[EJ Scorecard](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/scorecard/) content

**Header and Navigation:**

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The Environmental Justice Scorecard has been updated. Phase Two of the Environmental Justice Scorecard was released on July 24, 2024.

Environmental Justice

Scorecard

Tracking progress across the whole-of-government

Scorecard

Agencies

* [AmeriCorps](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/americorps/)
* [Appalachian Regional Commission](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/appalachian-regional-commission/)
* [Delta Regional Authority](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/delta-regional-authority/)
* [Denali Commission](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/denali-commission/)
* [Department of Agriculture](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/department-of-agriculture/)
* [Department of Commerce](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/department-of-commerce/)
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* [Department of Housing and Urban Development](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/department-of-housing-and-urban-development/)
* [Department of Justice](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/department-of-justice/)
* [Department of Labor](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/department-of-labor/)
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* [Department of the Interior](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/department-of-the-interior/)
* [Environmental Protection Agency](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/environmental-protection-agency/)
* [General Services Administration](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/general-services-administration/)
* [National Aeronautics and Space Administration](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/national-aeronautics-and-space-administration/)
* [Small Business Administration](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/small-business-administration/)
* [Tennessee Valley Authority](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/tennessee-valley-authority/)
* [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/u.s.-army-corps-of-engineers/)
* [U.S. National Science Foundation](https://ejscorecard.geoplatform.gov/en/scorecard/u.s.-national-science-foundation/)

About

Contact

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**Footer:**

Contact

Council on Environmental Quality

730 Jackson Place NW

Washington, DC 20506

(202) 395-5750

Office of Management and Budget

725 17th Street NW

Washington, DC 20503

(202) 395-3080

More information

Whitehouse.gov

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Privacy Policy

Additional government services

Find a contact at USA.gov

Grants.gov

EnvironmentalJustice.gov

Environmental Justice Clearing house

Share your feedback

The Office of Management and Budget and the Council on Environmental Quality

**Home page:**

Welcome

Welcome to the Biden-Harris Administration’s Environmental Justice Scorecard. On this website, you will find information about what federal agencies are doing to advance environmental justice in communities across America.

During his first week in office, President Biden signed Executive Order 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad, launching the most ambitious environmental justice agenda ever undertaken by the federal government. The Environmental Justice Scorecard is a signature component of the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to confronting longstanding environmental injustice and inequities. It is the first-ever government-wide assessment of what the federal government is doing to advance environmental justice.

The current version of the Environmental Justice Scorecard, or the Phase Two Scorecard, outlines actions taken by federal agencies to advance environmental justice in Fiscal Year 2023 (October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023). It builds upon the baseline assessment presented in the Phase One Scorecard, released in April 2023, in the following areas:

* Advancing the President’s Justice40 Initiative
* Implementing and enforcing environmental and civil rights laws
* Centering environmental justice in decision-making
* Embedding environmental justice throughout the federal government

Photo Caption

President Joe Biden delivers remarks highlighting the Biden-Harris Administration’s environmental justice agenda and announces new actions to advance environmental justice during a ceremony in the Rose Garden of the White House on April 21, 2023. (Source: White House Flickr)

View Progress by Agency

Select an agency below to view its progress on environmental justice

AmeriCorps

Appalachian Regional Commission

Delta Regional Authority

Denali Commission

Department of Agriculture

Department of Commerce

Department of Defense

Department of Education

Department of Energy

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Homeland Security

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Department of Justice

Department of Labor

Department of Transportation

Department of Veterans Affairs

Department of the Interior

Environmental Protection Agency

General Services Administration

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Small Business Administration

Tennessee Valley Authority

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. National Science Foundation

View all 24 federal agencies

Additional Resources

Find your community on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Check out the Environmental Justice Clearinghouse from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Learn more about environmental justice at EnvironmentalJustice.gov.

Return to top

**About page:**

**About**

**The Environmental Justice Scorecard**

President Biden prioritized environmental justice from the start of the Biden-Harris Administration by launching a whole-of-government effort to confront longstanding environmental injustices and inequities. The Environmental Justice Scorecard is a signature component of this commitment. It provides transparency for the public, ensures accountability for federal agencies, and demonstrates the federal government’s progress on advancing environmental justice over time.

Executive Order 14008, [Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/), directs the White House Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the White House Council on Environmental Quality and other relevant agency heads, to publish an annual Environmental Justice Scorecard detailing agency environmental justice performance measures. The [White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/white-house-environmental-justice-interagency-council/) (IAC) is also directed to develop performance measures to ensure accountability for work to address current and historic environmental injustice. Executive Order 14096, [Revitalizing Our Nation’s Commitment to Environmental Justice for All](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/04/26/2023-08955/revitalizing-our-nations-commitment-to-environmental-justice-for-all), provides the first government-wide definition of environmental justice and further outlines goals for the Environmental Justice Scorecard.

**Progress on the Justice40 Initiative**

Through President Biden’s [Investing in America](https://invest.gov/) agenda and other sources, the Biden-Harris Administration has secured:

Approximately **$613 billion** in funds from Fiscal Years (FY) 2022-2027 for programs that are part of the Justice40 Initiative.**\***

Through President Biden’s [Justice40 Initiative](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/), more than 500 programs across 19 federal agencies are working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of [seven categories of investment](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf), and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The more than 500 Justice40 covered programs working to deliver benefits for communities include:

* **253** programs protecting communities from the impacts of climate change
* **193** programs advancing clean and affordable energy for communities
* **82** programs delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities
* **71** programs advancing affordable and sustainable housing
* **125** programs delivering training and workforce development benefits
* **93** programs addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution
* **72** programs delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

For additional information about the Justice40 Initiative, please see below.

***\*****In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).*

*In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.*

*Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.*

**The Phase Two Scorecard**

The Phase Two Scorecard incorporates recommendations and feedback from environmental justice stakeholders, experts, and the public. In particular, recommendations from the [White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/white-house-environmental-justice-advisory-council/) and public comments informed its development.

The Phase Two Scorecard builds upon the baseline assessment of the federal government’s efforts to secure environmental justice established in the Phase One Scorecard, which included actions taken by federal agencies in 2021 and 2022. The Phase Two Scorecard outlines the progress by federal agencies in Fiscal Year 2023 (October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023) to achieve the Biden-Harris Administration’s environmental justice goals.

Building upon the Phase One Scorecard, the Phase Two Scorecard demonstrates progress made by federal agencies to:

* Advance environmental justice as part of each agency’s individual and unique mission, work, and scope;
* Revitalize agencies’ commitment to environmental justice, including through strategic planning;
* Make a difference on the ground with and for communities, including delivering benefits through the Justice40 Initiative;
* Promote meaningful engagement with communities with environmental justice concerns and expand access to information for the public, including about the outcomes of agencies’ activities; and
* Enhance collaboration across the federal government and with other governments, including through consultation with Tribal Nations.

The metrics and actions included in the Phase Two Scorecard vary based on the type, size, and mission of each federal agency. For example, some but not all of the agencies participating in the Phase Two Scorecard are members of the IAC and have Justice40 covered programs. If data is unavailable for a federal agency, the corresponding metrics do not appear on that agency’s page.

Similar to the Phase One Scorecard, the Phase Two Scorecard provides a valuable snapshot of key environmental justice work in progress at a particular point in time, but it alone cannot fully capture the depth or range of agencies’ active work or the long-term impact of that work on communities. Ensuring environmental justice for all is not a goal that can be achieved in one year, nor through a single initiative. Advancing environmental justice across the federal government requires federal agencies to provide opportunities for early, meaningful, and sustained partnership with communities and dedicated and sustained leadership over time. The Environmental Justice Scorecard will be updated annually, with the goal of creating a durable, robust, and comprehensive tool to assess and demonstrate the federal government’s efforts to secure environmental justice for all.

**About the Justice40 Initiative**

The [Justice40 Initiative](https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/) was established in 2021 as a key component of the Biden-Harris Administration’s environmental justice agenda. Under the Justice40 Initiative, the federal government is working toward the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments reach disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

The Phase Two Scorecard provides an update on progress made by agencies implementing the Justice40 Initiative. Future versions of the Environmental Justice Scorecard will continue to measure the progress of federal agencies over time and provide additional information on how this work is benefiting disadvantaged communities. The [Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf) and [Addendum](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/M-23-09_Signed_CEQ_CPO.pdf) on using the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/) provide guidance to agencies on how to identify and track these benefits.

**Contact page:**

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For general feedback, email: EJScorecard-Support@omb.eop.gov

**Download the data page:**

Download the Data

The Phase One Scorecard

The Phase One Scorecard was released on April 21, 2023. It established a baseline of actions taken by federal agencies in 2021 and 2022 to help achieve the Biden-Harris Administration’s environmental justice goals. The Phase One Scorecard reported on the progress of 24 federal agencies in the following areas: advancing the President’s Justice40 Initiative; implementing and enforcing environmental and civil rights laws; and embedding environmental justice throughout the federal government.

Download now (.zip 20MB)

The Phase Two Scorecard

The Phase Two Scorecard was released on July 24, 2024. It outlines actions taken by federal agencies to advance the Biden-Harris Administration’s environmental justice goals in Fiscal Year 2023 (October 1, 2022 to September 30, 2023). It builds upon the baseline assessment presented in the Phase One Scorecard in the following areas: advancing the Justice40 Initiative; implementing and enforcing environmental and civil rights laws; centering environmental justice in decision-making; and embedding environmental justice throughout the federal government.

Download now (.zip 243KB)

**Share your feedback survey:**

|  |
| --- |
| **Environmental Justice Scorecard | Feedback Survey** |

OMB Control No. 0031-0004  
Approval Expiration Date: 08/31/2025  
  
**Why provide feedback?**  
Your feedback will help improve the Environmental Justice Scorecard and the experience of the website.  
  
**What happens to feedback?**  
The feedback we receive will help inform future updates to the Environmental Justice Scorecard and to this website.  
  
**How to provide feedback?**  
Use the survey below to provide feedback on the Environmental Justice Scorecard.  
  
The survey is brief and open to everyone.   
  
Please select or write your responses to the following questions. You can provide additional information in the comment boxes.   
  
Thank you for providing feedback on the Environmental Justice Scorecard.

1. Contact Information

First name:  
Last name:

Organization (if any):

Email address (if any):

2. If you have feedback on the presentation of a specific agency’s data in the Environmental Justice Scorecard, and share your feedback for any of the agencies listed below:

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

Army Corps of Engineers

Corporation for National and Community Service (AmeriCorps)

Delta Regional Authority (DRA)

Denali Commission

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Department of Commerce (DOC)

Department of Defense (DOD)

Department of Education (ED)

Department of Energy (DOE)

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Department of Justice (DOJ)

Department of Labor (DOL)

Department of Transportation (DOT)

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

Department of the Interior (Interior)

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

General Services Administration (GSA)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

Small Business Administration (SBA)

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps)

U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF)

None  
Other (Please describe)

3. Please share your feedback on the aspects of the Scorecard listed below:

Usefulness

Accuracy

Ease of understanding information

Additional information to include in a future version of the Scorecard

Can not find a specific Agency or Department

Can not find specific type of information

Other (Please describe)

4. Is there additional information that should be included in the Environmental Justice Scorecard to help the public better understand a Federal Agency’s or Department’s commitments to environmental justice?

5. How will you use the information in the Environmental Justice Scorecard (Select all that apply)?

* To learn about an Agency or Department
* To learn about the Justice40 Initiative at an agency
* To understand Agency or Department actions on environmental justice
* To track Agency or Department progress on environmental justice
* To conduct research for scientific or academic publications
* To conduct research for reporting or media publication
* To use as a part of an academic or school curriculum or in another educational setting
* To help a community learn about and access Federal resources or assistance on environmental justice concerns
* Other (Please describe below)

If you have feedback about other uses of the information from the EJ Scorecard or other feedback in general, please share:  
6. Please share any thoughts or concerns about the features and functions of the Environmental Justice Scorecard website.  
7. Are there additional features or functions would you like to see included in the Environmental Justice Scorecard or website in the future?

8. Is there any additional information that you would like to share about the Environmental Justice Scorecard?

9. Opt-in:

* It is okay for someone at the White House Council on Environmental Quality or another Federal agency to contact me about this feedback
* I would like to subscribe to an email newsletter from the White House Council on Environmental Quality with updates on the Biden-Harris Administration’s work on environment, climate, and environmental justice issues
* I would like to subscribe to an email newsletter from the White House Council on Environmental Quality that is focused on the Biden-Harris Administration’s work on environmental justice

**Thank you for your feedback!**  
  
Please direct all comments, questions, or suggestions about this survey to:  
**Christina Bowman**  
[ej@ceq.eop.gov](http://Screeningtool-Support@omb.eop.gov)  
Phone: (202) 395-5750  
Council on Environmental Quality  
Executive Office of the President  
730 Jackson Place, NW Washington, DC 20506  
  
  
Burden Statement "This collection of information is approved by OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq. (OMB Control No. 0331-004). Responses to this collection of information are voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The public reporting and recordkeeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to be ten minutes per response. Send comments on the agency’s need for this information, the accuracy of the provided burden estimates and any suggested methods for minimizing respondent burden to Corey Solow, Director for Environmental Justice, Council on Environmental Quality, Executive Office of the President, 730 Jackson Place, NW, Washington, DC 20506. Include the OMB control number in any correspondence. Do not send the completed form to this address."

**AmeriCorps page:**

Agency logo

250 E Street SW

Washington, DC 20024

(202) 606-5000

americorps.govLaunch

Press@AmeriCorps.govLaunch

AmeriCorps

13 location(s), 788 employees, and 224 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

AmeriCorps’ mission is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering.

AmeriCorps is the federal agency for national service and volunteerism. AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans of all backgrounds to serve their country, address the nation’s most pressing challenges, and improve lives and communities. In FY 2023, AmeriCorps invested more than $140 million in climate, environmental stewardship, and disaster service projects that engaged more than 18,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.

AmeriCorps is also taking a lead role in the American Climate Corps, establishing a Hub to ensure success of this initiative, including advancing environmental justice.

Some examples of well-known AmeriCorps offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

National Service Programs

Office of Regional Operations regions

AmeriCorps NCCC regions

Get Involved

Check out AmeriCorps's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at AmeriCorps

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at AmeriCorps in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

American Climate Corps

AmeriCorps serves as the Hub of the American Climate Corps, for which the agency coordinates and implements a variety of activities, such as hosting listening sessions, expanding recruitment, establishing workforce partnerships, and developing common trainings.

Learn more

AmeriCorps’ Investment in Climate Change Mitigation

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps invested more than $140 million in climate, environmental stewardship, and disaster service projects that engaged more than 18,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers.

Learn more

Improving Parks, Trails, and Waterways

AmeriCorps members and volunteers treated more than 880,000 acres of parks and public land and 30,000 miles of trails and rivers, making more equitable opportunities for access to public spaces.

AmeriCorps VISTA Focus on Anti-Poverty Initiatives

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps VISTA prioritized projects that support anti-poverty initiatives focused on environmental stewardship and climate change in disadvantaged communities. Over 50% of environmentally focused VISTA members served in disadvantaged communities as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), advancing the goal of the Justice40 Initiative.

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) Projects in Disadvantaged Communities

AmeriCorps NCCC members carry out energy conservation, climate change mitigation, and environmental stewardship projects across the country. In FY 2023, 48% of environmentally focused NCCC projects served disadvantaged communities, advancing the goal of the Justice40 Initiative.

American Climate Corps

Photo credit: AmeriCorps

Agency logo

The American Climate Corps will mobilize a new, diverse generation of more than 20,000 Americans – conserving and restoring our lands and waters, bolstering community resilience, deploying clean energy, implementing energy efficient technologies, and advancing environmental justice, all while creating pathways to high-quality, good-paying clean energy and climate resilience jobs in the public and private sectors.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at AmeriCorps in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

With decades of experience in environmental stewardship, a vast network of partners across the country, a community-driven infrastructure, and proven pathways from service to employment, AmeriCorps is well positioned to conserve lands and waters, expand renewable energy use, and increase community resilience in disadvantaged communities through the President’s Justice40 Initiative.

For more information on AmeriCorps's Justice40 covered programs, please contact partnerships@cns.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The AmeriCorps has:

5 Justice40 covered program(s)

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, AmeriCorps has:

Approximately $1.3 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, AmeriCorps is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 5 covered program(s) at AmeriCorps working to deliver benefits for communities include:

5 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

4 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

5 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

4 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The AmeriCorps is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

AmeriCorps State and National: Green Jobs for Opportunity Youth

The Corps Network – the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps – was awarded 4,000 AmeriCorps member slots to promote energy efficiency in low-income housing, increase access to public lands, and establish pathways to green jobs for opportunity youth.

National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) Forest Corps

NCCC and the United States Forest Service signed a five-year agreement to establish the NCCC Forest Corps. Members will reduce wildfire risk to infrastructure and at-risk communities and make forests more resilient.

Learn more

AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP: Weatherization and Retrofitting Homes for Low-Income Households

Rebuild Upstate was awarded 75 AmeriCorps Seniors volunteer slots to repair and weatherize owner-occupied homes in disadvantaged communities. This work helped preserve affordable housing while lowering both the carbon footprint and low-income families’ utility bills.

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The AmeriCorps has:

20 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$706,646,000 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

AmeriCorps State and National Climate Change Resiliency

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps State and National prioritized awards to projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, conserve land and water, increase renewable energy use, and improve at-risk ecosystems, especially in communities that have been under-resourced.

Learn more

AmeriCorps VISTA Anti-Poverty Initiatives that Address Climate Change

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps VISTA prioritized projects that support anti-poverty initiatives focused on environmental stewardship and climate change in disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

AmeriCorps Seniors Climate Change and Conservation

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps Seniors prioritized awards to Native Nations and Indigenous Elders-serving organizations that advance programming to address climate change and conservation.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The AmeriCorps made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Modernizing AmeriCorps’ Grant Management System

AmeriCorps began modernizing its grant and project management system, which will reduce administrative burdens on prospective grantees. It will make the process more accessible and easier to navigate.

Modernizing AmeriCorps’ Member Applicant System

AmeriCorps is also modernizing its member applicant system. This will make the application process more accessible and ensure that anyone interested in service opportunities can find and apply to programs with ease.

Increased Opportunity to Serve for People from Disadvantaged Communities

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps State and National, AmeriCorps NCCC, and AmeriCorps VISTA increased the member living allowance so that service is a viable opportunity for Americans of all backgrounds.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The AmeriCorps is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Environmental Stewardship with the Army and the Department of Public Works in Georgia

AmeriCorps NCCC teams revitalized abandoned community gardens and assisted with conservation projects at Fort Eisenhower, Georgia. Service also included maintenance on several nature trails and field work to help protect the endangered red cockaded woodpecker’s ecosystem. These service activities occurred in census tracts identified as disadvantaged by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Program

The Waccamaw River Volunteer Water Monitoring project is a community-based project. It adds to state and federal monitoring efforts. AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP volunteers help to collect high quality data. The data help to identify hot spots for land-based pollutants. The data also assist in detecting discharge and helps to document water quality improvements in the Waccamaw River Watershed over time.

Build Capacity to Protect and Restore the Nation’s Lands

Conservation Legacy enrolled 50 AmeriCorps VISTA members to help increase communities’ capacity to protect, restore, and enhance our nation’s lands, with a focus on disadvantaged communities that face economic disparity and environmental degradation.

Environmental Education and Tree Planting

AmeriCorps members serving with Our City Forest recruit, educate, train, and support residents, volunteers, students, and other partners to adopt, plant, and steward trees and shrubs in Santa Clara County’s climate-vulnerable neighborhoods, including in disadvantaged communities. Through this service, 10,714 individuals received education or training in environmental stewardship last year.

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at AmeriCorps has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at AmeriCorps in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

To learn more about AmeriCorps’ NEPA procedures, please visit the Corporation for National and Community Service, Protocol for Categorical Exclusions Under the National Environmental Policy Act for Programs Funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, 74 Fed. Reg. 34,309 (July 15, 2009).

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at AmeriCorps in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Civil Rights and Employment Branch under the Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in AmeriCorps has not fielded any environmental justice-related inquiries or complaints in connection with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, or Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

Under the guidance and request of the Department of Justice, the Language Access Plan for AmeriCorps was updated. This plan will provide guidance to offices and programs as they write procedures on how to address meaningful and effective language access for AmeriCorps.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at AmeriCorps in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 applies to any individual, community, grantee, member, or volunteer to ensure access to AmeriCorps’ programs, services, and benefits are provided free from discrimination. This includes ensuring that any engagement in federal financial assistance through contractual or other agreements, use criteria, methods, and practices that are not discriminatory.

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at AmeriCorps in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

23 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on AmeriCorps’s technical assistance events, please visit https://americorps.gov/partner/funding-opportunities

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at AmeriCorps, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The AmeriCorps Tribal Consultation policy is inclusive of environmental justice.

For example, in June 2023, AmeriCorps convened existing and potential Tribal partners to build a shared experience in working in partnership with AmeriCorps. The convening provided space for themes brought to the agency’s attention by Tribal partners including stronger partnerships, addressing barriers, and Indigenizing service. Sessions were designed to build community, provide technical assistance, and increase cultural competency among staff members.

Training

10 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

150 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, AmeriCorps is committed to honoring our obligation to federal trust responsibilities and strengthening Nation-to-Nation relationships. More than 150 AmeriCorps staff have attended Native American Cultural Competency Trainings in FY 2023. These trainings provide awareness and inform staff on the importance of acknowledging Indigenous Knowledge, culture, and sovereignty. Staff implement these learnings in their programs and workstreams. The trainings did have an environmental justice component.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at AmeriCorps including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

As part of its commitment to tackling the climate crisis, AmeriCorps has prioritized investments in disadvantaged communities and recruiting a diverse corps of members and volunteers who reflect the communities we are serving. AmeriCorps has focused on reducing or removing barriers to participating for both members and grantees, and meaningfully engaging communities in developing and supporting climate solutions. AmeriCorps has increased its member living allowance and other benefits to ensure AmeriCorps is accessible to people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including those in low-income communities; increased investments in conservation, clean energy and energy efficiency, and climate resilience; strengthened relationships with Minority Serving Institutions and Tribal communities; and made policy and programmatic changes to make resources more accessible to organizations working in disadvantaged and underserved communities.

1 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Partner with Communities to Alleviate Poverty and Advance Racial Equity

AmeriCorps has set as part of Goal 1 of its FY 2022 – FY 2026 Strategic Plan: “through broader investments in mitigating climate change, through measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve land and water, and through targeted interventions that aid and empower underserved communities (e.g., improving food systems, increasing disaster preparedness and resilience, and retrofitting homes to be more energy efficient and less disaster-prone), AmeriCorps can work towards environmental justice and ensure the most vulnerable are able to adapt to climate change.”

Advancing Climate Action and Environmental Justice

To ensure that national service reflects the rich diversity of the country and the communities it serves, AmeriCorps is committed to prioritizing investments in the communities that need this most and recruiting a diverse corps of members and volunteers who reflect those who we are serving. To do so, the agency is focused on reducing or removing barriers to participating for both members and grantees, ensuring environmental justice is embedded in the work, and meaningfully engaging disadvantaged and underserved communities in developing and supporting climate solutions.

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

AmeriCorps worked with the following six agencies – the Departments of Commerce, the Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency – to prepare to launch the first group of members of President Biden’s historic American Climate Corps. Additionally, AmeriCorps has been represented at other interagency groups like the Nature in Communities working group, the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, and the Native American Affairs Climate Subcommittee.

AmeriCorps worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

EPA and AmeriCorps VISTA Partnership to Support Environmental Justice

In FY 2023, AmeriCorps collaborated with Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 to launch the Midwest EPA Green Communities VISTA Project. This project aims to enhance environmental stewardship and public health programs in low-income and overburdened communities; connect disadvantaged communities to new federal funding opportunities and technical assistance resources; build the environmental leaders of the future; and assist host sites in creating impactful and sustainable projects that support the needs of their communities.

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**Appalachian Regional Commission page:**

Agency logo

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https://www.arc.gov/Launch

info@arc.gov

Appalachian Regional Commission

1 office(s), 1 location(s), 90 employees, and 13 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The Appalachian Regional Commission’s (ARC) mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia.

ARC investments include resilient basic infrastructure improvements, such as water and sewer, and workforce training in advanced manufacturing.

Some examples of well-known ARC offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

The ARC Annual Conference

ARC Getting the Grant Workshops

The Appalachia Envisioned Roadshow

Get Involved

Check out the Appalachian Regional Commission's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Appalachian Regional Commission

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Appalachian Regional Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization

The Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization is a collaborative effort of multiple federal agencies to promote and support economic revitalization in communities impacted by coal-specific job losses. In FY 2023, ARC partnered with the Department of Agriculture and Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation to host a forum in Appalachian Kentucky designed to build collaboration, capacity, and relationships by connecting community networks with targeted federal and civic partners.

Learn more

Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative

The economic downturn of the coal industry has had a significant impact on Appalachia. The regionally competitive Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative was designed to specifically address economic inequity through a tailored development approach. Since 2015, ARC has invested $421.6 million in 507 projects touching 365 counties across Appalachia through the POWER Initiative. In FY 2023 alone, ARC has invested $56 million in 70 projects across Appalachia through the POWER Initiative.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Appalachian Regional Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

ARC’s mission aligns with the Justice40 Initiative. In FY 2023, 70% of ARC’s appropriations were invested in disadvantaged communities, which include distressed counties or areas. ARC’s collaborative nature and grassroots delivery system can help to provide small, rural communities with the strategic technical assistance necessary to achieve economic transformation.

ARC references Justice40 covered programs in the budget, performance, and policy tab of the ARC website. For more information, please visit ARC’s website.

For more information on ARC's Justice40 covered programs, please contact info@arc.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Appalachian Regional Commission has:

1 Justice40 covered program(s), including 1 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, ARC has:

Approximately $1.4 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, ARC is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 1 covered program(s) at ARC working to deliver benefits for communities include:

1 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

1 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

1 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

1 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Appalachian Regional Commission is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Appalachian Regional Commission Grants

In FY 2023, Appalachian Regional Commission Grants provided $88,411,173 in funding through ARC’s Justice40 covered program. In total, 163 grants were awarded, leveraging over $1.8 billion in private investment. Appalachian Regional Commission Grants benefitted Appalachian communities through business development, workforce development, infrastructure, tourism, and community capacity activities.

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-Funded Appalachian Regional Commission Grants

In FY 2023, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-funded Appalachian Regional Commission Grants provided $102,509,340 in funding through ARC’s Justice40 covered program. In total, 107 grants were awarded, leveraging over $25 million in private investment. Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-Funded Appalachian Regional Commission Grants were used to provide Appalachian communities with safer drinking water, enhanced connectivity through broadband, and to build community capacity, among many others.

Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization Initiative

The Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative targets federal resources to help communities and regions that have been affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America’s energy production. In FY 2023, ARC awarded nearly $56 million in 70 investments to help coal-impacted communities in Appalachia diversify and grow their economies.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Appalachian Regional Commission has:

4 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$400 million available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Area Development Program

ARC’s Area Development program relies on a flexible “bottom up” approach to economic development, empowering Appalachian communities to work with their state governments to design impactful investment opportunities supporting ARC’s mission and investment priorities. In FY 2023, ARC received an appropriation of $200 million for area development activities and allocated by formula $110.11 million, 55% of the appropriation, to the states. Within the framework of the strategic plan, the states have wide discretion in the use of these funds.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Appalachian Regional Commission made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies

The Appalachian Regional Initiative for Stronger Economies (ARISE) aims to drive large-scale, regional economic transformation through multi-state collaborative projects across Appalachia. ARC launched ARISE to strengthen Appalachian business and industry, and to grow and support the development of new opportunities across multiple states. In FY 2023, ARC updated the application process to include a requirement that applicants must highlight partnerships across multiple states and provide a plan that showcases the economic impact of proposed project. In FY 2023, ARC awarded $50.4 million to 17 projects that expand broadband access, educate workers in emerging sectors, bolster green manufacturing, and support workforce and business opportunities across 12 states.

Learn more

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Appalachian Regional Commission is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Manufacturing the New Energy Economy in Appalachia

With ARC’s investment of $10 million, announced in 2023, it is projected that 1,100 businesses will be served, 5,500 jobs will be created, 15,190 jobs will be retained, and $44 million will be saved in cost reductions. Funds will be used to provide training, technical assistance, supply chain mapping, and guidance on factory upgrades to support manufacturers of renewable energy, hydrogen power, low-carbon and decarbonized power, smart grid improvements, electric vehicles, and green buildings.

Learn more

Hamlin Sewer System Improvements Project

ARC announced an investment of $3,325,000 in Lincoln County, West Virginia, in 2023, to improve the Town of Hamlin’s Sewer System. This investment was made in a county that includes one disadvantaged community, and that is also a distressed and persistent poverty county. The project will correct existing deficiencies, protect the health, safety, and dependability of services for residents and businesses, and support the economic growth vital to Lincoln County’s future.

Building a Competitive Workforce to Boost Semiconductor Manufacturing in the ARC Region

ARC’s $1.4 million investment, announced in 2022, will revitalize the workforce in Western Pennsylvania by preparing for the emerging market of semiconductor manufacturing and implementing 41 new Advanced Workforce Trainings in the areas of semiconductor manufacturing. This project will benefit several disadvantaged communities and is expected to recruit and train up to 550 workers at the Steamfitters’ 570,000-square-foot facility in Harmony, Pennsylvania.

Learn more

Manufacturing the New Energy Economy in Appalachia

Photo credit: Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development

The “Manufacturing the New Energy Economy in Appalachia” project will harness the tools of ten Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) affiliates to provide technical assistance, training, supply chain mapping and diversification support, guidance on factory upgrades and product expansions, and other support to small and medium manufacturers seeking to enter or grow production in clean energy and green technology sectors. The foundational improvements facilitated by the project will have lasting effects that vastly outlive the duration of the project itself, with over 20,000 jobs created or retained in the region, as well as putting Appalachia at the forefront of green industry and solutions to climate change.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Appalachian Regional Commission has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Appalachian Regional Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

ARC’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work ARC did in FY 2023. ARC has agreements in place with other federal agencies and with Registered State Basic Agency Partners to do NEPA work on ARC’s behalf.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Appalachian Regional Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

18 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Appalachian Regional Commission’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.arc.gov/events/

Getting the Grant

ARC’s regional workshop series on “Getting the Grant” provides an opportunity to introduce its competitive program, to provide a Notice of Solicitation of Applications to stakeholders, and to provide hands-on, technical assistance to applicants and attendees. In FY 2023, there were 584 attendees across three events. The workshops took place in Belden, Mississippi, Knoxville, Tennessee, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Each of the workshops benefited disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

State Partner Workshops

ARC regularly leads workshops in conjunction with its state partners to provide technical assistance to applicants interested in pursuing opportunities through ARC’s Area Development Program. These training events are specifically tailored to fit the demands and priorities of the state with which ARC is partnering. ARC hosted 14 trainings and events for state partners in FY 2023.

Local Development District Training

Since Local Development Districts (LDD) play a large role in developing ARC projects and providing technical assistance to applicants, LDD workshops are more intensive than typical applicant or grantee workshops. Based on post-workshop survey responses, 100% of attendees indicated that the workshop met its stated objectives and deepened their understanding of how to develop projects and prepare ARC applications. ARC hosted five LDD trainings in FY 2023.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Appalachian Regional Commission, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

ARC created a Plan for Tribal Consultation and Coordination Policy for Tribal Consultation as required.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Appalachian Regional Commission including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

ARC’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan includes components of environmental justice. The strategic plan was updated for FY 2022 to FY 2023.

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**Delta Regional Authority page:**

Agency logo

236 Sharkey Avenue, Suite 400

Clarksdale, MS 38614

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https://dra.gov/Launch

info@dra.go

Delta Regional Authority

2 office(s), 2 location(s), 22 employees, and 6 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) envisions the region as a place where people and businesses have access to economic opportunities in vibrant, sustainable, and resilient communities. DRA’s mission is to realize that vision through the practical application of innovative ideas and strategies that will foster inclusive communities, strengthen regional collaboration and productive capacity, achieve sustained, long-term economic development, and produce meaningful opportunities for all people in the DRA region.

DRA was created to promote and encourage economic development in the Delta region. Over 90% of counties and parishes in the DRA region are economically distressed, reflecting a pervasive norm of hardship across the Delta region. Factors such as environmental racism and classism compound these challenges for Delta residents, highlighting systemic issues.

Some examples of well-known DRA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Programs Department

Policy and Communications Department

Strategic Partnerships Division

Get Involved

Check out the Delta Regional Authority's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Delta Regional Authority

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Delta Regional Authority in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Strategic Investments in Job Creation, Job Retention, Supporting Families, and Training People

In FY 2023, DRA estimates its strategic investments helped to create over 6,700 jobs. In FY 2023, DRA estimates its strategic investments helped to retain over 1,300 jobs. In FY 2023, DRA estimates that more than 18,000 families were benefitted by improved infrastructure as a result of DRA’s strategic investments. In FY 2023, DRA estimates that more than 2,400 people were trained as a result of DRA’s strategic investments.

Delta Regional Authority’s Justice40 Covered Program Benefits

DRA’s collective efforts resulted in increased benefits from Justice40 covered programs accrued across its eight-state, 252 county/parish area. DRA estimates its strategic investments helped to create eight times as many jobs and train two times as many people in year-over-year increases from FY 2021 to FY 2023. This is a testament to the focused and localized efforts the agency undertook to expand its Justice40 impact.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Delta Regional Authority in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DRA is a joint federal-state collaboration created to address the economic needs of the eight-state, 252 county/parish Mississippi Delta region. DRA is participating in the Justice40 Initiative through its grantmaking activities, including Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-funded activities.

As an identified agency with covered programs, DRA works to advance the Justice40 Initiative goal as part of its covered programs. These actions include identifying the benefits of covered programs, determining how covered programs distribute benefits, and calculating and reporting on reaching the 40% goal of the Justice40 Initiative. Benefits include direct and indirect investments (and program outcomes) that positively impact disadvantaged communities. Therefore, all entities also comply with reporting, data collection, and evaluation necessary for DRA to assess its progress toward the Justice40 Initiative goal, as outlined in interim guidance for the Justice40 Initiative and Executive Order 14008. Further, DRA’s Regional Development Plan IV will guide the agency’s strategic priorities and actions from 2023 through 2027 to help the region build on previous successes and maximize future opportunities. For more information, please visit DRA’s Regional Development Plan IV.

For more information on DRA's Justice40 covered programs, please contact info@dra.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Delta Regional Authority has:

1 Justice40 covered program(s), including 1 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, DRA has:

Approximately $210 million in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, DRA is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 1 covered program(s) at DRA working to deliver benefits for communities include:

1 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

1 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

1 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Delta Regional Authority is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Delta Regional Authority Grants

DRA’s strategic investments over FY 2023 are expected to have the following outcomes: 6,716 jobs created, 1,327 jobs retained, 18,055 families benefited, and 2,477 people trained.

Learn more

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law – Delta Regional Authority Grants

DRA’s metrics estimate that its strategic investments helped to create eight times as many jobs and train two times as many people in year-over-year increases from FY 2021 to FY 2023.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Delta Regional Authority has:

2 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$46,329,754 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

DRA Publishes 2023 Notice of Funding Availability for States’ Economic Development Assistance Program

Through this Notice of Funding Availability, DRA has made approximately $16.8 million available to address basic public and transportation infrastructure, as well as workforce and business development needs for communities across DRA’s eight-state service area.

Learn more

DRA Publishes 2023 Notice of Funding Availability for Community Infrastructure Fund

Through this Notice of Funding Availability, DRA has made approximately $30 million available to address basic public and transportation infrastructure, as well as flood control issues for communities across DRA’s eight-state service area.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Delta Regional Authority made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Application Criteria

DRA has instituted a technical review process to provide for an objective review of applications.

Outreach

DRA’s strategic partnerships team met with stakeholders throughout the region to discuss funding sources and the application process.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Delta Regional Authority in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DRA has a partnership with the University of Memphis that provides hands-on, deepened technical assistance to eight DRA communities in a year-long pilot project. Other partnerships include with Historically Black Colleges and Universities and community development financial institutions, among others.

DRA created a capacity-building hub to expand and provide deepened technical assistance to DRA’s most disadvantaged communities.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

13 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Delta Regional Authority’s technical assistance events, please visit https://dra.gov/events/

Technical Assistance and Capacity-Building Training for Local Development Districts

In FY 2023, DRA conducted ten in-person and one virtual Local Development District training.

Technical Assistance and Capacity-Building Training for the Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities Initiative

In FY 2023, DRA conducted one in-person and one virtual Pre-Technical Assistance training opportunity, which was attended by more than 80 participants. DRA also conducted one virtual Pre-Technical Assistance Training.

Learn more

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Delta Regional Authority, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DRA produced a Tribal Consultation Plan that outlines its commitment to ensuring Tribal Nations and communities have access to economic development resources. DRA will follow the consultation policies established through Executive Order 13175 on “Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments,” and consistent with policies set forth in the Presidential Memorandum of January 16, 2021, on “Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-Nation Relationships.”

2 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Stakeholder Government-to-Government Consultation with Tribal Nations

DRA’s strategic partnerships team met with Tribal Nations in the region to discuss funding sources and the application process.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Delta Regional Authority including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

8 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

Training

2 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

1 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Grants Management System

In FY 2023, DRA created a comprehensive grants management system that will measure reporting metrics.

Selma, Alabama Interagency Working Group

DRA leads an interagency working group to help the city of Selma, Alabama navigate and prepare for federal funding opportunities. In less than a year, over $29 million in federal resources has been invested in Selma and Dallas County. Federal agencies, including AmeriCorps, Environmental Protection Agency, and Small Business Administration, among others, have collectively worked alongside the city to inform and assist the city with identifying where its priorities align with available federal resources.

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**Denali Commission page:**

Agency logo

550 W 7th Avenue

Anchorage, AK 99501

(907) 271-1414

https://www.denali.gov/Launch

Denali Commission

1 office(s), 1 location(s), 16 employees, and 1 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The Denali Commission partners with Tribal, federal, state, and local governments and collaborates with all Alaskans to develop basic public infrastructure and enhance the quality of life in Alaska’s communities.

The Denali Commission’s mission targets expanding critical infrastructure to improve public health and well-being in rural Alaskan communities that have historically had disproportionate and adverse public health and climate-related impacts.

Some examples of well-known Denali Commission offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Anchorage Office

Get Involved

Check out the Denali Commission's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Denali Commission

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Denali Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Previous Funding Opportunity Announcement Resulted in nearly $30 Million in Awards Across Alaska in FY 2023

The Denali Commission’s open competitive opportunity for community improvements prioritizes areas considered economically distressed, disadvantaged, or at risk of environmental threats such as flooding, permafrost degradation, or erosion. The Funding Opportunity Announcement resulted in nearly $30 million in awards across Alaska in FY 2023.

Learn more

FY 2023 FOA Resulted in Nearly $35 million in Recommended Awards across Alaska

The Denali Commission’s open competitive opportunity for community improvements prioritizes areas considered economically distressed, disadvantaged, or at risk of environmental threats such as flooding, permafrost degradation, or erosion due to climate change – resulting in nearly $35 million in recommended awards across Alaska.

Learn more

Opportunistic Partnerships that Create Innovative Solutions to Housing Challenges in Alaska

The Denali Commission’s Housing Program embraces technological innovation to address housing challenges effectively. From incorporating materials science into a 3D Concrete Printed house, to tailoring housing-specific sawmill technology for efficient construction, to research of locally grown mycelium and grass as insulation substitutes, the Housing Program underscores the Commission’s forward-thinking approach. Partnerships with entities like the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, universities, and local organizations further enhance the Program’s capacity to drive change.

Partnerships that Fund Infrastructure Projects Based on Priority Lists

Partnering with the Alaska Energy Authority, the Denali Commission funds critical infrastructure projects listed on the Bulk Fuel Upgrade and Rural Power System Prioritization Lists to benefit as many communities as possible with limited state/federal resources.

Tununak to Toksook Bay Hardened Trail Project

The Denali Commission partners and funds projects to improve critical infrastructure, which in turn provides health benefits to communities in Alaska. The Tununak Boardwalk and Tununak to Toksook Bay Hardened Trail Project are prime examples of how these improvements make transportation safer and more efficient, leading to significant health benefits for the residents. By enhancing the transportation infrastructure, these projects have reduced travel time between Toksook Bay and Tununak from 1.5 to 2 hours to just 45 minutes. This improvement has several direct health benefits, including: Emergency Medical Services: Quicker travel times mean faster response in medical emergencies. Residents can now reach healthcare facilities more swiftly, which is critical in urgent situations where every minute counts. This can result in better outcomes for conditions such as heart attacks, strokes, and severe injuries. Access to Healthcare: Regular medical appointments and routine check-ups become more accessible. Previously, long travel times might have discouraged people from seeking regular medical care. With reduced travel time, more residents are likely to attend their appointments, leading to earlier detection and treatment of health issues. Reduced Physical Strain: Safer and more efficient travel reduces the physical strain associated with long and potentially hazardous journeys. This is especially important for elderly residents, those with disabilities, or individuals with chronic health conditions who might find lengthy travel arduous and detrimental to their health. Improved Mental Health: Easier and quicker access to other communities can reduce isolation, providing social and psychological benefits. People can visit family and friends more frequently, participate in community events, and have better overall social support networks, which are crucial for mental health. Healthier Lifestyle Choices: With more efficient transportation, residents can engage more readily in healthy lifestyle activities such as participating in community sports and accessing recreational areas. This contributes to overall better physical health. Reduced Exposure to Environmental Hazards: The new infrastructure reduces the time and distance traveled in potentially harsh weather conditions, decreasing the risk of accidents and exposure to extreme cold, which can lead to health problems like frostbite and hypothermia. By making transportation safer and more efficient, the Denali Commission’s Tununak Boardwalk and Tununak to Toksook Bay Hardened Trail Project provide substantial health benefits, enhancing the well-being of the community members in Alaska.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Denali Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The Denali Commission’s mission is to focus on rural Alaska, which includes many disadvantaged communities marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. By design of program focus, project eligibility and evaluation criteria, incorporation of Commissioner and public feedback, and other partner outreach, more than 40% of the Denali Commission’s funding benefits disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution and continues to advance this goal as part of the Justice40 Initiative.

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Denali Commission has:

1 Justice40 covered program(s), including 1 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, Denali Commission has:

Approximately $206.1 million in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, Denali Commission is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 1 covered program(s) at Denali Commission working to deliver benefits for communities include:

1 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

1 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

1 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

1 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

1 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Denali Commission is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Stebbins Wind Project and Grid Bridging System

With funds from the Denali Commission, a 900 kilowatt (kW) wind turbine and connection to the existing electrical distribution system was constructed in Stebbins, Alaska. This islanded microgrid community has been exclusively using diesel until this improvement, which was finalized in October 2023. Stebbins is tied to St. Michael and will soon have a Grid Bridging System (GBS) as well to facilitate diesel off operation for both communities. The GBS moderates the fluctuations in wind power for the interconnected communities.

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Grant Center for Environmentally Threatened Communities

With funds from the Denali Commission, the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Grant Center for Environmentally Threatened Communities provides technical assistance, resilience grant writing, and management support to 39 communities and leverages $43 billion benefiting 44 communities across 133 projects since 2016. Every three cents invested by the Denali Commission into the Center has resulted in one dollar for infrastructure protection in Alaska communities.

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Denali Commission has:

1 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$45,850,000 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Opening Millions to Benefit Rural Alaska Communities

The Denali Commission’s Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) for FY 2023 Work Plan and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Program Grants aids rural Alaska communities in developing or improving infrastructure. The Commission sought grant applications for an assortment of projects.

Learn more

Funding Applied Directly to Priority-Listed Projects

Denali Commission funding, paired with the Alaska Energy Authority Rural Power System Upgrade Program, increases efficiency, incorporates renewables, and lessens fuel usage in Alaska Villages.

Funding Applied Directly to Priority-Listed Projects

Denali Commission funding, paired with the Alaska Energy Authority Bulk Fuel Upgrade Program, increases efficiency and lessens fuel usage in Alaska Villages.

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Denali Commission made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Making Commission Funding Easier to Access for Communities

Awareness of Commission programs and ability to apply for funding are now more transparent with the annual funding opportunity announcement process. In addition, applications are given priority points for communities considered economically distressed, disadvantaged, or at risk of environmental threats such as flooding, permafrost degradation, or erosion.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Denali Commission is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Stebbins to St. Michael Wind Project and Grid Bridging System

The Stebbins to St. Michael 900 kilowatt (kW) wind turbine and grid bridging system will soon facilitate renewable energy power enabling the communities to turn off their diesel power plants for days at a time. This decreases diesel fuel usage, increases reliability of energy pricing, and improves ambient air and noise quality in both communities.

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Denali Commission has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Denali Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Denali Commission has National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) implementing procedures located at 40 CFR Part 900.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Denali Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Denali Commission’s program offerings and eventual awards require recipients to comply with all applicable Federal laws and regulations, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Training

1 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

15 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Denali Commission in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Denali Commission conducts external engagements and has partnerships with communities. The Denali Commission has had external engagements and partnerships with the following: the State of Alaska through the State Co-Chair and the Alaska Energy Authority, Alaska Village Electrical Cooperative, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) Center for Environmentally Threatened Communities, Indian Health Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, Department of Agriculture, Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Indian Affairs, Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration, Alaska Municipal League, Alaska Federation of Natives, Tanana Chiefs Conference, Kawerak Inc., as well as many other smaller and local Tribes and municipal governments.

A few examples of individual technical assistance and public outreach conducted by the Denali Commission include: the Alaska Grants Symposium, Commissioner Meetings, Funding Opportunity Announcement Public Q&A Session, and local outreach at conferences.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

13 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Denali Commission’s technical assistance events, please visit https://akfederalfunding.org/

Alaska Grants Symposium

During the Alaska Grants Symposium, the Denali Commission met with the public to discuss funding availability and share application forms.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Denali Commission, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Over 6 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, the Denali Commission made multiple project site visits to Tribal and Indigenous communities and one presentation of the Funding Opportunity Announcement to Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN) constituents.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Denali Commission including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The Denali Commission has always focused on distressed communities. By law, two of the purposes of the Denali Commission are to “provide job training and other economic development services in rural communities, particularly distressed communities,” and to “promote rural development.” The Denali Commission implements much of its work in distressed communities that are overburdened by pollution, and many that are on the frontlines of climate change. These communities are also often remote, not connected by road to any other village, face some of the harshest climates in the country, are composed of almost entirely Alaska Native residents, frequently do not have access to quality healthcare, educational opportunities, economic opportunities, quality housing, lending opportunities, and have been marginalized by underinvestment.

1 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

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**Department of Agriculture page:**

Agency logo

1400 Independence Avenue SW

Washington, DC 20250

(202) 720-2791

www.usda.govLaunch

askusda@usda.gov

Department of Agriculture

29 office(s), 4,500+ location(s), 92,106 employees, and 20,630 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA or the Department) provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related topics based on public policy, the best available science, and effective management.

USDA impacts almost every American every day. USDA agencies and offices provide support and leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development, nutrition, and related topics based on sound public policy, best available science, and efficient management. USDA is committed to: supporting inclusive, sustainable economies; mitigating legacy pollution; protecting communities from environmental hazards; promoting climate-smart practices in agriculture, forestry, and energy production; implementing consistent, meaningful public engagement; and addressing barriers to access of federal resources, services, and programs.

Some examples of well-known USDA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Farm Service Agency

Forest Service

Rural Development

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Agriculture's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Agriculture

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Agriculture in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Urban Agriculture

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service established 17 new urban agricultural service centers in major U.S. cities to administer farm loan, conservation, risk management, and disaster assistance programs. FSA awarded $40 million in agreements to partner organizations to raise awareness of USDA programs and help urban producers enroll. FSA implemented 10 new Urban County Committees to help administer FSA programs in urban areas.

Learn more

NextGen Program

USDA announced $262.5 million for the “From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals” (NextGen) program to foster agricultural career development opportunities for scholars at Minority-Serving Institutions. The 33 funded NextGen projects at over 60 institutions will support training for over 20,000 participants.

Learn more

Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Outreach

Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services conducted numerous listening sessions, workshops, and training sessions to provide technical assistance to Tribes and Minority Serving Institutions. Engagements focused on: sharing information about wildlife disease and damage management, pest survey training, accessing USDA programs and services, building partnerships and collaboration with USDA, and in-person agency recruitment.

Learn more

Rural Development’s Creating Opportunities through Rural Engagement Program

Through the Creating Opportunities through Rural Engagement (CORE) Program, Rural Development conducts targeted engagements with underserved rural and Tribal communities that have not received funding from field-based Agency programs in the last five years. Agency staff work with local governments and organizations to identify and address barriers to program access.

Learn more

Equity in Conservation Outreach Agreements

In FY 2023, the Natural Resources Conservation Service invested $70 million in partnerships that expand outreach to underserved producers and disadvantaged communities, and provide opportunities for students to pursue careers in agriculture, natural resources, and related sciences through Equity in Conservation Outreach Agreements.

Learn more

Urban and Community Forestry Grants

Photo credit: DJ Sene

Agency logo

In FY 2023, USDA’s Forest Service awarded more than $1 billion through the Urban and Community Forestry Program, funding nearly 400 projects to expand access to trees and green spaces in urban communities and neighborhoods. The funding was awarded and announced for entities in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, two U.S. territories, three Freely Associated States in the Pacific, and multiple Tribes. 100% of the benefits from these investments will flow to disadvantaged communities, as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Agriculture in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

To promote USDA’s progress in enhancing how benefits from Justice40 covered programs flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution, agencies developed internal Implementation Plans for each covered program. These plans outline the modifications agencies are and will implement to enhance how program benefits flow to disadvantaged communities. Modifications include, for example, publishing information about programs in multiple languages and including benefits to disadvantaged communities as evaluation criteria for funding proposals.

For more information on USDA's Justice40 covered programs, please contact Justice40\_USDA@usda.govLaunch

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Agriculture has:

70 Justice40 covered program(s), including 29 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, USDA has:

Approximately $91 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, USDA is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 70 covered program(s) at USDA working to deliver benefits for communities include:

48 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

17 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

1 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

6 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

7 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

9 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

13 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Agriculture is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Farm Service Agency’s Former Commodity Credit Corporation Grain Storage Hazardous Waste Cleanup Program

In FY 2023, this program allocated over $2.3 million (55% of its total fiscal year budget) to perform remediation and reduction of legacy pollution from grain fumigants (pesticides) on private lands in disadvantaged communities. This included investments made in 37 sites across Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska.

National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s Workforce Development Programs

In FY 2023, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s (NIFA) Hispanic-serving Institutions Education Grants Program (one of NIFA’s Justice40 covered programs) invested over $15 million in higher education programs. These programs promote academic advancement and professional and scientific workforce development focused on food production, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences.

Learn more

Risk Management Agency’s Education Partnership Program

In FY 2023, Risk Management Agency provided $6.7 million to 24 cooperative partners through the Risk Management Education Partnership Program. The majority of these partners help educate underserved, small-scale, and organic producers on farm risk management and climate-smart farming practices.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Agriculture has:

Over 94,000 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

Over $24 billion available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s Alaska Native-Serving and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Education Competitive Grants Program

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) program promotes and strengthens the ability of Alaska Native-Serving Institutions and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions to carry out education, applied research, and related community development programs.

Learn more

Rural Development’s Multifamily Housing Rental Assistance

The Rural Development’s Multifamily Housing Rental Assistance program provides payments to owners of USDA-financed Rural Rental Housing and Farm Labor Housing on behalf of low-income tenants unable to pay their full rent and utilities fees.

Learn more

Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Environmental Quality Incentive Program provides technical and financial assistance to agricultural producers and forest landowners to address natural resource concerns, such as: improved water and air quality; increased soil health; improved or created wildlife habitat; and mitigation against drought and increasing weather volatility.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Agriculture made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Revised Natural Resources Conservation Service Program Policy to Reduce Heirs’ Property Barriers

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) updated its policies and established a form for heirs (who inherit family land as joint owners) to document their ‘control of land.’ Use of the optional “Heirs’ Property Ownership Applicant Self-Verification Form” helps heirs to certify ownership interest in order to access financial assistance for structural or vegetative conservation practices and activities. This form can be used with the following NRCS programs, all of which are covered under the Justice40 Initiative: Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Agricultural Management Assistance, Conservation Stewardship Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

Rural Energy for America Program Technical Assistance Grants

The Rural Energy for America Program Technical Assistance Grant (REAP TAG) program supports technical assistance for potential REAP applicants. Grant recipients help applicants register with SAM.gov (a requirement to receive Federal contracts), complete applications, plan construction activities, and develop environmental reports. This technical assistance can address historic barriers Tribes and underserved organizations and entities in disadvantaged communities or distressed areas have experienced when applying for funding opportunities.

Risk Management Agency Risk Management Education and Outreach Technical Assistance

Through contractor support, Risk Management Agency provides technical and writing assistance to organizations applying for agency grants. This service is available to underserved producer groups, agriculture-related non-profits, Tribal colleges and universities, Tribal higher education programs, 1890 Land Grant Universities, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and Hispanic-Serving Agricultural Colleges and Universities.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Agriculture is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Rainwater Harvesting Techniques

The Southern Plains Climate Hub and Natural Resources Conservation Service in Texas hosted demonstrations and provided information on techniques for rainwater harvesting for approximately 120 members of rural communities. Members of seven Native American Tribes participated in workshops and subsequent one-on-one discussions. Hub employees helped with the design of systems tailored to Tribal partners who anticipate using rainwater harvest and storage to boost water reserves for wildfire control, livestock, and small-scale horticulture, among other uses.

Learn more

Success in Aquaponic Farming During Extreme Weather Events

In 2021, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s Distance Education Grants Program funded a project at the University of Puerto Rico-Mayaguez focused on training Extension agents, farmers, and community members in aquaponic production. The result of aquaponics is a steady supply of fresh fish and vegetables that are available in local communities throughout the year and can be grown in just about any environment. Drawing on relationships, capacity, and infrastructure developed through this project, during extreme weather in the summer of 2023, five aquaponics sites were kept running and hundreds of fish were saved. To date, eight Extension agents and 58 community members have been trained through this project.

Learn more

Forest Service’s National Revegetation Effort in Cooperative Forestry

The Forest Service’s National Revegetation Effort in Cooperative Forestry (also known as the National Seed Strategy Program) assists states, territories, and Tribes to fund nurseries for native trees and seeds. In FY 2022 and FY 2023, $16 million was allocated to 35 states, four territories and commonwealths, and seven Tribes. Funding is being used to purchase equipment, replace aging infrastructure, adopt new methods to boost nursery productivity, and increase nursery capacity. The Forest Service is working closely with the Intertribal Nursery Council to share technical assistance in cultivation of culturally significant plants and trees.

Learn more

Farm Service Agency Cooperative Agreements for Technical Assistance

Photo credit: Preston Keres

Beginning farmer, D’Quinton Robertson with Aaron Lehman of Lehman Farms in Polk City, Iowa

In FY 2023, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) awarded almost $1.8 million in cooperative agreements to six partner organizations for outreach and technical assistance to promote awareness and understanding of the Transition Incentives Program among agricultural communities. FSA offers this service to help underserved farmers – including farmers in disadvantaged communities – access land and keep agricultural lands in production.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Agriculture has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Agriculture in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USDA’s Departmental Regulation on Environmental Justice (DR 5600-002) requires agencies to incorporate environmental justice considerations into their National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance – including (1) addressing disproportionate and adverse effects from USDA programs and activities, and (2) providing opportunities for affected communities to participate in decisions related to their health or the quality of their environment. Multiple USDA agencies have manuals, handbooks, and other forms of guidance to support engagement with communities and consideration of environmental justice during NEPA processes.

Project Modifications

Numerous project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

Riparian Buffer Modification

Riparian buffers were modified in the North Fork Nooksack Vegetation Management Project on the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest as a result of ongoing meetings with the Nooksack Tribe and Lummi Nation. Riparian buffers deliver benefits such as increased wildlife diversity, improved water quality, reduced flood damage, better sediment, nutrient, pesticide, and animal waste filtration, riverbank stabilization, and diversification of income for landowners.

Bull Trout Habitat Restoration with the Yakama Nation

The Yakama Nation is providing technical review of designs and is a member of the interdisciplinary team for the Gold Creek Valley Restoration Project on the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, providing expertise in hydrology and bull trout passage.

Training

Over 23 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

Over 1,529 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, during agency trainings on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA review processes, participants gained increased awareness and understanding of laws, regulations, and executive orders related to environmental justice. Trainings equipped employees with practical methods for assessing potential disproportionate and adverse impacts of proposed activities on communities with environmental justice concerns during the NEPA review processes.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Agriculture on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Farmers are now eligible for further protection against damaging tropical storms through the Risk Management Agency’s Hurricane Insurance Protection-Wind Index Endorsement.

Former Commodity Credit Corp Contaminated Grain Storage Facilities

In FY 2023, $4.2 million ($2.3 million of which was spent in disadvantaged communities) was awarded to address legacy grain fumigant (pesticide) contamination released at former USDA grain storage facilities that is impacting rural lands and groundwater supplies. Funding allocated to disadvantaged communities includes the construction of remediation systems for the protection of community drinking water supplies and clean indoor air at impacted residences.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s Emergency and Regulatory Compliance Service

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s Emergency and Regulatory Compliance Service program staff conduct annual safety trainings for Safety Coordinators and Site Supervisors, targeting hazardous chemical management and disposal procedures.

USDA’s Agriculture Priorities & Allocation Systems

USDA’s Agriculture Priorities & Allocation Systems supports national defense and emergency preparedness related to food and food resources.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Agriculture in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, USDA opened and closed one Americans with Disabilities Act investigation related to access to a National Forest.

In FY 2023, USDA’s Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights issued Departmental Regulation 4330-003, Nondiscrimination in USDA-Conducted Programs and Activities. This regulation establishes policies and provides guidance on the Department’s prohibitions against discrimination in its programs, services, benefits, and resources delivered directly to the public by USDA employees. In FY 2023, the USDA and its Mission Areas and agencies issued Language Access Plans. The Department is committed to strengthening its procedures for ensuring that individuals with limited English proficiency have meaningful access to USDA’s programs, services, and activities.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Agriculture in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Strong USDA Title VI civil rights enforcement procedures are essential to delivering environmental justice. USDA’s Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights and agency civil rights compliance staff provide trainings, routinely evaluate Title VI concerns, and collaborate with federal partners to resolve Title VI environmental justice-related complaints that allege discriminatory behavior.

1 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

85 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Agriculture in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USDA’s external engagements and partnerships with communities, community-based organizations, educational institutions, and other non-federal organizations, include: In FY 2023, the Agricultural Research Service and the Nueta Hidatsa Sahnish College entered a partnership to conduct research on traditional varieties of seeds with ties to the Tribe. The partnership, and resulting cooperative agreement, is an important step toward supporting Indigenous Seed Sovereignty. USDA’s 2501 Grant Program supports more than 150 grantee organizations, including community-based organizations, working to connect underserved communities and those with environmental justice concerns to USDA programs. The USDA-led Agriculture Innovation Mission for Climate initiative (AIM for Climate) is a network of over 600 non-federal partners and 55 countries committing investments in climate-smart agriculture research, development, and scaling. Many of the partnerships promote environmental justice through equitable access to resilient food systems.

All USDA agencies conducted outreach events, such as listening sessions, training sessions, and workshops to enhance awareness to their programs and services, including events targeted to and hosted within underserved and disadvantaged communities and other communities with environmental justice concerns. Many agencies within USDA have taken steps to improve access to information for communities with environmental justice concerns, including the Agricultural Research Service, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Climate Hubs, Farm Service Agency, Forest Service, Food Safety and Inspection Service, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Risk Management Agency, and Rural Development. Agencies have also provided targeted technical assistance directly and through funded partners to help underserved and disadvantaged communities access and apply for programs and services.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

Over 4,900 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Department of Agriculture’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.usda.gov

National Institute of Food and Agriculture and Agricultural Research Service Workshops

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture and Agricultural Research Service partnered to conduct a series of capacity-building workshops for Historically Black and Tribal Colleges and Universities to enhance their financial and project management capacity. The events, held at University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and Fort Valley State University, attracted 165 participants.

Strengthening the Food Supply Chain with Small and Very Small Establishments

The Food Safety and Inspection Service hosted five roundtables, reaching nearly 400 participants, to increase access to regulatory information and best practices to maintain and enhance food safety and strengthen the food supply chain with small and very small establishments. Interpretation, translation, and sign language were available to ensure the roundtables were accessible to all attendees.

Learn more

Southwest Climate Hub Workshop and Course for Tribal Members

The Southwest Climate Hub held two workshops, attended by 117 individuals, to engage with Tribal members on drought resilience tools and strategies. The Southwest Climate Hub also supported development of a Train-the-Trainer course on Beekeeping and Pollinator Stewardship for Indigenous Stewards, which was hosted at the Institute of American Indian Arts and had 33 enrollees.

Learn more

Public Processes (show more/show less)

Numerous public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

National Institute of Food and Agriculture Listening Sessions

Through listening sessions, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture gleaned insights on: the need for expanded programs focused on health equity; the need for expanded research identifying priorities and needs of marginalized communities and those with environmental justice concerns; and the need to continue learning from a range of Traditional Ecological Knowledge related to agroecology and sustainability.

Risk Management Agency Island Working Group

Through engagements in Puerto Rico, the Risk Management Agency (RMA) assessed the effectiveness of crop insurance on the island, resulting in modifications such as the expansion of pineapple coverage and allowing for sales of the commodity throughout the year. Through engagements in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam, RMA assessed risk for local producers currently without access to Federal crop insurance. This information-gathering will inform the creation of insurance policies to meet the needs of local farmers and ranchers in these areas.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Easement Summit

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, alongside the American Farmland Trust, co-hosted an easement summit with a diverse range of partners that implement the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easement programs. The purpose of this summit was to obtain feedback on process improvement and streamlining efforts, program barriers, stewardship trends and challenges, and identification of training needs to further implement agricultural land protection programs.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Agriculture, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Consultations are formal, Nation-to-Nation meetings between USDA (representing the Federal Government) and officials from among the 574 Federally Recognized Tribal Nations. USDA agencies and offices host consultations throughout the year to hear from Tribal Nations about how USDA policies and programs can better support Indian Country. USDA consultation processes are directed by USDA’s Department Regulation 1350-002, Tribal Consultation, Coordination, and Collaboration.

54 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

USDA Departmental Tribal Consultations on Barriers

In FY 2023, the USDA’s Office of Tribal Relations held the Tribal Equity and Barriers Consultation that built off USDA’s 2021 and 2022 consultations. During this consultation, the Department reported out on previously identified barriers to accessing USDA programs, and Tribal leaders discussed additional and new barriers Tribes had identified.

Farm Service Agency Tribal Consultations on Barriers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has participated in the USDA Annual Consultation on Barriers for three consecutive years. Outcomes for FSA include a pilot program created to place Tribal agriculture technical assistance experts directly with Tribes and a new online Tribal Partnerships Page. The site facilitates access to opportunities for land access, Indigenous representation, conservation partnerships, and support for Tribal producers and Tribal food sovereignty.

Rural Development Consultation on Inflation Reduction Act Funded Programs

Rural Development (RD) held two consecutive years of Tribal consultations on implementation of the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), the Powering Affordable Clean Energy Program (PACE), and the Empowering Rural America (New ERA) Program. As a result of the consultations, for example, RD increased the forgivable loan threshold for Tribal PACE projects to 60 percent.

65 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, USDA hosted Tribal listening sessions and engagements focused on, among other topics: better meeting the needs of Indigenous producers; increasing equitable access to USDA programs and services by Tribal and Indigenous communities; USDA’s Department Regulation 1340-002, Consolidating USDA Agencies’ Services on Indian Reservations, which allows Tribal Nations to request consolidated USDA service on Tribal lands; the Carbon Partnership Program, where participants discussed the new national program and potential Tribal implications; and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, where discussions focused on how the program can contribute to Tribal Nations’ land stewardship efforts and the availability of dedicated funding for Tribal Nations.

Training

Numerous agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

Over 10,660 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, Tribal trainings educated employees and provided them resources related to, among other topics: cultural competency and working effectively with Tribes, Native Alaskan, and Indigenous communities; Tribal consultation; honoring Nation-to-Nation Trust Responsibilities; respecting Tribal Sovereignty; understanding the complex and challenging history of federal and Tribal relationships; and respecting and leveraging Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Agriculture including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

To advance environmental justice institutionally, USDA has evaluated policies and procedures to identify and address disproportionate and adverse impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns and barriers to these communities accessing agency programs and services. USDA has continued to expand consultation, outreach, engagement, collaboration, and participation opportunities targeted to Tribes and communities with environmental justice concerns, and to make these efforts fundamental components of program operations, planning, and decision-making activities, including during NEPA processes. USDA has continued to expand targeted financial and technical assistance opportunities for Tribes and communities with environmental justice concerns as well as continued to expand and deliver department and agency trainings focused on environmental justice and Tribal consultation. Finally, USDA has continued to develop internal and external resources and tools to support USDA’s work on environmental justice.

Over 238 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

69 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

50 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 7,700 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, environmental justice trainings had goals such as educating employees about the concepts of environmental justice and injustice, equipping employees with practical methods for addressing environmental justice, stressing the importance of early, meaningful engagement with communities with environmental justice concerns, and informing employees about relevant laws and executive orders.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Agricultural Research Service National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Guidance

The Agricultural Research Service published NEPA guidance that included consideration of environmental justice issues for construction, real property, and agricultural research projects.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Justice40 Guidance for State Employees

The Natural Resources Conservation Service developed internal federal guidance for federal agency staff working with state/local offices to provide background on and highlight the agency’s commitment to the Justice40 Initiative. The guidance describes resources for identifying disadvantaged communities and explains the importance of prioritizing outreach to and engagement with these communities.

Rural Development’s Priority of Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice

Rural Development reaffirmed its Mission Area priority of “Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice,” which specifically focuses on mitigating the causes of climate change and increasing communities’ resilience to the impacts of climate change through economic support to rural communities. The Mission Area established the priorities through policy communication and inclusion in regulatory funding notices throughout the year.

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the Department of Agriculture has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://www.usda.gov/equity/action-plan

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

Numerous tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Forest Service Justice 40 Accomplishment Tracker

This dashboard provides a geospatial visualization of the Forest Service’s planned or completed accomplishments by its 19 Justice40 covered programs. Project landscapes are overlaid with the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to inform and monitor the proportion of activities implemented in disadvantaged areas.

Food and Nutrition Service’s Nutrition Education and Local Food Access Dashboard

The dashboard provides a county-level visualization of the Food and Nutrition Service’s nutrition support. It can be used to support collaborative cross-program nutrition technical assistance. It can also be used to develop nutrition action plans geared to target and optimize resources. In addition to the above, it can also be used to identify potential partners and to expand the use and impacts of best practices.

Learn more

Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Priority Data Layers

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) developed internal data tools to evaluate program delivery to underserved people and disadvantaged communities, which empower the agency to make data-driven decisions to remove barriers and inequities in programs and services. The data tools are designed to evaluate NRCS program delivery alongside census and other population data.

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

11 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

8 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

USDA’s Equity Commission

The Equity Commission was established to advise the Secretary of Agriculture and provide USDA with an analysis of how its programs, policies, systems, structures, and practices create barriers to inclusion or access, contribute to systemic discrimination, or exacerbate or perpetuate racial, economic, health, and social disparities. The Equity Commission issued an Interim Recommendation Report in FY 2023 and its Final Recommendation Report in 2024.

Learn more

USDA’s Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers

The Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers (ACMF) works in the interest of the public to ensure that all farmers have equal access to USDA programs. In 2023, ACMF issued a report that includes recommendations for Farm Service Agency, Rural Development agencies, and other agencies within the Department for improving access to programs and services for minority farmers.

Learn more

USDA’s Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

USDA’s Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production advises the Secretary of Agriculture on the development of policies and outreach relating to urban, indoor, and emerging agriculture practices. The Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee (UAIPAC) is one of several ways that USDA is extending support to urban agriculture, including around issues of equity, climate resilience, and nutrition access.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

USDA participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. USDA also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 as provided by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. In FY 2023, Forest Service became a co-sponsor, alongside federal and non-federal partners, of the 21st location of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Urban Waters Federal Partnership, the Walnut Creek Watershed in Raleigh, North Carolina. This event served as the launch event for the White House Campaign for Environmental Justice. Encroachment on the Walnut Creek floodplain causes severe flooding and impairs water quality in low-lying, downstream communities in Southeastern Raleigh, many of which are disadvantaged. The Urban Waters Partnership reconnects urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies. The Partnership also collaborates with community-led revitalization efforts to improve the nation’s water systems and promote their economic, environmental, and social benefits.

The Department of Agriculture worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Rural Partners Network

USDA’s Rural Development leads the Rural Partners Network (RPN) in collaboration with 24 federal agencies and regional commissions. RPN helps rural communities find resources and funding to create local jobs, build infrastructure, and support long-term economic stability on their own terms. The RPN puts federal staff, known as “Community Liaisons,” on the ground to support economically challenged communities and provide expertise to leverage federal programs.

Learn more

Forest Service Community Navigator Initiative

The Community Navigator Initiative works to ensure that underserved communities, Tribes, and other targeted communities benefit from the Forest Service’s (FS) Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act investments. To support the Program, FS initiated an interagency Community Navigators “Community of Practice,” which brings together federal agencies with similar “navigator” programs (e.g., the Rural Partners Network and the Environmental Protection Agency’s Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers) to share best practices and support a whole of government approach in aiding underserved communities.

Learn more

Agency logo

Photo credit: Lance Cheung

Rural Development’s Rural Data Gateway

The Rural Data Gateway makes the Mission Area’s data for rural projects easier to access by its partners and people living in rural communities. It includes investment dashboards that show how USDA’s Rural Development Mission Area – which includes the Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Rural Housing Service, and Rural Utilities Service – has supported local and regional economies over the last 11 years through 69 programs. The Gateway’s easy-to-use dashboards highlight critical Rural Development investments. The data can help users analyze investment trends and help USDA better target resources to the rural communities that are most in need.

Learn more

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**Department of Commerce page:**

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Department of Commerce

13 office(s), 1,400 location(s), 47,000 employees, and 10,000 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The Department of Commerce’s mission is to create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity for all communities. To increase our nation’s competitiveness, opportunity must equitably be within reach of every American.

Environmental justice results in equity and is fundamental to good commerce. America’s diversity is its competitive advantage – but only if everyone has an opportunity to fulfill their potential and fully participate.

Some examples of well-known Department of Commerce offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Economic Development Administration

National Institute of Standards and Technology

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Commerce's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Commerce

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Commerce in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

$2.6 Billion Framework to Protect Coastal Communities and Restore Marine Resources

In June 2023, the Department of Commerce unveiled a $2.6 billion framework to invest in coastal resilience through President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act. As part of the President’s Investing in America agenda, this initiative will support communities and people on the frontlines of climate change, dedicating nearly $400 million specifically for Tribal priorities and benefiting coastal and Great Lakes communities nationwide with an emphasis on environmental justice. The historic $2.6 billion investment in climate resilience and coastal communities will help ensure communities, especially Tribes and vulnerable populations, have the resources and support needed to prepare, adapt, and build resilience to severe weather and climate events as well as strengthen workforce development, marine resources, nature-based solutions, conservation, regional partnerships, and Tribal priorities. These programs include: (1) Climate Resilience Regional Challenge ($575 million): National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) invests in holistic, collaborative approaches to coastal resilience at regional scales with new competitive grant program. This program is covered by the Justice40 Initiative and technical assistance helped applicants navigate federal grants systems, develop proposals and budgets, and tap climate-resilience expertise during the proposal development stages of the competition. (2) Tribal Priorities ($390 million): NOAA provided funding specifically for Tribes based on priorities set through Tribal consultation. Funding supported habitat restoration, fish passage, capacity building, science, fish hatcheries, and Pacific salmon. (3) Climate-Ready Workforce ($60 million): NOAA invests in the emerging and existing needs of employers by placing workers in high quality jobs that enhance climate resilience. Funding will also aid training and support services that will help American workers advance their careers and implement climate resilience efforts within public and private sectors.

Learn more

Census Bureau Social Science Research on Environmental Inequality

Throughout FY 2023, Census Bureau researchers had multiple ongoing projects documenting the distribution of exposure to environmental hazards and the causes and consequences of these exposures. For example, Census staff have developed the Census Environmental Impacts Frame, a confidential microdata infrastructure which allows researchers to study the distribution of exposure to environmental hazards, and the causes and consequences of these exposures.

Learn more

National Telecommunications and Information Administration Investments for All 50 States, the District of Columbia, Five Territories, and Tribal Lands

Access to the internet and broadband is critical for communities with environmental justice concerns. The internet provides access to information and tools, allows communities to participate in decision-making, and connects communities with resources to improve resilience. In FY 2023, the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) announced funding allocations to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five Territories to deploy affordable, reliable high-speed internet service to everyone in America. The Internet for All initiative is a key component of President Biden’s Investing in America agenda. NTIA also announced the availability of nearly $1 billion in funding to expand Internet access and adoption on Tribal Lands. This second round of funding from the Internet for All initiative’s Tribal Broadband Connectivity Program will make available up to approximately $980 million available for Native American, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities for the deployment of Internet infrastructure on Tribal lands, affordability programs, telehealth, and distance learning initiatives.

The United States Patent and Trademark Office Expands and Extends its Climate Change Mitigation Pilot Program

The burdens of climate change can disproportionately impact communities with environmental justice concerns. The United States Patent and Trademark Office is addressing the impacts of climate change through the recently expanded and extended Climate Change Mitigation Pilot Program. The program expedites the examination of patent applications for technologies that reduce, remove, prevent, and/or monitor greenhouse gas emissions.

The Minority Business Development Agency Invests in Underserved Entrepreneurs and Minority Colleges and Universities

In FY 2023, the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) launched the Capital Readiness Program, a $125 million program to help minority and other underserved entrepreneurs grow and scale their businesses to serve local communities. The Capital Readiness Program incubates and accelerates businesses in high-growth industries like climate resilient technology and infrastructure that can help to reduce health and environmental impacts for communities marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. Also in FY 2023, the MBDA announced $1.75 million in grants to seven minority-serving educational institutions as part of an expanded pilot program to support entrepreneurship for undergraduate students who will bring climate resilience and other benefits to local communities through their businesses. These grantees join a cohort of four other Minority Colleges and Universities awarded in 2021. This expands the pilot program supporting inclusive entrepreneurship with seven new grantees. This program will lay the foundation for a future generation of entrepreneurial leaders and innovators, including in climate resilience and infrastructure.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Commerce in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The Department is implementing President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative as a series of systemic changes to improve equitable distribution of the benefits of 14 Justice40 covered programs across three bureaus. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has 12 of these Justice40 covered programs and is working to increase access to funding and technical assistance to ensure that Tribal and disadvantaged communities have the resources they need to respond and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The Department of Commerce has laid the foundation for programming and policies that will reach a larger and more diverse audience and address key barriers to economic success for disadvantaged communities. More information is available on the Department’s Justice40 Initiative webpage.

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Commerce has:

14 Justice40 covered program(s), including 10 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, Department of Commerce has:

Approximately $1.9 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, Department of Commerce is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 14 covered program(s) at Department of Commerce working to deliver benefits for communities include:

13 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

2 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Commerce is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Economic Development Administration: Establishment of the Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities Initiative

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) awarded a $2.6 million grant to the National Association of Counties (NACo) to lead a Community of Practice, the Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities Initiative, which is designed to help communities in coal-reliant regions enact place-based, locally-driven development strategies to build thriving, resilient economies. The establishment of this multi-organizational, self-governing, knowledge-sharing community will empower local government leaders, nonprofit organizations, and other community champions to develop new ideas, approaches, and fundable projects as coal communities transform their economies.

Learn more

NOAA’s Climate Adaptation Partnerships to Help Frontline Communities Reduce Risks from

Increasing Flooding and Drought

In September 2023, NOAA’s Climate Adaptation Partnerships program announced eight new awards of $3.9 million to support work in flood- and wildfire-impacted communities to help test, scale, and transfer knowledge and build adaptation capacity, with a focus on frontline communities, including in disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

NOAA Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal

In 2023, NOAA awarded more than $16 million in funding for 13 projects led by Tribal applicants for fish passage and to build Tribal organizational capacity. These projects support Tribes in their role as managers and stewards of Tribal trust resources for cultural, spiritual, economic, subsistence, and recreational purposes.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Commerce has:

11 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

Approximately $1,569,000,000 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Economic Development Administration’s Assistance to Energy Transition Communities

In FY 2023, the Notice of Funding Opportunity provided specific investment assistance, including to disadvantaged communities that have been negatively impacted by a nuclear power plant, biomass facility, or coal plant or coal mine closure. The broad-based economic benefits of such transition assistance will pose direct benefit to disadvantaged communities, as these communities typically face severe economic struggle in the face of transition without assistance.

Learn more

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants

This $240 million Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants program will help sustain fisheries, make significant strides in the recovery of threatened and endangered species, and help protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Commerce made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Economic Development Administration Updated FY 2023 Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance to Include Equity and Climate Considerations

The Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance – which includes the Assistance to Energy Transition Communities program, a Justice40 covered program – FY 2023 Notice of Funding Opportunity was modified to include specific language regarding the necessity of equity and climate considerations. This language advises applicants to ensure that the economic benefits of the project will be shared by all communities in the project region.

NOAA Creating a Set Aside for Tribal Communities

Through its $45 million Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Tribes and Underserved Communities program, NOAA set aside $20 million specifically for projects supported by Federally Recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and organizations that represent Tribes.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Commerce is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Economic Development Administration’s Assistance to Energy Transition Communities

As a result of grants funded through the Assistance to Coal Communities and Assistance to Nuclear Closure Communities appropriations, grantees estimate that these communities will see the creation of 4,621 new jobs and the preservation of 896 existing jobs.

NOAA’s Return to the River: The Upper Mattaponi Tribe Reclaim their Ancestral Lands

NOAA is supporting the rematriation of 853 acres of ancestral lands along Virginia’s Mattaponi River to their original stewards, the Upper Mattaponi Tribe. The site, a former sand and gravel mine, will now be connected to over 3,000 acres of previously protected land along the Mattaponi River. This linkage expands a conservation corridor protecting fish, wildlife, and plants that are culturally significant to the Upper Mattaponi Tribe. The re-acquisition effort was supported by a $3 million investment from NOAA’s Coastal Zone Management Habitat Protection and Restoration Grants under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Learn more

NOAA Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Underserved Communities

In 2023, NOAA awarded nearly $25 million in funding for 35 new projects that will advance the coastal habitat restoration priorities of Tribes and underserved and disadvantaged communities. Projects support community-driven habitat restoration and help build the capacity of underserved communities to participate in restoration activities more fully. Project examples include: (1) The Kashia Band of Pomo Indians will begin red abalone restoration on their ancestral lands in northern California’s kelp forest ecosystem. They will take steps toward establishing a Tribal breeding program for red abalone and will train and employ Tribal divers to conduct ecological monitoring. (2) Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government with the Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe, the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe, and the Jean Charles Choctaw Nation will restore coastal wetlands on or near sacred and culturally significant sites. (3) Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper will work toward restoring habitat in the highly impaired Scajaquada Creek watershed. A Community Advisory Group will play an active role in creating a restoration plan and advancing restoration efforts.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Commerce has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Commerce in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) NEPA procedures contain general information about considering environmental justice in the NEPA process. NOAA’s line and regional offices have practices that involve considering environmental justice in all levels of NEPA review, partnering with other agencies on environmental justice analyses, and translating NEPA-related materials into other languages. Additionally, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has a formal Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy that contains some information regarding the NEPA process. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) continues to perform its own environmental reviews to identify any adverse environmental impacts associated with its project investments, as required under NEPA. EDA's environmental review process provides an opportunity to evaluate the full environmental impact of an EDA-funded project to ensure that the project complies with all applicable environmental laws and regulations and to identify any potential disproportionate and adverse environmental or health effects on communities with environmental justice concerns. As part of this effort, applicants are required to complete an Environmental Narrative, which among other items, requires the applicant to discuss environmental justice.

Training

5 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

64 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, the learning objectives of NOAA NEPA training include greater awareness when writing and reviewing NEPA documents, and when completing the design, scoping, and public input phases of the NEPA process.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Commerce in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

As part of the development and rollout of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy, there were numerous engagements with partners and communities across the NMFS regions. NMFS has put equity and environmental justice principles into practice by centering engagement with communities with environmental justice concerns during research, policy development and education, and fishery stock assessments.

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center implemented a Community Engagement Protocol, requiring scientists to (1) reach out to potentially affected communities at least six months prior to planned research to discuss the project with potential affected communities; (2) check for overlaps with any ongoing subsistence activities in the region and mitigating action, if needed, in response to community concerns; and (3) provide regular updates while research activities are taking place and timely follow-up with preliminary results so that local communities are the first to hear what is happening in their backyard.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

3 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Tribes and Underserved Communities Applicant Webinars

In September 2023, the Office of Habitat Conservation provided technical assistance through multiple live webinars for Tribal and underserved communities applying for the Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants.

Learn more

How to Apply for Federal Grants Training in U.S. Territories

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center (PIFSC), Pacific Islands Regional Office (PIRO), and Office of Habitat Conservation (OHC) jointly hosted six “How to Apply for Federal Grants” training workshops in Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), and American Samoa with a total of 348 participants. The workshops were designed to increase the accessibility of federal funding opportunities for communities in the territories.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

3 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

NOAA Alaska Salmon Research Task Force

Alaska Fisheries Science Center is supporting work of the Alaska Salmon Research Task Force to bring Indigenous community voices and Indigenous and Local Knowledge into the discussion and inform development of a collaborative science plan for sustainable management of salmon in Alaska.

Learn more

NOAA Request for Information: Advancing Equity and Environmental Justice in the Southeast Through the Conservation and Management of Living Marine Resources

In July 2023, NOAA issued a public request for information to solicit stakeholder input to inform the operationalization of NOAA Fisheries’ Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy in the Southeast Region.

Outreach to Advance Equity and Environmental Justice in Alaska Through the Conservation and Management of Living Marine Resources

Alaska Fisheries Science Center and Alaska Regional Office conducted nine telephone town halls with Tribal Councils and Tribal organizations in Alaska to build relationships and support regional implementation of the national Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Commerce, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has established policies and guidance to provide for meaningful and timely input from Federally Recognized Tribes into NOAA’s decision-making process on policy matters that have Tribal implications. In July 2023, NOAA released a revised Consultation Handbook and associated NOAA Administrative Order, as well as published an Indigenous Knowledge Guidance. The Economic Development Administration (EDA) follows the Department’s Tribal Consultation Policy when conducting a consultation.

13 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Economic Development Administration’s Design and Implementation of Two Programs Authorized under the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022

The Economic Development Administration sought consultation on design and implementation of the Regional Technology and Innovation Hub Program (Tech Hubs) and specific consultation on the Distressed Area Recompete Pilot Program on an issue where the statutory dataset for Tribes does not exist. Consultation led to program design changes such as 100% grant rate to extend eligibility and supported Tribal Sovereignty by allowing Tribes to self-certify the required information.

NOAA Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Groundfish Harvest Specifications Consultation

In February 2023, NOAA Fisheries held Tribal consultation with several Alaska Native Tribal government representatives to discuss the impacts of salmon declines in Western/Interior Alaska subsistence communities. Through the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, harvest specifications are set annually. The Council and NMFS are committed to continued improvements in bycatch management.

NOAA Federal Subsistence Management Program

In October 2022, the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration hosted a listening session and three Tribal and Alaska Native corporation consultation sessions on how to improve the Federal Subsistence Management Program.

Over 81 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, NOAA helped facilitate the Department of Commerce signing Joint Secretarial Order 3403, which was announced at the November 2022 White House Tribal Leaders Summit. After Inflation Reduction Act consultations in March 2023, 17 additional engagements occurred with Tribal representatives. In July 2023, NOAA Ocean Exploration staff spent over a week engaging and teaching more than 75 campers at the 26th Annual Camp Qungaayux. In September 2023, NOAA and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes co-hosted the Workshop for Building Drought Resilience in a Changing Climate with Upper Columbia and Missouri Basin Tribes. The Economic Development Administration held an informational webinar to introduce the Recompete Pilot Program Notice of Funding Opportunity to Indigenous communities with a targeted approach to relay information and answer questions about the program. The webinar led to a better understanding of eligibility and clarification on the different ways in which to apply.

Training

5 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

464 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, in December 2022, NOAA held a workforce training webinar entitled, “NOAA and Native Peoples: Perspectives on Indian Country, who it includes, and where NOAA fits in.” In July 2023, the NOAA Tribal Team created a community of practice for Indigenous engagement, partnerships, and Indigenous Knowledge to provide a platform for NOAA practitioners to share ideas, concerns, resources, and tools and to potentially develop common solutions. The second event was held in September 2023. The EDA Tribal Communities meeting is facilitated by the Tribal Engagement Coordinator and the agendas are designed to provide information about Tribal policy, issues, and initiatives (e.g., Executive Order 13175), and provide a space to answer questions related to Tribal engagement. It is also a space for participants to share experiences/learnings about working with Tribes with other participants.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Commerce including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

In FY 2023, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) developed an Administrative Order for Environmental Justice.

127 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

1 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

14 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

742 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, in November 2023, the National Ocean Science Office of Response and Restoration’s Assessment Restoration Division, through the Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program, hosted an “Environmental Justice 101” training webinar for all staff, in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

NOAA Fisheries Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy

In May 2023, NOAA Fisheries released its first-ever national Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy to guide the agency as it focuses on serving all communities more equitably and effectively. This national strategy addresses equity and environmental justice (EEJ) and applies to all NOAA Fisheries program offices and regions. It identifies six core areas of EEJ to be addressed and provides actions, metrics, and resource needs.

Learn more

NOAA Native Hawaiian Engagement Guide

NOAA works toward its mission through six major line offices. The NOAA Native Hawaiian Engagement Guide was a cross-office initiative with the Department of the Interior and Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

5 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

NOAA Fisheries Social Indicators for Coastal Communities Toolbox

NOAA Fisheries developed social indicators to characterize community well-being for coastal communities engaged in fishing activities. The toolbox includes 14 social, economic, and climate change indicators that characterize community vulnerability to disturbances (regulations, extreme weather, oil spills, sea level rise, etc.). Users can analyze environmental justice and climate vulnerability of over 4,600 coastal communities in 24 states.

Learn more

Office of Response and Restoration: Environmental Response Management Environmental Justice Layers

The Environmental Response Management Application is an online mapping tool that incorporates layers for users to visualize different populations impacted by environmental justice issues. Data is incorporated from the Environmental Protection Agency’s EJScreen, the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, and others.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

19 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

20 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

The Department of Commerce participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. The National Institute of Standards and Technology participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 as provided by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice.

NOAA Restoration for Fish, Wildlife and Communities Coming to Seven Polluted Waterways

In 2023, NOAA and partners helped to recover over $92.8 million from polluters to restore seven waterways in six states following oil spill and industrial pollution incidents. These restoration efforts will benefit fish, wildlife, and disadvantaged communities disproportionately impacted by pollution.

Learn more

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**Department of Defense**

Agency logo

1400 Defense Pentagon

Washington, DC 20301

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https://www.defense.gov/

https://www.defense.gov/Contact/Help-Center/

Department of Defense

15 office(s), 4,800 location(s), and 3,400,000 employees in Fiscal Year 2023

The Department of Defense (DoD or the Department) is America’s largest government agency. With our military tracing its roots back to pre-Revolutionary times, DoD has grown and evolved with our nation. DoD’s mission is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and ensure our nation's security.

Environmental justice is closely related to DoD’s mission sustainment and maintaining national security. Ensuring resilient DoD installations (e.g., military bases, camps, stations, etc.) is key to the Department’s ability to fully meet mission objectives, protect military personnel health, and build community resilience. DoD addresses environmental justice under its planning and cleanup programs. The Department’s environmental justice efforts focus on ensuring safe, thriving conditions for military families, strengthening alliances and coordination with Native and Indigenous populations, reducing climate change risks to military installations, and integrating environmental justice into adjacent defense communities.

To learn more about environmental justice at DoD, please visit DoD's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known DoD offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Department of the Army

Department of the Navy

Department of the Air Force

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Defense's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Defense

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Defense in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Investigating Opportunities to Integrate Geospatial Information Systems and Related Tools

The DoD Climate Adaptation Plan recognizes the importance of environmental justice to progress the Department's climate adaptation goals. DoD’s Climate Action Team is using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) to analyze data about communities that have been historically disadvantaged and are near DoD installations. Results from these analyses will inform the agency’s environmental justice strategic planning and climate adaptation measures.

Learn more

Engaging with Local Communities in Alaska

In August 2023, the Department and several other federal agencies attended the Justice40rward Tour in Alaska, organized by non-governmental organizations. Discussion topics included military contamination, closing of Formerly Used Defense Sites, and Tribal consultation practices.

The Army’s Incorporation of Environmental Justice into Its Work

The Army integrates environmental justice considerations into several of its programs, while carrying out all legal obligations and advancing its mission. For example, the Army incorporates environmental justice considerations into the NEPA review process and documents. The Army’s environmental programs also ensure the equitable implementation of initiatives concerning clean air and water, pollution prevention, greenhouse gas reductions, carbon-pollution free electricity, clean transportation, and other environmental initiatives.

The Defense Logistics Agency’s Incorporation of Environmental Justice in Environmental Program Reviews

The Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Headquarters’ environmental program reviews include an assessment of how DLA host installations and other field activities implement environmental justice practices.

The Department of Air Force’s Instruction on Environmental Justice Screening Tools

The Department of the Air Force established an instruction discussing how individual installations can use environmental justice screening tools in their restoration activities.

DoD-Wide Efforts to Advance Environmental Justice

DoD is working across the Military Departments, Combatant Commands, and other Components to advance its environmental justice efforts. The Department is updating its Environmental Justice Strategic Plan. The updated DoD Environmental Justice Strategic Plan will focus on key Department goals, such as building community trust, strengthening engagement, and improving the Department’s capacity to conduct meaningful environmental justice work. The updated Environmental Justice Strategic Plan will be publicly available once finalized.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Defense has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Defense in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DoD and the Military Departments provide policies and guidance to address environmental justice. 32 CFR Part 651 includes the Army's policy. 32 CFR Part 775 contains the Department of the Navy’s policy. 32 CFR Part 989 includes the Department of the Air Force’s policy. Environmental justice is also accounted for in DoD’s NEPA processes. Each Military Department may issue additional policies and guidance, as needed and depending on operational and management needs. The Army incorporates environmental justice into its NEPA process, including the NEPA review, community outreach, and environmental assessments and environmental impact statement procedures. Further, the Department of the Navy and the Department of the Air Force memorialized environmental justice in their NEPA policies and guidance materials. The Defense Logistics Agency’s NEPA staff also uses available environmental justice tools to identify potentially impacted communities as part of the environmental review process.

Training

14 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

Over 400 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, Across the Military Departments, agency personnel have attended trainings that include discussions on environmental justice. Recent Army trainings have an increased focus on assessing the social costs of carbon emissions and relative climate impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns during Army’s NEPA reviews. In FY 2023, the Army hosted several trainings, including ones on environmental compliance, environmental justice, cultural resources, and Tribal consultations. Army personnel also attended Civil Engineer Corps Officers School (CECOS) trainings and the Advance Historic Preservation Course, which can cover environmental justice-related topics. Further, in May 2023, the Department of the Navy trained over 200 employees at the biennial Department of the Navy NEPA symposium held in San Diego, California. At the symposium, the Department of the Navy conducted several sessions on addressing environmental justice in the environmental planning process, shared best practices and lessons learned, and provided updates on the latest environmental justice guidance. Department of the Navy personnel also attended CECOS trainings and the Advance Historic Preservation Course, which can cover environmental justice-related topics. Over 200 Air Force personnel attended the 2023 Annual Air Force NEPA Workshop, which included environmental justice topics and discussions.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Defense on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DoD makes investments to ensure it meets and exceeds what is needed to assure compliance with applicable statutes. For example, the Army invests in and uses research and data collection efforts related to human and environmental health to support access to clean water and air and environmental justice for local communities, including disadvantaged communities. The Department of the Air Force also developed business rules and guidance to assist installation personnel in implementing environmental justice considerations in public engagement and planning activities.

Updating the Army’s 2021 Environmental Justice Policy

The Army is currently revising its January 19, 2021, Environmental Justice Policy. The updated policy will include references to guidance and best management practices and will consider how to address greenhouse gas emissions and other considerations in NEPA reviews. Further, various environmental programs advance environmental justice through the Army’s Environmental Safety and Occupational Health Program.

Army’s Innovative Reserve Component Support

The following documents support the Army’s Innovative Reserve Component in addressing community needs, as defined in the U.S. Code (U.S.C.): 10 U.S.C. § 2012 “Support and services for eligible organizations and activities outside Department of Defense;” DoD Directive 1100.20, “Support and Services for Eligible Organizations and Activities Outside the Department of Defense;” and 32 U.S.C. § 508, “Assistance for certain youth and charitable organizations.”

81st Readiness Division Protocols to Communicate with Tribal Government81st Readiness

Division Protocols to Communicate with Tribal Governments

On January 23, 2023, during Safety and Occupational Health Week, the 81st Readiness Division (RD) Environmental Division provided instruction on the proper protocols for communicating with Tribal governments. The RD also provided a lecture on laws and executive orders that shape the relationship between federal agencies and Federally Recognized Tribes. The 81st RD Environmental Division will continue to participate in safety week and provide instruction on Tribal outreach and consultation.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Defense in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DoD is committed to ensuring non-discrimination and civil rights protection with respect to its federal activities. For example, through existing policies, the Department of the Navy works with Tribal partners to provide access to treaty resources and to sites of religious and cultural importance. The Department of the Navy has managed public access programs on many installations, in line with public safety and security, to support access to important cultural sites, recreational opportunities, and subsistence resources.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Defense in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DoD partners with non-governmental organizations, local municipalities, and state agencies on land protection, natural resources management, climate resilience, and cleanup activities through the Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program, Sentinel Landscapes Partnerships, and many other conservation and/or preservation partnerships. For example, the Defense Logistics Agency’s Defense Supply Center in Columbus, Ohio was awarded funding to construct wetlands to improve water quality, reduce flooding and erosion risks, and create endangered and/or threatened species habitats. The Defense Logistics Agency anticipates the project will provide benefits to a downstream community that has been historically disadvantaged.

DoD is committed to increasing environmental and human health awareness in all communities, including working with environmental justice groups to determine community needs. For example, the Army’s Innovative Readiness Training Program trains Army National Guard and Reserve members to provide no-cost medical, dental, nutrition, behavioral, and other health services to eligible communities, including Federally Recognized Tribes. DoD has also historically integrated environmental justice in the NEPA review process. For example, the Department of the Navy shares information on major actions undergoing NEPA review through multiple sources, local media, libraries, and websites. The Department of the Navy also holds public scoping to hear from the public, including in communities with environmental justice concerns, on its actions. The Department of the Air Force engages with communities by sending letters, providing public listening sessions, and posting documents in languages other than English both online and in newspapers. The Defense Logistics Agency prepares environmental planning documents and uses the scoping process to solicit information from the public and potentially-impacted communities. The Defense Logistics Agency also uses local newspaper ads and places copies of the environmental planning documents in local libraries.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

24 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

Naval Air Station Fallon Small Business Training

In April 2023, Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon hosted a Native American-owned Small Business Training event. Attendees included representatives from two local Tribes, 10 local Native American-owned businesses, and the Human Resources & Native American Affairs Workforce. From this training, one company successfully applied for and was awarded a contract for a construction project on NAS Fallon.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

52 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Army’s Public Input Process under NEPA

Public input is crucial for the Army’s Restoration Program and informs remedy selections for removal and remedial actions. The Army uses and is strengthening its public input collection through the NEPA process, which may include environmental justice considerations.

Department of the Navy’s Intergovernmental Executive Committee

The Department of the Navy established an Intergovernmental Executive Committee (IEC) at Fallon, Nevada to exchange information related to natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The Department of the Navy is communicating and coordinating with the Department of the Interior, State of Nevada, six neighboring counties, and 17 Indian Tribes through the IEC.

Department of the Air Force’s Florida Panhandle and Carolina Optimized Remediation Contracts

Remedial Project Manager Community Engagement

The Department of the Air Force’s Remedial Project Managers (RPMs) inform communities of installation environmental restoration via questionnaires. The Department of the Air Force’s questionnaires ask about community interests, knowledge, and preferred communication methods. The Department of the Air Force’s RPMs also integrate questionnaire findings with the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool and the Environmental Protection Agency’s EJScreen into Community Involvement Plans.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Defense, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense issues several policies concerning consultations and interactions with Federally Recognized Tribes. The Military Departments may also issue their own policies and guidance. For example, the Army issued its “Army Policy Guidance for implementing American Indian and Alaska Native Policy” (July 10, 2014), to aid Army installations’ Tribal consultations and compliance with other Army and DoD policies and instructions. Additionally, the Department of the Navy addresses Tribal consultations through Secretary of the Navy Instruction 11010.14B, January 2019. The Department of the Air Force Instruction 90-2002 also discusses Tribal consultations within the Department of the Air Force. The Defense Logistics Agency also offers Federally Recognized Tribes consultation opportunities during the NEPA process.

623 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Army National Guard Consults with Tribal Communities

All 50 State Army National Guards (ARNGs) consult with Tribes, Natives Hawaiian Organizations, and/or Alaska Native Tribal Entities (Villages, Tribes, Communities). 37 traditional culture properties (e.g., places of cultural or spiritual significance to Federally Recognized Tribes) are distributed across six state ARNGs. ARNG has consulted on 312 activities with Tribal Nations. During FY 2023, Indiana ARNG’s consultation addressed the burial and repatriation of objects and ancestors associated with the Miami Tribe. After Tribal consultations in Pennsylvania, concerning the remains of 11 Native American children who died more than a century ago at a government-run Indian boarding school in Pennsylvania, ARNG will be repatriating the remains to their closest living relatives in fall 2024.

Office of Army Cemeteries Consultations

The Office of Army consulted 24 times with 17 Federally Recognized Tribes nationwide by hosting 24 meetings regarding the Carlisle Barracks Disinterment Project. 17 of the consultations were virtual and seven were hybrid meetings where individuals could participate in-person or virtually.

Department of the Navy’s and Department of the Air Force’s FY 2023 Tribal Consultations

In FY 2023, the Department of the Navy conducted 247 consultation and outreach efforts with 243 Federally Recognized Tribes on environmental and related matters. In FY 2023, the Department of the Air Force conducted 40 consultations that were related to environmental justice. The Department of the Air Force conducts Tribal Consultations for each NEPA environmental impact statement and environmental assessment as well as during Section 106 project reviews under the National Historic Preservation Act.

Over 287 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, the Army continues to take important steps to implement the policies and directives of Executive Order 13175, “Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments.” The Army has stable and enduring government-to-government relations with Federally Recognized Tribes and fully recognizes that the government-to-government relationship is based on the acknowledgement of Tribal sovereignty. The Army respects and takes into consideration the significance that both Federally Recognized Tribes and Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHOs) ascribe to cultural and natural resources when undertaking military readiness mission activities and when managing Army lands. The Army fully integrates the principles of meaningful consultation and communication with Federally Recognized Tribes and NHOs at all organizational levels, including staff officers and civilian officials. The Army considers the unique qualities of individual Federally Recognized Tribes and NHOs when applying these principles. The Army recognizes the importance of understanding and addressing the concerns of Federally Recognized Tribes prior to reaching decisions on matters that may affect Tribal rights, Tribal lands, or protected Tribal resources. The government-to-government relationship between the Army, as a representative of the United States, and Federally Recognized Tribes sustains the Army’s military readiness mission while minimizing effects on protected Tribal resources.

Training

25 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

Over 550 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, the Department of the Navy’s installations routinely provide training that includes topics related to the histories, cultures, and interests of local Tribes and Native Hawaiian communities to all new staff, both military and civilian, as well as to units using installation training ranges. The Department of the Air Force’s training includes information on compliance with DoD Instruction 4710.02 and Department of the Air Force Instruction 90-2002, the purpose and legal framework for Tribal Consultations, and best practices for government-to-government relationship building.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Defense including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The Military Departments may advance environmental justice institutionally through their own methods. The Army is advancing environmental justice through best management practices designed to guide activities that promote environmental justice and environmental stewardship. The Army has identified opportunities to advance environmental justice by integrating it in NEPA documentation, Environmental Restoration Activities, Master Planning, Program Management, community involvement plans, restoration advisory boards, Strategic Planning documents, and the Army’s Climate Strategy. The Department of the Navy has traditionally addressed environmental justice through its NEPA procedures. The Department of the Air Force institutionalizes environmental justice in its Environmental Restoration Program via Business Rules. The Department of the Air Force’s Business Rules provide best practices for the Department of the Air Force installation personnel to conduct public outreach, develop communication techniques, use various media platforms, and ensure inequities are mitigated as much as possible during Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) cleanup activities. The Department of the Air Force is also updating its NEPA environmental justice guidance.

642 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

1 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

24 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 1,048 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, environmental justice training is incorporated into existing NEPA, Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act trainings. DoD Component-specific trainings may also improve military personnel’s ability to use environmental justice screening tools to identify communities with environmental justice concerns.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Army National Guard Updated NEPA Handbook

In December 2023, the Army National Guard updated its NEPA Handbook to include environmental justice analysis guidance and the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Department of the Air Force Action Officer Environmental Justice Working Panel

The Department of the Air Force established an internal Action Officer panel to improve coordination and guidance on environmental justice issues.

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

3 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

DoD Tribal Engagement Guidebook

Released in July 2023, the DoD Tribal Engagement Guidebook assists DoD personnel while engaging with Federally Recognized Tribes. Specifically, the Guidebook offers methods to establishing and maintaining relationships, consistency in engagement methods, and effective management strategies of Tribal resources on DoD-managed lands.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

Over 14 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

DoD participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC). President Biden established the IAC in 2021 and expanded it in 2023 through executive orders focused on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. DoD also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 as provided by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. DoD and the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) Federal Facilities Superfund program piloted a systematic process to integrate environmental justice considerations into federal facilities Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act investigations. The team included representatives from: Three military bases (i.e., Tobyhanna Army Depot, Dover Air Force Base and Naval Station Norfolk); Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Virginia; and EPA Headquarters and Region 3 staff. In summer 2023, DoD and the EPA published the Environmental Justice Pilot Report summarizing the outcome of the collaborative project, along with two short guides explaining a six-step process for incorporating environmental justice considerations and available tools for planning and screening. Year 2 of the project will focus on developing targeted outreach strategies at these sites.

The Department of Defense worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Military Department’s Coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency’s Federal Facilities Superfund Program

The Military Departments and the Environmental Protection Agency’s Federal Facilities Superfund program piloted a systematic process to integrate environmental justice considerations into federal facilities Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act investigations.

Department of the Air Force’s Collaboration with the Environmental Protection Agency’s Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office

The Department of the Air Force’s Environmental Restoration personnel collaborate with the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) environmental justice personnel in the Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office to advance environmental justice goals and mitigate inequalities.

Environmental Justice in the Department of the Air Force Environmental Restoration Program

Efforts to institutionalize environmental justice in the Department of the Air Force’s Environmental Restoration Program include: 1) Integrating recommendations to identify communities with environmental justice concerns that may be disproportionately impacted by Department of the Air Force actions using available tools. 2) Analyzing needs and/or gaps pertaining to both community engagement and protection. 3) Identifying ways to improve engagement and refine the Department of the Air Force’s understanding of potential risks and disproportionate impacts so that they can be addressed through cleanup actions. 4) Compiling suggestions on how to document environmental justice implementation within the existing CERCLA framework.

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**Department of Education**

Agency logo

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https://www.ed.gov/

infrastructureandsustainability@ed.gov

Department of Education

20 office(s), 25 location(s), and 4,262 employees in Fiscal Year 2023

The Department of Education’s (ED or the Department) mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

ED is committed to promoting equitable access to healthy, safe, sustainable, 21st century learning environments and environmental sustainability learning. ED promotes school infrastructure and sustainability through multiple communications and outreach tools designed to share best practices and connect schools with partnerships and resources; new grant programs; and a longstanding recognition award for whole school sustainability.

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Education's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Education

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Education in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Implementation of the Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools

The Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools is the agency’s signature framework to support schools in (1) reducing their environmental impacts and costs; (2) improving the health and wellness of students and staff; and (3) increasing access to effective environmental and sustainability education. More than 50% of the over 760 schools, districts, and/or postsecondary institutions named since 2012 have been in under-resourced communities.

Learn more

Launch of the ED Infrastructure and Sustainability Initiative

ED’s Infrastructure and Sustainability Initiative promotes equitable access to healthy, safe, sustainable, 21st century school facilities, and environmental sustainability education, using meaningful engagement tools and communication to increase awareness of federal resources.

Learn more

Cultivation of Intentional Partnerships to Share Resources for Schools

Culminating in a White House Summit for Sustainable and Healthy Schools, held in April 2024 with critical work occurring in FY 2023, ED is now working more closely than ever before with colleagues at the White House, Department of Energy, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and other agencies to help communicate in plain language federal Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and other school facilities-related grant programs, tax credits, and resources that stand to advance equitable access to healthy, safe, sustainable, and modern schools. For example, ED works with EPA to communicate available resources for healthy water and clean air in schools.

Learn more

Gen180 Clean Energy Schools Symposium

ED Deputy Secretary Cindy Marten delivered a keynote address about infrastructure and sustainability, with an emphasis on clean energy in schools, to school decision-makers from 38 school districts across 16 states. These school decision-makers, having switched to clean energy in their own school communities, are supporting other schools around the country to do the same and received professional development to deepen their expertise and knowledge on how to take advantage of federal funding opportunities to support clean energy changes.

School Infrastructure Programs

Agency logo

ED now oversees two new School Infrastructure Programs to increase the capacity of states to support high-need Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) and schools in leveraging other available federal, state, and local resources to improve school facilities and environments through public school infrastructure improvements to ensure that their public school facilities are safe, healthy, sustainable, and equitable learning environments for all students.

Learn more

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Education in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

ED collaborates with numerous national non-profits to promote resources that support environmental justice and equitable access to healthy, sustainable schools and environmental education.

ED shares resources, programs, webinars, and opportunities related to these areas through its monthly newsletter, with distribution of approximately 65,000, and the Green Strides School Sustainability Resource Hub.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

For more information on the Department of Education’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.greenstrides.org

2023 Green Schools Conference

At the 2023 Green Schools Conference, ED offered multiple presentations on how to get involved with Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

Over 25 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council

Staff from ED attended the White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council (WHEJAC) public meeting in June 2023 and answered questions about the role of ED in environmental justice.

Electric School Bus Initiative Advisory Council

On May 25, 2023, ED joined a meeting of the Electric School Bus Initiative Advisory Council and addressed advisory council questions about the role of ED in electric school bus programming.

Participation in Public Meetings and Events

ED participates in meetings, conferences, and other events that center equitable access to sustainable schools and environmental learning. These range from presentations with the National Association of State Boards of Education to health symposiums.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Education, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

ED’s Consultation and Coordination with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal Governments policy allows for Tribes to request that ED consult on a specific program policy.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Education including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

ED intends to provide information on how the agency is advancing environmental justice as part of its mission when it releases its new Environmental Justice Strategic Plan, as directed by Executive Order 14096. For example, as part of its commitment to advance environmental justice, ED works to expand equitable access to healthy, safe, sustainable, and educationally appropriate school physical environments for all students.

1 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

2 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

Several tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Green Strides School Sustainability Resource Hub

The Green Strides School Sustainability Resource Hub is a website that is available for schools to access free resources on healthy, safe, sustainable, 21st learning environments and environmental sustainability education. Resources and webinars on the website are aligned with the three Pillars of the Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) recognition award. The Green Strides School Sustainability Resource Hub is made possible through a partnership between ED Infrastructure and Sustainability and the Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council.

Learn more

ED Infrastructure and Sustainability News

ED’s Infrastructure and Sustainability News is a monthly roundup of news, resources, webinars, and inspiring examples of healthy, sustainable, modern schools and environmental learning.

Learn more

National Center for School Infrastructure

The National Center for School Infrastructure, one of two new School Infrastructure Programs, will serve as a resource for equitable access to healthy, sustainable, modern learning environments.

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

1 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

Partnerships and Collaborations with Federal Agencies to Benefit Schools

ED is working more closely than ever before with colleagues at the White House, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Energy, and other agencies to help communicate in plain language federal Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and other school facilities related grant programs, tax credits, and resources that stand to advance equitable access to healthy, safe, sustainable, modern schools.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

ED is a leader in an interagency group focused on school infrastructure that includes other federal agency partners such as the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy. This White House Climate Policy Office-led effort supported the development of the first-ever White House Summit for Sustainable and Healthy Schools, held in April 2024 with critical work occurring in FY 2023, as well as a new federal toolkit for healthy, sustainable school infrastructure. Over 90 students, teachers, advocates, school leaders, facilities and grounds experts, and labor leaders joined the agencies to discuss the deployment of unprecedented levels of federal funding available for school infrastructure, clean energy, and healthy schools. The agencies also had the opportunity to hear from these stakeholders in focus groups on how to strengthen the deployment of these resources.

The Department of Education worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Collaborative Presentations with Federal Agency Partners

ED has presented at various public events with the Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy regarding healthy, sustainable school infrastructure, including at an American Institute of Architects and the K-12 Facilities Forum.

Agency logo

Photo credit: Provided to ED by Rio School District

Highlighting Environmental Justice

ED’s Infrastructure and Sustainability Initiative has led innovative communications and outreach as well as meaningful public engagement to address areas affecting environmental justice where ED has grant funding and authority. This includes an annual recognition award centered on school sustainability; a call for private sector commitments on school infrastructure and sustainability; public listening sessions on a variety of related topics; and a nearly annual sustainable schools media tour under different related themes, including equity.

Learn more

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**Department of Energy**

Agency logo

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Department of Energy

The mission of the Department of Energy (DOE) is to ensure America’s security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental, and nuclear challenges through transformative science and technology solutions.

Additionally, the Department is also weaving energy and environmental justice into the fabric of its energy system and operations via departmental offices, programs, and policies. DOE approaches energy justice through the lens of four concepts: recognition, procedural, distributive, and restorative justice.

To learn more about environmental justice at DOE, please visit DOE's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known DOE offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Office of Energy Justice and Equity

Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy

Office of State and Community Energy Programs

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Energy's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Energy

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Energy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Decrease Energy Burden in Disadvantaged Communities: DOE Energy Justice Policy Priority #1

DOE seeks to reduce the energy burden for people in disadvantaged communities through initiatives like the Home Energy Rebates. In FY 2023, this program required states to reserve 40% to 50% of the $8.8 billion in rebates for low-income households and provided a $200 incentive for contractors to serve disadvantaged communities. In December 2022, DOE also launched the American-Made Equitable and Affordable Solutions to Electrification Prize. This initiative awards projects that make home electrification simpler, faster, and more affordable for homeowners across diverse communities and all housing types.

Learn more

Increase Access to Low-Cost Capital in Disadvantaged Communities: DOE Energy Justice Policy Priority #4

The Twin Cities Electric Vehicle Community Mobility Network provided access to low-cost capital and created an electrified public car-sharing program, with emphasis on expanding car-sharing access for multifamily housing complexes in disadvantaged communities. In FY 2023, this project deployed 150 electric vehicles (EVs), 59 Level 2 EV chargers, and five fast charging EV stations. Then, in September 2023, Sunnova Inc.’s Project Hestia (supported by DOE’s Loan Programs Office) began providing loans for clean energy systems for about 100,000 homeowners throughout the United States, including Puerto Rico. This project targets at least 20% of loans to customers with FICO credit scores below 680. Additionally, in FY 2023, the American-Made Community Power Accelerator Prize provided $10 million to address early-stage access to capital for equitable community solar projects.

Learn more

Increase Clean Energy Enterprise Creation and Contracting (MBE/DBE) in Disadvantaged Communities: DOE Energy Justice Policy Priority #5

The Black Owners of Solar Services received a $6.3 million award from DOE in February 2023 to support enterprise creation and train local business-owners in the solar climate resilience and clean energy sectors. Additionally, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) provides awards to small businesses, including those in disadvantaged communities, and increases awareness of funding opportunities for those businesses. OSDBU had several accomplishments in FY 2023.

Learn more

Increase Clean Energy Jobs, Job Pipeline, and Job Training for Individuals from Disadvantaged Communities: DOE Energy Justice Policy Priority #6

The Advancing Equity Through Workforce Partnerships Program facilitates the rapid deployment of solar energy technologies and supports an inclusive workforce with opportunities for union membership. DOE announced 12 selected projects in June 2023 that will enable more members of disadvantaged communities and other communities with environmental justice concerns to pursue careers in the solar industry. The FY 2023 Ride and Drive program supports projects across 16 states and the District of Columbia to bolster America’s electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Seven of the selected projects are focused on improving access to related jobs for disadvantaged communities through new jobs and training resources. In addition, Reaching a New Energy Sciences Workforce (RENEW) awarded funding to 65 institutions across the United States in August 2023, 40 of which are minority-serving institutions. These investments will diversify the expertise and leadership in the physical, biological, and computational sciences to provide America’s best and brightest students with environmental justice experience and increased pathways to STEM fields and jobs.

Learn more

Increase Energy Resiliency in Disadvantaged Communities: DOE Energy Justice Policy Priority #7

Energy resiliency initiatives at DOE include the Onsite Technical Assistance Partnerships Program, which contributed to maintained operations during grid outages in Puerto Rico caused by Hurricane Fiona in 2022. In July 2023, an award for Resilient Distribution Systems for Underserved and Indigenous Community Microgrids (UICM) was announced. This effort supports replicable microgrid solutions to ensure that low-cost reliable, resilient, clean energy is available in low-income, energy-burdened communities as well as Tribal and Indigenous communities that have been underserved. The Grid Deployment Office at DOE also provides grid resilience assistance, and in FY 2023 assisted Alaska with snow removal equipment as the most effective form of grid resilience to maintain their wind power operations during snowstorms.

Learn more

Energy Justice to the People Roadshow

Photo credit: DOE Public Affairs

Agency logo

DOE offices visited three locations in the Gulf Coast and Southeastern United States as part of the “Energy Justice to the People Roadshow.” These visits helped to support and engage with disadvantaged and frontline communities related to energy security. DOE hosted a series of funding opportunity workshops, community benefits planning activities, and community listening sessions. These events brought together industry leaders, local governments, community stakeholders, and local businesses. This engagement was a concerted effort to meet communities where they are, understand their needs and concerns, and to discuss solutions. One of the visits included a celebration for the opening of a solar/battery resiliency hub in Louisiana.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Energy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DOE has eight policy priorities to guide the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative that can be viewed on DOE’s Justice40 Initiative webpage and through its Justice40 Initiative Fact Sheet. These policy priorities are: (1) decrease energy burden in disadvantaged communities; (2) decrease environmental exposure and burdens for disadvantaged communities; (3) increase parity in clean energy technology (e.g., solar, storage) access and adoption in disadvantaged communities; (4) increase access to low-cost capital in disadvantaged communities; (5) increase clean energy enterprise creation and contracting (MBE/DBE) in disadvantaged communities; (6) increase clean energy jobs, job pipeline, and job training for individuals from disadvantaged communities; (7) increase energy resiliency in disadvantaged communities; and (8) increase energy democracy in disadvantaged communities.

DOE requires Community Benefits Plans (CBPs) as part of most Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act funding opportunity announcements, which are based on a set of four core policy priorities: (1) engaging communities and labor; (2) investing in quality jobs; (3) advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility; and (4) implementing the Justice40 Initiative. In June 2023, DOE held a CBP 101 Webinar that was recorded and posted on DOE’s CBP webpage. Some project applicants have made their CBPs public such as those for these battery materials processing and manufacturing projects.

For more information on DOE's Justice40 covered programs, please contact energyjustice@hq.doe.govLaunch

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Energy has:

167 Justice40 covered program(s), including 88 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, DOE has:

Approximately $92 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, DOE is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 167 covered program(s) at DOE working to deliver benefits for communities include:

43 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

119 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

20 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

16 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

38 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

24 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

5 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Energy is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Community Geothermal Initiative

The Community Geothermal Heating and Cooling Design and Deployment Program is a Justice40 covered program under the Geothermal Technologies Office. This program supports the formation of U.S.-based community coalitions that will develop, design, and install geothermal heating and cooling systems to supply at least 25% of the heating and cooling load in disadvantaged communities. 11 projects were selected in April 2023 for the first phase of the program. Identifying and addressing environmental justice concerns is a key focus for each of the projects.

Learn more

Bio-Optimized Technologies to Keep Thermoplastics out of Landfills and the Environment (BOTTLE) Consortium

The Bio-Optimized Technologies to Keep Thermoplastics out of Landfills and the Environment (BOTTLE) Consortium, funded by the Bioenergy Technologies Office Justice40 covered program for FY 2023, includes the development of a worksheet to stimulate thinking around environmental justice considerations. It also guides the usage of materials that have environmentally toxic and/or socially detrimental impacts. Designing processes that consider alternatives or minimize certain materials can benefit disadvantaged communities.

Industrial Assessment Centers

The Industrial Assessment Centers (IACs) program provides no-cost assessments and recommendations to small- and medium-sized manufacturers (SMMs) on energy efficiency, productivity, sustainability, and competitiveness, while simultaneously training the next generation of energy-savvy professionals. The program targets SMMs located within disadvantaged communities, as well as projects that strengthen outreach and access for local educational institutions, including minority-serving institutions. DOE began considering applications for the first round of IAC Implementation Grants in FY 2023.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Energy has:

Over 100 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

Over $10 billion available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Advanced Cybersecurity Technology 1 Prize

Under the Rural and Municipal Utility Cybersecurity Justice40 covered program, this three-phase competition empowers rural and municipal utilities to implement solutions that improve their cybersecurity posture. Phase 1 opened in August 2023. In FY 2024, winners will receive cash prizes and technical assistance towards investments in workforce, governance, and cybersecurity tools and technologies.

Learn more

Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land

The Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Land, a Justice40 covered program, seeks to deploy clean energy projects across the 1.5 million acres of mine land across the nation while preserving natural and agricultural environments. The program encourages community ownership models and community and workforce agreements, in addition to requiring meaningful community and labor engagement, to provide economic development and new job opportunities for communities that have been affected by coal mines, including many disadvantaged communities. The funding announcement for this program was released in April 2023.

Learn more

R-STEP: Renewable Energy Siting through Technical Engagement and Planning

In September 2023, under the Solar Energy Technologies Office Justice40 covered program, DOE opened R-STEP applications. The goal for R-STEP is for state-based collaboratives to provide technical assistance and other resources to rural communities, Tribes, and others to improve planning and permitting processes for large-scale renewable energy facilities. This will enable disadvantaged communities to improve environmental and economic outcomes from hosting large-scale renewable energy

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Energy made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Modified Tribal Consortium Applications for Grid Resilience State & Tribal Formula Grants

The Grid Deployment Office oversees the Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid / Hazard Hardening Justice40 covered program. Under that program, modifications were made to its State & Tribal Formula Grants Program based on feedback received during the FY 2023 application season from Tribes, including Alaska Native Villages and Alaska Native Corporations. The resulting changes include enabling Tribal consortium applications from smaller Tribes so that they are able to take full advantage of available funding.

Learn more

Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas

In FY 2023, the Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations (OCED) made the $50 million fixed award grant funding opportunity for the Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas available in English and Spanish and shared information in both languages in-person and online. To improve accessibility and limit capacity requirements for applicants, OCED simplified the application process with a short-answer pre-application and a shortened full application.

Learn more

Manufacturing Ecosystem Track of the Community Energy Innovation Prize

Under the Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies Office (AMMTO), AMMTO sponsors the Manufacturing Ecosystems Track to support the equitable and inclusive advancement of the clean energy manufacturing innovation ecosystem by strengthening relationships and partnerships with organizations that advance community-led solutions. Learning from a prior community-focused prize, the Community Energy Innovation Prize, launched in August 2023, kept its application period open for more than five months. The prize was also designed so that all ten of the teams were eligible to move through all three phases of the prize, creating less competition and promoting collaboration.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Energy is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Ohio’s First Net-Zero Neighborhood: American Addition

The Ohio Department of Development and IMPACT Community Action are combining DOE Weatherization Assistance Program funding to establish Ohio’s inaugural net-zero energy neighborhood. This neighborhood is called “American Addition,” and it is the first net-zero energy disadvantaged community in the nation. This initiative aims to conduct comprehensive energy efficiency renovations on 60 historical homes in that have not been modernized for many years.

Learn more

Consent-Based Siting for Interim Nuclear Storage Program

Under the Fuel Cycle Research and Development Justice40 covered program, DOE awarded $26 million in June 2023 to 13 groups of university, non-profit, and private-sector partners that will work with communities using DOE’s consent-based siting approach to storing and disposing of spent nuclear fuel. DOE and the consent-based siting consortia work together to build equity and environmental justice principles into the engagement processes. This funding opportunity was designed to be more accessible to disadvantaged communities and to serve needs more holistically by enabling mechanisms that provide subawards to communities and organizations.

Learn more

DOE’s Four Power Marketing Administrations Continue to Provide “At Cost” (Not-for-Profit) Power to Millions of People

The Bonneville Power Administration, the Southeastern Power Administration, the Southwestern Power Administration, and the Western Area Power Administration serve millions of customers wholesale hydropower-based electricity. A large portion of these customers are in rural territories or Tribal areas at or below national poverty levels.

Justice Week 2023: Equity Empowered

Photo credit: DOE Public Affairs

Members of DOE who participated in or helped plan Justice Week 2023

Held in October 2023, with planning occurring in FY 2023, Justice Week 2023: Equity Empowered was the second annual event dedicated to convening internal and external stakeholders to advance environmental justice and tackle the climate crisis through equity-centered solutions, including the implementation of the Biden-Harris Administration’s Justice40 Initiative. The agenda for Justice Week 2023 included keynotes by DOE senior leaders, panel discussions with equity and justice organizations, community engagement sessions, and much more. The event focused on highlighting DOE’s efforts to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and provided a platform for communities across the country to share their experiences with DOE programs and initiatives. Each day drew over 500 in-person and virtual participants.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Energy has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Energy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

As part of its NEPA process, DOE identifies and seeks input from communities with environmental justice concerns to inform the preparation of DOE NEPA documents. Of the environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs) that DOE completed in FY 2023, five EAs and two EISs identified nearby communities with environmental justice concerns and analyzed potential impacts to these communities, consistent with NEPA and the CEQ regulations.

Training

4 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

368 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, during one training, DOE NEPA Office staff discussed the use of the scoping process to identify potentially affected communities and shared recommendations for providing early notice of opportunities for public engagement. The training also recommended providing opportunities for engagement of disadvantaged communities and communities with environmental justice concerns early in the project scoping and planning process to understand unique risks and concerns. The training noted that the NEPA documents should identify and analyze reasonably foreseeable effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or minimize any such effects.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Energy on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOE evaluates the potential impact to communities with environmental justice concerns in projects under NEPA review. In addition, DOE encourages early engagement with stakeholders and potentially affected communities during the scoping and project planning process. Further, DOE identifies the best management practices and measures to minimize, avoid, or mitigate potential impacts to human health or the environment in DOE NEPA documents, including potential impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns.

Minimizing Environmental Impacts of Component Manufacturing

In April 2023, DOE issues a $750 million solicitation for electrolyzer and fuel cell manufacturing research and development to encourage manufacturing processes that mitigate environmental health impacts. Examples include prioritizing environment, health, and safety in the manufacturing, installation, operation, and disposal/recyclability of fuel cell components and systems, as well as encouraging designs and processes that minimize potential hydrogen leaks or other harmful emissions.

Removal of 1.3 Million Pounds of Hazardous Refrigerant from the Paducah, Kentucky Site

In FY 2023, DOE completed the safe and successful disposal of approximately 1.3 million pounds of R-114 refrigerant, an environmental hazard stored at the site. This removal equates to taking about 10,000 vehicles off the road each year. This reduction in greenhouse gas emissions directly or indirectly affects the health of certain communities and populations that are more vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Long-Term Stewardship Program

In FY 2023, the Long-Term Stewardship program benefitted surrounding communities and Tribal Nations, including disadvantaged communities, limiting exposure from residual legacy contamination at four sites – Pantex, Sandia National Laboratories, the Y-12 Plant, and Kansas City/Former Bannister Federal Complex.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Energy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, DOE began work to create a new Language Assistance Plan for limited English proficiency (LEP) individuals to advance the goal of meaningful involvement. For further information on DOE and LEP, please visit DOE’s Limited English Proficiency website.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Energy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOE’s Office of Civil Rights is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with Title VI, investigating Title VI-related complaints, and providing technical assistance to recipients of Department of Energy financial assistance.

1 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

Training

1 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

40 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Energy in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Many DOE offices engage with external partners. For example, there is work to deepen relationships and trust between hydropower and river stakeholders to better incorporate community priorities in hydropower research and development activities. DOE has also convened decision-makers and senior leadership from across sectors to inform an action plan or offshore wind transmission development in the U.S. Atlantic region. These convenings hosted 879 unique attendees representing 443 unique organizations, which included nonprofit and state officials who represented local community and Tribal interests. Among other offices, DOE’s Office of State and Community Energy Programs includes environmental justice in much of its outreach and engagement activities.

DOE offices are creating ways to improve access to information for communities, such as the National Energy and Water Treatment Speciation Database. This database is a first-of-its kind digital tool to provide national access to water characterization data and to support water treatment for beneficial reuse, critical mineral recovery, and pollution abatement in communities with a legacy of fossil energy dependence. Other DOE efforts include the Office of Legacy Management’s Community Leaders Institutes and Technical Assistance Workshops, which helps communities with “how to” skills such as grant writing and how to participate in federal decision-making processes. The Energy Transitions Initiative and Partnership Project (ETIPP), which advances self-reliant island and remote communities through the development of resilient energy systems, held its first-ever ETIPP annual meeting – bringing together 24 communities from Cohorts 1 and 2 at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

189 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

Energy Storage for Social Equity Technical Workshops

Between November 2022 and March 2023, DOE held three Energy Storage for Social Equity technical workshops on microgrid planning and design, battery safety, and sizing software. In addition, DOE invited communities to participate in panels, touchpoints, and visits with DOE and generally compensated them for their involvement.

Learn more

NEPA and Historic Preservation Training for the Public

In October 2022, DOE members participated in a training webinar for the public hosted by the National Association for State Community Services Programs about important updates on the National Environmental Policy Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, in particular as it relates to the Weatherization Assistance Program.

Learn more

Application Assistance Workshops for Teachers and Scientists

Attendees of the Application Assistance workshops learned strategies to submit a compliant and competitive application and got their questions answered. Participants were also able to tune into the Alumni Workshop, where they heard stories from alumni about their internship experience.

Learn more

Public Processes (show more/show less)

157 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Interconnection Innovation e-Xchange

In FY 2023, DOE’s Interconnection Innovation e-Xchange (i2X) designed a series of virtual meetings in five topical “Solution e-Xchanges” to facilitate open dialogue among diverse stakeholders across the United States. One of the topical areas was Equity and Energy Justice. Feedback will be incorporated in the i2X Transmission Interconnection Roadmap.

Learn more

Provider of Choice Public Workshops

On numerous occasions in FY 2023, public meetings were held in-person and virtually throughout the Pacific Northwest on the Provider of Choice draft policy direction. Provider of Choice will lead to long-term power sales contracts related to the long-term certainty of carbon-free power from the Federal Columbia River Power System for the next 20-year term following expiration of the existing contracts in 2028.

Learn more

Wind Energy Equity Engagement Series

In FY 2023, DOE held three community listening sessions for community members to discuss their experiences and share ways to make wind energy more equitable. DOE received feedback that participants appreciated the workshops, with some expressing that they had not felt heard before the series. The final report summarized all three sessions and was shared with community organizations to promote learning across regions.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Energy, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

During FY 2023, DOE continued working to update both the DOE Order 144.1, the DOE American Indian Tribal Government Interactions and Policy. The Policy sets forth principles for DOE to follow to ensure effective government-to-government relationships with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal governments. The Order lays out responsibilities for DOE staff and contractors to meet the agency’s obligations for interacting with Tribal governments. The 2009 Order focused on DOE communication with Tribes at sites and facilities, and on transportation issues.

5 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Inflation Reduction Act Tribal Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates Consultation

The Tribal Consultation on Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates in March 2023 informed DOE on how to make home energy rebates under the Inflation Reduction Act more meaningful and accessible to Tribal Nations. DOE spent time consulting with Tribes and federal agencies on how to structure the program to take equity, supply chain access, and workforce issues into consideration.

Rattlesnake Mountain Sacred Site Tribal Consultation

In June 2023 DOE held a consultation on the management of “Laliik” or Rattlesnake Mountain with the Confederated Tribes of Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, Yakama Nation, and the Wanapum Band of Indians took place in June 2023. While Rattlesnake Mountain is a DOE property, it is managed by the Department of the Interior’s (DOI) Fish and Wildlife Service. The partnership between DOI and DOE fostered a memorandum of understanding between the agencies and conversations about increased Tribal access to this sacred mountain.

Strategic Uranium Reserve Consultation with Ute Mountain Ute Tribe

DOE participated in an interagency consultation among the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), DOI’s Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the State of Utah to increase transparency around current activity at the White Mesa Uranium Mill, which is of concern to the local Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. This consultation led to improved notification and consultation guidelines being established at DOE when making awards impacting Tribes.

244 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, many of DOE’s offices have active partnerships, cooperative agreements, or memorandums of understanding with specific Tribal groups. Many offices have participated in listening sessions or hosted workshops to build capacity or provide technical assistance. For example, in FY 2023, DOE held a first-of-its-kind workshop to discuss how to protect and preserve sacred sites. DOE hosted the Tribal Clean Energy Summit and attended the Reservation Economic Summit, the National Congress of American Indians, and several other conferences. In addition, DOE offices partnered with other agencies and the White House Council on Native American Affairs to host an Indian Energy Purchase Preference Listening Session on May 18, 2023, which established a pathway for Tribal power preference inquiries. The goal of the listening session was to gain important insight directly from Tribes, Tribally-owned businesses, Tribal utilities, and Tribal entrepreneurs regarding any interest, availability, development, or challenges associated with generating and selling electricity to the federal government using the Purchase Preference.

Training

Numerous agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

Approximately 500 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and

Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, over 300 staff have viewed the virtual, on-demand DOE Indian Country Education and Tribal Consultation Training since April 2023. The trainings orient new staff to the overall agency responsibility to Tribes consistent with DOE’s Policy and Order 144.1 and DOE’s particular responsibilities to support Tribes in their energy planning, infrastructure development and execution, and overall energy needs. Several DOE offices also provide tailored training on Tribal Consultation, including: (1) onboarding training for new federal and contractor employees; (2) cultural awareness training – particularly for DOE site offices that regularly engage with Tribes near that location – to introduce employees to Tribal perspectives, cultural sensitivity, and the importance of timely and consistent communication; and (3) training on specific topics like sacred sites.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Energy including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DOE is taking steps to institutionalize environmental justice in a variety of ways. In FY 2023, DOE released an Environmental Justice Implementation Progress Report. The Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy’s (EERE) hosts the “Energy Equity and Environmental Justice Tiger Team,” with representatives from each of EERE’s 11 technical offices. The team advises EERE tech offices on incorporating energy equity and environmental justice in their programs and funding opportunities and provides guidance and training in these areas. DOE’s Loan Programs Office expanded many resources. The Office of Nuclear Energy also established the Office of Communications and Engagement, which is working to advance environmental and energy justice, and supports a cohesive approach to community, Tribal, and stakeholder engagement.

566 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

21 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

137 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 1,000 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, in September 2023, DOE’s Vehicle Technologies Office within the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) held an in-person training for the Clean Cities Energy and Environmental Justice Initiative in Denver, Colorado, featuring a site visit to a local mobility hub located in a disadvantaged community. Participants had the opportunity to see e-bike and electric shuttle bus infrastructure “in action” and heard from a panel of local residents about how the project was conceived and developed according to community needs. This training helped 17 newly hired Community Engagement Liaisons to further develop project management and community engagement skills, which they used to complete outlines of similar projects that they could perform in their own communities.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Community Benefits Plan Templates Published

In FY 2023, Community Benefits Plan (CBP) templates were published to aid applicants of DOE funding that required a CBP as part of the submission. These templates have since been updated and are available through DOE’s CBP website. CBPs support advancing environmental justice through the Justice40 Initiative.

Learn more

Equity Action Plan Update

In FY 2023, DOE worked on updating its Equity Action Plan. The first Equity Action Plan featured how DOE is addressing environmental justice through the Justice40 Initiative and Executive Orders 13985 and 14008. Updates to the plan feature five new priority strategies of: (1) establishing a DOE-wide Community Benefits Plan framework; (2) updating the Merit Review program to facilitate equitable outcomes; (3) increasing access to procurement opportunities for new entrants and disadvantaged businesses; (4) integrating justice considerations into R&D programs; and (5) developing an agency-wide framework to work with Tribal and disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Leveraging Existing Site Environmental Management Systems to Address Environmental Justice

In September 2023, the Office of Environment, Health, Safety and Security issued instructions for addressing environmental justice and disadvantaged communities in site Environmental Management Systems to fulfill the requirements of DOE Order 436.1A, Departmental Sustainability.

Learn more

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the Department of Energy has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy23osti/85259.pdf

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

Over 60 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Justice40 Tool

The Justice40 tool was developed by the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and DOE. A methods paper about the tool was published in 2022 and the tool itself was made public in FY 2023. The goal of the tool is to offer decision makers an optimal portfolio of policy interventions that explicitly mitigate energy insecurity of a user-defined population by reducing its energy burden. DOE plans to add a layer for the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool next.

Learn more

Energy Communities Interagency Working Group Site Review Tool

This tool, developed in part by DOE in FY 2023, is a resource for manufacturers and investors interested in developing or expanding clean energy manufacturing projects in energy communities and nationwide. The interactive map provides access to publicly available information on facilities, nearby infrastructure, and community attributes, including energy community census tracts.

Learn more

Program Capacity Dashboards: Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program

The program capacity dashboard for the Low-Income Communities Bonus Credit Program, developed by DOE in FY 2023, illustrates the capacity remaining within each eligibility category for the program. The four eligibility categories are: (1) located in a low-income community, (2) located on Indian Land, (3) qualified low-income residential building project, and (4) qualified low-income economic benefit project. Please note that the information in the dashboard table is dynamic and changes as DOE verifies information provided by applicants, applicants update their application information, applicants withdraw applications, and as DOE and IRS process applications.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

8 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

20 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

Indian Country Energy and Infrastructure Working Group

The Indian Country Energy and Infrastructure Working Group (ICEIWG) was established in 2011 by DOE to evaluate Tribal experiences of the challenges and opportunities for energy infrastructure, development, and expanded capacity through enhanced DOE decisions on policy. In 2023, the group wrote Energy Secretary Granholm about the need to support capacity within Tribal governments to pursue energy projects. This has increased participation of Tribes in the Clean Energy Innovator Fellowship Program, and continued investigation into new program development.

Learn more

Arctic Energy Ambassadors Program

Originally, DOE limited its Arctic Energy Ambassadors Program to Tribal stakeholders. In FY 2023, DOE’s Arctic Energy Office reinvigorated the Arctic Energy Ambassadors Program to include all Alaska stakeholders and develop a network of energy leaders to help move the state towards sustainable and impactful projects that could be supported by DOE programs or other funding sources, such as other federal agencies, the State of Alaska, or private sector partners.

Learn more

The Office of Environmental Management Site-Specific Advisory Board Related to Cleanup Efforts

DOE created the Site-Specific Advisory Board (SSAB) to involve Tribes and stakeholders more directly in DOE cleanup decisions. When communities share their opinions by becoming involved in environmental cleanup discussions, federal decision-making and cleanup activities are improved. Public input helps DOE make decisions that are cost-effective, community-specific, and environmentally sound, which leads to faster and safer environmental cleanups. The SSAB held 32 meetings in 2023 to discuss EM cleanup topics.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

DOE participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. DOE also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. DOE also participates in the White House Council on Native American Affairs (WHCNAA).

The Department of Energy worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

The Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers

In partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency, DOE helped launch the Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (TCTACs), a network of technical assistance centers designed to remove barriers and improve accessibility to environmental and energy justice grant opportunities for communities that are disadvantaged and have been overburdened and under-resourced. There are 16 TCTACs and over 160 partners that aim to help communities identify grant opportunities, prepare grant applications and manage grant funding, build capacity to effectively engage with decisionmakers, and develop collaborative community-based partnerships.

Learn more

Interagency Agreement to support the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe

Announced in December 2023, DOE’s Office of Indian Energy is leading an interagency memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe signed by DOE, the Departments of the Interior, Agriculture, Labor, Transportation, and Education, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Permitting Council. The purpose of the interagency MOU with the Navajo Nation and the Hopi Tribe is to provide a framework for collaboration between the Tribes and federal agencies to ensure that infrastructure, manufacturing, research and development, and workforce training and development investments (including but not limited to those made through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act) are invested in a strategic, coordinated, efficient, and equitable manner.

Learn more

Agency logo

Photo credit: Office of Energy Justice and Equity

Development of the “Harnessing Hydrogen” and “Community Benefits Planning” Public Forums

Community Benefits Plans (CBPs) are an important part of energy project proposals funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) or the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and typically count for about 20% of the project proposal’s overall score when it undergoes review for federal funding. In FY 2023, the Harnessing Hydrogen and CBP Forums were developed by the Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office and the Office of Energy Justice and Equity as a tool to help both communities with environmental justice concerns and companies better understand and engage in the development and negotiation process of forming a CBP for energy projects.

Learn more

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**Department of Health and Human Services**

Agency logo

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https://www.hhs.gov

https://www.hhs.gov/about/contact-us/index.html

Department of Health and Human Services

20 office(s), 10 location(s), and Over 80,000 employees in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS or the Department) is to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans, by providing for effective health and human services and by fostering sound, sustained advances in the sciences underlying medicine, public health, and social services. The agency’s motto is: “Improving the health, safety, and well-being of America.”

To achieve its mission, HHS strives for health equity, which is inextricably linked to environmental justice. The HHS vision for environmental justice is a nation that equitably promotes healthy, sustainable, and resilient environments, and protects the health, wellbeing, and dignity of all people and communities in which they live.

To learn more about environmental justice at HHS, please visit HHS' environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known HHS offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Health and Human Services's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Health and Human Services

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Health and Human Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

HHS Environmental Justice Community Innovator Challenge

In FY 2023, HHS launched a nationwide HHS Environmental Justice Community Innovator Challenge to support disadvantaged communities and Tribes facing the brunt of environmental injustices, including health harms due to climate change. This Challenge aims to uplift community-level solutions to address health inequities. The Challenge is co-led by the HHS Office of Environmental Justice and the Office of Minority Health.

Learn more

Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS) Program

The National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) ComPASS Program launched several new community-led awards with an environmental justice focus, including projects focused on structural interventions addressing housing quality, city infrastructure, access to green spaces, and other factors. NIH directly funded these research projects led by community organizations.

Learn more

Report to Increase Language Access for Persons with Limited English Proficiency

In May 2023, HHS released a report summarizing the progress the Department has made on improving the provision of meaningful access to language assistance services to persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). One example resource is the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s Disaster Distress Helpline (1-800-985-5990), which is the first national hotline dedicated to providing year-round disaster crisis counseling. This toll-free, multilingual, crisis support service is available 24/7 through call, text, and American Sign Language (ASL) videophone to all residents in the United States and U.S. territories who are experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

Learn more

Supporting Communities to Reduce Lead Poisoning

In May 2023, CDC’s National Center for Environmental Health’s Lead Poisoning Prevention and Surveillance Branch announced a new funding opportunity to support communities in reducing lead poisoning. Eleven organizations were funded for three years to help families avoid the dangers of lead in their homes through community engagement, prevention education, and family support. The Notice of Funding Opportunity required that organizations demonstrate a record of successful work in disadvantaged communities and communities overburdened by lead exposure, including promoting environmental justice, building coalitions to advance health equity, and conducting grassroot community education.

Learn more

First HHS and DOJ Environmental Justice Civil Rights Agreement

HHS and the Department of Justice (DOJ) reached an interim resolution agreement in their investigation into whether the Alabama Department of Public Health’s conduct violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act. The agreement sets a path forward towards ensuring the development of equitable and safe wastewater disposal and management systems in Lowndes County, Alabama.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Health and Human Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

Implementing the Justice40 Initiative at HHS provides opportunities to enhance the health and well-being of all Americans and advance health equity for all, including to address longstanding environmental injustices by deepening the Department’s engagement and ensuring that programs are working to help disadvantaged communities meet the vital conditions for health and well-being.

Each HHS Justice40 covered program is tracking its policy priorities and benefits. For more information about the Department’s Justice40 covered programs and direct links to their websites, please visit the Justice40 Initiative at HHS.

For more information on HHS' Justice40 covered programs, please contact OEJ@HHS.GOV

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Health and Human Services has:

13 Justice40 covered program(s), including 2 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, HHS has:

Approximately $6.4 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, HHS is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 13 covered program(s) at HHS working to deliver benefits for communities include:

3 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

2 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

2 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

4 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

3 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Health and Human Services is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program Serves Over One Million Households

By August 2023, the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), funded by the American Rescue Plan, served more than one million households, including reconnecting water and wastewater services 84,514 times, paying 565,273 past due bills for families and individuals with low incomes, preventing water shutoff, and helping low-income households that have struggled with water affordability by paying 486,628 current water bills.

Learn more

Flint Registry: Get Connected. Get Supported. Get Counted

The Flint Registry connects people affected by the Flint Water Crisis to services and programs to promote health and wellness. It also helps the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and others understand how this water crisis has affected the Flint community. As of July 2023, there were 21,492 Flint Registry members. Each member completes a detailed health survey when they enroll.

Justice40 and the Los Angeles Black Worker Center

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences Environmental Career Worker Training Program’s grantee, Western Region Universities Consortium provided increased support for a larger Los Angeles Black Worker Center cohort, including an added Mentorship/Guidance component where previous participants provide support to current participants.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Health and Human Services has:

6 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$7,791,929,305 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

New Community Economic Development Planning Grants

The Administration for Children and Families’ Office of Community Services announced a new $1.5 million Community Economic Development Planning Grant to stimulate new projects in disadvantaged communities. The Justice40 Initiative was listed as a priority area in the funding opportunity.

Learn more

Partnership to Promote Local Efforts to Reduce Environmental Exposure (APPLETREE) Cooperative Agreement

In April 2023, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry’s (ATSDR) APPLETREE program awarded $13.95 million in FY 2023, for a total of $70 million from FY 2023 to FY 2028, to build the environmental public health capacity of 30 states. Recipients will use data, indices, and geospatial tools, including the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to better understand community characteristics.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Health and Human Services made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

LIHEAP Issued Guidance on Community Solar for the First Time

The Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) issued guidance for the first time to (1) confirm that funds can be used for solar energy use through new and existing electric payment mechanisms, such as community solar subscription fees, and (2) provide LIHEAP grant recipients with recommendations to consider when utilizing funds for community solar subscriptions.

LIHEAP Funding Now Eligible for Consolidation by Tribes Under 477

For the first time in FY 2023, LIHEAP was included as part of the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Administration Act – Public Law 102-477 (25 U.S.C. § 3401), also referred to as “477.” Under this law, Tribes have the ability to integrate the federal employment, training, and related services that they provide from diverse federal sources in order to improve the effectiveness of those services. To date, six LIHEAP-eligible Tribes and Tribal organizations have consolidated LIHEAP funding under the law.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Health and Human Services is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

NIEHS Environmental Career Worker Training Program

In St. Louis, Missouri, two non-profits – Opportunity, Advancement, Innovation (OAI) Training Consortium and Motivating Purpose with Education and Readiness (MPWER) – are working together with local government to overcome environmental injustices and employment challenges. The Assistant Secretary for Health held a roundtable discussion with participants in this program in June 2023 as part of the White House Campaign for Environmental Justice.

Learn more

San Francisco’s Largest Permanent Supportive Housing Development Opens

The HHS Federal Real Property Assistance Program, in coordination with the General Services Administration, facilitated the transfer of federally owned real estate for the 2023 opening of San Francisco’s largest permanent supportive housing development. The development includes open green space that is accessible to the public. Supportive services include on-site nursing and primary care medical services and in-home supportive services for formerly homeless older adults and people with disabilities.

Learn more

Office of Community Services Community Impact Spotlight Videos

The Administration for Children and Families released a series of videos on how its Justice40 covered programs address the many facets of environmental justice, from expanding clean energy to providing disaster relief in low-income communities. Some of these spotlights include highlighting Washington’s LIHEAP cooling program, and areas once dependent on coal mining in West Virginia, and successful efforts to install rooftop solar panels for households with low income in Wisconsin.

Learn more

Indian Health Service Launches New Sanitation Facilities Construction Projects Website

A new interactive website was launched in April 2023 to demonstrate the Indian Health Service’s commitment to transparency and reporting on progress to complete projects that support improved public health for American Indian and Alaska Native homes and communities. These projects build the infrastructure necessary to ensure a safe supply of drinking water, reliable sewage systems, and solid waste disposal facilities. The website includes project funding amount, Tribes and number of homes served, as well as project status.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Health and Human Services has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Health and Human Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The Federal Real Property Assistance Program is implementing its environmental information documentation checklist to include aspects of greenhouse gas accounting and mitigation and addressing climate change hazards that pose a risk to surplus federal real property used for public health or homelessness.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Health and Human Services on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

HHS proposed multiple rules to protect people from discrimination in health and human services programs. Agencies released and promoted policies on flexibilities during disaster and extreme heat events, describing how funds can be used to respond to disasters and climate change. The ongoing work of HHS environmental health agencies continues to identify and address the cumulative impacts of environmental and health burdens.

Proposed Rule: Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Health and Human Service Programs or Activities

In September 2023, HHS issued a proposed rule, Discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Health and Human Service Programs or Activities, that the agency has since finalized to advance equity and bolster protections for people with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The final rule clarifies and strengthens civil rights protections for people with disabilities in federally-funded health and human services programs.

Proposed Rule: Health and Human Services Grants Regulation

In July 2023, HHS issued a proposed rule, Health and Human Services Grants Regulation, that the agency has since finalized, to repromulgate and revise certain regulatory provisions of the HHS, Uniform Administrative Rule Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for HHS Awards. This rule would protect LGBTQI+ people from discrimination in certain health and human services programs.

Addressing Floodplain Management in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

The Indian Health Service (IHS) implemented an Interim Guidance to address new floodplain management standards issued as part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Federal Flood Risk Management Standard. The floodplain guidance will help IHS to better implement floodplain mitigation planning to address ongoing hazards associated with climate change. These hazards have a disproportionate effect on the American Indian and Alaska Native communities IHS serves.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Health and Human Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

HHS and the Department of Justice reached an interim resolution agreement in their investigation into whether the Alabama Department of Public Health’s conduct violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act. The agreement sets a path forward towards ensuring the development of equitable and safe wastewater disposal and management systems in Lowndes County, Alabama.

In May 2023, HHS released a report summarizing the progress the Department has made on improving the provision of meaningful access to language assistance services to persons with limited English proficiency. The HHS Office for Civil Rights issued several proposed rules that would protect LGBTQI+ people from discrimination in certain health and human services programs and provide robust civil rights protections for people with disabilities in federally funded health and human services programs. These civil rights actions are critical to removing barriers that affect communities with environmental justice concerns.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Health and Human Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The HHS Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, religion, and sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity) in health and human services, including, but not limited to, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act - both of which advance equity. OCR’s Title VI and Section 1557 Affordable Care Act enforcement program engages in activities that align with advancing the goal of environmental justice and the HHS Climate Action Plan and is an essential component of HHS’ efforts in achieving equitable health outcomes for all. OCR is charged with Title VI and Section 1557 enforcement and ensuring that HHS federal financial assistance is not used to support programs or activities that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin.

1 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

1 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

1 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

100 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Health and Human Services in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

HHS agencies pursue many types of partnerships to advance environmental justice and health equity. One example is the National Institutes of Health’s (NIH) Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS) Program. This program studies ways to reduce health disparities by addressing underlying structural factors within communities and is developing a new research model for NIH where the projects are led by community organizations in collaboration with research partners. ComPASS launched several new community-led awards with an environmental justice focus, including projects focused on structural interventions addressing housing quality, city infrastructure, access to green spaces, and other factors.

In 2023, HHS joined the federal interagency Thriving Communities Network to better coordinate strategy, collaborate across initiatives, and target deployment of a full range of federal place-based technical assistance and capacity-building resources to disadvantaged communities. HHS also continues to engage on environmental justice and civil rights issues nationally through leadership visits and providing follow-up technical assistance to disadvantaged communities. For example, the Assistant Secretary for Health traveled to multiple cities in 15 states, convening roundtable conversations and site visits related to environmental justice, including in Alaska, Florida, Louisiana, Connecticut, and Arizona.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

41 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Department of Health and Human Services’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oej/index.html

Highlighting Environmental Justice Index Data on Specific Actions

The Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) worked with the Assistant Secretary for Health to develop project-specific correspondence on proposed actions in communities with environmental justice concerns. In one example, OEJ encouraged New York City planners to include health protection efforts before finalizing a transportation plan that would increase air pollution in an overburdened neighborhood in the Bronx.

Learn more

Environmental Justice Action Forum Addresses Impacts of Army Missile Plant Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

Held in January 2024, the one-day Environmental Justice Action Forum was aimed at identifying, framing, and addressing environmental justice issues regarding the Western Electric/Tarheel Army Missile Plant in Burlington, North Carolina. This forum was an outgrowth of a two-year collaboration with community-based organizations. Planning for the event occurred in FY 2023.

Learn more

Engaging in Civil Rights and Environmental Justice Nationally

The HHS Office for Civil Rights Director and staff visited multiple communities and engaged on local civil rights and environmental justice issues, including in Louisiana, California, Arizona, and Alabama. Additionally, a joint visit and roundtable on environmental justice in Illinois was co-hosted with the Assistant Secretary for Health and Civil Rights Director.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

17 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Request for Information: Environmental Justice Research Gaps, Opportunities, and Capacity Building

In FY 2023, three institutes at the National Institutes of Health – National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences – collaborated on a Request for Information: Environmental Justice Research Gaps, Opportunities and Capacity Building, released in October 2023, which received over 40 responses. Responses will inform NIH’s three signature environmental justice initiatives: (1) a renewal of the Environmental Justice Centers of Excellence; (2) a new program for Environmental Justice scholars to visit and inform NIH Institutes, Centers, and Offices on community engagement; and (3) new training and development activities for researchers in fields related to environmental justice.

Alliance for Community Engagement – Climate and Health

The National Institutes of Health’s Alliance for Community Engagement – Climate and Health (ACE-CH) – was launched in 2023 with four flagship teams. ACE-CH Teams, in collaboration with partners, are performing community-engaged research, capacity building, and outreach to assess factors associated with social determinants of health that impact communities with environmental justice concerns that are disproportionately affected by the health impacts of climate change. In September 2023, NIH released a Request for Information on Advancing Nursing Research in Climate and Health.

Climate Change and Health Equity Request for Information Summary

In August 2023, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration completed a summary of responses to its 2022 Request for Information. Key ideas identified included: climate change is a social determinant of mental health; behavioral health systems must become “climate-informed;” and intergenerational trauma will be one of the layered effects of climate-related environmental change.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Health and Human Services, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The HHS Tribal Consultation Policy is coordinated by the HHS Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs and serves as the focal point in the Office of the Secretary for the Department’s consultation with Tribal governments on policy, regulatory, and legislative issues that have a significant direct impact on Tribal governments and Tribal organizations. The complexity of the Federal-Tribal intergovernmental relationships results from treaties, statutes, executive orders, and court decisions. The goal of the policy includes, but is not limited to, eliminating health and human service disparities of American Indians and Alaska Natives, ensuring that access to critical health and human services is maximized, and advancing or enhancing the social, physical, economic, and health status of Native Americans.

2 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Consultation on Environmental Regulatory Enhancement Grants from the Administration for Native Americans

In June 2023, the Administration for Native Americans (part of the Administration for Children and Families) held a Tribal Consultation in conjunction with the National Congress of American Indians on grant processes.

Annual HHS Budget Tribal Consultation

In March 2023, HHS held its 25th Annual Budget Tribal Consultation, followed by Annual Regional Tribal Consultations in April. For the first time in history, the FY 2023 budget provided the Indian Health Service with advanced appropriations to provide budget certainty.

16 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, many HHS agencies hosted and participated in environmental justice-related listening sessions. One example is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) partnership with the National Indian Health Board to host a series of four Regional Tribal Environmental Health summits. The summits were designed to exchange knowledge, share best practices, identify solutions to address environmental health and environmental justice/health equity issues affecting Tribal communities, and expand regional partnerships in the environmental health field. Each summit ended with a listening session allowing Tribal-affiliated participants to provide any thoughts and comments. A Tribal listening session was also hosted on the Environmental Justice Index.

Training

1 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

22 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Health and Human Services including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

HHS aims to incorporate equity by design in all of its programs and services, which helps advance environmental justice and health equity. The newly established Office of Environmental Justice has a leadership role in coordinating HHS-wide strategies and helping communities address the health disparities they face at a local level by connecting to tools and resources. Working with HHS’ 17 staff and 13 operating divisions, the office leads the development of coherent federal strategies to address health threats that disproportionately affect disadvantaged communities and vulnerable populations on the frontlines of the climate crisis and the fence lines of harmful environmental exposures.

59 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

3 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

81 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

1,721 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, the seven Environmental Justice Index workshops brought together over 700 state, Tribal, local, and territorial and federal partners, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and industry representatives to learn about the Environmental Justice Index and provide feedback on the tool. Attendees expressed that these workshops “exceeded their expectations” and “can serve as a model for trainings that they are providing in their state.”

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Policy Guidance on People with Lived Experience in Behavioral Health

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration released policy guidance in June 2023 on incorporating the input and needs of people with lived experience in all aspects of behavioral health prevention, treatment, and recovery organizations. This approach aligns with environmental justice frameworks by including disadvantaged and low-income populations and people most impacted in planning and resource development.

Learn more

Closer to Zero: Reducing Childhood Exposure to Contaminants from Foods

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) evaluated the science for arsenic and cadmium in foods intended for babies and young children and established interim reference levels for cadmium. For mercury, FDA sponsored a study on the role of seafood consumption in child growth and development (bioaccumulation of mercury in seafood is the primary dietary source).

Learn more

Administration for Children and Families Highlight Flexibilities During Disasters and Extreme Heat

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program released a Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) 2023-08, Flexibilities During Hurricane and Tropical Storm Season regarding disaster and extreme heat flexibilities. The Community Services Block Grant program issued guidance reminding grant recipients of the ways in which they can use funding to support hurricane preparedness and response. This program also issued guidance to grant recipients highlighting how funds can be used to respond to disasters and climate change. Recipients of these programs include states, Tribes, territories, and non-profit and community-based organizations.

Learn more

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

28 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

CDC/ATSDR Environmental Justice Index

Developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Agency Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Environmental Justice Index is the first national, place-based tool designed to measure the cumulative impacts of environmental burden through the lens of human health and health equity.

Learn more

Head Start Environmental Exposure Mapping Tool and Resource Library

HHS sponsored the development of an interactive mapping tool and resources for Head Start providers and other early childhood stakeholders to identify environmental risks to low-income children and families and better address their concerns.

Learn more

Disaster Flexibilities Hub

The Administration for Children and Families maintains the Disaster Flexibilities Hub tool, which visually tracks and displays key data, guidance, and resources on declared disasters, disaster preparedness efforts, and the flexibilities built into Office of Community Services’ block grant programs. The hub includes a tab to help individuals and families find assistance in their communities.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

10 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

HHS Environmental Justice Working Group

Members of the HHS Environmental Justice Working Group work together to address environmental health disparities and environmental injustices by building resilient communities, making health systems more sustainable, strengthening community partnerships, and growing educational outreach. Members meet monthly to share information and new approaches, identify opportunities for collaboration, and track progress toward priority areas of focus surrounding environmental justice. HHS Environmental Justice Working Group members organize and report on environmental justice activities within their agencies.

National Institutes of Health Environmental Justice Working Group

The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIH) Deputy Director was selected to lead a newly established NIH Environmental Justice Working Group. This new Environmental Justice Working group brings together 70 people from across the 27 Institutes and Centers of the NIH.

Learn more

Environmental Health Disparities and Environmental Justice Faculty

The Environmental Health Disparities and Environmental Justice Faculty at National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) have met regularly to discuss internal efforts related to environmental justice and federal partnerships. The group facilitated interactions among local environmental justice organizations and NIEHS senior leadership.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

HHS participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. HHS also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 as provided by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. Multiple HHS agencies partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to revise Heat.gov with critical information and resources related to the needs of at-risk groups in order to be more inclusive, including older adults and individuals with disabilities. HHS’ Office of Climate Change and Health Equity coordinated this effort across the department and collaborated with the HHS Administration for Community Living, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Agencies, and the Administration for Children and Families to accomplish this update.

The Department of Health and Human Services worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Federal Collaboration Addressing Environmental Asthma Triggers in Homes

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) staff collaborated with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Environmental Protection Agency to build external partner capacity regarding evaluation of public health actions and practices, by conducting an evaluation of CDC’s Training for Home Assessment for Asthma Triggers project and presenting these evaluation findings to HUD managers.

President’s Task Force for Environmental Health and Safety Risks to Children, Subcommittee on Climate, Emergencies, and Disasters

In FY 2023, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development staff co-led this subcommittee of the President’s Task Force, which is focused on climate, environmental, and disaster risks to children’s health. Environmental justice – including engagement of communities experiencing or most at risk for natural and man-made disasters – is a central focus.

Learn more

HHS Federal Summit on Environmental and Climate Justice: Strengthening Partnerships for Healthy, Climate Resilient, and Thriving Communities

The HHS Federal Summit on Environmental Justice and Climate Justice: Strengthening Partnerships for Healthy, Climate Resilient, and Thriving Communities was a collaboration by Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health (OASH), and Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) that occurred in August 2023. Day 1 included 481 participants, including public stakeholders, and day 2 included 275 federal staff participants. Speakers were from Tribal and community organizations, philanthropy, and academia. The event also featured report-outs on 12 community conversations from around the country hosted by ACF and OASH’s Office of Climate Change and Health Equity.

Women’s Health Awareness Annual Conference

The Women’s Health Awareness program conducts community-engaged research, educates, and advocates on the intersecting issues of environmental health disparities, environmental and social justice, health and well-being, and gender and racial inequities to build community-based health resiliency. This includes utilizing community partnerships to support the development of research, evidence-based interventions, and health education and environmental literacy aimed at empowering women to take responsibility for their health, understand the critical intersections of health and the environment, and to work on environmental justice issues directly impacting their communities.

Learn more

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**Department of Homeland Security**

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Department of Homeland Security

16 office(s), 247,512 employees, and 8,669 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS or the Department) and its homeland security mission are born from the commitment and resolve of Americans across the United States in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks. With the passage of the Homeland Security Act by Congress in November 2002, DHS formally came into being as a stand-alone, Cabinet-level department to further coordinate and unify national homeland security efforts, opening its doors on March 1, 2003. DHS has a vital mission: to secure the nation from the many threats we face. This requires the hard work of more than 260,000 employees in jobs that range from aviation and border security to emergency response, from cybersecurity analyst to chemical facility inspector. The Department’s duties are wide-ranging, and its goal is clear – keeping America safe.

DHS approaches environmental justice through the missions and general strategic framework set forth in the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review (QHSR), which guides the activities of the homeland security enterprise. As described in the 2023 QHSR, the nation envisions a homeland that is safe and secure, resilient against terrorism and other hazards, and where American interests and aspirations can thrive. In seeking to fulfill this vision, the Department is committed to promoting environmental justice and ensuring equitable outcomes for all communities.

To learn more about environmental justice at DHS, please visit DHS' environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known DHS offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Coast Guard

Customs and Border Protection

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Homeland Security's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Homeland Security

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Homeland Security in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Federal Emergency Management Agency Reflects on the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program

During summer 2023, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share their thoughts and experiences with FEMA, following the initial launch of the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program in FY 2020. BRIC provides proactive investment in resilience for communities so that they are better prepared and remain resilient prior to a natural disaster. It is one of four Justice40 covered programs within the Department of Homeland Security. This stakeholder effort aimed to identify successes and opportunities for reducing barriers to access BRIC funding for state, local, Tribal, and territorial partners. The three-month survey period ended August 31, 2023.

Learn more

FEMA Efforts Advancing Community-Driven Relocation

According to research from DHS Science and Technology Directorate and the Arctic Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School’s Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 40% of Alaska Native communities will require relocation due to climate change. As climate change continues to displace people, FEMA – alongside federal partners – strives to assist these communities during the implementation of a climate adaptation strategy known as community-driven relocation. In September 2023, FEMA joined federal partners at an Alaska Institute for Justice workshop to discuss ongoing efforts to support Indigenous-led adaptation strategies and relocation governance frameworks for communities responding to rapid Arctic warming. FEMA informed workshop participants about the efforts of a new working group, current opportunities for federal aid, how agencies can support community access to available resources, and what agencies are doing to improve their approach to climate adaptation and resilience.

Learn more

Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers Recycling Program

In FY 2023, the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers Recycling Program made strides towards diverting waste from landfills, selling about 504 tons of recyclables, a 4.5% rise from the prior year, supporting efforts to reduce landfill burden on communities with environmental justice concerns.

Community Disaster Resilience Zones Help Identify Natural Disaster Risks for Communities in Need

In September 2023, FEMA announced the first 483 Community Disaster Resilience Zones (CDRZ) in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. FEMA used data from the National Risk Index, the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, and other tools to identify the census tracts across the country at the highest risk from natural hazards and those most in need. Communities designated as CDRZ can receive increased financial and technical assistance for Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) projects and technical assistance to plan and implement resilience projects. At the beginning of FY 2023, on October 7, 2022, FEMA announced an increase in program accessibility for communities for the FY 2022 BRIC and Flood Mitigation Assistance grant program application cycle.

Learn more

Partnership with the Squaxin Island Tribe of the Squaxin Island Reservation

Two Protective Security Advisors in the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency’s Region 10 office have established a proactive, progressive partnership with the Squaxin Island Tribe of the Squaxin Island Reservation through, among other technical assistance, a review of critical infrastructure systems for vulnerabilities that may impact critical services such as clean water, energy, childcare, healthcare, and building safety, for Tribal members.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Homeland Security in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DHS has four Justice40 covered programs, administered by FEMA: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Program; Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) Program; Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP); and Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (RiskMAP) Program. Each makes communities more climate resilient and focuses more directly on the challenges disadvantaged communities face to better allocate funding in a way that promotes overall risk awareness, avoidance, and reduction. These programs enhance community resilience when disaster strikes.

Disadvantaged communities bear the brunt of climate change and are more likely to be impacted by the associated extreme weather events. The President’s Justice40 Initiative strengthens FEMA’s commitment to ensure quick and equitable distribution of investments and benefits to the communities who need it most.

For more information on DHS' Justice40 covered programs, please contact fema-justice40@fema.dhs.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Homeland Security has:

4 Justice40 covered program(s), including 2 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, DHS is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 4 covered program(s) at DHS working to deliver benefits for communities include:

4 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Homeland Security is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

BRIC Grant Selections Include Benefits to Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities

In August 2023, FEMA announced the selection of 124 projects through the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program’s National Competition, utilizing FY 2022 funds. The application period opened in September 2022 and closed January 2023.

Learn more

BRIC Grant Selections Tribal Set-Aside

In May 2023, FEMA announced that 34 Tribes were selected in the BRIC Tribal Set-Aside, for an estimated $54 million in funding, utilizing FY 2022 funds. The application period opened in September 2022 and closed January 2023. For the purpose of the Justice40 Initiative, Federally Recognized Tribes, including Alaska Native Villages, are recognized as disadvantaged.

Learn more

Flood Mitigation Assistance Annual Grant Selections Include Benefits to Justice40 Disadvantaged Communities

In August 2023, FEMA announced the final selection of 149 subapplications for the Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program, totaling nearly $642.5 million of available FY 2022 grant funds. The application period was open from September 2022 to January 2023. One example is a selected project in Canton, Mississippi that aims to enact long-term sustainable solutions for flood risk. As part of flood mitigation efforts, Canton is looking to carry out a capital improvement project that includes activities to improve detention/retention ponds and drainage channels. The city will also rehabilitate and expand riverbank buffers. The major upgrade of the drainage systems in two areas prone to frequent flooding will result in new and improved driveway drainage structures, restoration and stabilization of open channels for water flow, and implementation of nature-based solutions to reduce the impact of flooding.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Homeland Security has:

FY 2022 Notices of Funding Opportunity for Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants Closed in FY 2023

The FY 2022 application period for FEMA’s two competitive hazard mitigation assistance grant programs – Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) – opened on September 30, 2022 (in FY 2022), and closed on January 27, 2023 (in FY 2023). FMA Swift Current opened on April 1, 2022 (in FY 2022), and closed on October 3, 2022 (in FY 2023).

Learn more

FY 2023 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program Fact Sheet

The FY 2023 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) application period ran from May 24 to July 24, 2023. As outlined in the program’s fact sheet, for FY 2023, FEMA implemented four RCPGP strategic priorities: housing, equity, climate resilience, and readiness, and emphasized the needs of disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Homeland Security made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Fiscal Year 2023 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program Key Changes

In FY 2023, the Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) prioritized the needs of disadvantaged communities and directed applicants to use the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to better understand their vulnerabilities and needs. Recipients were expected to involve representatives of disadvantaged communities when developing and integrating preparedness and readiness plans.

Learn more

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Homeland Security is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Mississippi: City of Canton Martin Luther King Stormwater Improvement Project

The city of Canton, Mississippi requested grant funding for the Martin Luther King (MLK) South Flood Mitigation Project. As part of flood mitigation efforts, Canton is looking to carry out a capital improvement project that includes activities to improve detention/retention ponds and drainage channels. The city will also rehabilitate and expand riverbank buffers. This project was announced as a final selection for FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant funding in August 2023.

Learn more

Texas: Harris County Flood Control District Buyout

A socially vulnerable community in Harris County, Texas, has faced repetitive flooding on 49 National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)-insured homes in Houston, Texas, including some in census tracts identified as disadvantaged using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. With these homes having 101 flood loss claims submitted, this project will result in the homes being bought and residents relocated out of harm’s way to higher ground. The flood-prone area will be restored as a natural floodplain for stormwater storage and protect the larger community from future flood events.

Learn more

FEMA Funding Danville, Arkansas School District Safe Room

Danville, Arkansas is an Economically Disadvantaged Rural Community and is identified as a disadvantaged community on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. Danville School District has no protection for its students during severe wind and tornado events. The community plans to leverage FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding to build a multi-purpose safe room next to the elementary school. The proposed safe room will have space for 1,126 faculty, staff, and students. It will have six wheelchair spaces and be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Homeland Security has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Homeland Security in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

All components of DHS have NEPA policy and guidance. For example: DHS Directive 023-01 and Instruction 023-01-001, “National Environmental Policy Act;” FEMA Directive 108-1 and Instruction 108-1-1, “Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Responsibilities and Program Requirements;” and Coast Guard COMDTINST 5090.1, “Environmental Planning Policy.”

Project Modifications

6 project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

Levee in the City of Reedsport, Oregon

In Reedsport, Oregon, FEMA provided a grant for pre-disaster mitigation. The grant was for construction of significant levee improvements, which required the preparation of an environmental assessment in accordance with NEPA. Through analysis, it was determined that construction noise would impact nearby low-income residents. Measures to minimize noise were incorporated to reduce the effects of noise during construction.

Demolition/Reconstruction in Modena, Pennsylvania

In Modena, Pennsylvania, FEMA provided a grant for pre-disaster mitigation. The grant was for demolition and reconstruction. In particular, the project was for 10 renter-occupied homes in a community with environmental justice concerns. As a part of the NEPA process, FEMA worked with the state so that the renters were given the first option to return to their homes at the new market rate. This was in accordance with the Unified Relocation Assistance.

Training

25 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

511 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, trainings were provided to all levels of agency employees at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), Science and Technology Directorate (S&T), Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Coast Guard, and Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC). DHS Headquarters provided training to environmental planning and historic preservation professionals, the intradepartmental Environmental Justice Working Group, and the DHS Climate Change Advisory Group. Additionally, 22 Coast Guard NEPA Warrant holders completed the environmental justice training module which requires the passing of a test to ensure competency.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Homeland Security on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The FY 2023 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grant Program (RCPGP) application period ran from May 24 to July 24, 2023. As outlined in the program’s fact sheet, for FY 2023, FEMA implemented four RCPGP strategic priorities: housing, equity, climate resilience, and readiness, and emphasized the needs of disadvantaged communities.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Homeland Security in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DHS works to ensure that its recipients do not discriminate against individuals with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Consistent with the November 21, 2022, memorandum titled “Strengthening the Federal Government’s Commitment to Language Access,” issued by the U.S. Attorney General, the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) updated the DHS Language Access Plan throughout FY 2023 and issued it in early FY 2024. CRCL chairs the DHS Language Access Working Group and has requested that each DHS Component and Office that interacts with the public, whether in person, virtually, or through the provision of information or services: (1) review its own language access plan for consistency with the DHS Language Access Plan and make modifications accordingly; and (2) include other updates and/or steps that a DHS Operational or Support Component or Office has taken or will take to strengthen language access in its public-facing programs and activities. CRCL continued to engage with Indigenous migrant leaders and communities throughout FY 2023 to provide information about the draft Indigenous Languages Plan and received input on language access issues that impact Indigenous migrant communities in the United States. Following this outreach and comment period, DHS then released its first-ever DHS Indigenous Languages Plan to strengthen language services for Indigenous persons of Latin America in its programs and activities.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Homeland Security in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DHS is advancing environmental justice in its work to ensure Department recipients that carry out programs and activities that affect human health or the environment do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency) in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties coordinates a federally assisted compliance program and provides guidance and technical assistance to Department recipients to help organizations understand their obligations under Title VI and related civil rights authorities.

2 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

Training

1 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

1,680 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Homeland Security in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DHS continued implementing the Civil Rights Evaluation Tool (CRET), a post-award technical assistance and data collection tool that enables DHS to directly engage recipients, outside DHS’ compliance and enforcement activities, to receive data (including any civil rights complaints alleging environmental justice concerns) and ensure these recipients have developed and provided to DHS their civil rights-related policies and procedures for their public-facing programs and activities, including those that may have human health or environmental impacts. DHS reviews and provides feedback to recipients to address gaps. As a Component within DHS, FEMA deploys a cadre of Civil Rights Advisors to communities impacted by disasters. Among the cadre’s responsibilities is engaging impacted community members and informing disaster survivors of their civil rights.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

1 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program

In March 2023, the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) represented the Department at the 2023 National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program, in which CRCL presented on Title VI and environmental justice enforcement efforts.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Homeland Security, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DHS has the following Directive and Instructions that outline guiding principles for Tribal consultation: DHS Directive 071-04, “Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Nations” and DHS Instruction 071-04-001, “Implementing Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Nations.”

3 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Base Seattle Expansion and Modernization Project/CERCLA Removal Action

The Coast Guard initiated formal government-to-government consultation in December 2022 with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and Suquamish Tribe regarding potential actions at Base Seattle that may affect ancestral fishing, hunting, and gathering sites – referred to as Usual and Accustomed grounds – established by the Treaty of Point Elliott. The Coast Guard is also participating in consultation with these Tribes for a Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) removal action at Base Seattle under the lead of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Coast Guard conducted numerous consultation meetings with the staff and leadership of the Tribes in FY 2023 and is actively working toward one or more memorandums of agreement to address Coast Guard operations at Base Seattle, the CERCLA project, and future expansion and modernization projects. The focus of the consultation is on avoiding potential interference with Treaty-established access to Usual and Accustomed fishing grounds.

Coast Guard Civil Engineering Unit Providence Engages Tribes to Share Resources

In FY 2023, the Coast Guard continued NEPA analysis to potentially remove trees that presented a hazard to life and property on Base Cape Cod in Massachusetts. Through consultation with the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, the Coast Guard cut down the hazardous trees, and Tribal members collected the felled silver birch (Betula pendula) for ceremonial and traditional use.

FEMA Continues to Meaningfully Engage Tribes

FEMA has been working toward meeting goals identified in its first-ever National Tribal Strategy, released in December 2021. The 2022-2026 Strategy outlines the agency’s responsibilities to Federally Recognized Tribes, including building Tribal capacities and capabilities to improve readiness and resilience. In 2023, FEMA held Tribal consultation meetings to discuss needed updates to the Tribal Mitigation Plan Review Guide, last revised in 2017. The Review Guide helps FEMA officials review Tribal mitigation plans to identify risks and make long-term strategies to reduce losses to people and property from disasters in a fair and consistent way. It also informs Tribal governments about what the plan must include to receive FEMA approval.

37 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, in September 2023, the DHS Secretary tasked the Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council with the review of DHS grants, specifically six FEMA grant programs, and the development of a report with recommendations on increasing Tribal equity and accessibility to important adaptation, response, and recovery actions. The report was published on January 10, 2024 and made many recommendations such as communicating how DHS plans to promote climate adaptation and resilience, while also helping to advance the Justice40 Initiative through Tribal grant programs. Launched in January 2022, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency’s Tribal Affairs website continued in FY 2023 to serve as a clearinghouse of agency services and resources that are available to assist Tribes in strengthening the resilience of critical infrastructure, including risks that may arise from climate change such as disruptions to Tribal emergency management and communications systems. This includes improving operable and interoperable communications, an enhanced cyber posture, consultative engagement, outreach, advocacy, technical assistance, and coordination.

Training

14 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

588 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, the Coast Guard NEPA Warrant program held three training sessions on Tribal considerations that included environmental justice. The Coast Guard Bridge Program also developed and provided training on Tribal Engagement Best Practices nationwide to team members of the Coast Guard Bridge Programs to reference during compliance with National Environmental Policy Act. In July 2023, representatives from the Department’s environmental planning and historic preservation program provided an overview of the DHS Environmental Justice Program, the signing of Executive Order 14096, and current federal initiatives at the external Tribal quarterly meeting.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Homeland Security including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DHS is advancing environmental justice through implementation of Executive Order (EO) 14096. DHS is implementing EO 14096 to advance environmental justice for all, and seeks to ensure that affected communities, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, are heard from and considered in agency decision-making and activities that affect human health and the environment. The DHS Environmental Justice Program examines environmental justice considerations in the Department’s own programs and activities, as well as in programs and activities that affect human health or the environment carried out by DHS recipients. DHS is taking steps to “operationalize” the meaningful engagement/involvement provisions within EO 14096 and is currently revising DHS Directive 023-04, “Environmental Justice,” and developing an accompanying Instruction Manual. The first DHS Environmental Justice Strategy was issued in 2012. In May 2021, DHS issued an updated FY 2021-2025 Environmental Justice Strategy signed by DHS Secretary Mayorkas. Currently, DHS is updating its strategic plan per EO 14096 and CEQ guidance. Environmental justice is also part of the DHS Climate Adaptation Plan, DHS Sustainability Plan, and will be incorporated into the Department’s revised NEPA procedures in FY 2025. In December 2022, the Department filled its first-ever environmental justice advisor federal position within the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. The Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer is set to hire another environmental justice program manager in FY 2024. Through the allocation of resources, these positions further support the Department’s commitment to institutionalizing and advancing environmental justice as it relates to the DHS mission.

291 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

2 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

16 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

489 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, DHS provided trainings and presentations from the Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer (OCRSO) and the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties at the DHS Climate Change Action Group (CCAG), DHS Tribal Affairs internal monthly and external quarterly meetings, DHS Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation Community of Practice monthly meeting, the DHS Environmental Justice Working Group, the OCRSO office-wide meeting, the Partnership for Inclusive Disaster Strategies weekly meeting, and at the National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program in Washington, DC. These presentations focused on DHS activities with environmental justice considerations, DHS efforts to adapt to climate change by prioritizing facility projects with added benefits to disadvantaged communities, and best practices and tools for environmental justice analysis. DHS held a training for component environmental planning and historic preservation subject matter experts where CEQ presented on the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool and National Environmental Policy Act Guidance on Consideration of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change. Component training highlights include a new internal Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers environmental justice online training module and an environmental justice module for the Coast Guard NEPA Warrant Program.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

DHS Equity Action Plan Update

In FY 2023, DHS updated its Equity Action Plan to include the advancement of equity in FEMA’s Individual Assistance Program to increase participation of underserved communities, and through the advancement of Community Disaster Resilience Zones.

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency’s Stakeholder Engagement Strategic Plan FY 2023-2025

Finalized in June 2023, and as outlined in its Stakeholder Engagement Strategic Plan FY 2023-2025, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) is prioritizing efforts to effectively engage and collaborate with stakeholders and partners and is developing and strengthening the trusted relationships that underpin whole-of-nation operational collaboration and information sharing. CISA’s vital mission to lead the national effort to understand, manage, and reduce risk to our cyber and physical infrastructure ensures overburdened communities that have been historically underfunded have the tools necessary to ensure safe and consistent access to online services in areas such as healthcare and emergency response.

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

3 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool

The Resilience Analysis and Planning Tool (RAPT) includes over 100 preloaded data layers – including community resilience indicators from peer-reviewed research, the most current census demographic data, infrastructure data, and data on weather, hazards, and risk. This data and GIS mapping have the potential to help communities to advance environmental justice. Specifically, the RAPT includes the Community Resilience Challenges Index (CRCI), which is an index of 22 commonly used indicators on community resilience and social vulnerability. The RAPT also includes data from the Grant Equity Threshold Tool (GETT), which assists with identifying population characteristics of selected areas of interest, including disadvantaged communities as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool and Community Disaster Resilience Zones.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

4 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

DHS Environmental Justice Working Group

The DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and the Office of the Chief Readiness Support Officer co-chair the DHS Environmental Justice Working Group, comprised of members from DHS Component agencies and offices. In FY 2023, the DHS Environmental Justice Working Group met regularly to provide trainings and share information about federal interagency efforts and Departmental environmental justice-related goals. Environmental justice information and

trainings were also provided at the DHS Climate Change Action Group and Tribal Affairs Quarterly Meeting and incorporated into the Department-wide Climate Change 101 training. FEMA also manages an intra-agency Environmental Justice Working Group. Through the DHS Environmental Justice Working Group, all DHS Components have strengthened relationships between their environmental planning/compliance and civil rights teams, in addition to creating new relationships with Tribal Affairs, Human Resources, and Public Affairs staff.

Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council

As a federal advisory committee, the Tribal Homeland Security Advisory Council provides advice and recommendations to the Secretary, through engagement with DHS components, agencies, and offices, and by producing recommendations, studies, reports, and more. The Advisory Council has been charged with collaborating on all matters of homeland security as they relate to Tribal Nations, including those that intersect with environmental justice concerns. DHS established the Advisory Council in September 2022, as the first ever in agency history.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

DHS participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice.

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**Department of Housing and Urban Development**

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Department of Housing and Urban Development

23 office(s), 65 location(s), 8,470 employees, and 1,117 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD or the Department) is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business.

Advancing environmental justice is core to the mission of HUD. Investing in environmental improvements, remedying past environmental inequities, and otherwise developing, implementing, and enforcing laws and policies in a manner that advances environmental equity and provides meaningful involvement for people and communities that have been environmentally underserved or overburdened, such as low-income communities, Black and Brown communities, Tribal Nations and Indigenous groups, and individuals with disabilities.

To learn more about environmental justice at HUD, please visit HUD's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known HUD offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

The Office of Housing

The Office of Public and Indian Housing

The Office of Community Planning and Development

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Housing and Urban Development's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

HUD Launched the Green and Resilient Retrofit Program

The Green and Resilient Retrofit Program (GRRP), funded by the President’s Inflation Reduction Act, seeks to amplify recent technological advancements in utility efficiency and energy generation, bring a new focus on preparing for climate hazards by reducing residents’ and properties’ exposure to hazards, and protecting life, livability, and property when disaster strikes. Launched in FY 2023, GRRP is the first HUD program to simultaneously invest in energy efficiency, greenhouse gas emissions reductions, energy generation, green and healthy housing, and climate resilience strategies specifically in HUD-assisted multifamily housing. All the investments under the GRRP will be made in affordable housing communities serving low-income families in alignment with the President’s Justice40 Initiative. The Inflation Reduction Act provided HUD with $837.5 million in grant and loan subsidy funding and $4 billion in loan commitment authority for this program. In FY 2023, HUD awarded $105 million, which will improve over 9,900 homes for low-income families, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

Learn more

Fair Housing Planning Toolkit: A How-To Guide for HUD Program Participants

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 not only prohibits discrimination, but also directs HUD to ensure that the agency and its program participants proactively take meaningful actions to overcome patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, eliminate disparities in housing-related opportunities, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination. This is the Fair Housing Act’s mandate to affirmatively further fair housing. In January 2021, HUD’s Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Interim Final Rule (IFR) reinstated a process by which HUD will provide technical assistance and other support to program participants who are engaged in fair housing planning. The IFR requires program participants to submit certifications that they will affirmatively further fair housing in connection with their consolidated plans, annual action plans, and Public Housing Authorities (PHA) plans. To support these certifications, the IFR creates a voluntary Fair Housing Planning process for which HUD will provide technical assistance and support. The IFR remains in effect during proposed rulemaking. In April 2023, HUD published and is continuing to update its interactive Fair Housing Planning Toolkit, a “How-To Guide” for HUD program participants. The modules in this toolkit guide a program participant through undertaking fair housing planning and could provide a roadmap for HUD funding recipients to take meaningful actions to overcome patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination, which could include disparate access to healthy environments, neighborhoods, and homes.

Learn more

HUD Announced Over $30 Billion in Renewal Funding for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

In April 2023, HUD announced over $30.3 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program for 2023. This historic, $2.9 billion (10.5%) increase over the prior year’s funding will help Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) maintain rental assistance for 2.3 million low-income families, address recent inflation in rents, and enable more low-income families to use housing vouchers to afford a safe, decent place to call home.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

HUD strongly supports the President’s Justice40 Initiative, which set a goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. HUD will strive to maximize investments in low-income and disadvantaged communities, in line with HUD’s obligations under the Fair Housing Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other civil rights authorities.

HUD has developed a centralized hub site on HUD Exchange, the Build for the Future page, to connect program participants with information and resources about climate resiliency, energy efficiency, renewable energy, environmental justice, and other topics. This includes the Build for the Future Funding Navigator, a searchable database of funding and technical assistance opportunities that includes HUD’s Justice40 covered programs, funded or created by the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and also includes other opportunities across federal agencies to support efforts to invest in climate resilience.

For more information on HUD's Justice40 covered programs, please contact Justice40@hud.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has:

26 Justice40 covered program(s), including 2 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, HUD has:

Approximately $132 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, HUD is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 26 covered program(s) at HUD working to deliver benefits for communities include:

4 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

26 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

1 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

HUD Awarded Over $38 Million to Protect Children and Families from Home Health Hazards

In February 2023, HUD awarded over $38 million to city, county, and Native American Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations in 17 states to protect children and families from home health hazards. HUD is providing these 23 grants through its Healthy Homes Production Grant Program, part of the Justice40 covered program Lead Hazard Reduction and Health Homes Grants, to identify and mitigate health and safety hazards in the homes of families of low-income.

Learn more

HUD Awarded More Than $794 Million for Affordable Housing Activities in Tribal Communities

In February 2023, HUD announced more than $794 million in Indian Housing Block Grant (IHBG) formula funding for eligible Native American Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and Tribally Designated Housing Entities to carry out affordable housing activities in Tribal communities. The IHBG program is a formula grant that provides a range of affordable housing activities on reservations and related areas.

Learn more

HUD Awarded $98 Million in Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grants

In April 2023, HUD announced “Supplemental Grant” awards for Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grantees, totaling more than $98 million. Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants assist in the redevelopment of severely distressed HUD-assisted properties into mixed-income communities. The program has a three-pronged “Housing, People, and Neighborhood” approach by supporting (1) redevelopment of distressed properties, (2) support to housing residents related to the health, education, and income, and (3) neighborhood improvement projects which promote economic development and private investment. Since the program’s inception, the Choice Neighborhoods program has seen 11,000 new mixed-income units built across 44 cities. More than 32,000 units are planned with Choice Neighborhood funding.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has:

40 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

Over $35 billion available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

HUD Made Available Over $30 Billion for the Housing Choice Voucher Program

In April 2023, HUD announced the availability of $30.3 billion for the Housing Choice Voucher Program for 2023. This funding will help Public Housing Authorities maintain rental assistance for 2.3 million low-income families, address recent inflation in rents, and enable more low-income families to use housing vouchers to afford a safe, decent place to call home.

Learn more

HUD Announced $568 Million to Address Lead-Based Paint and Additional Housing-Related Hazards

In January 2023, HUD announced two historic Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) that will make homes healthier and safer for low-income families. Since 1993, HUD has made more than $2.7 billion available to protect children, families, and individuals from exposure to lead and other hazards in their homes.

Learn more

HUD Opened a Notice of Funding Opportunity for Choice Neighborhoods

HUD announced the availability of $10 million in Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants funding to support locally driven planning efforts. Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants are two-year grants of up to $500,000 each that assist communities with severely distressed public housing or HUD-assisted housing in developing a comprehensive neighborhood transformation plan that meets the “Housing, People, and Neighborhood” goals of the program. Grant funds also support an early action activity to foster engagement and build the momentum necessary for that plan to be successfully implemented. Public housing authorities, local governments, Tribal entities, and nonprofits with distressed HUD-assisted housing are encouraged to apply.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

HUD Established the New Green and Resilient Retrofit Program

The Green Resilient and Retrofit Program will advance environmental justice by serving low-income families and disadvantaged communities in alignment with the President’s Justice40 Initiative by improving the utility efficiency of affordable housing, promoting access to green technology and jobs, and strengthening affordable homes to be more resilient against extreme weather events, leading to the preservation of quality affordable housing into the future.

Learn more

HUD Opened a New $10 Million Funding Opportunity for Local Planning Efforts

HUD announced the availability of $10 million in Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants funding to support locally driven planning efforts. Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants are two-year grants of up to $500,000 each that assist communities with severely distressed public housing or HUD-assisted housing in developing a comprehensive neighborhood transformation plan that meets the “Housing, People, and Neighborhood” goals of the program. These new grant funds also support an early action activity to foster engagement and build the momentum necessary for that plan to be successfully implemented. Public housing authorities, local governments, Tribal entities, and nonprofits with distressed HUD-assisted housing are encouraged to apply.

Learn more

HUD Housing-Related Hazards and Lead-Based Paint Capital Fund Program New Emphasis on Life-Threatening Hazards

In May 2023, HUD published new National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE), which were incorporated into a funding announcement for HUD’s Capital Fund Program. The FY 2024 funding announcement further emphasized the risks of life-threatening health hazards to residents. In May 2024, HUD announced nearly $90 million to reduce residential health hazards for public housing, including lead-based paint hazards, carbon monoxide, mold, radon, and fire safety, which will also help advance President Biden’s Lead Pipe and Paint Action Plan.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

HUD Awarded Green Resilient and Retrofit Program Funding to a 202-Unit, Fully Assisted Property in Port Arthur, Texas

Crystal Creek is a 202-unit property located in Port Arthur, Texas, fully assisted with Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) – located in a disadvantaged community. Owners of the property are interested in leveraging recapitalization funding to reduce racial disparities in the region regarding the equitable distribution of sustainability and resiliency resources. Building improvements may include heat pump instillations, LED lighting upgrades, the reduction of carbon emissions from heating and cooling, and conversion to low flow plumbing fixtures in residential kitchens and bathrooms. A major component owners would like to address during this project is improving the property’s resilience to major weather events. Crystal Creek is located near the Gulf of Mexico and, according to the National Risk Index, may experience significant hurricane, riverine flooding, ice storm, lightning, and tornado threats. The property has been impacted by five major hurricanes since 1986. Crystal Creek was selected to receive a Green Resilient and Retrofit Program (GRRP) loan of $16.16 million and will undergo a thorough suite of assessments with a HUD-procured contractor to determine how GRRP funding will be applied.

HUD Awarded the City of Memphis $5.7 Million to Address Lead Hazards in 125 Housing Units

In August FY 2023, HUD advanced the goal of delivering benefits to disadvantaged communities to protect children and families, including those who are low-income, from lead-based paint and other health hazards, by awarding nearly $140 million Justice40 funding to protect families from lead hazards. For example, the City of Memphis, Tennessee was awarded $5.7 million to address lead hazards in 125 housing units; the city is working with medical and social service providers on this effort.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Housing and Urban Development has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

All HUD-assisted projects consider the proposed project’s environmental effects on the surrounding environment and the property site itself. Not every project may be subject to a full environmental review (i.e., every project's environmental impact must be examined, but the extent of this examination varies), but every project must be in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and other related federal and state environmental laws.

Training

10 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

181 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, in FY 2023, HUD conducted staff-level training on environmental justice during the NEPA environmental review process. Participants gained an understanding of how to consider disproportionate environmental impact factors, including disproportionate levels of harmful, sometimes combined, environmental exposures, while identifying environmental harms in communities with environmental justice concerns. HUD provides extensive online training materials on the HUD Exchange.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Housing and Urban Development on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

HUD takes every step to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. This includes advancing policies, rulemakings, and enforcement to protect the environment and to provide everyone who calls America home with equality and opportunity in the pursuit of housing.

HUD’s Rule for Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS)

On March 24, 2023, HUD published its proposed rule, Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands; Minimum Property Standards for Flood Hazard Exposure; Building to the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard, taking a major step in addressing future flood risk and ensuring the safety of HUD-assisted residents and federal investments. Finalized in April 2024, the rule will increase the required elevation for HUD-assisted new construction, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Minimum Property Standards, and, for grant and subsidy programs and multifamily FHA-insured projects required to comply with 24 CFR Part 55, substantially improved structures within the FFRMS floodplain. The rule also clarifies and strengthens public notice and flood insurance requirements to increase awareness of flood risk for HUD-assisted renters and homeowners.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

If you believe you have experienced housing discrimination, you can file a complaint with HUD. In addition to HUD’s Title VI authorities, HUD also enforces the Fair Housing Act, which not only prohibits discrimination in housing on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, and familial status, but also requires HUD and HUD funding recipients to take meaningful actions to overcome patterns of segregation, promote fair housing choice, and foster inclusive communities that are free from discrimination, which could include disparate access to healthy environments, neighborhoods, and homes.

In March 2023, HUD restored the “Discriminatory Effects” rule, codifying long-standing caselaw for adjudication of Fair Housing Act cases under the discriminatory effects doctrine, which is a tool for addressing policies that unnecessarily cause systemic inequality in housing, regardless of discriminatory intent. It has long been used to challenge policies that unnecessarily exclude people from housing opportunities, including for example discriminatory zoning requirements, lending and property insurance policies, and criminal records policies. A workable discriminatory effects standard is vital for HUD to accomplish its goal of creating a housing market that is free from discrimination.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

HUD is committed to addressing environmental inequities through enforcement of federal fair housing and civil rights laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In May 2023, HUD entered into a compliance agreement with the City of Chicago, Illinois and community groups to alleviate existing and prevent future environmental burdens, such as pollution, and increase opportunities for environmentally burdened communities to participate in decision-making processes. Under this agreement, the City of Chicago will complete a comprehensive study of environmental burdens, health conditions, and social stressors across Chicago and use that study to inform and advance reforms to land use, permitting, and environmental enforcement policies and procedures. The agreement resolves HUD findings of noncompliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 109 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 for the City of Chicago and arose from a complaint filed by the three community-based environmental advocacy organizations alleging city actions and policies shifted polluting activities from predominantly white neighborhoods to predominantly Black and Hispanic neighborhoods that were known to the city to be overburdened by environmental hazards. For more background on the complaint and the city’s actions, please read HUD’s findings.

1 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

4 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

9 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

659 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In April 2023, HUD convened the first-ever Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee meeting. The two-day convening included Tribal leaders from across the continental United States and Alaska that make up the HUD Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee. The meeting focused on Nation-to-Nation relationships with Tribal governments, Tribal Sovereignty, housing needs and challenges in Indian Country, and funding for Tribal housing and community development programs.

HUD took a step forward to advance equity, fair housing, and civil rights in the allocation of Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) grant funds. The February 2022 Consolidated Notice requires all recipients of CDBG-DR funding to assess whether the planned use of CDBG-DR funds will have an unjustified discriminatory effect on or failure to benefit communities, particularly in concentrated areas of poverty. CDBG-DR grantees must also explore how their allocated funds may address environmental injustices facing vulnerable populations and communities that have experienced environmental burdens. In FY 2023, HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity and Office of Disaster Recovery provided technical assistance and guidance to 17 CDBG-DR grantees completing Action Plans, to ensure grantees are addressing their fair housing and civil rights obligations.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

Thousands of technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/technical-assistance/

Technical Assistance at HUD

HUD’s technical assistance provides resources, tools, and support for recipients of HUD funding, such as state and local government grantees, public housing authorities, Tribes and Tribally-designated housing entities, Continuums of Care, and nonprofits. Thousands of technical assistance events that involve environmental justice occur across HUD’s 26 Justice40 programs and 65 local offices. HUD also conducts technical assistance across HUD’s non-Justice40 covered programs. For example, HUD’s Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity works closely with jurisdictions who conduct voluntary fair housing planning.

Learn more

Public Processes (show more/show less)

10 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Modernizing the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Program

Following the first-time the Department asked the public for feedback in December 2022 on how to simplify, modernize, and more equitably distribute critical disaster recovery funds through the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) program, HUD established the Office of Disaster Management and the Office of Disaster Recovery and hired dozens of new HUD staff to expedite the recovery processes.

Lead-Based Paint Technical Workshop

In July 2023, EPA and HUD announced a virtual public workshop to receive stakeholder input on the detection, measurement, and characterization of lead-based paint to support efforts to reduce lead exposure. The workshop was held in November 2023. Information received during the workshop will inform a joint effort to revisit the federal definition of lead-based paint and propose and finalize a revised definition.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

HUD’s government-to-government Tribal consultation policy guides HUD’s planning and management activities, including its budget, operating guidance, legislative initiatives, management accountability system, and ongoing policy and regulation development processes for all programs affecting Tribes. In FY 2023, HUD convened the first-ever Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee meeting, focusing on Nation-to-Nation relationships with Tribal governments, Tribal Sovereignty, housing needs and challenges in Indian Country, and funding for Tribal housing and community development programs.

20 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Consultation on the Coordinated Environmental Review Process Implementation Plan

HUD conducted a Tribal consultation to receive feedback to inform the development of HUD’s Environmental Review Process Implementation Plan.

Consultation on Tribal Directory Assessment Tool Enhancement Project

HUD conducted a Tribal consultation to receive feedback to inform HUD’s Tribal Directory

Assessment Tool (TDAT) Enhancement Project.

Consultation on HUD’s Draft Departmental Policy for Addressing Radon in the Environmental

Review Process Notice

HUD conducted a Tribal consultation to receive feedback to inform HUD’s Departmental Policy for Addressing Radon in the Environmental Review Process Notice.

2 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, HUD facilitated two Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee meetings (TIAC). The TIAC provided several policy recommendations that HUD is actively considering and implementing.

Training

Over 10 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

200 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, the Office of Native American Programs (ONAP) leads the Department’s Tribal consultation and Tribal engagement work. In FY 2023, HUD facilitated a number of staff webinars and informational sessions to discuss ONAP’s work with employees across the Department.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Housing and Urban Development including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

HUD is working to implement its 2021 Climate Action Plan (CAP), which considers the impacts from climate change on the communities most vulnerable to these impacts. CAP goals are to pursue environmental justice, promote environmental justice with Tribal communities, create green job opportunities, and encourage equitable community planning and engagement and healthy housing initiatives. The CAP also seeks to increase climate resilience, implement practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and build community capacity through providing climate resilience and environmental justice training. HUD is updating its Environmental Justice Strategy to enhance HUD’s efforts to communicate and engage with environmentally underserved or overburdened communities on environmental justice activities and provide increased opportunities for meaningful community involvement in the Department’s decision-making process.

205 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

2 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

Over 19 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Establishment of the Office of Disaster Management

Based on the increasing number of disasters and the increasingly important role that HUD is playing in the federal government’s preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, in March 2023, HUD announced the establishment of the Office of Disaster Management in the Office of the Deputy Secretary, and the Office of Disaster Recovery within the Office of Community Planning and Development, which included the addition of dozens of new HUD staff members to help expedite recovery processes.

HUD Advanced Equitable Climate Resilience Planning in the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program

In July 2023, HUD advanced equitable climate resilience planning by requiring public housing authorities (PHAs) and owners participating in the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program to establish property-specific disaster recovery plans under the RAD Supplemental Notice 4B. PHAs and owners are also required to detail plans for evacuating individuals with disabilities in disaster recovery plans.

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

7 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Citizen Participation and Climate Resilience Toolkit

The Citizen Participation and Equitable Climate Engagement Toolkit is a resource to aid grantees of the Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery, a Justice40 covered program, in centering equity in their disaster recovery programs through an enhanced community and public participation process that actively involves people who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality in their own recovery. The primary goal of community participation is to provide residents – especially low- and moderate-income (LMI) residents of the community where HUD-funded activities will take place – the opportunity to actively participate in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the programs and projects.

Learn more

Build for the Future Funding Navigator

HUD has developed a centralized hub site, the Build for the Future page, to connect program participants with information and resources about climate resiliency, energy efficiency, renewable energy, environmental justice, and other topics. This includes the Build for the Future Funding Navigator, a searchable database of funding and technical assistance opportunities under the Inflation Reduction Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and others across federal agencies to support efforts to invest in climate resilience.

Learn more

Fair Housing Considerations in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Action Plan Development Grantee Guide and Resources

This guide provides recommendations and examples to help recipients of Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funding effectively prepare the fair housing and civil rights-related elements of CDBG-DR Action Plans. This guide also provides grantees with data sources that may be helpful in understanding their community and in fulfilling data and analysis requirements to meet civil rights obligations.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

1 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

1 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee

HUD convened the first-ever Tribal Intergovernmental Advisory Committee (TIAC) to strengthen the Nation-to-Nation relationship between HUD and Tribal communities, coordinate policy across all HUD programs, and advise on housing priorities of Tribal and Alaska Native communities. TIAC intends to supplement existing Tribal consultation engagements. The establishment of this committee builds on consistent engagement between HUD and Tribes across the country.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

HUD participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Memorandum of Understanding to Support More Affordable Housing in Nevada

In August 2023, the Departments of Housing and Urban Development and the Interior announced a new action to make it easier and more affordable for local communities in the Las Vegas metropolitan area to obtain federal land to build affordable housing. With the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), the Departments established a process to make eligible public lands available for $100 an acre, far below the fair market value, for the construction of critically needed affordable housing projects in Southern Nevada.

Learn more

Thriving Communities Program

The Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Program aims to ensure disadvantaged communities adversely or disproportionately affected by environmental, climate, and human health policy outcomes have the technical tools and organizational capacity for federal aid and deliver quality infrastructure projects that enable their communities and neighborhoods to thrive. HUD is offering technical assistance as part of the Thriving Communities Network, an interagency initiative among the Departments of Transportation, HUD, Energy, Commerce, and Agriculture, as well as the General Services Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency as historic amounts of infrastructure funding reach communities across the country.

Learn more

Rebuilding Trust through Resident-Centered Neighborhood Transformation

In August 2023, the City of Syracuse, New York received Thriving Communities Technical Assistance (TCTA) to strengthen community engagement as a foundation for neighborhood transformation. The city began construction on the Interstate 81 (I-81) viaduct removal project, supported by a Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities planning grant. The original I-81 construction divided a once-thriving primarily Black community in the 15th Ward, displacing more than 1,200 families and 400 businesses. Next year, the Syracuse Housing Authority will begin construction on a new housing development, including redevelopment of public housing, as part of the New 15th Ward project. TCTA will help city staff develop strategies for coordinating timelines across the housing and transportation projects and strengthen community engagement to rebuild trust among residents. A key goal is to ensure residents’ needs are central to decisions about the housing and transportation projects that will transform their neighborhood.

Learn more

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**Department of Justice**

Agency logo

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Department of Justice

Approximately 40 office(s), Numerous location(s), and 115,000 employees in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Department of Justice (DOJ or the Department) is to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights. The Justice Department maintains field offices in all states and territories across the United States and in more than 50 countries around the world.

DOJ developed a Comprehensive Environmental Justice Enforcement Strategy (CEJES) that provides a set of principles and actions to guide and continue its work to advance environmental justice through the enforcement of federal laws, consistent with the agency’s mission. These principles and actions ensure that the entire Justice Department is vigorously and transparently working to secure environmental justice with the full set of legal tools at its disposal, in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency and other federal agencies, and in communication with the communities most affected by the underlying violations of federal law. Four of the DOJ components highlighted in the CEJES roadmap to advance environmental justice are: The Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD), the Civil Rights Division, the Community Relations Service (CRS), and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices.

To learn more about environmental justice at DOJ, please visit DOJ's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known DOJ offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

The Environment and Natural Resources Division

The Civil Rights Division

The Community Relations Service

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Justice's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Justice

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Addressing the Jackson, Mississippi Drinking Water Crisis

In November 2022, Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) attorneys filed a Safe Drinking Water Act lawsuit on behalf of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). ENRD negotiated an interim order with city and state officials to name a court-appointed manager and begin to stabilize the Jackson, Mississippi drinking water system. DOJ’s Office of Environmental Justice worked with the Department’s Southern District of Mississippi U.S. Attorney’s Office, Community Relations Service, and ENRD’s case team, along with EPA, to build a community outreach strategy for Jackson, Mississippi.

Learn more

Action to Address Illegal Dumping in the City of Houston, Texas

In June 2023, DOJ secured a settlement agreement in its investigation into the City of Houston’s response to illegal dumping in Black and Latino neighborhoods. The agreement establishes a three-year period of federal monitoring; data reporting obligations; enhanced community outreach with impacted neighborhoods, including engagement with residents with limited English proficiency; consideration of additional actions to combat commercial sources of illegal dumping and reduce restrictions for residents seeking to use waste depositories; and a federal civil rights training program for specified city employees. The agreement builds upon the city’s March 2023 One Clean Houston initiative, a comprehensive plan to address pervasive illegal dumping and its negative impacts on the health, safety and quality of life of Houston residents.

Learn more

Executives Charged in Connection with Concealing Inaccurately Low Lead Test Results

In April 2023, three former executives for a medical device company were charged with conspiracy, wire fraud, and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) violations for allegedly concealing a device malfunction that allegedly produced inaccurately low lead test results for tens of thousands of children and other patients. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is no safe level of lead in the blood. Additionally, young children and pregnant mothers from low-income households living in public housing are the most vulnerable to lead exposure. DOJ alleged that these defendants deceived customers and the FDA about the reliability of medical tests that detected lead levels. DOJ asserted that by doing so, defendants endangered the health and lives of incredibly vulnerable victims.

Learn more

Pursuit of Tribal Environmental Justice

In July 2023, the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington hosted a Federal/Tribal Regional Summit in Spokane, Washington, alongside the Environment and Natural Resources Division and the Office of Tribal Justice. The summit built on a November 2022 Tribal Listening Session in Washington, DC and a national Federal/Tribal Summit in Columbia, South Carolina in early 2023. The summits are part of a strategy to work with Tribal government representatives, including technical and legal experts, to explore how the Department can identify and prioritize affirmative litigation involving Tribal environmental justice issues.

Learn more

Joint Trainings and Capacity Building Efforts with State and Local Partners

In August 2023, the Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) and the Office of Environmental Justice hosted a one-hour webinar for state attorneys general offices to discuss the importance of community outreach as part of an effective environmental justice strategy.

The Community Relations Service and ENRD’s Environmental Enforcement and Environmental Crimes Sections also presented.

Pursuit of Timely and Effective Remedies in Enforcement Matters

Photo credit: DOJ

Agency logo

The Department incorporated more mitigation and appropriate settlement tools such as Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs) into settlements. SEPs are environmentally beneficial projects that are strongly connected to the alleged violations and are not otherwise required by law. These environmentally beneficial projects help remedy the harm caused by violations of environmental law in the community where the harm occurred. For example, in May 2023, DOJ and EPA announced a Clean Air Act settlement with BP Products to secure important air toxic controls at its Whiting Refinery in Indiana, a $40 million civil penalty, and a SEP. BP Products committed to spend millions of dollars to retrofit and replace old, polluting diesel engines in four frontline communities, with input from citizen advisory committees.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Justice has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOJ litigating components and U.S. Attorneys’ offices typically encounter environmental justice concerns in the context of litigation over other agencies’ NEPA-related actions. However, DOJ’s Bureau of Prisons (BOP) directly addresses environmental justice in its NEPA regulations that apply to new and existing BOP facilities as well as the closing of existing BOP institutions. Environmental justice is a consideration noted in DOJ’s Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) instructions for completing an Environmental Assessment or an Environmental Impact Statement. DOJ’s DEA has no ongoing projects or litigation involving environmental justice. DOJ’s BOP NEPA-related documents analyze environmental justice impacts. To date, no mitigation measures have been recommended or implemented for BOP actions.

Training

1 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

6 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, for employees who work on NEPA, DOJ’s Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) provides training annually to attorneys and staff on environmental justice considerations under NEPA, for purposes of defending agency decisions in federal litigation. For example, in October 2022, ENRD conducted environmental justice training for its new attorneys joining the Division through the Attorney General’s Honors Program. For attendees who work on NEPA, the training covered NEPA and environmental justice.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Justice on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Judicial enforcement of EPA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) lead paint regulations can be an important tool for protecting people, particularly children, from harmful lead exposure. ENRD has discussed enforcement priorities and case development resources with EPA, HUD, and the U.S. Attorneys’ offices. ENRD has also discussed ways that the agencies can collaborate to use a whole-of-government approach to share resources when policy goals are aligned but resources may be limited. The Civil Rights Division set a goal to develop a framework for addressing lead exposure in communities with environmental justice concerns through coordination with ENRD, EPA, and HUD. The framework will establish a process for collaboration and employing legal authorities the Civil Rights Division has for identifying adversely impacted communities.

Lead Paint Enforcement in the Chicago, Illinois Area

In January 2023, DOJ’s Environment and Natural Resources Division and EPA secured remedies that advance environmental justice in the Chicago area, through settlements with Logan Square Aluminum Supply Inc. The settlements resolved alleged violations of the federal Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting regulations at renovation projects performed by Logan Square and its contractors. As part of its settlements, Logan Square agreed to perform $2 million of lead-based paint abatement work in lower income properties, focused on communities with a higher incidence of childhood lead poisoning.

Lead Paint Enforcement in the Southern District of New York

In September 2023, the Southern District of New York U.S. Attorney’s Office and the Environmental Protection Agency secured a settlement against Apex Building Company for violating lead paint safety regulations. The settlement requires Apex to take steps to mitigate potential harms caused by its conduct and pay a civil penalty.

Lead Paint Enforcement in the Southern District of Indiana

In December 2022, the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Office of Inspector General, Environmental Protection Agency, and the Southern District of Indiana U.S. Attorney’s Office secured a 16-month sentence for a contractor who violated federal lead paint safety laws when renovating low- and median income housing in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In November 2022, the Attorney General issued a memorandum on “Strengthening the Federal Government’s Commitment to Language Access.” The memorandum directed federal agencies to provide updated language access plans within 180 days. The memorandum asked the Civil Rights Division to work with federal agencies to support these improved language access efforts, led by the Federal Coordination and Compliance Section under its coordination responsibilities under Executive Orders 12250 and 13166, and with assistance from the Department’s Language Access Coordinator. In August 2023, the Department subsequently released its updated Department-wide Language Access Plan to help ensure that all individuals, regardless of language used, have access to and are able to fully participate in the Department’s programs, activities, and services.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOJ’s Federal Coordination and Compliance Section (Section) implements Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and related authorities that prohibit discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, national origin (including language access), sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), and other bases. DOJ’s Title VI jurisdiction is limited to recipients of federal financial assistance from DOJ, which includes law enforcement agencies, state courts, or correctional facilities. The Section plays a central role in enforcement, regulation, interagency coordination and oversight, and technical assistance.

2 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

2 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

1 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

60 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, the Department took important steps to identify areas of environmental injustice of greatest concern to impacted communities. The Department increased outreach and listening sessions, developed case-specific community outreach plans, and increased coordination with the Community Relations Service. Through these steps, the Department increased the public’s familiarity with federal environmental laws, enforcement processes, the roles of various government agencies, the available remedies to address environmental harms, and how to report concerns about polluting activities or potential violations of law.

The Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) worked with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Community Relations Service (CRS), the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Mississippi, and DOJ’s Environment and Natural Resources Division’s Law and Policy and Environmental Enforcement Sections to build an outreach strategy for Jackson, Mississippi in support of the Safe Drinking Water Act enforcement action in that city. In Cahokia Heights, Illinois, CRS worked to help address the needs of local communities impacted by environmental pollution. Staff consulted with ENRD and EPA on developing an outreach plan to ensure the necessary information reached all members of the diverse community. At a Superfund site in Idaho, CRS facilitated a dialogue between community members and the EPA to discuss local concerns, available EPA grant programs, and technical assistance.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

2 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

Spokane, Washington Federal/Tribal Regional Summit Provided Information on Federal Grants and Technical Assistance

In July 2023, the Environment and Natural Resources Division, the Office of Tribal Justice, and the Eastern District of Washington U.S. Attorney’s Office held a Federal/Tribal Regional Summit that included training by the Department of Housing and Urban Development on lead-safe housing and affordable housing grant resources for Tribal governments and communities.

Learn more

Public Processes (show more/show less)

Over 25 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Listening Sessions in Jackson, Mississippi as Part of a Safe Drinking Water Act Enforcement Action

Examples of outreach conducted include a December 2022 listening session with community leaders to provide an enforcement update and gather input on the impacts of the water crisis and seven in-person events in March 2023 with almost 180 community leaders from a range of stakeholder groups.

Learn more

Listening Session in Lowndes County, Alabama

The Civil Rights Division hosted a listening session in Lowndes County, Alabama regarding the Interim Resolution Agreement between the Department of Justice, the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Alabama Department of Public Health.

Learn more

Outreach in the Southern District of Indiana

In August 2023, the Southern District of Indiana U.S. Attorney’s Office conducted a public outreach session with local and national environmental and community advocacy organizations regarding environmental enforcement.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Justice, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, DOJ updated its Tribal Consultation policy. DOJ will consult with Federally Recognized Tribes before formulating or implementing policies that have Tribal implications. The term “policies” includes: (1) regulations or regulatory policies; (2) proposed legislation; (3) decisions regarding the establishment of federal standards; and (4) other policies for which the Department determines consultation is appropriate and practicable. The term “policies” does not include matters that are the subject of investigation, anticipated or active litigation, or settlement negotiations. It also does not include individual grants or contracts. All decisions regarding whether and how to conduct a consultation, or whether a given policy or topic has Tribal implications, will be coordinated with the Department’s Office of Tribal Justice.

5 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, the Office of Tribal Justice spoke about environmental justice at the March 2023 Midwest Association of Sovereign Tribes meeting. In November 2022, DOJ hosted a hybrid nationwide listening session to seek initial Tribal input on how the Department could better help Tribes secure and protect water and treaty rights. Based on participant feedback, DOJ planned follow-up summits in FY 2023 to get more information. The FY 2023 environmental justice Tribal summits were held in South Carolina, Washington, and Minnesota. Federal and Tribal representatives discussed how to improve litigation and settlement outcomes in DOJ cases involving Tribal water rights adjudications and treaty rights. The regional summits helped DOJ further identify, refine, and develop ways for the federal government and Tribal governments to obtain outcomes that will better address the diverse environmental threats to water, land, fish, plants, and game resources from pollution and climate change.

Training

1 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

23 DOJ Components employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, following the update of DOJ’s consultation policy at the beginning of FY 2023, DOJ’s Office of Tribal Justice did broad outreach across the Department in December 2022 to educate points of contact across components on the consultation policy, including recent changes.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Justice including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

Through DOJ’s first-ever Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ), established in May 2022, the Office engages all of DOJ’s bureaus, components, and offices in the collective pursuit of environmental justice. In August 2023, the Department’s OEJ submitted a report to the Deputy Attorney General evaluating implementation of the Department’s Comprehensive Environmental Justice Enforcement Strategy (CEJES). In October 2023, OEJ publicly released this first-ever Comprehensive Environmental Justice Enforcement Strategy Annual Report, sharing the progress the Department made (through August 3, 2023) in advancing environmental justice under the Strategy. This included efforts of components across the Department (such as ENRD, the Civil Rights Division, and the Civil Division) and OEJ. The report details the case-specific work and related activities done to implement each of the CEJES’ four principles, which ensure that the Department’s environmental justice efforts are transparent and consistent across Divisions. In addition, DOJ continues to advance the objectives outlined in its Fiscal Year 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, which includes “Objective 3.5: Advance Environmental Justice and Tackle the Climate Crisis,” under Strategic Goal 3: Protect Civil Rights.

150-200 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

Numerous new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

19 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 700 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, with the development of trainings and other environmental justice materials, the Department has engaged staff through presentations and webinar discussions. For example, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) held its first-ever environmental crimes conference, which trained 100 agents and analysts from around the country. The Environment and Natural Resources Division’s Environmental Crimes Section and the FBI provided instructors who covered environmental justice, including a case study, and other topics. The training helped expand FBI’s case work and participation in several new taskforces.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

DOJ Language Access Plan

Timely and accurate communication with the public is essential to DOJ’s mission to uphold the rule of law, to keep our country safe, and to protect civil rights. The DOJ Language Access Plan reinforces the Department’s commitment to advancing equity for all, including historically underserved individuals with limited English proficiency, through meaningful language access to DOJ benefits, information, and services.

Learn more

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

93 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

U.S. Attorneys’ Offices Community Reporting Systems

93 of the United States Attorneys’ offices now have environmental justice community reporting systems to improve community members’ ability to inform local government. The reporting procedures encourage citizens to report their concerns about public health, safety, or environmental matters to United States Attorneys’ offices and partner agencies such as EPA.

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

2 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Internal Partnerships Help Integrate Environmental Justice into its Work

In FY 2023, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) established an internal working group as a network for agents and analysts looking at environmental justice cases in the regions their field offices cover. The FBI hosted a quarterly speaker series to expose its workforce to a variety of environmental issues. It also began actively partnering with ENRD’s Environmental Crimes Section and EPA’s Criminal Investigation Division to conduct regular environmental justice meetings, looking for new opportunities for criminal enforcement.

District of New Mexico U.S. Attorney’s Office Joins Environmental Crimes Task Force

The District of New Mexico U.S. Attorney’s Office launched its website and joined the Environmental Crimes Task Force the state of New Mexico launched, which is comprised of many federal and state partners.

Learn more

District of Utah U.S. Attorney’s Office Environmental Justice and Public Reporting Initiative

The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Utah announced a new initiative focusing on Environmental Justice and Public Reporting.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

DOJ participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. Effective communication and collaboration among federal agencies are essential to the whole-of-government effort to advance environmental justice. The Civil Rights Division gathered key staff from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Department of Transportation to determine the best approach for communicating to recipients of federal agency funding that compliance with civil rights laws is required in addition to compliance with environmental laws. DOJ also coordinated with EPA and other federal agencies that have regulatory, enforcement, cleanup, or restoration authorities that can contribute to providing timely and effective remedies for environmental violations, contamination, and injury to natural resources in overburdened communities. For example, ENRD continued to collaborate with HUD and EPA surrounding lead paint and on areas of mutual concern.

The Department of Justice worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Whole-of-Government Approach to Enhance Lead Paint Enforcement and Enforcement of Housing Condition Laws

The Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) has discussed enforcement priorities and case development resources with EPA, HUD, and the U.S. Attorneys’ offices. ENRD also discussed ways agencies can collaborate to use a whole-of-government approach to share resources when policy goals are aligned but resources may be limited. For more information, please visit DOJ’s Comprehensive Environmental Justice Annual Report for example settlements resulting in important remedies.

Southern District of Indiana U.S. Attorney’s Office Interagency Collaboration

The Southern District of Indiana established regular standing meetings with HUD, EPA Office of Inspector General, and other agencies with environmentally focused initiatives to develop civil and criminal environmental cases.

Federal Bureau of Investigation Interagency Taskforce Collaborations are part of DOJ’s Comprehensive Environmental Justice Enforcement Strategy

To expand its case portfolio, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) strengthened relationships with federal, state, and local partners through working groups and taskforces, and trained over 600 FBI employees. The FBI joined or formed ten new environmental crime taskforces/working groups, including the taskforce in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. ENRD’s Environmental Crimes Section has also worked with the FBI on training and increasing visibility related to environmental crimes investigations. Overall, these efforts have contributed to an increase in operational successes. One example is a case involving indictments for dumping construction waste into the wetlands of Puerto Rico (District of Puerto Rico, ENRD, and FBI).

Agency logo

Photo credit: DOJ Civil Rights Division

Wastewater Disposal and Management in Lowndes County, Alabama

In May 2023, the Departments of Justice and Health and Human Services (HHS) reached an interim resolution agreement in the Civil Rights Division’s first-ever Title VI environmental justice investigation into the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Lowndes County Health Department in Lowndes County, Alabama.

Learn more

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**Department of Labor**

Agency logo

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Department of Labor

26 office(s), 15,645 employees, and 2,133 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The Department of Labor’s (DOL) mission is to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

DOL is committed to supporting the Administration’s efforts to pursue environmental justice as a part of its mission. DOL’s mission aligns well with Executive Order 14096’s call to prioritize building an equitable, inclusive, and sustainable economy that offers economic opportunities, workforce training, and high-quality and well-paying jobs, including union jobs, and helping to achieve an equitable transition of the workforce as part of a clean energy future.

To learn more about environmental justice at DOL, please visit DOL's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known DOL offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Bureau of Labor Statistics

Unemployment Insurance Program

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Labor

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Labor in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Advancing Environmental Justice by Building an Equitable and Inclusive Economy

In FY 2023, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) launched the Mega Construction Project Program (Megaproject Program). Through the Megaproject Program, OFCCP focuses the agency’s efforts to bring the public and private sector together on designated Megaprojects to provide a diverse pool of qualified workers with access to good jobs in the construction trades and to promote equitable hiring and fair workplaces by federal construction contractors. The Megaproject Program has been an effective strategy for increasing the representation of diverse, qualified workers in the construction trades and expanding access to good, family-sustaining jobs. OFCCP leverages its relationships in communities across the country to provide on-the-ground assistance to contractors to strengthen their hiring, recruitment, and employment practices. OFCCP also helps contractors broaden the pool of available workers by providing connections to recruitment sources so that projects can fully use the local workforce and get the needed talent. For example, OFCCP works with stakeholders to build the pipeline of workers in time for the work to begin on the project using proven equitable workforce development pathways including pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs. Projects eligible for designation as Megaprojects are valued at $35 million or more in funding, some part of which must be federal funding, and are expected to last for at least one year.

Learn more

Supporting Workers around the World Impacted by Climate Change and Decarbonization

Worker voice and the active participation of workers and their organizations in decision-making are vital to ensuring that workers and communities benefit from climate- and energy-related transitions. Launched in December 2022, the Multilateral Partnership for Organizing, Worker Empowerment, and Rights (M-POWER), advances the development of strong unions globally which are critical to ensuring workers have a voice at the table in climate discussions and that such transitions to a clean energy economy are just. M-POWER, of which the federal government (DOL, U.S. Agency for International Development, and Department of State) is a founding partner, focuses on ensuring working families thrive in the global economy and elevating the role of trade unions and organized workers as essential to advancing democracy.

Learn more

Ensuring Underserved Communities have Access to Good Jobs

Agency logo

As underscored by DOL’s Good Jobs Initiative, underserved communities face significant challenges with access to good jobs, including lack of equal employment opportunities and lack of support services. DOL is partnering with other federal agencies to ensure federal infrastructure dollars are implementing the Good Jobs Principles to remove barriers and expand access for all working people, including underserved communities, and partnering with state and local actors to encourage good hiring and retention practices in the private sector. In FY 2023, DOL released a toolkit to assist federal agencies, state, Tribal, and local governments, employers, as well as labor and worker advocacy organizations unleash their power to improve job quality and equity.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Labor in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DOL’s Justice40 covered programs are administered by the Employment and Training Administration. Each of the programs aim to improve economic opportunity through workforce training and development and produce high-quality employment outcomes for workers.

For more information on DOL's Justice40 covered programs, please contact EnvironmentalJustice@DOL.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Labor has:

4 Justice40 covered program(s)

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, DOL has:

Approximately $4 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, DOL is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 4 covered program(s) at DOL working to deliver benefits for communities include:

1 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

4 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Labor is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

DOL Job Corps

Job Corps helps eligible young people ages 16 through 24 complete their high school education, trains them for meaningful careers, and assists them with obtaining employment at no cost to them. Training in “Renewable Resources” is a top 10 high-growth field. Job Corps includes cost-free housing, meals, basic health care, a living allowance, and career transition assistance in sites across the country.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Labor has:

241 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$1,908,333,000 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Pathway Home Grants for Adults Re-Entering the Workforce

In June 2023, DOL announced $49.4 million in Reentry Employment Opportunities Pathway Home grants to 17 organizations across 15 states to provide pre- and post-release job training and services for adults reentering the workforce following incarceration in a local jail or state correctional facility. These Pathway Home grants eliminate the time gap between when people are released from prison and when they enroll into a workforce development reentry program. By enrolling participants while they are incarcerated, grantees begin foundational skills, job search strategies, occupational training leading to industry-recognized credentials, and more. Post-release, the participants remain in the program, return to their communities, and receive job search assistance, further education, peer support, supportive services, and additional help. This program gives priority for projects serving high-poverty areas with a scarcity of reentry services, and will help advance equity for people who face significant barriers to labor market reentry.

Learn more

YouthBuild Grants

In April 2023, DOL announced $93 million in YouthBuild grants serving 68 high unemployment and high poverty communities. YouthBuild grants support a pre-apprenticeship model that provides disadvantaged youth with occupational skills training and educational guidance, with an emphasis on green building techniques, including sustainable materials, solar panel installation, and weatherization. YouthBuild grant applicants must target service areas that demonstrate need based on high youth unemployment and poverty.

Learn more

Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities

In September 2023, DOL announced a Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) award of $44.2 million to 32 grant recipients in the Appalachian, Delta, and Northern Border regions. The WORC Initiative grants will create economic mobility; address historic inequities for disadvantaged communities, rural areas, and underserved and underrepresented communities; and produce high-quality employment outcomes for local workers enabling them to remain and thrive in their communities.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Labor made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Change to DOL Funding Announcements

The funding announcements for some grants now explicitly refer to the Justice40 Initiative, environmental justice, and the goal of delivering benefits for disadvantaged communities. For example, the funding opportunity announcements for the Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities (WORC) round 5 include a description of the Justice40 Initiative and refer applicants to the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool to identify disadvantaged communities to benefit from the program.

Green Job Training for Disadvantaged Youth at Job Corps Centers

Job Corps offers expanded training opportunities in green industries such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, and environmental conservation. For example, Job Corps added a Solar Photovoltaic program and developed a partnership with Mercedes-Benz USA that incorporates green energy/electric car components. This not only prepares students for careers in emerging sectors but also contributes to environmental sustainability and resilience.

Renovating Job Corps Facilities for Health and Safety of Students

The Office of Job Corps’ highest priority is the health and safety of Job Corps students, and potential environmental hazards are regularly reviewed and acted upon at all worksites and training facilities. This may involve implementing measures to mitigate exposure to pollutants, providing training on workplace safety protocols, and advocating for regulatory compliance and enforcement. Job Corps facilities are also required to reduce direct greenhouse gas emissions by 2.5% or more per year, accomplished primarily by campus modernization efforts and reducing building and fleet energy consumption.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Labor is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Building Experience Through Training and Education in Rural Appalachia Ohio

The Building Experience Through Training and Education in Rural Appalachia Ohio (BETTER Appalachia) program, funded in September 2022 through the Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities grant, advances the Justice40 Initiative. It focuses on providing on-the-job training opportunities to individuals in Athens and Meigs counties, Ohio who are underserved and underrepresented in the workforce or have barriers to employment. The program is a collaboration between community development organizations, employer and industry partners, and state/local workforce development centers. Key activities include offering training, educational, professional, and personal development opportunities. Participants are also employed for up to six months at either a Rural Action, Inc. social enterprise or one of the industry partners at $14/hour.

GRID Alternatives in Madera and Fresno Counties, California

GRID Alternatives in Madera and Fresno Counties, California is a Reentry Employment Opportunities Pathway Home grantee funded from July 2020 through December 2023. They aim to provide individuals with a hands-on introduction to solar training before release from incarceration. One local worker who benefitted from the GRID Pathway Home grant, Juan, started his journey from GRID solar trainee to Crew Lead during incarceration where he took hands-on classes using real system components. After graduation, Juan became a Solar Installer at a local solar energy company. His hard work paid off, and as a Crew Lead his team now works on commercial projects across California. He even hired a former GRID Pathway Home classmate.

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Labor has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Labor on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Heat is the leading cause of death among all weather-related phenomena, and it is becoming more dangerous as nine of the last ten years were among the warmest on record. Workers in agriculture and construction are among the highest risk, but the problem affects all workers exposed to heat. Workers of color disproportionately make up the population of employees in essential jobs who are exposed to high levels of heat. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has begun the rulemaking process to consider a heat-specific workplace standard. OSHA’s milestones include: October 2021: published an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that received 965 public comments. May 2022: held virtual public stakeholder meeting attended by over 1,300 people. August 2023: convened a Small Business Advocacy Review panel. 82 small entity representatives spoke over six sessions. July 2024: announced the release of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, after ongoing work in FY 2023.

Protecting Miners from Silica

In July 2023, the Mine Safety and Health Administration published a proposed rule to better protect all miners from exposure to silica dust. Silica dust is an occupational carcinogen that puts miners at risk of developing preventable but potentially fatal diseases like silicosis, lung cancer, and black lung disease. On April 18, 2024, the agency issued a final rule that will better protect all miners (coal and metal/nonmetal miners) from exposure to silica dust. The final rule also updates existing respiratory protection standards to better protect miners from exposure to all airborne hazards, including silica dust, asbestos, and other contaminants.

Enforcing H-2A Temporary Agricultural Worker Housing Standards

The Wage and Hour Division (WHD) has enforcement responsibilities under the H-2A temporary agricultural worker visa program that help protect workers against the impact of severe weather due to climate change. For example, WHD enforces agricultural worker housing standards that require any housing to be structurally sound and provide shelter against the elements, all exterior openings to be effectively screened with 16-mesh material, all screen doors to be equipped with self-closing devices, buildings to be heated to a minimum of 70 degrees, and a sufficient number of windows opening directly outdoors, all of which help ensure that workers are not harmed by the extreme effects of climate change.

Protecting H-2A Temporary Agricultural Workers from the Impacts of Severe Weather and “Acts of God”

DOL has the responsibility to ensure that employers using H-2A temporary workers affected by disasters continue to honor their contractual obligations (i.e., providing housing, meals, or provision of cooking facilities as originally disclosed) until DOL says the emergency makes fulfilling the contract impossible. If a contract “impossibility” determination is made, DOL will ensure the employer complies with the steps in the “H-2A” contract “impossibility” provision (e.g., satisfying the three-fourths guarantee for the time that has elapsed from the start of the work contract to the time of its termination, outbound transportation, reimbursement for inbound transportation). Additionally, employers must also make efforts to transfer the workers to comparable employment acceptable to the worker and consistent with existing immigration law.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Labor in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The mission of the Civil Rights Center is to promote justice and equal opportunity by acting with impartiality and integrity in administering and enforcing various civil rights laws. These laws protect: DOL employees and applicants for DOL employment, and individuals who apply to, participate in, work for, or come into contact with programs and activities that are conducted by or receive financial assistance from DOL, or, under certain circumstances, from other federal agencies.

In FY 2023, DOL’s Civil Rights Center (CRC) launched a comprehensive survey to assess each DOL agency’s current language access practices and pinpoint areas to improve access for workers and other external departmental stakeholders. The CRC also established the Centralized Office of Language Assistance to improve access to DOL-conducted programs and activities for limited English proficiency individuals and published DOL’s FY 2023 Language Access Plan, which revised DOL’s previous plan published in 2011.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Labor in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

1 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Environmental Justice Listening Session

On December 9, 2022, DOL held a Virtual Public Stakeholder Meeting. During this listening session, DOL collected public input on what the greatest needs and/or barriers facing disadvantaged and/or environmentally-impacted communities are as it relates to employment, worker protections, and worker rights. Interested parties that were not able to attend the calls were able to submit their feedback in writing to environmentaljustice@dol.gov.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Labor, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, DOL completed its Revised Final Tribal Consultation Policy, which was effective on October 10, 2023, and was published in the Federal Register on December 27, 2023.

1 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

2 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, in FY 2023, the DOL Tribal Liaison arraigned an environmental justice listening session specifically for Tribal stakeholders.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Labor including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DOL is working on establishing goals, objectives, and priority actions for advancing environmental justice institutionally. In FY 2023, each subagency reported internally on its environmental justice activities and goals. There was a wide range of activities noted from miner safety to job opportunities for underrepresented groups, bringing economic benefits to local communities.

3 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

OSHA Protects People Working in the Heat

Several new Heat campaign products were released in FY 2023, including the launch of a nationwide heat contest, to raise awareness of the dangers and hazards of heat exposure in both indoor and outdoor workplaces and resources on personal risk factors, hydration, and pregnant workers and heat.

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

2 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

1 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

Native American Employment and Training Council

The Native American Employment and Training Council (NAETC) provides guidance to the Secretary of Labor regarding the overall operation and administration of Native American programs authorized under Section 166 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), as well as the implementation of other programs providing services to Native American youth and adults under this Act. DOL updated the NAETC Charter in 2023.

DOL Internal Climate Working Group

The DOL internal Climate Working Group, organized by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, consists of representatives from across DOL sub-agencies, and coordinates the various climate priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration and DOL leadership.

DOL Internal Climate Action Plan Group

The Climate Action Plan meetings, organized by the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, are cross-DOL subagency meetings focused on the implementation of the Climate Action Plan, published yearly, which is an ongoing program to ensure robust federal mission resilience, protect worker safety (before, during, and after climate-related events), mitigate environmental threats to DOL facilities, and improve procurement and acquisition stewardship.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

DOL participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. In addition, DOL has entered into memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with several agency partners, including the Departments of Commerce, Transportation, the Interior, and Energy, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the General Services Administration, to embed job quality, worker empowerment, and equity provisions in federal funding opportunities from these agencies. DOL shares its subject matter expertise on job quality, equity, and worker empowerment with federal agencies as well as shared stakeholders including funding applicants, state and local governments, the private sector, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, labor unions, and others, through joint engagement opportunities.

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**Department of Transportation**

Agency logo

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Engage@dot.gov

Department of Transportation

11 office(s), 1,100 location(s), 55,922 employees, and 1,522 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Department of Transportation (DOT or the Department) is to deliver the world’s leading transportation system, serving the American people and economy through the safe, efficient, sustainable, and equitable movement of people and goods.

Smart and inclusive transportation investments transform economies, connect people to opportunities and each other, and empower communities to build generational wealth for the future. The current transportation system distributes benefits and burdens that vary greatly by location due to historical and systemic patterns of disparity. DOT or the Department is working to ensure that all communities receive the benefits that transportation brings and are not left out, or made to shoulder disproportionate burdens caused by transportation infrastructure. By making equity and environmental justice priorities and supporting them with the historic funding provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, DOT is working to meet the Department’s mission to deliver the world’s leading transportation system, serving the American people and economy through the safe, efficient, sustainable, and equitable movement of people and goods.

To learn more about environmental justice at DOT, please visit DOT's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known DOT offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Federal Aviation Administration

Federal Highway Administration

Federal Transit Administration

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Transportation's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Transportation

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

DOT Requires Airline Lavatories to Be More Accessible for Wheelchair Users

DOT recognized the importance of meaningful public engagement to address issues related to disability, language access, and resources. In July 2023, on the 33rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, DOT announced a new rule which requires airline lavatories to be more accessible. This rulemaking, authorized by the Air Carrier Access Act, would require airlines to make lavatories on new single-aisle aircraft large enough to permit a passenger with a disability and attendant, both equivalent in size to a 95th percentile male, to approach, enter, and maneuver within as necessary to use the aircraft lavatory.

Learn more

National Roadway Safety Strategy Call to Action Campaign

In February 2023, DOT launched the Department’s National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) Call to Action campaign, asking stakeholders to commit to specific actions to reduce serious injuries and deaths on our roadways, which have reached crisis levels and can disproportionately impact communities with environmental justice concerns. For example, the NRSS includes an action to protect vulnerable road users through updates to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

Learn more

DOT Equity Council

The DOT Equity Council (Council) was established through DOT Order 1000.17 in December 2022 built on the foundation laid by the DOT Equity Task Force to further institutionalize equity across the Department’s policies and programs. The DOT Equity Council serves as the coordinating body for implementation of the Department’s various authorities on equity, development and execution of equity initiatives, and achievement of the Department’s equity goals.

Learn more

DOT’s Thriving Communities Program

Photo credit: DOT

Agency logo

DOT’s Thriving Communities Program aims to ensure that disadvantaged communities adversely or disproportionately affected by environmental, climate, and human health policy outcomes have the technical tools and organizational capacity to compete for federal aid and deliver quality infrastructure projects that enable their communities and neighborhoods to thrive. With planning occurring in FY 2023, DOT welcomed hundreds of attendees for the first-ever Thriving Communities Program Convening, hosted by DOT and the Build America Bureau’s Thriving Communities Program. The two-day event, held on November 30 and December 1, 2023, connected leaders from 62 disadvantaged communities with federal agency staff to learn, collaborate, and boost infrastructure access.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The Justice40 Initiative allows DOT to identify and prioritize projects that benefit rural, suburban, Tribal, and urban communities facing barriers to affordable, equitable, reliable, and safe transportation. Through the Justice40 Initiative, DOT is also assessing the negative impacts of transportation projects and systems on disadvantaged communities and will consider whether meaningful public involvement is taking place throughout a project’s lifecycle.

DOT’s Justice40 Story Map describes DOT’s approach to the Justice40 Initiative, including three case studies. The Story Map uses data from the Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer to demonstrate the connection between the components of transportation disadvantage for each case study and how each project’s benefits may help reverse or mitigate how the community experiences disadvantage.

For more information on DOT's Justice40 covered programs, please contact Justice40@dot.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Transportation has:

40 Justice40 covered program(s), including 39 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, DOT has:

Approximately $150 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2026 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, DOT is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 40 covered program(s) at DOT working to deliver benefits for communities include:

18 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

26 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

40 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

21 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Transportation is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Foster Economic Sustainability Throughout Kentucky Project

Announced for funding in September 2023 through DOT’s Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program, this project in Kentucky involves project development, final design, and construction activities for various track improvements in a rail yard, upgrades to multiple bridges along Paducah and Louisville Railway’s 280-mile main line, and rehabilitation of locomotives. The project will reduce delays and increase the safety and resiliency with reduced chance of derailments on a rail line that transports hazardous chemicals.

Learn more

New Orleans Regional Transit Authority

In June 2023, the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (RTA) received $71 million in Low or No Emission grant to fund the purchase of zero-emission vehicles and charging equipment, provide a microgrid to support charging resiliency after major storm events, and design and implement a workforce training program. The City of New Orleans experiences high climate and disaster burden, high poverty, and poor air quality. The RTA plays a crucial role in providing mobility to residents, tourists, and disabled individuals in New Orleans. In addition to funding for the addition of 20 electric buses, chargers and microgrid technology, $3.5 million of the award is allocated to developing a training program to support the maintenance of electric buses and charging facilities.

Learn more

Buses for Coeur D’Alene Transit System

Announced in March 2023 by the Federal Transit Administration, the project, and funded by the Tribal Transit Program, will allow for the purchase of two buses for the Coeur D’Alene Tribe’s transit system, which serves an estimated 65,750 riders annually in Benewah and Kootenai counties in northern Idaho. The buses will allow the Tribe to continue to provide safe, timely, and fare-free public transportation that allows residents to access jobs, schools, healthcare, and essential services.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of Transportation has:

21 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

Over $43 billion available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Thriving Communities Program

DOT’s Thriving Communities Program is coordinating capacity building efforts with other federal technical assistance programs and federal staff in regional and state offices through the Federal interagency Thriving Communities Network to meet communities where they are and leverage resources. Building upon the previous year’s program that funded four national capacity builder teams to support 64 communities who were announced in April 2023, an additional $23.1 million was made available in September 2023 to enable support to more disadvantaged and low-resourced communities.

Learn more

Reconnecting Communities Grant Program

The Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program is the first-ever federal program dedicated to reconnecting communities that were previously cut off from economic opportunities by transportation infrastructure. Funding supports planning grants and capital construction grants, as well as technical assistance, to restore community connectivity through the removal, retrofit, mitigation, or replacement of eligible transportation infrastructure facilities. In February 2023, Transportation Secretary Buttigieg announced a historic $185 million in grant awards for 45 projects through the new Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program. That summer, the FY 2023 Reconnecting Communities Program was combined with the Neighborhood Access and Equity Grant Program into a single $3.155 billion funding announcement that emphasized assisting economically disadvantaged communities with planning and capital construction.

Learn more

Low or No Emission Grants

The purpose of the Low or No Emission Vehicle Program is to support the transition of the nation’s transit fleet to the lowest polluting and most energy efficient transit vehicles. The program provides funding to state and local governmental authorities for the purchase or lease of zero-emission and low-emission transit buses, including acquisition, construction, and leasing of required supporting facilities. In June 2023, Federal Transit Administration announced 130 awards totaling nearly $1.7 billion from President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law for transit projects in 46 states and territories.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of Transportation made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

DOT’s Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer Tool

In May 2023, DOT launched the Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer tool, an interactive mapping tool to understand where transportation insecurity, defined as limited transportation access and safety combined with a high cost-burden, is most acute across the country. It is designed to complement the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) by providing users deeper insight into the Transportation disadvantage component of the CEJST, and the ETC Explorer’s Transportation Insecurity component, which will help ensure the benefits of DOT’s investments are addressing the transportation-related causes of disadvantage.

Learn more

DOT Discretionary Grant Dashboard

DOT launched an online DOT Discretionary Grant Dashboard to make it easier for communities to search the full set of federal transportation grant programs and find those that may align with local needs. Designed for ease of use to navigate DOT programs, the Dashboard provides users with a way to sort by eligible activities, applicant type and keywords. Designed with all communities in mind, the Dashboard identified grant programs with rural and tribal set-asides or match waivers available.

Learn more

Streamlining Funding Opportunities

DOT piloted a new approach of releasing combined Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) to streamline the process for applicants applying for multiple discretionary grant programs and reduce administrative barriers for non-traditional applicants. The combined NOFOs in FY 2023 included a combination of the Reconnecting Communities Grant Program with the Neighborhood Access and Equity Programs as well as a combined NOFO for Multimodal Project Discretionary Grants – which combined funding opportunities for Mega, Rural, and INFRA grant programs to reduce application burden.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of Transportation is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Kapalama Container Terminal at Honolulu Harbor, Hawaii

Hawaii DOT’s $47.3 million Kapalama Container Terminal project funded from the Port Infrastructure Development Program, will expand cargo handling capacity by 40% at the state’s largest commercial port, which is currently experiencing severe congestion. Investing in electrified cranes, solar, and a resilient long-duration microgrid not only reduces port emissions, but also increases the resiliency and reliability of the port during extreme weather events, energy disruptions, and natural disasters, thereby mitigating supply chain disruptions for the Hawaiian Islands. 80% of all goods that Hawaii’s residents consume are imported, with 98% of those goods processed through this port. Improving the capacity, resiliency, and reliability of the port helps goods reach families and businesses across the island of Oahu – which includes disadvantaged communities – more efficiently, which in turn lowers the cost of basic needs like fresh food, clothing, and fuel. The project has also incorporated policies to encourage the hiring of individuals from local low-income communities.

Learn more

U.S. Highway 64 over the Alligator River, North Carolina

North Carolina DOT’s $271 million project to replace the moveable span U.S. Highway 64’s Alligator River Bridge will remove extensive detours or delays to both motorists and water cargo due to increasingly frequent mechanical failures. In January 2023, DOT announced the award of a $110 million DOT Multimodal Program Discretionary grant for the project that not only funds the bridge replacement, it also provides for broadband installation infrastructure and a separated bike lane benefiting disadvantaged communities that depend on the bridge as major transportation and evacuation corridor that connects Northeastern North Carolina to the Outer Banks.

Learn more

Memphis Area Transit Authority’s New Operating and Maintenance Facility & Electric Buses in Memphis, Tennessee

Memphis Area Transit Authority’s (MATA) $76 million project will build a new Operating and Maintenance facility and purchase battery electric buses and related charging equipment, thereby allowing the agency to transition its fleet to electric buses, increasing service levels, reducing wait and travel times, improving the reliability of service, making transit simpler to use, and training employees to work on the new technologies. Funding from both the Low or No Emission Program and Buses and Bus Facilities Program provided funding for the MATA project. The MATA service area includes disadvantaged communities that would benefit from improvements with lowered emissions and increased safety and expanded access.

Learn more

The Chinatown Stitch: A Reconnecting Communities Story

Photo credit: DOT

Reconnecting Communities: Repairing the harm caused by the infrastructure choices of the past

The City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was awarded a FY 2023 Neighborhood Access and Equity Program Reconnecting Communities grant to construct a cap that covers a portion of the existing below-grade Vine Street Expressway with a public park. For almost 100 years, the area was home to generations of Chinese immigrants. Churches, businesses, and other social and cultural organizations helped preserve culture and cultivate neighborhood character. The Vine Street Expressway was completed in 1991. The Expressway connected existing Interstates in Philadelphia, decimating communities and dividing neighborhoods, including Chinatown. The new project will ensure that residents and visitors in Chinatown can safely travel by any mode they choose. It will increase access to greenspace and reconnect the two sides of Chinatown divided by the Expressway.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Transportation has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOT Order 5610.1C establishes procedures for consideration of environmental impacts in decision-making on proposed DOT actions. The Order provides that information on environmental impacts of proposed actions will be made available to the public through environmental impact statements, environmental assessments, or findings of no significant impact. These documents serve as the single vehicle for environmental findings and coordination. DOT’s agencies (also called operating administrations) may then provide additional NEPA guidance that is further tailored to their specific mission and actions. DOT also maintains Department-wide guidance (currently found at DOT EJ Order 5610.2C) that establishes procedures to advance DOT’s environmental justice strategy.

Project Modifications

2 project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

I-526 Lowcountry Corridor West Improvements

The Federal Highway Administration’s I-526 Lowcountry Corridor project is intended to increase capacity and improve operations at the I-26/I-526 interchange and along the I-526 mainline in South Carolina. An extensive environmental justice community mitigation plan was developed in concert with impacted communities. Examples of mitigation include pre-employment training in the fields of engineering, construction, and transportation; on-the-job training; educational and scholarship opportunities for impacted communities; and implementing a Single-Family Affordable Housing Replacement Housing Program, a Multi-Family Housing Program, and a Small Business Development Program.

I-26 Asheville Connector

The I-26 Connector will be a median-divided freeway to connect I-26 in southwest Asheville to U.S. Highway 19/23/70 in northwest Asheville. Project modifications and mitigation measures are being implemented as a result of environmental justice concerns. Examples include eliminating the need to displace the Community Baptist Church and improved pedestrian infrastructure.

Training

20 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

354 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, the National Transit Institute, which is funded by the Federal Transit Administration, held a pilot of a new course, the Environmental Justice for Transit Professionals course, at DOT headquarters in August 2023. In September 2023, the National Highway Institute, which is funded by the Federal Highway Administration, held a pilot of the new Environmental Justice Analysis in NEPA course for transportation professionals in North Carolina.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of Transportation on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, the Department issued a number of proposed actions aimed at reducing the harm of transportation projects. As shown in the examples below, DOT issued proposed rules that would reduce transportation emissions, increase pipeline and vehicular safety, and increase the equitable distribution of benefits. DOT has since recently taken final action on many of these proposals.

Proposed Regulation to Significantly Improve the Gas Pipeline Leak Detection and Repair

In August 2023, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) announced a proposed new rule to significantly improve the detection and repair of leaks from gas distribution pipelines. As directed by the bipartisan Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety (PIPES) Act of 2020, the proposed rule would create good-paying jobs, deploy pipeline workers across the country to keep more product in the pipe, and prevent dangerous accidents. These actions, if finalized, would boost efficiency, cut harmful pollution and waste, and are estimated to create up to $2.3 billion annually in benefits.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Minimum Standards and Requirements Regulation

Announced in February 2023, the Federal Highway Administration’s EV Minimum Standards and Requirements regulation requires a Community Engagement Outcomes Report for the National EV Infrastructure Formula Program, a Justice40 covered program. States must include in their State EV Infrastructure Deployment Plans a description of the community engagement activities conducted as part of the development and approval of their most recently submitted plan, including engagement with disadvantaged communities.

Corporate Average Fuel Economy Standards Regulation Update

In July 2023, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) proposed new fuel economy standards for passenger cars and light trucks and fuel efficiency standards for model years (MYs) 2027-2031. Finalized in June 2024, the new rule will increase fuel economy 2% per year for model years 2027-2031 for passenger cars, while light trucks will increase 2% per year for model years 2029-2031. These increases will bring the average light-duty vehicle fuel economy up to approximately 50.4 miles per gallon by model year 2031, saving passenger car and light truck owners more than $600 in fuel over the lifetime of their vehicles. Heavy-duty pickup truck and van fuel efficiency will increase 10% per year for model years 2030-2032 and 8% per year for model years 2033-2035. This will result in a fleetwide average of approximately 35 miles per gallon by model year 2035, saving heavy-duty pickup and van owners more than $700 in fuel over the lifetime of their vehicles. These new fuel economy standards will save our nation billions of dollars, help reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, and make our air cleaner for everyone, including for communities overburdened by harmful air emissions.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOT is focused on reducing inequities across its transportation systems and the communities they affect. To this end, DOT continues to create, strengthen, and implement nondiscrimination policies. DOT’s agencies (also called operating administrations) increased the use of nondiscriminatory language in Notice of Funding Opportunities and strengthened documentation of civil rights compliance as part of its pre-award assessments. In September 2023, DOT approved its Language Access Plan and is moving swiftly towards implementation by creating working groups and establishing agreements for language services. DOT also reviewed and updated policies and tools including Federal Aviation Administration’s Order 1050.1F, “Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures,” and Federal Railroad Administration’s Justice40 Rail Explorer.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a tool that DOT has to achieve environmental goals such as just treatment and equitable access in transportation. DOT’s Title VI regulations at 49 CFR. Part 21 and DOT Order 100.12C, “The U.S. Department of Transportation Title VI Program,” are designed to provide equal opportunity and access in all programs receiving federal financial assistance from DOT, by ensuring nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency). Equal opportunity connects all people and communities to transportation programs that receive federal financial assistance from DOT.

15 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

Training

48 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

1,042 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Transportation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

DOT engages in external engagements on a daily basis both related to specific projects through the project planning and NEPA processes and to advance broader Departmental priorities. For example, DOT’s University Transportation Centers Program (UTC) continues to strengthen its partnerships and engage with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions and Universities, Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities by increasing research opportunities for institutions and advancing economic and educational opportunities in transportation. In February 2023, DOT announced a record number of HBCUs, MSIs, and Tribal Colleges participating in the UTC program.

DOT’s tools and resources are aimed at enhancing its provision of information to its stakeholders and the public. This includes websites and webinars on grant application processes, websites and networks for technical assistance, and tools to identify and evaluate the impacts of transportation on communities, amongst many others. DOT is continuing to develop and advance these resources.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

Over 10 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Department of Transportation’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator

Webinar: Utilizing DOT Data and Mapping Tools for Stronger Grant Applications

Held in September 2023, DOT’s webinar on utilizing DOT data and mapping tools for stronger grant applications highlighted new features of the DOT Navigator, including a new webpage on Data and Mapping Tools and presentations on the Screening Tool for Equity Analysis of Projects and the Equitable Transportation Community Explorer. The webinar also provided tips for DOT grant competitiveness and featured a live discussion panel of DOT discretionary grant experts.

Learn more

Webinar: Identifying DOT Discretionary Grant Opportunities

Held in May 2023, DOT’s webinar on identifying discretionary grant opportunities showcased the DOT Discretionary Grants Dashboard, a tool that makes it easier to search for and find grant opportunities based on project type, organization type, and other considerations. The webinar also highlighted the Wildlife Crossings Program, Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Program and other new resources available on the DOT Navigator.

Learn more

Tribal Transit Symposium

To provide a one-stop shop for technical assistance for Tribal leaders and Tribal organizations, DOT and the Federal Transit Administration co-hosted a Tribal Transit Symposium in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in May 2023. The two-day learning opportunity included information on initiating transit programs on Tribal lands and technical assistance to expand and improve existing Tribal transit systems.

Learn more

Public Processes (show more/show less)

Several public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Request for Information: Equitable Transportation Community Explorer

In February 2023, DOT issued a Request for Information to solicit feedback on DOT’s updated Equitable Transportation Community Explorer and Index methodology that supports the Justice40 Initiative. The resulting 51 public comments and feedback were integrated into the update of the tool.

Learn more

First DOT and Federal Transit Administration Roundtable Discussion on Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Transit Experience

In October 2022, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) held a roundtable discussion in New York City with local leaders of the Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AA & NHPI) communities regarding the experience of riders of Asian descent on New York City’s public transportation system. This roundtable was the first in a series of planned discussions around the nation to help DOT and FTA better understand local perceptions of public transit by AA & NHPI riders and identify potential solutions to better meet the needs of these communities.

Learn more

Request for Information: Equity Action Plan Update

In June 2023, DOT issued a Request for Information (RFI) inviting public comment regarding how the Department’s work to advance equity (including environmental justice) has impacted organizations and communities, as well as input on performance metrics, data sets, tools, and research to measure and advance transportation equity (including environmental justice). The responses to this RFI helped the Department understand the impact of its equity activities to date and inform equity-related activities and performance metrics prioritized through the 2023 update to DOT’s Equity Action Plan (released in February 2024).

Learn more

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Transportation, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

As a follow-up action to the President’s January 26, 2021, Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening the Nation-to-Nation Relationships, DOT, after consultations with Indian Tribes, issued an update to its Tribal Consultation Policy and Procedures (DOT Order 5301.1A) to improve and implement the policies and directives of Executive Order 13175. The goal of consultation under the DOT Order is to ensure the preservation and protection of the rights and resources of Indian Tribes under treaties, the trust relationship, and federal law. The consultation policy applies to Indian Tribes and Alaskan Native Claims Settlement Act corporations. Consultation will be carried out in accordance with the process and directives in the Order, Executive Order 13175, all Presidential Memoranda regarding Tribal Consultation, and applicable federal law. The consultation process should also adhere to the principles and standards in the Presidential Memorandum on Uniform Standards for Tribal Consultation.

Several Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

DOT Participates in Second Annual White House Tribal Nations Summit

Transportation Secretary Buttigieg attended the second annual White House Tribal Nations Summit, during which the Secretary announced a slate of actions to build on DOT’s ongoing work to deliver infrastructure funding to Indian Country including Regional Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) agreements, an electric vehicle initiative for Tribal Nations, a Tribal Transit Symposium, a Tribal Aviation Symposium, a Tribal Maritime Roundtable, and a multi-agency effort to improving highway safety in Indian Country.

Federal Transit Administration Sought Comments on Tribal Transit Programs

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted a consultation with Tribal Nations and requested comments related to the Tribal Transit Program. Specifically, FTA consulted with Tribal recipients to ensure the program is administered in a beneficial manner following increases in the amount of funding available and increases in the number of Tribes participating, as well as other changes related to the program.

Tribal Maritime Symposium

The Maritime Administration (MARAD) held an inaugural Maritime Tribal Roundtable to discuss maritime and intermodal transportation programs and funding opportunities. This conversation included sharing information about available resources and ideas to support maritime and intermodal transportation needs for Tribal communities. The roundtable was an opportunity for Tribal representatives to hear from MARAD leadership how they support maritime infrastructure investments, learn where to find grants to fund Tribal maritime infrastructure and planning projects, and receive on-the-spot technical assistance on how MARAD can help Tribes succeed in their maritime transportation projects. Tribal representatives were able to ask questions and share ideas, insights, and experiences to help bring safe, equitable, and sustainable transportation to Indian Country.

Several Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) engages in technical assistance assessments through the Tribal Technical Program and staff participate in conferences related to Tribal interests, such as the Alaska Tribal Transportation Work Group annual conference and the DOT/FTA Tribal Transit Symposium.

Training

14 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

47 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, the Director of DOT’s Tribal Affairs Office within the Office of the Secretary provided an in-depth training on customs and courtesies, to include resources that may be utilized when collaborating with Tribal Nations, to the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Transportation including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

DOT has taken, and is continuing to take, significant steps to embed equity and environmental justice in all of its programs, policies, and actions. By ensuring the consideration of equity in grant application evaluation, developing and implementing strategic and action plans that are prepared with an equity lens, and standing up new programs aimed at reducing harms to underserved and overburdened communities and increasing benefits to disadvantaged communities, DOT is demonstrating a commitment to advance equity and environmental justice throughout the transportation sector.

10,461 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

3 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

11 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

832 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, Federal Railroad Administration employees attending training on environmental justice resulted in the employees being better equipped to address and manage environmental justice issues in program management, project, environmental, and/or grant review and/or project implementation.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

DOT Research, Development, and Technology Strategic Plan

Released in January 2023, the Research, Development, and Technology (RD&T) Strategic Plan (FY 2022-2026) – Building a Better Transportation Future for All presents the Department’s transportation research priorities and strategies for the next five years and beyond. The purpose of the plan is to outline a national transportation research vision to guide America’s transportation research priorities and improve coordination of transportation research. The plan defines the role of the Department’s RD&T programs to lead the transformation of our nation’s transportation system in partnership with stakeholders. It further describes the RD&T priorities and strategies the Department will use to meet the Administration’s strategic goals including safety, economic strength and global competitiveness, equity, climate and sustainability, and transformation.

Learn more

Blueprint to Decarbonize America’s Transportation Sector

In January 2023, the Biden-Harris Administration released the U.S. National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization (Blueprint). Developed by the Departments of Energy, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency, the Blueprint is a landmark strategy for cutting all greenhouse emissions from the transportation sector by 2050. It exemplifies the Biden-Harris Administration’s whole-of-government approach to addressing the climate crisis and meeting President Biden’s goals of securing a 100% clean electrical grid by 2035 and reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The Blueprint builds on President Biden’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, which together represent historic investments in the future of our nation that will transform how we move and live while we build the backbone of a safer and more sustainable transportation system.

Learn more

Enabling Safe and Accessible Air Travel

DOT’s Disability Policy Priorities highlight work that DOT is undertaking to increase access for people with disabilities across four focus areas: enabling safe and accessible air travel; enabling multimodal accessibility of public transportation facilities, vehicles, and rights-of-way; enabling access to good-paying jobs and business opportunities for people with disabilities; and enabling accessibility of electric vehicles and automated vehicles. In support of the first focus area, in FY 2023, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) initiated a three-year research roadmap to investigate the feasibility of enabling passengers to stay in their personal wheelchairs while traveling on commercial aircraft. This research program builds on the U.S. Access Board and Transportation Research Board Report on the Feasibility of Wheelchair Securement Systems on Passenger Aircraft and may support potential future rulemaking. The research will evaluate occupant safety and crashworthiness aspects of installing wheelchairs on commercial aircraft.

Learn more

Has assesed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

30 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

DOT Equitable Transportation Community Explorer

The Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer is an interactive web application that uses 2020 census tracts and data to explore the cumulative burden communities experience as a result of underinvestment in transportation in the following five components: Transportation Insecurity, Climate and Disaster Risk Burden, Environmental Burden, Health Vulnerability, and Social Vulnerability.

Learn more

Climate Adaptation Resources and Tools

Created by DOT’s Climate Change Center, this website compiles climate adaptation resources and tools from across DOT.

Learn more

Charging Forward: A Toolkit for Planning and Funding Rural Electric Mobility Infrastructure

In May 2023, DOT released an updated toolkit, which is meant to be a one-stop resource to help rural communities scope, plan, and identify ways to fund electric vehicle charging infrastructure. A rural organization or individual – such as a property owner, business, town, Tribe, or planning or transit agency – can use the toolkit to identify key partners for a project, take advantage of relevant planning tools, and identify available funding or financing to help make that project a reality.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

4 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

1 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

DOT Appoints 24 Members of the Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity

In August 2023, DOT appointed 24 members to the Advisory Committee on Transportation Equity (ACTE) under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Appointees to the Advisory Committee are drawn from academia, the private sector, and the transportation industry. They include experts in community engagement, transportation planning, design, research, policy, advocacy, and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA). The ACTE provides independent advice and recommendations about issues of civil rights and the four DOT equity objectives – including expanding access, the power of community, interventions, and wealth creation – from a variety of leaders.

Learn more

DOT Names 19 Members to the Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee

In February 2023, DOT announced 19 members to serve on the Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee, a subcommittee of the Aviation Consumer Protection Advisory Committee (ACPAC). The Anti-Discrimination Subcommittee reviews airlines’ policies, procedures, and practices to prevent discrimination against air travelers based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, ancestry, gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation. It also provides recommendations to the ACPAC on best practices related to airline training programs and other practices or actions that can be taken by DOT, airlines, and others to prevent discrimination in air transportation.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

DOT participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. DOT also participates in the Environmental Justice Subcommittee of the National Science and Technology Council. The purpose is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. It was established in 2023 by President Biden in the executive order on environmental justice. DOT engages with federal partners on a daily basis through channels such as our NEPA review process and through numerous interagency groups aimed at reducing harms and improving benefits of federal activities. In addition to the examples provided below and above, DOT is part of several interagency task forces and working groups, such as the White House Interagency Working Group on Extreme Heat, which is developing a National Heat Strategy centered on equity and environmental justice.

The Department of Transportation worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Joint Office of Energy and Transportation

The Joint Office of Energy and Transportation (Joint Office) was created through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to facilitate collaboration between DOT and the Department of Energy. The Joint Office aligns resources and expertise across the two departments toward leveraged outcomes. The office provides support and expertise to a multitude of programs that seek to deploy a network of electric vehicle chargers, zero-emission fueling infrastructure, and zero-emission transit and school buses, which will result in a decrease in hazardous air emissions that disproportionately impact overburdened communities. As part of focus on equitable access to clean transportation, in February 2023, the Joint Office began providing technical assistance to transit fleets seeking funds from the Federal Transit Administration’s Low or No Emission grant program to help plan for and deploy clean transit buses.

Learn more

DOT Joins Several Other Federal Agencies Working to Combat Religious Discrimination

In September 2023, DOT joined seven other federal agencies – the Departments of Agriculture, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Homeland Security, the Interior, and Treasury – to release the first-ever fact sheet clarifying that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on actual or perceived ancestry or ethnic characteristics and prohibits certain forms of antisemitic, Islamophobic, and other religiously biased behavior in federally supported programs and activities. DOT also simultaneously released a companion fact sheet.

Learn more

America the Beautiful Initiative

DOT actively participates in the Biden-Harris Administration’s America the Beautiful initiative, which is a decade-long challenge to pursue a locally led and voluntary, nationwide effort to conserve, connect, and restore the lands, waters, and wildlife. This first-ever national goal to conserve at least 30 percent of our lands and waters by the year 2030 will help safeguard our health, food supplies, and the prosperity of every community. In particular, DOT is a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding on Promoting Equitable access to Nature in Nature Deprived Communities.

Learn more

Agency logo

Photo credit: DOT

Promising Practices for Meaningful Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making

In October of 2022, DOT released a Promising Practices for Meaningful Public Involvement in Transportation Decision-Making guidance document, a first-of-its-kind guide for DOT funding recipients and partners that conduct public involvement in the transportation space. Since this guide was released, DOT has held regular trainings that provide in-depth overviews of tools, techniques, and approaches for conducting meaningful public involvement. In November 2023, DOT released an updated guide.

Learn more

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**Department of Veterans Affairs**

Agency logo

810 Vermont Avenue NW

Washington, DC 20420

(800) 698-2411

https://www.va.gov/

https://ask.va.gov/ask-a-question/

Department of Veterans Affairs

4 office(s), 2,009 location(s), 471,054 employees, and 107,002 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA or Veterans Affairs) is to fulfill President Lincoln’s promise to care for those who have served in our nation’s military and for their families, caregivers, and survivors.

VA integrates environmental justice into its mission and will continue to encourage and facilitate meaningful involvement of affected stakeholders and communities.

To learn more about environmental justice at VA, please visit VA's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known VA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

National Cemetery Administration

Veterans Benefits Administration

Veterans Health Administration

Get Involved

Check out the Department of Veterans Affairs's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of Veterans Affairs

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Enhanced Use Lease Housing Considers Environmental Justice in Siting

Veterans Affairs’ Enhanced Use Lease program provides housing for homeless Veterans. In siting housing projects, environmental factors such as noise and pollution are considered, and housing must meet sustainable building criteria.

Learn more

VA Integrates Environmental Justice in Project Prioritization for Better Health Equity

VA promotes environmental justice by prioritizing projects that improve healthcare access, reducing disparities in health outcomes across populations and communities.

Veterans Health Administration Ceased Using Ethylene Oxide for Sterile Processing

In FY 2023, the Veterans Health Administration successfully ceased used of ethylene oxide (EtO) for sterile processing of reusable medical equipment and instrumentation. EtO is carcinogenic and a harmful air pollutant. This change protects Veterans’ and VA employees’ health, as well as the health of local communities.

Electrification of the VA Vehicle Fleet

The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) added 1,641 zero-emissions vehicles to its fleet since October 2022, replacing the same number of fossil fuel vehicles. VHA has procured 140 solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations deployed at 38 VHA facilities nationwide in an effort to drive toward zero-emissions as an organization through an investment in zero-emissions vehicles and the associated infrastructure.

Learn more

Energy and Water Conservation

For the past 40 years, the Veterans Health Administration has implemented a robust energy and water conservation strategy at each of its medical centers. On average, the energy intensity of each medical center is approximately 143 Btu per gross square foot. That represents a 26% decrease from FY 2003. In addition, water intensity at each medical center is approximately 39 gallons per gross square foot. That represents a 33% decrease from FY 2007.

“Surroundings” Contribute to Health and Well-Being

Photo credit: OPCC&CT

Agency logo

One of the Veterans Affairs healthcare priorities is a improving a person’s “Whole Health.” That includes acknowledging that a person’s surroundings have an impact on their health and well-being. Veterans and employees are encouraged to complete a personal health inventory to help identify their needs in relation to their surroundings.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

In FY 2023, nearly $31,000 in funding was made available from the Justice40 covered program, VA’s Energy Efficient Mortgages (EEM) Program, which resulted in six loans to recipients in disadvantaged communities out of a total of 31 EEMs.

For more information on VA's Justice40 covered programs, please contact lgy.vbaco@va.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of Veterans Affairs has:

1 Justice40 covered program(s)

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, VA has:

Approximately $322,000 in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, VA is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 1 covered program(s) at VA working to deliver benefits for communities include:

1 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of Veterans Affairs is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Energy Efficient Mortgages

Energy Efficient Mortgages are loans to cover the cost of making energy efficiency improvements to a dwelling. In FY 2023, VA provided 23 EEM loans in communities, and six were located in disadvantaged communities as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

Learn more

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of Veterans Affairs has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Environmental justice is an issue evaluated under VA’s NEPA process. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) has approximately 4,500 active non-recurring maintenance construction projects and 500 active minor construction projects. NEPA requirements are applied and followed for each project. In addition, through the Sustainability Program Office and Environmental Program Office, VA conducts NEPA review on major construction and leasing activities, including assessing impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns and engaging the public through the NEPA process.

For example, the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) provides a regular and recurring training on topics that include NEPA. This is often coordinated with other Veterans Affairs organizations, based on the topic. The training is made available and provided to more than 1,400 engineers and construction professionals in VHA, including staff in the Environmental Program Office who conduct the environmental justice evaluations during NEPA project analysis.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of Veterans Affairs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

20 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

FY 2023 Grant Opportunity Project Kickoff Meetings with Prospective Grantees to Establish or Expand a Veterans Cemetery

The program assists states, territories, and Tribal government prospective grantees in providing gravesites for Veterans in certain areas. 20 project kickoff meetings were held with prospective grantees remotely or in-person, specifically in Nebraska, New York, Arizona, Idaho, Arkansas, Kansas, Minnesota, Kentucky, North Dakota, Georgia, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Alabama, as well as three meetings in Virginia, two in Louisiana, and two in Texas.

Learn more

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of Veterans Affairs, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

For more information, please visit VA’s Tribal Consultation Policy.

For example, Veteran Affairs is advancing the Biden-Harris Administration’s efforts to prioritize strengthening Nation-to-Nation relationships with Tribal Nations and advancing Tribal sovereignty and self-determination. Through attending conferences, the Office of Tribal Government Relations and Veterans Health Administration Office of Tribal Health have been made aware of priority issues for Indian County, such as climate change.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of Veterans Affairs including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

VA’s Office of Construction and Facilities Management (CFM) Sustainability Program Office is taking action to implement sustainability policies in its major construction program. These actions will align with Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, and will strive to enhance facility sustainability and reduce negative environmental impacts to local communities. Veterans Affairs NEPA reviews continue to evaluate potential impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns.

Training

19 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

610 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, VA’s Whole Health for All course provides VA clinicians with awareness, skills, and tools needed to promote health equity and inclusion as well as to address social and structural determinants – including the impact of surroundings and climate in their clinical practice as they provide care to Veterans and their families.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the Department of Veterans Affairs has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://www.va.gov/housing-assistance/home-loans/loan-types/native-american-direct-loan/

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

1 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Loan Guaranty Service Dashboard

Loan Guaranty developed an internal data visualization tool. The tool incorporates data from the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), and provides more accurate data to better evaluate the impact of climate change by location that could negatively impact Veteran homeownership and property, the home loan program, and portfolio monetary risk.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

Veterans Affairs participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice.

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**Department of Interior**

Agency logo

1849 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20240

(202) 208-3100

https://www.doi.gov/

https://www.doi.gov/contact-us#no-back

Department of the Interior

11 office(s), 2,400 location(s), and 70,000 employees in Fiscal Year 2023

The Department of the Interior (Interior or the Department) protects and manages the nation’s natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and affiliated Island Communities.

Interior prioritizes a coordinated and unified whole-of-government approach to environmental justice. Interior’s environmental justice vision statement is to provide outstanding management of the natural and cultural resources entrusted to the Department in a manner that is sustainable, equitable, accessible, and inclusive of all people and communities.

To learn more about environmental justice at Interior, please visit Interior's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known Interior offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

National Park Service

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Get Involved

Check out the Department of the Interior's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Department of the Interior

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Department of the Interior in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Prioritizing Actions to Ensuring Safe Drinking Water

To help ensure safe drinking water to Tribal communities, in FY 2023, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) completed assessments at 85 BIA-owned public water systems, the majority of which serve BIE-operated schools. This resulted in BIA’s very first Public Water System inventory that included baseline conditions of systems serving Tribal communities.

Developing Youth Opportunities

To provide opportunities for college-aged youth to work on initiatives and projects that advance environmental justice, in FY 2023, the National Park Service (NPS) established the Environmental Justice Fellowship program. The fellowship also supports the implementation of a Washington, DC-based environmental justice internship for local high school youth to address environmental justice concerns in their community. The environmental justice internship is facilitated by the University of the District of Columbia, Interior, and NPS.

Learn more

Supporting Affordable Housing

In FY 2023, Interior and the Department of Housing and Urban Development announced a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to make it easier and more affordable for local communities in southern Nevada to obtain federal land at below fair market value to build critically needed affordable housing. In implementing the MOU, in April 2023, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) conveyed a five-acre parcel to Clark County, Nevada, for the development of affordable housing for low-income senior citizens.

Learn more

Supporting Native Hawaiian Tourism

In FY 2023, Interior announced $1 million in funding for Native Hawaiian organizations to provide communities with environmental justice concerns access to resources and technical assistance. These efforts build sustainable recreational and cultural travel and tourism infrastructure and capacity, spur economic development, and create jobs.

Learn more

Enhancing Climate Resilience in Tribal Communities

To help Tribal communities plan for the most severe climate-related environmental threats to their homelands, Interior announced the availability of $120 million in funding in FY 2023. Tribal communities can use this funding to proactively plan to adapt to these threats and safely relocate critical community infrastructure. This is one of the largest amounts of annual funding made available to Tribal Nations and Tribal organizations in the history of the BIA Tribal Climate Annual Awards Program, due to President Biden’s Investing in America agenda.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Department of the Interior in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

To promote Interior’s progress in enhancing benefits from Justice40 covered programs, agencies engaged in targeted land acquisition and applied federal funding to covered programs. Interior also provided technical and financial assistance to restore ecosystems, invested in domestic water supplies for communities, expanded opportunities for recreation, and meaningfully engaged communities.

For more information on Interior's Justice40 covered programs, please contact environmental\_justice@ios.doi.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Department of the Interior has:

75 Justice40 covered program(s), including 29 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, Interior has:

Approximately $33 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, Interior is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 75 covered program(s) at Interior working to deliver benefits for communities include:

64 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

8 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

2 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

3 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

14 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

16 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

20 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Department of the Interior is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Addressing Legacy Pollution

In September 2023, Interior awarded nearly $40 million to Tribes for the plugging and remediation of orphaned oil and gas wells across Indian Country. The funding is anticipated to plug and remediate 559 wells to address legacy pollution, reduce harmful methane leaks, and tackle environmental hazards that threaten local communities. In FY 2023, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) awarded more than $680 million Abandoned Mine Land (AML) funds from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to 18 states and Tribes. AML reclamation supports jobs in coal communities while improving the environmental health and safety of disadvantaged communities. The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) awarded two contracts for the decommissioning of nine orphaned wells in the Matagorda Island area in federal waters approximately 12 miles off the Texas coast.

Funding Critical Water Infrastructure in Tribal Communities

In May 2023, Interior awarded $48 million across 13 projects to repair and revitalize Tribal water sanitation systems, upgrade irrigation and power projects, and invest in the safety of dams in Tribal communities.

Learn more

Combatting Climate Change in the U.S. Territories

In May 2023, Interior awarded $12 million in investments from the Inflation Reduction Act for climate change planning, mitigation, adaptation, and resilience for the U.S. territories of American Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. This is anticipated to benefit disadvantaged communities in the territories.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Department of the Interior has:

138 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$6,312,826,000 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Launching the Tribal Electrification Program

In FY 2023, Interior launched a new program and made available $72.5 million in initial funding to help Tribal communities electrify homes. The program provides financial and technical assistance to Tribes to accomplish the following: connect homes to transmission and distribution that is powered by renewable energy, provide electricity to unelectrified Tribal homes through zero-emissions energy systems, transition electrified Tribal homes to zero-emissions energy systems, and support associated home repairs and retrofitting necessary to install zero-emissions energy systems.

Learn more

Funding Water Conservation and Efficiency Projects

In April 2023, Interior announced $140 million in funding for 84 water conservation and efficiency projects in 15 states, which are expected to conserve over 230,000 acre-feet of water when completed. This saves the equivalent of 77 billion gallons of water, which is enough water for more than 940,000 people. One-third of the selected projects are anticipated to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Revitalizing Land in Coal Communities

In FY 2023, Interior awarded $135 million of Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization (AMLER) grants to return legacy coal mining sites to productive uses through economic and community development. Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia were each allocated $29.35 million in AMLER funds; Alabama, Ohio, and Virginia were each allocated $11.74 million; and the Crow Tribe, the Hopi Tribe, and the Navajo Nation were each allocated $3.91 million.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Department of the Interior made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

WaterSMART Provides Technical Assistance and Information

The Bureau of Reclamation’s WaterSMART program implemented several actions to increase access to information and technical assistance for disadvantaged communities. These included developing an online scheduling tool enabling entities to easily schedule technical consultations with program staff, offering application debriefs for all unsuccessful grant applicants, providing technical assistance focused on funding opportunity criteria, and developing a quarterly newsletter specifically tailored for Federally Recognized Tribes and insular areas on the latest WaterSMART updates (including open funding opportunities, upcoming webinars, and essential program contact information).

Updated Land and Water Conservation Fund Manual

The National Park Service (NPS) updated its Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Manual to direct states to work more closely with Tribal Nations, disadvantaged communities, and underserved populations during the development of their Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans. In addition to supporting the priorities of Tribal Nations, the plans are a requirement for eligibility to receive LWCF funds. The NPS also requires states to develop an open project selection process that creates more parks in disadvantaged communities in need of recreational areas. In FY 2023, NPS distributed nearly $300 million from the LWCF to across the 50 states, U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia to support and expand outdoor recreation.

Learn more

Implementation of the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool

Consistent with M-23-09, Interior began using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) as the primary tool to identify geographically defined disadvantaged communities for Justice40 covered programs. For example, in FY 2023, the Fish and Wildlife Service’s Fish Passages Program modified its Notices of Funding Opportunity to clarify program goals related to disadvantaged communities, that applicants should use the CEJST to identify disadvantaged communities, and that proposals will be ranked and scored depending on if projects benefits will be directed towards disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Department of the Interior is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Economic Revitalization on Tribal Lands

The Shonto Township is a uniquely governed township within the Navajo Nation with a population of approximately 1,800 and a poverty rate of roughly 30%. The Shonto Township, in conjunction with the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, used approximately $3.3 million of Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization funds to help develop the Shonto Hotel project. The project is currently under construction and is expected to benefit from tourism-related travel to destinations such as the Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Monument Valley, and the Four Corners.

Learn more

Recreation Opportunities Expanded for Disadvantaged Communities along the John Day River

Using Land and Water Conservation Funding, the Bureau of Land Management acquired approximately 4,000 acres of property along the lower John Day Wild and Scenic River in Oregon, expanding recreation opportunities to remote and rural communities, including Justice40 communities identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool. Private and guided trips for rafting, hunting, and fishing have dramatically increased, bringing tourism dollars to benefit the area.

Learn more

Supporting Tribal Employment

In FY 2023, the Bureau of Reclamation awarded the initial Arkansas Valley Conduit contract nearly $43 million to WCA Construction LLC (WCA) to construct the infrastructure needed to reliably provide municipal and industrial water to 39 communities in Southeastern Colorado. WCA is a wholly owned economic enterprise of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe. As a Tribal enterprise, WCA is dedicated to the employment, training, and development of vocational skills for Tribal community members. This policy has resulted in approximately 70% of WCA’s total workforce being Tribal members or members of communities with environmental justice concerns.

Learn more

Tribal Conservation in Alaska

Photo credit: Bri Dwyer

Subsistence fishing for salmon

The Bristol Bay region is the largest wild salmon fishery in the world – accounting for 57% of global sockeye salmon harvest. Salmon are incredibly important to the economy of southwest Alaska. The Fish and Wildlife Service’s Coastal Program worked with Pedro Bay Corporation (Corporation), an Alaska Native Village corporation, the Conservation Fund, and the Bristol Bay Heritage Land Trust. This collaboration resulted in the permanent protection of more than 44,000 acres of critical spawning and rearing habitats for sockeye salmon in the Iliamna Lake watershed. The project also preserved important cultural traditions and subsistence activities. By selling the conservation easement, the Corporation generates revenue to provide long-term financial stability of the Dena’ina Athabascan people.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Department of the Interior has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Department of the Interior in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The responsibilities and requirements for implementing environmental justice requirements apply to all applicable Department of the Interior bureaus/offices and their existing and future programs, policies, and activities. Bureaus/offices implement environmental justice policies, guidance, and procedures that meet their individual missions and mandates. For more information, please visit DOI’s website.

Project Modifications

33 project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

Protecting Subsistence Resources

In FY 2023, pursuant to comments received during Tribal consultation with the Cantwell Native Village in Alaska over blueberry subsistence opportunities in the proposed project area, the Bureau of Land Management conducted a vegetation survey. The survey identified areas likely to contain a higher concentration of blueberries and as a result, the proposed action was modified to exclude those areas.

Protecting Historic Properties

In FY 2023, due to archaeological resource concerns raised in Tribal consultation with the Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah & Ouray Reservation, the Bureau of Land Management worked with the project proponent to reroute the proposed linear developments to avoid potential physical impacts to multiple identified historic properties. Ongoing Tribal consultation also identified that the project area is part of a larger, ethnohistoric landscape important to the Tribe.

Modifying Facility Plans

In consultation with the Tohono O’odham Nation, the Fish and Wildlife Service put on hold a proposed demolition of a building at the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge. The building once provided meals to Tribal members.

Training

57 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

Over 550 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, the U.S. Geological Service (USGS) provides training to staff for environmental compliance, including on NEPA and associated analyses as needed to project managers. In FY 2023, there were three trainings provided to various Science Centers. In addition, USGS provided electronic resources that provide training on NEPA, including the requirement to evaluate potential impacts related to environmental justice, to all USGS staff.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Department of the Interior on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Interior advances environmental justice by providing environmental or health protection in multiple forms and venues. Examples include: the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) conducting annual safety inspections and Emergency Management Accreditation Program audits of BIE-operated Tribal schools, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) conducting annual safety inspections of BIA-operated Tribal dams.

Reclamation of Tribal Lands and Resources

In FY 2023, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement administered three terminations of jurisdiction and three reclamation liability release for mined lands on the Navajo and Hopi Reservations. These actions document the successful reclamation of these minded lands, protection of the human environment, and are important steps towards returning these lands and resources to the Tribes.

Revised Rule Permits the Reburial of Native American Human Remains

The Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) revised its regulations pertaining to public conduct on Reclamation facilities, lands, and waterbodies – available at 43 CFR Part 423 – to allow for Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) reburials. The rule was developed in consultation with Tribal Nations and became effective December 21, 2023. This reburial provision allows permitted reburials of ancestral Native American human remains, and cultural items on Reclamation facilities, lands, or waterbodies, which previously was prohibited.

Meaningful Involvement on Legacy Pollution Cleanup Prioritization

In April 2023, the Bureau of Land Management issued a Permanent Instruction Memorandum requiring its state offices to develop and annually update a State Environmental Cleanup Action Plan that will identify and prioritize all contaminated sites within their jurisdictions. The state offices are required to develop the plan through a meaningful public involvement process, including with communities with environmental justice concerns.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Department of the Interior in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Interior responds to submitted civil rights and environmental justice-related complaints and investigations and conducts compliance reviews routinely throughout the year. For example, in FY 2023, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) opened two compliance reviews on Alabama’s Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation Program and New Mexico’s Abandoned Mine Land Program. OSMRE conducts these compliance reviews to determine whether recipients are providing programs and activities equitably based on race, color, national origin, age, disability, and sex (in educational programs). OSMRE continues to review and analyze data submission and anti-discrimination policies to ensure enforcement of civil rights laws and statutes based on federal financial assistance provided in the form of grants to each state program.

In September 2023, Interior released a fact sheet that specifies how the Title VI requirements apply to its federally funded programs and activities and how to report incidents of discrimination. The Bureau of Land Management enhanced the public-facing interactive map that highlights accessibility for people with disabilities. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management developed a Language Access Plan for its Pacific Region.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Department of the Interior in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Interior’s Title VI efforts ensure that recipients of financial assistance operate without discrimination and that all persons have equal opportunity to participate in Interior’s programs and activities.

5 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

3 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

7 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

290 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Department of the Interior in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, Interior bureaus conducted engagement events such as public meetings, listening sessions, and workshops, as well as developed partnerships with organizations and educational institutions, to enhance awareness of their programs and services. For example, in FY 2023, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement executed a cooperative agreement with the University of Alaska’s Alaska Native Science and Engineering Program to provide training and learning opportunities to students in Alaska, with the goal of developing the next generation of lifelong conservation stewards.

In FY 2023, Interior bureaus evaluated opportunities to increase access and awareness of programs and funding. For example, the Bureau of Reclamation’s (Reclamation) Native American Affairs Program notified each Tribe of funding opportunities, encouraged them to submit applications, and provided support in developing project scopes and budgets. The program also sends a “Dear Tribal Leader” letter to each Tribe notifying them of funding opportunities as they are initiated and hosted a webinar focused on Tribal funding to help Tribes apply for Reclamation funding opportunities.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

Over 330 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Department of the Interior’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.usbr.gov/watersmart/

Management of Natural Resources Assistance

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) partners with the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society (NAFWS) to provide support, technical assistance, and education to Tribal Nations in the management of natural resources. In FY 2023, BIA and NAFWS provided a series of webinars on BIA’s invasive species grant process and hosted invasive species workshops. NAFWS also hosted a national conference and regional conferences in which BIA provided informational sessions pertaining to natural resource management, recreation, and agriculture resources and funding. The conferences also provided an opportunity for attendees to share project updates and findings throughout Indian Country.

Abandoned Mine Lands Program Assistance

In FY 2023, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) provided in-person technical assistance to the Navajo and Hopi Reservations abandoned mine lands programs and impacted communities to support development of Abandoned Mine Land Economic Revitalization financial assistance applications. As a result, two projects on the Navajo Reservation have received funding and one project on the Hopi Reservation is being developed for submission.

Working with Small Businesses

In FY 2023, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) met with over 100 vendors certified as a Small Disadvantaged Business, 8(a) Business Development Small Business, HUBZone Small Business Program, Minority Owned Business, or a Tribal Owned Business to increase awareness of opportunities to work with BSEE.

Public Processes (show lesscollapse icon)

Over 130 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Japanese American Confinement Education Grants Guidelines

Through outreach to Japanese American communities, eligible organizations, and the public, the National Park Service requested input on the guidelines and criteria for the Norman Y. Mineta Japanese American Confinement Education Grants, a new category of grants that will be administered through the Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program.

Tribal Engagement for Mined Lands

In FY 2023, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) gathered comments and concerns from community members, through hosted meetings on the Navajo Reservation. The topic concerned OSMRE’s decision to release certain mined areas at the Kayenta Mine Complex from applicable reclamation liability. The release of reclamation liability is an important step towards returning these lands and resources to the Tribes so they can be used to their benefit.

Supporting Tribes and Tribal Nations, Local Governments for Climate-Driven Coastal Hazards

In FY 2023, the U.S. Geological Survey’s Integrated Climate-Driven Coastal Hazards program aims to integrate community needs into coastal hazards products that feed directly into local planning processes. Numerous outreach events were conducted to identify end-user needs and preferences to inform production and science development.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Department of the Interior, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, Interior announced new policies and procedures to strengthen and fulfill Interior’s responsibility to ensure regular and meaningful consultation with American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes, as well as a second policy for consultation with Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act Corporations. It is a priority for Interior to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with sovereign Tribal Nations, as well as with Alaska Native Villages.

Approximately 1,500 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Federal Government-Wide Consultation Training Modules

To implement the Presidential Memorandum on Uniform Standards for Tribal Consultation, which directs the Secretary of the Interior and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, in consultation with Tribal Nations, to establish training modules regarding Tribal consultation for all federal agencies, Interior conducted Tribal consultation on the key elements of the training in April 2023. The training will be required for all employees who work with Tribal Nations or on policies with Tribal implications.

Indigenous Knowledge Policy Development

In February 2023, Interior conducted Tribal consultation on a draft Department-wide policy to respect, and equitably promote the inclusion of, Indigenous Knowledge in the Department’s decision-making, program implementation, and other activities.

Transferring Facility for Tribal Use

In FY 2023, the Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs transferred the Cat Point Creek Lodge located on Rappahannock River Valley National Wildlife Refuge to the Rappahannock Tribe to serve as an Indigenous Environmental and Conservation Education Center. Tribal citizens and the public will learn about Indigenous Knowledge practices for stewarding the land through exhibits, classes, and outdoor activities. In addition, the Tribe was awarded a $750,000 Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) grant that will help the Trible re-acquire 703 acres of ancestral homelands.

Approximately 15 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, Interior conducts Tribal listening sessions as a mechanism to share information with Tribal representatives or to seek information from Tribal representatives. Examples of Interior hosted Tribal listening sessions in FY 2023 include: The Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSMRE) hosted two listening sessions at each Tribal Nation that qualifies for Abandoned Mine Lands (AML) funding (Navajo Nation, Hopi Tribe, and Crow Tribe), to provide information on financial assistance available through OSMRE under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). OSMRE will distribute approximately $10.9 billion in BIL AML grants to eligible states and Tribes equally on an annual basis over a 15-year period, which is approximately $725 million per year. States and Tribes are encouraged to prioritize using the BIL funds on AML projects that provide employment opportunities to current and former employees of the coal industry, and to promote the revitalization of disadvantaged communities affected by the coal industry, to advance the goal of the Justice40 Initiative and promote the revitalization of coal communities.

Training

Over 20 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

Over 350 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, trainings provide staff with knowledge on resources, policies, and guidance on Tribal treaty rights, Tribal sovereignty, Interior’s Trust responsibilities, Tribal relations, Tribal Consultation, Indigenous Knowledge, Tribal co-stewardship, and cultural competency.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Department of the Interior including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

Interior continues to evaluate modifying existing or creating new policies and procedures as an opportunity to advance environmental justice. For instance, in FY 2023, Interior formed its Environmental Justice Steering Committee to coordinate the development and implementation of Departmental policies, programs, and initiatives that support Interior’s efforts to advance environmental justice. The Steering Committee is comprised of representatives from each of Interior’s bureaus and offices.

Over 430 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

40 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

65 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 760 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) provides two environmental justice training sessions for new employees annually. Through these trainings, new employees are made aware of BOEM’s environmental justice responsibilities, are able to consider their new position’s role in supporting those responsibilities, and know whom to contact regarding environmental justice issues.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Environmental Justice Implementation Policy (IM-045)

In FY 2023, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement’s (BSEE) Director issued an Instructional Memorandum (IM-045, Environmental Justice Implementation Policy) mandating bureau decision-makers strengthen consideration of environmental justice in program implementation and regional activities as well as advance meaningful engagement and outreach with communities potentially affected by BSEE’s actions.

Accountability for Advancing Environmental Justice

At the end of FY 2023, Interior developed employee performance appraisal plan (EPAP) standards on advancing environmental justice that are now required in all Senior Executive Service EPAPs starting in FY 2024.

Has assesed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

12 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Socioeconomic Profiles Tool

The Bureau of Land Management’s (BLM) Socioeconomic Profiles is a web-based tool that provides an overview of demographic and economic conditions in counties and states near BLM Field Offices and National Conservation Land units. Users can explore local data on economics, demographics, land use, economic sectors, and other topics. Each topic includes a discussion of how to use socioeconomic characteristics to understand an area and its relationship to BLM managed lands.

Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Environmental Justice Website

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) launched its environmental justice website to share information with employees and the public on BOEM’s work to advance environmental justice.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

13 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

6 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

Supporting Tribal Water and Sanitation Infrastructure

In FY 2023, the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and the Department of Health and Human Services’ Indian Health Service announced a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to advance safe drinking water and community sanitation infrastructure projects across Indian Country. Through the MOU, the agencies agree to collaborate to complete studies, plan, and design the construction of domestic water infrastructure projects. The collaboration is aimed at accelerating completion of such facilities in Tribal communities. In FY 2023, Reclamation made $320 million available for Tribal domestic water supply projects, as part of an overall $550 million allocated through the Inflation Reduction Act for domestic water assistance for disadvantaged communities, advancing the goal of the Justice40 Initiative.

Increasing Diversity in the Ocean Studies Workforce

In FY 2023, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) sponsored the establishment of a National Academies committee, Developing a Just and Inclusive Culture in the U.S. Ocean Studies Community. The committee’s goal is to ascertain the impediments, including past social policies leading to marginalization, and identify evidence-based approaches for increasing the racial and ethnic diversity and Indigenous, Alaska Native, American Indian, and Native American participation in the ocean studies workforce.

Supporting Air Quality Monitoring

In FY 2023, the Fish and Wildlife Service’s (FWS) Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge launched the Environmental Justice Air Quality Monitoring program in collaboration with Mountain View neighborhood and the Pueblo of Isleta. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) gave FWS funding to start a high technology local air system and to train community leaders and students on the air system. The Environmental Justice Air program hired staff through a partnership with Lands Conservation Corps. This area of Albuquerque has high poverty rates, two Superfund sites, and more than 40 other industrial sites regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

Interior participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. Interior also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 as provided by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) also hosts the New York Bight Environmental Justice Quarterly Forums comprised of federal and state government partners and community-based organizations that are working towards building an iterative engagement framework for communities affected by offshore wind projects in the New York and New Jersey area.

The Department of the Interior worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Increasing Access to Outdoor Recreation

To increase opportunities for access for underserved, Tribal, and low-income youth to public lands, with a goal of approximately 500,000 additional youth visits annually, in FY 2023, the Federal Interagency Council on Outdoor Recreation, which includes the National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureaus of Land Management and Reclamation, and other federal agencies, is advancing a transportation grant Initiative to collaborate on opportunities.

Testing the Feasibility of Reintroducing Salmon in the Upper Columbia Basin

The Bureau of Reclamation, Bonneville Power Administration, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are preparing the Phase 2 Implementation Plan: Testing the Feasibility of Reintroducing Salmon in the Upper Columbia Basin (P2IP) Programmatic Environmental Assessment. The P2IP involves activities over approximately 20 years to test the reintroduction of salmon in the Upper Columbia River Basin. Returning salmon to their historic habitats in the upper Columbia River will restore Tribal traditional and cultural practices related to salmon.

Learn more

Portland-Vancouver Canopy Collective

In FY 2023, the Fish and Wildlife Service’s Columbia Pacific Northwest Region led the creation of the new coalition, Portland-Vancouver Canopy Collective to increase tree canopy in underserved neighborhoods and disadvantaged communities. The Collective was successful in securing a $7 million grant from the Department of Agriculture’s Urban and Community Forestry Program to plant 3,000 street trees in four underserved neighborhoods and disadvantaged communities, employed 24 youth in living wage internships, and connected people to nearby nature and national wildlife refuges.

Meaningfully Consider Environmental Justice Implications of Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement’s Decisions

In FY 2023, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement’s (BSEE) released its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan includes an objective to engage people, communities, and organizations with environmental justice concerns to help mitigate impact to communities. BSEE is employing strategies to ensure it: (1) is knowledgeable about the past and potential impacts experienced by communities with environmental justice concerns stemming from activities on the Outer Continental Shelf; (2) possesses the capacity to regularly engage with communities and monitor and respond to environmental justice concerns; and (3) meaningfully considers environmental justice implications in bureau decisions and enforces compliance measures designed to mitigate those impacts.

Learn more

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**Environmental Protection Agency**

Agency logo

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Environmental Protection Agency

22 office(s), 12+ location(s), 15,567 employees, and 1,883 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is to protect human health and the environment.

The EPA has prioritized environmental justice throughout the agency by creating a cross-cutting agency-wide strategic planning goal and establishing the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights. Through these and other actions, the EPA sees the advancement of environmental justice as a whole-of-agency approach embedded in the mission of the EPA.

To learn more about environmental justice at EPA, please visit EPA's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known EPA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Office of Air and Radiation

Office of Land and Emergency Management

Office of Water

Get Involved

Check out the Environmental Protection Agency's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Environmental Protection Agency

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Environmental Protection Agency in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Advancing Meaningful Engagement

In FY 2023, the EPA updated the 2003 Public Involvement Policy and released a draft policy for public comment, Achieving Health and Environmental Protection through the EPA’s Meaningful Engagement Policy, in November 2023.

Learn more

Developed the Environmental Justice Clearinghouse

Per Executive Order 14096, the EPA developed the Environmental Justice Clearinghouse – a whole-of-government, online database composed of culturally and linguistically appropriate and accessible materials, developed in FY 2023 and published in April 2024.

Learn more

Operationalized a National Network of Environmental Justice Thriving Community Technical Assistance Centers

The Environmental Justice Thriving Community Technical Assistance Centers (TCTACs) are a network of three national and 13 regional centers that provide foundational access to technical assistance to disadvantaged communities and other communities with environmental justice concerns over the next five years, free of charge.

Learn more

Proposed Rules to Reduce Cancer-Risks and Emissions

The EPA released and received public comment on proposed rules to significantly reduce hazardous and highly toxic air pollutants from chemical plants, and to address vehicle emissions. The EPA has since finalized these new rules, that will dramatically improve the health of communities near chemical plants and roadways.

Surpassed the Goal to Increase the Percentage of On-Site Inspections in Communities with Environmental Justice Concerns

The EPA committed to increasing the percentage of on-site inspections in communities with environmental justice concerns from 30% to 55% by 2026. The EPA surpassed that goal during FY 2023, three years ahead of schedule, when 61% of onsite inspections were in overburdened communities.

Learn more

Protecting Drinking Water in Jackson, Mississippi

Photo credit: Mississippi State Department of Health

Agency logo

The EPA’s Region 4 and the Department of Justice lodged two Stipulated Orders placing operation of the Jackson, Mississippi water and wastewater systems under temporary control of an Interim Third-Party Manager, putting this community with environmental justice concerns on a path to access to clean water. The EPA provided Safe Drinking Water Act funding under an emergency authority for the first time to support work needed under the Stipulated Orders.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the Environmental Protection Agency in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The EPA is committed to meeting and exceeding President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. The EPA will strive to exceed this commitment and advance environmental justice and equity considerations in all aspects of its work to help protect human health and the environment for all communities.

The EPA works to exceed the Justice40 Initiative goal, including through policy priorities for critical Justice40 covered programs such as Water Infrastructure and Superfund. For example, to improve access to water infrastructure for disadvantaged communities, the EPA’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law State Revolving Fund Memorandum outlined a strategy for collaborative implementation with state, local, and Tribal partners of $43 billion in water infrastructure funding through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The Superfund Remedial Program’s memorandum on “Incorporating Community Input, Including Environmental Justice Considerations, Throughout CERCLA Investigations and Response Selection” improves the ability for communities to participate in the development of projects.

For more information on EPA's Justice40 covered programs, please contact EPAJ40@epa.govLaunch

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The Environmental Protection Agency has:

79 Justice40 covered program(s), including 34 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, EPA has:

Approximately $83.4 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, EPA is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 79 covered program(s) at EPA working to deliver benefits for communities include:

34 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

11 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

14 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

7 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

27 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

35 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

25 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The Environmental Protection Agency is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Brownfields Program Invests in Communities in Need

84% of selected applicants for the Brownfields Multipurpose, Assessment, Revolving Loan Fund and Cleanup Grants and Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Supplemental Funding went to disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

The EPA Invests More than $100 Million in Recycling Infrastructure Projects Across the Nation

The EPA dedicated $105 million to improve recycling in communities, including $32 million awarded to states, territories, and the District of Columbia. This was funded through the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling grants. Approximately 59.5% of funds benefited disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Children’s Healthy Learning Environments in Low-Income and/or Minority Communities Competition

The EPA awarded ten grants of $200,000 each to provide capacity building activities that address disproportionate children’s environmental health harms and risks in school and/or childcare settings. All awardees are in schools and/or childcare centers that are in communities with environmental justice concerns and/or primarily serve disadvantaged student populations. Implementation of projects is ongoing in FY 2023.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The Environmental Protection Agency has:

60 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$18 billion available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Launched the Historic $27 Billion Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Grant Competition

In July 2023, the EPA launched the historic $27 billion Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund, created by the President’s Inflation Reduction Act, with at least two-thirds of the financial and technical assistance funding dedicated to low-income and disadvantaged communities. The first-of-its-kind, national-scale program will mobilize private capital into clean technology projects to create jobs and lower energy costs while cutting pollution, tackling the climate crisis, and supporting solar adoption. Together, the Fund’s National Clean Investment Fund, Clean Communities Investment Accelerator, and Solar for All programs will advance President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative while expanding good-paying job opportunities in domestic industries.

Learn more

Nearly $9 Billion in Funding Announced for Clear Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Programs

Through the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs, the EPA announced nearly $9 billion in funding for states, Tribes, and territories for essential wastewater and drinking water infrastructure upgrades across the nation in FY 2023. This includes over $6.5 billion announced in April 2023 for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, and over $2.4 billion announced in February 2023 for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

$400 Million Announced for Clean School Bus Program

The Clean School Bus Program has improved air quality in and around schools and communities, saved schools money, created jobs, and reduced greenhouse gas pollution. More information on the funding results for FY 2023 can be found in the Clean School Bus Reports to Congress.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The Environmental Protection Agency made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Launched the Pilot Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) Hub

In FY 2023, the EPA launched the pilot Indian Environmental General Assistance Program (GAP) Hub, an internal performance management application to establish a consistent national GAP performance reporting mechanism. This hub is through the Tribal General Assistance Program.

Learn more

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Project Selection Process

A new rolling project selection process offered increased flexibility and technical assistance to borrowers. During the FY 2023 (Round 6) rolling project selection process, which occurred throughout FY 2023, the WIFIA program selected 42 projects, including 17 in small and disadvantaged communities, to apply for $7 billion in WIFIA financing.

Learn more

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The Environmental Protection Agency is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Over $500 Million of FY 2023 Superfund Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Funding Goes to 66 Sites in Disadvantaged Communities

The EPA’s Superfund program obligated approximately $507.3 million (49%) of its BIL funding in FY 2023 at 66 sites in disadvantaged communities, advancing the Justice40 Initiative. BIL funding is being used to expedite cleanup of ongoing remedial projects and address the legacy pollution that harms the public health of communities and neighborhoods.

Learn more

Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Loan to New Jersey State Revolving Loan Program

The WIFIA program closed a $500 million loan to the New Jersey Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs. This loan will support 140 drinking water and wastewater projects across the state and benefit 36 small and rural communities and 39 disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center’s New Work Supports the Justice40 Initiative

The EPA’s Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center supports EPA’s regulatory, enforcement, and voluntary programs by providing alternative dispute resolution services to the entire agency. 71% of the Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center’s new work has been collaboration and conflict resolution support to benefit disadvantaged communities. For additional information, please reference EPA’s FY 2023 Annual Report for the Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution.

Learn more

Biden-Harris Administration Announces $177 Million for 16 New Technical Assistance Centers Across the Nation to Help Communities Access Historic Investments to Advance Environmental Justice

EJ TCTAC Network

In April 2023, the EPA and the Department of Energy announced the selection of 16 Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (TCTACs) that will receive $177 million over a five-year project period to provide access to technical assistance for disadvantaged communities and other communities with environmental justice concerns. The TCTACs help eligible participants build capacity, enable partnerships, as well as identify, apply, and effectively manage energy and environmental grant opportunities.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Environmental Protection Agency has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Environmental Protection Agency in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Under Clean Air Act Section 309, the EPA is required to review the Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) prepared by other federal agencies and to comment on the adequacy and acceptability of the environmental impacts of the proposed action, including as related to environmental justice. In FY 2023, the EPA reviewed and published comments on 140 EISs and, where appropriate, provided recommendations for identifying and meaningfully engaging communities with environmental justice concerns. The EPA’s website includes key information about the NEPA process, public participation, and the NEPAssist mapping and screening tool linked to EJScreen.

Training

2 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

102 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, in August 2023, the EPA’s Office of Federal Activities NEPA Compliance Division offered the Introduction to NEPA training course for NEPA/Clean Air Act (CAA) Section 309 reviewers. The course includes information on considering environmental justice when reviewing other agency NEPA documents. In September 2023, the NEPA Compliance Division hosted the EPA’s National Community of Practice Workshop, which occurs every two years. Over 80 EPA NEPA/CAA Section 309 reviewers and subject matter experts from across the nation attended this hybrid training; more than 50 EPA staff attended in-person. Multiple sessions highlighted environmental justice-related topics, including a session educating staff on recent court decisions related to NEPA and environmental justice. The hybrid training also included several case studies on the EPA’s review and comment on NEPA documents with complex environmental justice issues.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the Environmental Protection Agency on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The EPA advanced rulemakings to protect workers and communities from harm to their health from toxic chemical exposure, air pollution, water contamination, and other health and safety threats that the agency has since finalized, and amended program guidance to include environmental justice and civil rights. The EPA prioritized informing the public, including via AirNow. The EPA strengthened enforcement of environmental violations in overburdened communities, which resulted in, for example, increasing oil spill prevention inspections in communities with environmental justice concerns from 40% in FY 2022 to 69% in FY 2023.

Newly Proposed and Listed Superfund Sites Advance Environmental Protection

The EPA added six sites and proposed eight sites to the Superfund National Priorities List. This is a list of sites where historic releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants pose significant threats to human health and the environment. All 14 sites were determined to have potential environmental justice concerns.

2023 Financial Capability Assessment Guidance

The EPA finalized guidance asking municipalities seeking revised compliance schedules or Water Quality Standards (WQS) revisions to affirmatively demonstrate actions to protect low-income customers from rate hikes before decisions are made on extensions, or WQS changes to protect communities that often carry more of the financial and environmental burden associated with discharges in their communities.

Revising the Federal Water Quality Standards Regulation to Protect Tribal Reserved Rights

The EPA proposed a rule to amend the federal Water Quality Standards (WQS) regulation to clarify and prescribe how WQS must protect Tribal reserved rights to resources in waters where states establish WQS. The revisions would create a regulatory framework to help ensure protection of resources reserved to Tribes, such as fish and wild rice.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Environmental Protection Agency in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

On April 28, 2023, the EPA closed its monitoring of an informal resolution agreement with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) (entered into on August 19, 2019). MDA has finalized a language access plan, a public participation plan, and disability policy, among other things. The EPA’s letter resolving the complaint, as well as its monitoring closure letter, can be found on the External Civil Rights Docket 2014-Present.

The EPA launched an internal limited English proficiency resources intranet page in FY 2023. On December 8, 2022, the EPA posted an updated Disability Plan Sample, which is for the purpose of providing technical assistance to assist EPA financial assistance recipients in complying with federal civil rights laws and the EPA’s nondiscrimination regulation. Also, the EPA has focused on website transparency, notably in the external civil rights program, where an online docket of cases is publicly available from 2014 forward.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the Environmental Protection Agency in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The EPA is committed to vigorously upholding and enforcing all applicable civil rights laws, including Title VI, to address environmental injustice. The EPA also is committed to working actively with state, territorial, and local governments as well as all EPA financial assistance recipients to ensure compliance with these important laws and to centering its mission on the integration of justice, equity, and civil rights for communities across the country. In FY 2023, the EPA resolved cases impacting communities in West Virginia; Owasa, North Carolina; and Minnesota. In FY 2023, the EPA had 10 open investigations; 18 in informal resolution process; 1 open compliance review; and 23 complaints in jurisdictional review.

UPDATE: Pursuant to a permanent injunction issued by the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana on August 22, 2024, EPA will not impose or enforce any disparate-impact or cumulative-impact-analysis requirements under Title VI against any entity in the State of Louisiana. Please see here for additional and updated information.

29 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

26 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

52 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

2,213 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Environmental Protection Agency in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The EPA engages with partners and communities to inform agency decisions. For example, the EPA sought advice from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine on the potential for electric arc furnace slag use to cause disproportionate adverse effects on lower socioeconomic communities. Also, the EPA’s Region 8 supported an air quality assessment report through funding and direct community engagement that analyzed future inland port development and highway expansion impacts on air quality, and qualitatively considered cumulative impacts. Ultimately, local authorities revised their planning process and led to successful grant funding for solutions.

The EPA is advancing language access by proactively providing interpretation and translation for Spanish-speakers and supporting requests for other languages, including monthly community check-ins hosted by Region 9 and solid waste webinars. The EPA also is improving web content to help communities better understand risks and take action, including via: Clean Air Tracking Tool, PFAS Analytic Tools, Benzene Fenceline Monitoring Dashboard, Equitable Resilience Builder, and Participatory Science Tools.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

484 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Environmental Protection Agency’s technical assistance events, please visit Thriving Communities – Technical Assistance Centers, Community Change Grants Technical Assistance, Recreation Economy for Rural Communities Program, Community Air Monitoring, Clean School Bus Program, Superfund Technical Assistance for Communities, Research Technical Support Centers, Brownfields Technical Assistance, and Water Infrastructure Technical Assistance.

Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights: Environmental and Climate Justice Program Design

The Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR) provided a series of informational webinars on the Environmental and Climate Justice program design tailored to different audiences. Through this outreach, OEJECR sought input and feedback from disadvantaged communities and other key stakeholders to inform development of the Community Change Grant Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) that was issued in November 2023. As a result, this NOFO reflected community needs and helped facilitate the submission of applications under the NOFO to address environmental and climate justice issues.

Learn more

Environmental Justice Academy

The EPA’s Region 4 and OEJECR provided nine months of technical assistance and capacity building for 42 representatives of eight Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), host communities, and extension agents from Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, and Kentucky. As part of the Environmental Justice Academy, or EJ Academy, participants cultivate skills on environmental challenges and carry out environmental improvement goals in their communities, helping communities have a voice in addressing local environmental concerns.

Screening for Lead in Soil Region 5 Lead Prevention Initiatives

The EPA’s Region 5 provided community members with over 250 free soil lead screenings, to help people learn if their soil is contaminated and how to reduce exposures in seven communities in Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio. The EPA’s Region 5 also visited 29 childcare providers in Cleveland and Bedford, Ohio with outreach on healthy learning environments. The team met with providers and parents about reducing exposure to lead and getting children tested for lead.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

665 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Coal Combustion Residuals – June 2023 Environmental Justice Listening Session in Waukegan, Illinois

The EPA hosted a listening session for communities near the Waukegan Generating Station and received insight on the Coal Combustion Residuals (CCR) Rule impacts on communities and ways to increase public participation in future rules.

Learn more

Lead and Copper Rule Revision Outreach

The EPA’s Region 7 partnered with states and Tribes to center blood lead levels and environmental justice concerns in the prioritization of material inventory evaluations. Four states adopted these criteria, and the Region 7 Direct Implementation Program completed Lead Service Line inventories at two EPA Region 7 Tribal Public Water Supply Systems. When found, the EPA recommends replacing lead service lines (LSL) and galvanized service lines that are or ever were downstream of an LSL or are currently downstream of an unknown service line. Prioritizing investigations in areas with high blood lead levels and environmental justice concerns helps water systems reduce the number of service lines with unknown materials. These actions expedite LSL replacement efforts and improve public health.

Environmental Justice Community Engagement Calls and Webinars

The Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights fosters community engagement through: Monthly National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Calls, typically 300 to 400 attendees each, to inform the public about EPA’s environmental justice work and to enhance opportunities to maintain an open dialogue with environmental justice advocates and Environmental Justice Webinars for Houses of Worship and Communities to help faith-based organizations and faith leaders address environmental and public health issues in their facilities, on their lands, and in the communities within which they serve. For up-to-date information about Environmental Justice funding opportunities, events, and webinars, subscribe to EPA’s Environmental Justice listserv by sending a blank email to join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Environmental Protection Agency, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

During FY 2023, the EPA consulted with Tribal Nations on an update to the 2011 Consultation Framework. Following that, the EPA issued an updated Tribal Consultation Policy, “EPA Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes,” on December 7, 2023. The EPA has had a longstanding policy on advancing environmental justice for Tribes and Indigenous Peoples, issued in June 2014. In addition, in 2016, the EPA adopted the Guidance for Discussing Tribal Treaty Rights, which complements the consultation policy by providing affirmative steps for the agency to take during tribal consultations when an EPA action may affect a treaty right.

4 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, the EPA conducts an “Environmental Justice Webinar Series for Tribes and Indigenous Peoples” to enhance environmental justice integration, build capacity, raise awareness of EPA and other federal programs and resources, and provide technical assistance to Tribes and Indigenous Peoples on priority environmental, public health, and other environmental justice concerns. Four webinars were held, which covered the following topics: Effectively Applying for Federal Jobs; Food Sovereignty – Healthy Foods & Cultural Practices; Environmental Justice Funding and Technical Resources; and Food Sovereignty – Food Forests and Sustainable Foods.

Training

5 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

192 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, EPA employees were trained on the agency’s guidance on consultation with Tribal Nations and approaches to support Treaty Rights in agency decision-making.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Environmental Protection Agency including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

The EPA has long elevated three fundamental principles: follow the science, follow the law, and be transparent. In 2022, the EPA added a fourth foundational principle: advance justice and equity. By doing so, the EPA solidified the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals into all EPA policies, practices, and programs. These principles guide its operations and decision-making – whether with respect to the public and communities, or the EPA’s workforce. The agency further institutionalized environmental justice by establishing the national Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights, establishing a separate goal for environmental justice and civil rights in its FY 2022-2026 EPA Strategic Plan, and beginning work on an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan.

422 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

15 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

117 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 8,000 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, broad environmental justice trainings in the EPA’s regions improved staff capacity for community engagement, managing grants, implementing Executive Orders, and evaluating environmental justice in permit decisions. The EPA also provided regional support through technical trainings: EJScreen training for the EPA regional underground storage tank (UST) and leaking UST (LUST) programs provided information on its applicability within federal and state programs. This resulted in additional support and training for state UST and LUST programs from the EPA regions and headquarters staff.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

2023 Equity Action Plan

In the 2023 Equity Action Plan, the EPA addressed barriers to access to information and resources affecting rural communities, protecting children from exposure to environmental contaminants, removing barriers to access and addressing disparities affecting people with disabilities, and building capacity to assess equity and remove barriers faced by communities with environmental justice concerns.

Learn more

Cumulative Impacts Workgroup

The Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights (OEJECR) is coordinating with all programs and regions who are engaged in the work of addressing cumulative and multiple impacts. The goal of this work is ultimately to improve environmental public health of overburdened communities by systemically operationalizing and integrating cumulative impacts across the EPA.

Meaningful Engagement Booklet

The EPA Office of Air and Radiation launched a tool for local and state governments to build their capacity to conduct meaningful engagement. This tool guides local and state governments in increasing a community’s impact on the decision-making process, creating channels for empowered decision-making while maintaining engagement, and a roadmap to building trust within the community.

Learn more

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the Environmental Protection Agency has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/equity-action-plan

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

Over 103 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

America’s Children and Environment

America’s Children and Environment (ACE) is a collection of key data indicators on children's environmental health in the United States. ACE brings together information from a variety of vetted sources to provide national-level indicators and related information on the environment and children’s health across a of number of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic factors. These indicators include contaminants found in different media (e.g., water, air, food), biomonitoring (e.g., levels of a contaminant found in blood or urine of sensitive populations), and health outcomes associated with exposure to certain environmental pollutants.

Learn more

National Farmworker Training Program: Cooperative Agreement between the EPA and the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs

The EPA has prioritized development of training materials and training farmworker communities on pesticide safety and the Worker Protection Standard. Materials are available online in Spanish, English, and Haitian Creole, and were used to train 36,938 farmworkers in FY 2023.

Learn more

Advancing Environmental Justice Near Contaminated Lands

The EPA defined a six-step process to incorporate environmental justice related concerns into the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) investigations and created fact sheets to help communities consider anti-displacement strategies when planning for brownfields reuse.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

58 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

6 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

National Environmental Justice Advisory Council

The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) provides independent advice, consultation, and recommendations to the Administrator of the EPA on matters related to environmental justice. In FY 2023, the NEJAC held three public meetings and released five sets of recommendations. For additional information, including reports to Congress from EPA on the NEJAC’s recommendations, please visit the EPA’s NEJAC website.

Learn more

American Rescue Plan Funding to Pediatric Environmental Health Speciality Units

The EPA provided American Rescue Plan funding to the Pediatric Environmental Health Speciality Units, a national network of experts in the prevention, diagnosis, management, and treatment of health issues that arise from environmental exposures, to add programming on children’s health in communities with environmental justice concerns.

Board of Scientific Counselors – Social and Community Science Subcommittee

The Board of Scientific Counselors’ new Social and Community Science subcommittee is dedicated to supporting the agency's commitment to improve research to support communities and community science.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

The EPA participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. The EPA also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 as provided by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. The EPA coordinates across federal agencies on environmental justice, including: The Thriving Communities Network, co-chaired by the EPA and the Department of Transportation, convened eight agencies to coordinate place-based technical assistance and capacity-building resources for urban, rural, and Tribal communities to counteract economic distress and systemic disinvestment. The EPA participated in an interagency committee on Title VI working group led by the Department of Justice, a forum for sharing best practices and ensuring coordination. The EPA initiated the Colonias and other Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities effort along the US-Mexico Border, an interagency collaboration with 22 federal agencies to examine gaps and barriers and create opportunities for collaboration. Through the Green Infrastructure Federal Collaborative Steering Committee, 10 agencies engaged to prioritize federal actions to accelerate green infrastructure in partnership with CEQ to help implement recommendations in a recent report, “Opportunities to Accelerate Nature-Based Solutions: The Roadmap for Climate Progress, Thriving Nature, Equity, and Prosperity.”

The Environmental Protection Agency worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Thriving Communities Network

The EPA established the Thriving Communities Network (TCN), a federal interagency effort to coordinate place-based technical assistance and capacity-building resources for urban, rural, and Tribal communities experiencing a history of economic distress and systemic disinvestment. In September 2023, the White House hosted the TCN kick-off convening for federally-funded TCN capacity builders, selected philanthropic organizations, and federal partners. Senior White House leaders provided resources on climate, transportation, economic, and environmental justice. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the breadth of capacity-building resources now available to communities and the historic investments being deployed.

Learn more

Collaborating with the Federal Asthma Disparities Subcommittee, under the President’s Task Force for Environmental and Safety Risks to Children

Since 2012, the EPA has led an interagency collaboration to incorporate environmental controls into the standards of asthma care supporting delivery of in-home environmental asthma interventions. This improves health and well-being, reduces health care costs and increases savings, for children with hard-to-control asthma, children of color who face a higher asthma burden, and families suffering from poverty. In FY 2023, the Asthma Disparities subcommittee focused on three priorities: sustainable Medicaid reimbursement, research gaps, and equitable expectations.

Region 7’s Superfund Program Partnership with HUD for Housing Analyses

The EPA’s Region 7 currently has 12 Superfund sites that include Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) multifamily or public housing buildings within the site boundary. The EPA coordinated with HUD to ensure information on the Superfund site was effectively communicated to property owners and tenants. The EPA and HUD share the goals of ensuring that residents of HUD-assisted properties located on Superfund sites are protected from exposure to contamination. HUD’s relationship with HUD public housing authorities and multifamily property owners/agents places HUD in a unique position to help the EPA, when needed, to: (1) obtain access to HUD properties to sample and cleanup sites, and (2) reach HUD residents with EPA information about the site. The EPA can in turn assist HUD by providing risk communication and site-specific information on Superfund sites where HUD-assisted properties reside.

Environmental Justice in Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

The EPA’s enforcement and compliance programs incorporated environmental justice considerations into all six of the agency’s FY 2024-2027 National Enforcement and Compliance Initiatives, which focus enforcement and compliance resources on the most serious environmental problems.

Learn more

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**General Services Administration**

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General Services Administration

16 office(s), 11 location(s), 12,933 employees, and 1,738 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the General Services Administration (GSA) is to deliver the best customer experience and value in real estate, acquisition, and technology services to the government and the American people.

GSA centers and institutionalizes the principles of environmental justice within its mission of delivering the best customer experience and value in real estate, acquisition, and technology services to the government and the American people.

To learn more about environmental justice at GSA, please visit GSA's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known GSA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Public Buildings Service

Federal Acquisition Service

GSA IT

Get Involved

Check out the General Services Administration's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the General Services Administration

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the General Services Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Rule Incorporating Environmental Justice Principles into Federal Location Decisions

In FY 2023, GSA drafted a proposed rule to amend the Federal Management Regulation; Designation of Authority and Sustainable Siting. GSA proposed the rule on October 24, 2023. The objective of the rule is to direct agencies to better integrate strategic, holistic analysis into planning for agency location decisions, including consideration of economic, environmental, and cultural conditions. The rule was finalized in April 2024.

Learn more

GSA and Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Working in Partnership to Protect Environmental Interests

Photo credit: GSA

Agency logo

GSA conducts consultations with the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Band), regarding the modernization of a land port of entry. As a result of consultations with the Band, GSA reduced the modernization effort’s acreage impact and established the Band as a cooperating agency in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis. GSA and the Band formalized the government-to-government relationship through a Memorandum of Understanding and developed a process to conduct environmental studies. At the request of the Band, GSA adjusted its NEPA assessment from an Environmental Assessment to an Environmental Impact Statement.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the General Services Administration has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the General Services Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

GSA provides guidance on how to conduct an environmental justice study in Section 9.2 of the GSA NEPA Desk Guide. The guidance includes identifying of and outreach to communities with environmental justice concerns, Tribal Nations, or other affected groups; offering opportunities for communities to provide input; and seeking to overcome linguistic, cultural, institutional, and geographic barriers to meaningful participation.

Project Modifications

6 project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

Alcan Land Port of Entry in Alcan, Alaska

In summer 2023, the Tanana Chiefs Conference raised concerns regarding a Land Port of Entry (LPOE) site being considered for development, citing impacts to Native allotments and subsistence practices in the area for Tribal members. In the fall of 2023 GSA eliminated the alternative site from further consideration.

Grand Portage Land Port of Entry in Grand Portage, Minnesota

In June 2023, GSA held a formal Tribal consultation meeting with the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Band), the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Indian Health Service. In July 2023, GSA and the Band elevated Tribal authority and engagement to the appropriate level by signing a Memorandum of Understanding that established the Band as a cooperating agency in the NEPA process. Additionally, the NEPA statement of work was revised to reflect environmental evaluation standards of the Band.

Training

2 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

40 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, during the annual NEPA workshop for regional and central office NEPA practitioners, GSA conducted a training session on Executive Orders 14008 and 14096. This led to updates to various internal policies, including the GSA NEPA Desk Guide, the Floodplain Desk Guide, the Capital Investment and Leasing Program Environmental Worksheet, and GSA’s Feasibility Study Scope of Work.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the General Services Administration on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, GSA developed a priority list of site repair work and enhancement projects through the Good Neighbor Program that maximized positive community impact. In April 2024, GSA announced funding totaling $23.8 million from the President’s Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to develop 13 site repair and enhancement projects at federal buildings in 10 states through the program. These projects advance the goals of both the IRA and President Biden's Investing in America agenda.

Mitigate Climate and Pollutant Impacts to Communities Adjacent to Federal Property in Newark, New Jersey

The Rodino Federal Building in Newark, New Jersey, will receive $3.6 million for stormwater management, tree planting, and building resilience and adaptation updates that will also benefit the surrounding community by reducing offsite impacts. For example, tree planting should reduce local heat island effects and stormwater management will reduce site runoff and mitigate impacts to combined sewer overflows.

Mitigate Climate and Pollutant Impacts to Communities Adjacent to Federal Property in Baker City, Oregon

The David J. Wheeler Federal Building in Baker City, Oregon, will receive $1,075,000 to renovate a failing parking lot and install stormwater management to alleviate runoff and pollution of the adjacent Powder River and help mitigate downstream flooding in communities. Tree planting will help address urban heat island of the area.

Restore Public Space Access and Mitigate Climate Impacts to Communities Adjacent to Federal Property

The C. Clyde Atkins U.S. Courthouse, located in Miami, Florida, will receive $2,408,748 to improve accessibility and improve the public streetscape through tree planting and stormwater management.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the General Services Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

GSA administers two major federal financial assistance programs. These two programs are the federal surplus personal property donation program and the disposal of federal surplus real property for public use. GSA oversees the compliance of these two programs with the applicable civil rights laws and policies. GSA is responsible for engaging in proactive, investigatory, and corrective measures to ensure programs receiving federal financial assistance through GSA are compliant with relevant laws and policies. GSA issued its internal Policy Statement on Nondiscrimination in Federal Financial Assistance Programs. This policy promotes equitable and nondiscriminatory access to federal financial assistance programs, including those that advance environmental justice.

Title VI and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, such as under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at the General Services Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

As part of GSA’s Title VI compliance reviews, GSA’s Office of Civil Rights provided civil rights training, including a module on environmental justice, to 10 state agencies for surplus property and four training sessions for GSA employees on the “Fundamentals of Environmental Justice.”

10 open Title VI investigation(s) or compliance review(s) related to environmental justice

10 closed Title VI investigation(s) or resolution agreement(s) related to environmental justice

Training

4 agency training(s) on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

65 employee(s) trained on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and environmental justice

What is Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964?

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that no person be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance on account of race, color, or national origin.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the General Services Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

1 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

Thriving Communities Network

Through the Thriving Communities Network, GSA proactively facilitates alignment of community access to place-based and environmental justice technical and financial assistance from federal partners to enable communities to leverage Public Buildings Service real estate investments through their own planning or infrastructure work.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

2 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Refine Facility Location Regulation

In FY 2023, GSA drafted a proposed rule seeking public comment through the Administrative Procedures Act on an amendment to the Federal Management Regulation concerning location policy to address environmental justice, and local collaboration, among other issues. GSA revised the rule based on comments from five different groups, and the final rule was published in April 2024.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the General Services Administration, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

GSA is refining its policies on Tribal consultation and engagement. While these policies are being developed, with the guidance of the GSA Tribal Liaison, GSA is responding to the immediate needs of Tribes through consultation strategies based on other agencies’ best practices. GSA submitted three draft memoranda of understanding with two Tribal Governments and one Alaska Village Council establishing their governing bodies as Cooperating Agencies in the NEPA review process, giving them the right to represent their interests equal to other agency partners in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law-funded infrastructure border projects.

4 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

Consultation with Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

As a result of two government-to-government consultation sessions in FY 2023 on the Grand Portage Land Port of Entry (LPOE) Modernization Project, funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), GSA revised the amount of acreage needed for the LPOE after hearing concerns and objections to site expansion from the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa (Band). GSA and Customs and Border Protection acknowledged that the mission could be accomplished without an expansion, minimizing GSA’s overall impact to the local environment, and respecting the sovereign land ownership and management rights of the Band. Additionally, GSA and the Band established a memorandum of understanding outlining the environmental assessment decision making and permitting processes that would be conducted between GSA and the Band. GSA has elevated the study from an Environmental Assessment to an Environmental Impact Statement per Tribal policy and to follow Tribal guidelines around soil sample disposals.

Consultation with the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

As a result of government-to-government consultation in FY 2023, GSA and the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho entered a memorandum of understanding that established the Tribe as a Cooperating Agency in the NEPA review process of a LPOE located near their reservation and on their historical homelands.

GSA National Tribal Consultation – Indian Energy Procurement Preference Pilot

To ensure investments in the clean energy economy reach Tribal lands, the Department of Energy coordinated with the White House Council on Native American Affairs, the Department of Defense, and GSA, to launch an initiative to increase federal agencies’ use of Tribal energy through purchasing preference established by Title V of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. GSA participated in a national Tribal consultation, interagency listening sessions, and conducted over

37 one-on-one meetings in its market research as part of this pilot.

1 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, GSA conducted one virtual listening session with Tribes to inform them about Carbon Pollution-Free Electricity opportunities and hear about their successes and challenges to accessing the green energy market. This meeting led to 35 one-on-one meetings and discussions with Tribal stakeholders as GSA works to navigate implementation of Title V of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Training

2 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

363 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, in upholding the Presidential Memorandum on Uniform Standards for Tribal Consultation, GSA conducted a Tribal Consultation and Historic Preservation NEPA Workshop. The workshop provided staff with the tools to make informed decisions about when a specific project or action warrants the federal government holding a Tribal listening session or a government-to-government Tribal consultation concerning environmental decisions or topics. GSA supports over 450 Tribal fleet accounts. To improve customer service to Tribes, GSA conducted a training for GSA Fleet Service Representatives and released formal Support Guidance to 348 Zonal Fleet Employees. Providing specialized training enhances the support that GSA Fleet Service Representatives can provide to Tribal entities that want to lease or purchase vehicles from GSA. GSA’s work increased the number of zero-emissions vehicles ordered by Tribes from just three in FY 2022 to over 101 in FY 2023.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the General Services Administration including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

GSA will include environmental justice in its mission by developing programs, policies, and activities to address the negative health, environmental, climate, and economic impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. GSA aims to achieve environmental justice and provide economic opportunities for communities disproportionately affected by pollution and underinvestment in housing transportation, water, wastewater infrastructure, and healthcare.

7 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

1 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

10 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

565 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, training provided to GSA employees and community partners with information on advancing environmental justice principles.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

The Capital Investment and Leasing Program

In August 2023, GSA updated the Environmental Planning Worksheet for construction and repair and alteration projects to include a section on environmental justice and community planning considerations.

GSA P100

GSA worked on revisions to align Chapter 2 of the Public Buildings Service Facilities Standards (P100) with environmental justice and to further institutionalize consultation with local government officials during new construction and major renovation projects. GSA completed the P100 final updates in May 2024.

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

1 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Multi-Asset Planning Tool

GSA’s Multi-Asset Planning Tool is an internal map that helps visualize and search for building lease and client data. It also displays relevant geographic information such as flood hazard zones, seismic data, and transportation infrastructure. The tool includes information on disadvantaged census tracts from the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool as well as environmental justice concerns for review.

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

2 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

1 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

Green Building Advisory Committee

The Green Building Advisory Committee gives independent policy advice and recommendations to GSA’s Office of Federal High-Performance Buildings, as required by the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007. The advisory committee’s goal is to promote federal building innovations in planning, design, and operations that reduce costs, support agency missions, improve human health and performance, and minimize environmental impacts. In FY 2023, the advisory committee’s Federal Building Decarbonization Task Group held meetings and conducted work that resulted in an advice letter sent to GSA in December 2023. This followed a previous advice letter sent in November 2022. Both letters included environmental justice considerations for GSA. After GSA received the advice letters, the advisory committee appointed two members to represent environmental justice viewpoints, both of which have been instrumental over the past two years. The advisory committee focused on decarbonization of building operations. The advisory committee linked this to benefits that support equitable and resilient communities like enhanced human health, water conservation, and improved grid reliability.

Learn more

GSA Acquisition Policy Federal Advisory Committee

The GSA Acquisition Policy Federal Advisory Committee (GAP FAC) advises the GSA Administrator on using GSA’s acquisition tools and authorities to target the highest priority federal acquisition challenges. GSA received two recommendation reports focused on climate and sustainability. Another report, approved by the committee on May 22, 2024, is in progress. The recommendations suggest empowering the federal acquisition workforce to prioritize environmental outcomes and sustainability throughout the acquisition process. They also recommend engaging a broader and more diverse supplier base to achieve the government’s goals related to sustainability, environmental justice, economic equity, and a resilient domestic supply chain, leading to changes in GSA’s procurement policies and practices.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

GSA participates in the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council (IAC), which President Biden established in 2021 and expanded in 2023 through executive orders on tackling the climate crisis and environmental justice. GSA has also been participating in the Department of State’s Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for plastics treaty negotiations. These meetings discuss the impacts of plastic pollution on various communities.

The General Services Administration worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

White House Council on Native American Affairs – Indian Energy Purchase Preference Working Committee

Through the White House Council on Native American Affairs, GSA partners on the implementation of the Indian Energy Purchase Preference. Throughout FY 2023, the working group met bi-weekly to coordinate upcoming training, listening sessions, and procurements, and to identify the challenges and strategy for procuring energy products and by-products. The working group collaborated on a Department of Energy (DOE) training hosted by the Federal Energy Management Program aimed specifically at engaging Tribal energy companies.

White House Council on Native American Affairs – Electric Vehicle Initiative Committee

On March 15, 2023, GSA participated in the Electric Vehicle Initiative Committee’s joint agency webinar with DOE and the White House Council on Native American Affairs. The outcomes included increased awareness among Tribal governments about the availability of electric vehicles through GSA, including heavy-duty vehicles. This led to an increase in Tribes procuring electric vehicles in FY 2023.

FY 2024 GSA Sustainability Strategic Plan Incorporates Environmental Justice

On September 1, 2023, GSA submitted the FY 2024 Sustainability Strategic Plan. The plan details how GSA is integrating environmental justice into carbon pollution-free electricity procurement and into its facility project prioritization and implementation process. GSA posted a Request for Quote using the Indian Energy Purchase Preference, targeting Tribal owned businesses, to provide energy attribute certificates. This resulted in multiple offers for carbon-free energy attribute certificates. GSA is currently evaluating these offers.

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**National Aeronautics Space Administration**

Agency logo

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National Aeronautics and Space Administration

11 location(s), 18,343 employees, and 1,435 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) explores the unknown in air and space, innovates for the benefit of humanity, and inspires the world through discovery.

NASA Earth science helps communities across the world adapt to changing environmental conditions. Environmental justice efforts within the agency focus on providing trusted data and support resources to researchers, policymakers, and the public. Through strategic partnerships and capacity building activities, NASA strives to maximize the application of Earth science to solve real-world problems.

To learn more about environmental justice at NASA, please visit NASA's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known NASA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Science Mission Directorate

Office of STEM Engagement

Office of Strategic Infrastructure

Get Involved

Check out the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Improving Accessibility, Discoverability, and Usability of Earth System Data

NASA strives to provide equitable access to Earth data, including through open data policies and ongoing migration of datasets to the cloud. In so doing, the agency advances environmental justice by lowering systemic barriers to entry into the scientific community.

Learn more

Assessing Environmental Impact of NASA’s Activities

NASA maintains robust environmental management processes to help assess and minimize the impact of activities at NASA centers and launch facilities on local communities.

Learn more

Maximizing the Societal Benefit of Earth Science through Equity and Environmental Justice Applications

NASA’s Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) program focuses on bridging the gap between basic and applied science to maximize the utility and impact of Earth information. The EEJ program provides competitive research and training opportunities relevant to EEJ applications of Earth science that advance equity and environmental justice.

Learn more

NASA DEVELOP Helps Communities and Organizations Address Environmental Justice Concerns with Earth Observing Satellites

Photo credit: NASA

Agency logo

Through DEVELOP, a workforce development and capacity building program, NASA partners with organizations to inform decisions related to environmental justice. In FY 2023, DEVELOP conducted 13 feasibility studies addressing environmental justice concerns, including climate, disasters, air quality, water resources, and wildland fires. Extreme heat is a growing concern to many organizations, including those that partnered with DEVELOP to better understand heat vulnerability at bus stops in New York City.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

NASA has two Earth science programs covered under the Justice40 Initiative: Applied Sciences: Climate Resilience and Applied Sciences: Community Action. These programs provide funding, training, and resources to environmental justice researchers, disadvantaged communities, and local decision-makers.

For more information on NASA's Justice40 covered programs, please contact https://appliedsciences.nasa.gov/contact

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has:

2 Justice40 covered program(s)

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, NASA has:

Approximately $10.4 million in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2023 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, NASA is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 2 covered program(s) at NASA working to deliver benefits for communities include:

2 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

1 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

1 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

1 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

1 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

1 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

NASA-Funded Project Uses Space-Based Data to Improve Community Health

Researchers at the University of California, Irvine are working to combine NASA data and participatory Geographic Information System mapping to study urban heat, air pollutants, and greenspace in southeast Los Angeles, California, in partnership with a local organization. This project advances environmental justice and improves community health by disseminating exposure information and promoting greenspace access. This project was funded by the Applied Sciences: Community Action Program, which is a Justice40 covered program, and it will run through September 2024.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has:

2 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$4.2 million available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

ROSES-23 A.47 Earth Action: Community Action for Equity and Environmental Justice

To advance equity and environmental justice, NASA sought proposals for the creation of geospatial tools that integrate Earth science and socioeconomic data to inform environmental decision-making. NASA encouraged proposals to be developed in collaboration with disadvantaged communities, including those identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.

ROSES-23 A.67 Earth Action: Supporting Climate Resilient Communities

NASA sought proposals to support communities, including disadvantaged communities, in building resilience to climate impacts through application of NASA Earth observations. Proposals focused on informing local decision-making and were required to include engagement with organizations that assist in knowledge sharing between stakeholders.

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Funded Co-Investigators

As part of the “Earth Action: Community Action for Equity and Environmental Justice” funding solicitation, NASA introduced a new requirement to promote equity and participation of disadvantaged populations. The new guidance required that the proposed investigator team include an end-user who is part of the affected community. This team member must be in a funded role as either the Principal Investigator or Co-Investigator on the proposed project.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

NASA-Funded Environmental Justice Researcher Responds to Devastating Lāhainā Fires

NASA’s Earth science data and tools help communities prepare for and respond to natural disasters such as hurricanes and wildfires. In August 2023, a NASA-led team was working in Maui County when wildfires broke out. The team acted quickly to provide local partners with maps and satellite data and later deployed an application to support damage assessments that helped distribute more than $6 million in aid to 6,000 Maui residents impacted by the fires. This project was funded through the Equity and Environmental Justice component of NASA’s Applied Science: Community Action Program, which is a Justice40 covered program.

NASA’s Indigenous Peoples Initiative Partners with Karuk Tribe to Address Environmental Concerns

Photo credit: NASA

NASA’s Indigenous Peoples Initiative collaborated with the Karuk Department of Natural Resources (KDNR) to create the Remote Sensing of Wildfires and Watersheds workshop. This workshop focused on the Karuk Tribe’s landscape monitoring needs and introduced KDNR staff to data and tools for addressing wildfires, vegetation health, drought, and more. The agenda included hands-on activities, lectures, and time for reflection and discussion.

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

NASA includes environmental justice in Environmental Assessments (EAs) and Environmental Impact Statements (EISs) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations. Environmental justice is also included in the NEPA 101 course available through NASA’s internal training system, informing managers of the requirement to include environmental justice in all EAs and EISs.

Training

1 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

25 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, the NEPA module available in the agency training system cites the requirement for environmental justice to be included in Environmental Assessments and Environmental Impact Statements prepared for NASA programs and projects. New program and project managers are expected to complete this NEPA module, equating to an estimate of dozens of employees trained each year. Center NEPA Managers also occasionally provide NEPA trainings, which also include environmental justice considerations as an integral part of NASA’s NEPA analysis.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In FY 2023, NASA developed new or updated Language Access Plans (LAPs) for all ten NASA Centers to establish a more equitable communication strategy for reaching members of limited English proficiency populations in nearby communities. The plans outline actions to implement the agency-wide LAP to identify the languages of greatest need for each service area and provide guidance to personnel on when and how to provide services in languages other than English. In the future, NASA will leverage LAPs to improve opportunities for community engagement during environmental management processes.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

NASA seeks to maximize the societal benefit of federal investments in Earth science missions and research. To achieve this, the agency promotes collaboration with community organizations, educational institutions, and other non-federal partners to understand user needs, expedite real-world applications, and advance environmental justice in decision-making.

NASA is committed to providing equitable access to the agency’s data and tools, including those that can be used to identify and respond to environmental challenges. As part of this effort, eight new datasets relevant to climate and environmental justice were made available in FY 2023.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

3 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

NASA Holds UNBOUND Workshops on Environmental Issues

Environmental justice is one of several high-priority domains identified by the NASA’s Earth Science Division. NASA’s Understanding Needs to Broaden Outside Use of NASA Data (UNBOUND) workshops help promote discoverability and usability of NASA data and tools. These workshops provide a mechanism for user engagement to help define barriers and broaden use of NASA Earth data in communities outside of traditional research pipelines. Two UNBOUND workshops in FY 2023 focused on topics of relevance to environmental justice, including air quality and coastal issues.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

In response to the 2021 Presidential Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships, NASA developed a Plan of Action to Implement the Policies and Directives of Executive Order 13175.

1 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, in January 2023, NASA hosted a virtual forum and listening session with Tribal representatives to advance Executive Order 13175 on “Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments.” While not specifically centered on environmental justice, feedback received during this session underscored the importance of access to NASA data for Tribal research, landscape monitoring, and natural resource management. This feedback was provided to NASA’s Earth Science Division and Indigenous Peoples Initiative for further action.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

NASA has embedded environmental justice within relevant internal and external facing policies, including in the agency’s Climate Strategy) and Equity Action Plan. In alignment with other agency directives, and in response to Executive Order 14096, NASA is also developing an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan, which will further institutionalize environmental justice within the agency

1 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

1 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

NASA Releases Climate Strategy to Maximize Impact of Earth Science Programs

In March 2023, NASA released its Climate Strategy which outlined efforts the agency is taking to support stakeholders – including at-risk and underserved communities – in preparing for and responding to climate change.

Learn more

NASA 2023 Equity Action Plan Focuses on Environmental Justice

Strategy #3 of NASA’s 2023 Equity Action Plan focused on agency actions to advance equity in climate data accessibility and environmental justice. This strategy focused on capacity-building activities, open data policies, and citizen science programs.

Learn more

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

2 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

NASA’s Environmental Justice Data Catalog

NASA’s Environmental Justice Data Catalog provides a repository for datasets that may be useful in environmental justice research, organized by topic – such as extreme heat, food availability, and air quality. In FY 2023, work began to incorporate the Environmental Justice Data Catalog into NASA’s Environmental Justice Data Search Interface, which is powered by the Science Discovery Engine. This search engine offers an open-source science infrastructure that enables collaborative and interdisciplinary environmental justice research.

Learn more

Environmental Justice Backgrounder

NASA’s Earth Science Data Systems (ESDS) Program has created an Environmental Justice Data Backgrounder to provide information on NASA data that can be used to support environmental and climate justice efforts. This public resource also highlights use cases showing how scientists and decision-makers are applying datasets to assess the vulnerability and exposure of communities to environmental challenges.

Learn more

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

1 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

NASA collaborates actively with other federal agencies to enable resource-sharing and facilitate coordination on environmental justice goals. Collaboration takes many forms, including joint Earth observation missions, interagency meetings, and groups such as the U.S. Global Change Research Program, and staff-level discussions. NASA also participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

NASA and USAID Join Forces to Address Environmental Challenges

On November 4, 2022, NASA and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to expand collaborative efforts in development areas of countries with emerging economies, such as disaster response and environmental management. This MOU builds off a long-standing partnership on SERVIR, which facilitates application of Earth data to improve community resilience, including a focus on gender and social inclusion of disadvantaged communities, and supports locally led efforts to address environmental concerns related to climate change, water security, land management, air quality, and more.

Agency logo

Photo credit: NASA

NASA Collaborates with Federal Partners to Launch the Earth Information Center

In FY 2023, NASA partnered with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Geological Survey, Department of Agriculture, USAID, Environmental Protection Agency, and Federal Emergency Management Agency to launch the Earth Information Center (EIC), a central hub for Earth data across the government. The EIC promotes access to and use of federal data for studying the Earth-human system and addressing environmental concerns. Thus far, three stories related to environmental justice have been published through the EIC on air quality, natural disasters, and agriculture.

Learn more

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**Small Business Administration**

Agency logo

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Small Business Administration

91+ location(s), 6,263 employees, and 3,457 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the Small Business Administration (SBA) is to maintain and strengthen the nation’s economy by enabling the establishment and vitality of small businesses and by assisting in the economic recovery of communities after disasters.

SBA advances environmental justice by providing support for local communities primarily, but not exclusively, through the disaster loan program. This program provides financial assistance for businesses, non-profit organizations, homeowners, and renters following a disaster and helps borrowers prepare for future disasters through loans including the mitigation option.

Some examples of well-known SBA offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Office of Capital Access

Office of Field Operations

Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Small Business Administration

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Small Business Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Increased Loans, Including the Mitigation Option for Disaster Survivors

In FY 2023, the SBA provided 1,356 borrowers with loans, including the mitigation option, totaling over $66 million to rebuild their properties with safeguards against future disasters. In FY 2023, the SBA updated its Disaster Assistance loan program, including the mitigation option, through the public rulemaking process to eliminate a restriction on property owners. Previously, borrowers could only use disaster loan funds to mitigate a “similar” disaster event that caused damage to their home or business. The new rule gives property owners more options to mitigate future damage from different types of disasters, reducing the need for future financial assistance. The same rule change also increased the amount of disaster loan limits from $40,000 to $100,000 for repair and replacement of household and personal effects; and from $200,000 to $500,000 for repair and replacement of a primary residence as well as the maximum allowed for post-disaster mitigation.

Learn more

Whole-of Agency Approach to Disasters

The SBA is using an extensive partnership network to better reach disaster survivors. Through the whole-of-agency approach, the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resiliency has strengthened its coordination role within the SBA. The Office supports federally coordinated disaster preparedness, response, recovery, planning, and resilience activities. The office also accesses other SBA programs that can make it easier for a business to recover and thrive after being impacted by a disaster. In turn, this can help the entire impacted community recover from a disaster.

Learn more

Deployment of Portable Loan Outreach Centers

SBA created the Portable Loan Outreach Centers (PLOC) initiative, which focuses on providing support to underserved disaster survivors that might not otherwise have access to SBA assistance. PLOCs are lightweight, mobile deployable systems that enable rapid response to some of the most damaged and vulnerable locations, where traditional recovery centers may be unavailable. PLOCs enhance the SBA’s agility, increase efficiency, and maximize outreach, making them essential in responding to disasters when infrastructure has been destroyed. In FY 2023, several rural areas were served by PLOCs. For example, in Mississippi, 353 business contracts had 72 successful loan applications; in Florida, 248 contacts led to 132 accepted applications. The SBA also used PLOCs in its response to the Maui wildfires.

Learn more

Disaster Assistance for Rural Communities Act

In FY 2023, the SBA implemented statutory changes increasing the accessibility of disaster assistance for rural communities. The Disaster Assistance for Rural Communities Act (RCA) gives SBA new authority to declare a disaster in a rural area upon request by the Governor of the State or the Chief Executive of the Indian Tribal Government in which the rural area is located. Specifically, the SBA Administrator has the authority to declare a disaster in a rural area where a major disaster for “Public Assistance” has been declared by the President under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, but where “Individual Assistance” was not authorized, if certain conditions are met. In August 2023, SBA announced its first rural declaration for Lyon County, Nevada. Ten months after full implementation of the RCA, SBA has made 14 Agency Rural Disaster Declarations totaling almost $6 million in loan approvals. Now, these counties that would historically not be declared eligible for SBA disaster assistance, can take advantage of available SBA disaster assistance programs.

Learn more

Piloting Unified Lending Platform

In FY 2023, the SBA established a new Unified Lending Platform to reduce the amount of work for disaster victims and to speed up the process from application to approval.

Learn more

SBA’s Ongoing Response to Maui Wildfires

The SBA adopted a whole-of-agency approach for the Maui wildfire response effort. Within six months of the August 2023 wildfires, the SBA directed more than 1,700 loans totaling more than $292 million to small business owners, non-profits, homeowners, and renters. The agency is offering assistance at eight disaster centers in impacted areas. The SBA worked to identify Native Hawaiian Organization-owned small businesses to perform contracts to clean up and help rebuild west Maui. The SBA translated all critical information, including press releases and fact sheets, into the following languages: Native Hawaiian, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Small Business Administration has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the Small Business Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The SBA did not investigate any complaints involving environmental justice in FY 2023. The SBA did complete one civil rights investigation involving Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The complaint filed against SBA involved its federally funded Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. The investigation found that there was no evidence to conclude that SBA violated its obligations under 13 CFR Part 136: Enforcement of nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap in programs or activities conducted by the SBA.

Based on guidance from the Department of Justice, the SBA Office of Diversity Inclusion and Civil Rights in FY 2023 began the process of updating the SBA Language Access Plan. In response to the Maui wildfire, the SBA translated all critical information, including press releases and fact sheets, into the following languages: Native Hawaiian, Chinese (Mandarin), Japanese, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. In response to the California Interstate 10 Fire and Road Closures, the SBA translated all critical information, including press releases and fact sheets, into the following languages: English, Korean, Navajo, and Spanish. Navajo was requested by American Indian Chamber of Commerce of California.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Small Business Administration in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The SBA conducted targeted outreach and listening sessions for disaster survivors in communities most at-risk, emphasizing engagement with key community stakeholders.

The SBA is improving access to disaster assistance by modernizing technology, streamlining the application process, and increasing support for underserved disaster survivors navigating the application process. The SBA conducts regular outreach with disaster survivors as part of the response and recovery process. SBA field offices provide vital links between disaster operations and survivors. These connections strengthen the long-term recovery and overall resiliency of affected communities. The SBA is also working with other federal agencies as part of a Life Experience Research Team to determine how to improve disaster response and recovery from the survivor’s point of view.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

4,296 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the Small Business Administration’s technical assistance events, please visit https://sba.gov/disaster

Technical Assistance at the SBA

The SBA conducted 4,296 targeted outreach engagements and listening sessions for disaster survivors in underserved communities, including communities most at-risk – emphasizing engagement with key community stakeholders. In addition, the SBA conducts technical assistance, including Business Reconsideration, Business Withdrawal, and Target Business Analysis Campaigns. In FY 2023, the SBA conducted 11 outreach campaigns, 33,256 business contacts, 246 referrals to Small Business Development Centers, and generated 416 reconsideration and reacceptance requests.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

Outreach Campaigns and Technical Assistance Campaigns

In FY 2023, the SBA conducted outreach campaigns and technical assistance campaigns, including Business Reconsideration, Business Withdrawal, and Target Business Analysis Campaigns.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Small Business Administration, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The federal government has a unique political relationship with Native American governments as set forth in the Constitution of the United States, and the various treaties, statutes, executive orders, and court decisions. The relationship, which is based on Indigenous Tribes’ nationhood status and their inherent powers of self-governance, acknowledges and recognizes the federal government’s trust responsibility to protect Tribal sovereignty and self-determination, Tribal lands, assets, resources, treaties, and other federally recognized and reserved rights. In recognition of our nation’s responsibilities to American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations (ANCs), it is the policy of the SBA to operate within a government-to-government relationship with federally recognized Tribes and to consult with tribal governments and ANCs prior to finalizing SBA policies that have implications for these stakeholders. For more information, please visit SBA’s Tribal Consultation Policy. As the SBA continues to hold Tribal consultations and Tribal listening sessions, the agency will identify environmental justice subjects as they are raised.

For example, the SBA conducted listening sessions in lieu of consultations in Hawaii, but environmental justice was not a topic brought up.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Small Business Administration including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Disaster Assistance for Rural Communities Act

Rural communities often face more severe impacts from natural disasters due to limited access to resources and infrastructure, which limits a community’s ability to recover and avert long-lasting economic hardship. For this reason, as a result of the bipartisan Disaster Assistance for Rural Communities Act (RCA), the SBA announced the full implementation of the Disaster Assistance for RCA on June 5, 2023.

Learn more

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the Small Business Administration has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/2024-02/2023 SBA Equity Action Plan\_508\_Jan 2.pdf

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

Loans, Including the Mitigation Option

The SBA offers low-interest disaster loans to homeowners and small businesses impacted by declared natural and other disasters. Eligible SBA disaster loan borrowers may choose to receive expanded funding to help mitigate their home or business against future disasters. The SBA disaster loans can be increased up to 20% to make building upgrades.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

The Small Business Administration worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Improve Disaster Response and Recovery across the Federal Government

The SBA is working with federal agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Department of Health and Human Services, as part of a Life Experience Research Team to determine how to improve disaster response and recovery from the survivor’s point of view.

Learn more

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**Tennessee Valley Authority**

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Tennessee Valley Authority

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is founded on a mission of service to all people of the Tennessee Valley region, including the Valley’s disadvantaged communities. TVA delivers on this mission through three key service areas: (1) Energy that is reliable, resilient, and low-cost; (2) Economic Development that brings jobs and capital investment to the region; and (3) Environmental Stewardship of our public lands, water, and air. TVA is committed to the just treatment and meaningful involvement of local communities in TVA’s decision-making. TVA seeks diverse partnerships that deliver broad and inclusive positive impacts through investment programs, community engagement, employee volunteerism, and customer and supply chain partnerships.

TVA encourages and facilitates meaningful participation by potentially affected communities in TVA’s decision-making processes. TVA works with those communities to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any disproportionate and adverse human, social, economic, or environmental effects when possible. This aligns with TVA’s statutory mission, and promotes mutually beneficial partnerships with potentially affected communities.

Get Involved

Check out the Tennessee Valley Authority's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the Tennessee Valley Authority

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the Tennessee Valley Authority in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

Community Information Hub

Launched in FY 2023, the Community Information Hub has interactive maps that enable users to identify communities with environmental justice concerns and explore environmental justice-related metrics, like energy burden, across the TVA region. The database on funding resources and project ideas assists communities with advancing their community vision.

Learn more

Recreation and Environmental Justice Support Grants

In FY 2023, the program provided assistance for non-profit organizations to support diversity and inclusivity in the outdoors and to promote recreational opportunities in local communities with environmental justice concerns and accessibility to the outdoors.

Learn more

Grade School Robotics Partners

TVA employees and retirees partner with Tennessee Valley Robotics to support local schools’ robotics initiatives, fostering innovation and inspiring the next generation of STEM enthusiasts.

Grade School STEM Program

TVA and the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation have partnered to create STEM centers at 27 locations in communities with environmental justice concerns throughout TVA’s seven-state region through a $1.1 million TVA grant. This is anticipated to help develop young scientists who understand scientific issues related to health and the environment, to better illustrate the potential connection with environmental justice.

TVA Home Uplift Program

TVA solicits stakeholder engagement on its low-income energy equity programs through deliberative outreach to stakeholder groups, including outreach through advocacy groups for underserved communities and communities with environmental justice concerns, and cross-referral with organizations offering social services targeting housing and energy. All benefits of the free home energy upgrades provided are realized by low-income and other communities that are underserved.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the Tennessee Valley Authority has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the Tennessee Valley Authority in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

TVA’s NEPA procedures are available at 18 CFR Part 1318, which outlines TVA’s environmental review process. TVA conducts an environmental justice analysis as part of its NEPA environmental reviews. Meaningfully engaging with stakeholders is a vital part of TVA’s mission executed through communications and outreach.

For example, a training session provided employees an awareness and education of online tools such as EJScreen and the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) to better understand issues impacting communities with environmental justice concerns. Use of screening tools occurs early in the NEPA process (before a full environmental justice analysis is conducted) to help NEPA staff, project managers, and external relations teams with targeted stakeholder outreach planning as early as possible.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the Tennessee Valley Authority in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

TVA works closely with a variety of stakeholders (local governments, civic and community organizations, etc.) to assist TVA in finding engagement opportunities. Stakeholders can directly engage with TVA decision-makers through various public meetings, along with submitting comments through NEPA and other engagement processes. New and strengthened partnerships in FY 2023 include: Grade School STEM Program: TVA and the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation have partnered to create STEM centers at 27 locations in communities with environmental justice concerns throughout TVA’s seven-state region through a $1.1 million TVA grant. This is anticipated to help develop young scientists who understand scientific issues related to health and the environment, to better illustrate the potential connection with environmental justice. Utility of the Future Information Exchange Working Groups: Through TVA’s Utility of the Future Information Exchange Working Groups, customers, residents, academics, environmental non-profit organizations, and government representatives discuss what topics or issued should be studied in long-term planning efforts. Teams are formed for specific purposes and sunset once goals are met. Tennessee Urban League Grant: Through a strengthened partnership with TVA, the Tennessee Urban League provides assistance to communities with environmental justice concerns to secure economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights. The partnership addresses inequities and creates caring, inclusive communities.

NEPA reviews and related documents are shared through various means, including but not limited to online, hard copies in local venues, hard copies by mail, materials translated to various languages, audio and video tours online, virtual and in-person meetings, local community events, local government meetings, social media, and newspapers.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

Pumped Storage Community Open House

TVA is preparing a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for evaluating potential pumped storage hydropower (PSH) site locations in Jackson County, Alabama, and at the existing Raccoon Mountain PSH Plant in Marion County, Tennessee, for the potential construction at one or more sites as the need for long-duration energy storage increases. In June 2023, TVA discussed Environmental Impact Statement alternatives, community economic and recreational benefits, and employment opportunities with local communities. The discussion focused on ways TVA could avoid, minimize, and mitigate environmental impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns.

Kingston Retirement Draft Environmental Impact Statement Public Meeting

In May 2023, TVA published a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for public review and comment on the proposed retirement and demolition of the Kingston Fossil Plant and the construction of replacement generation. TVA conducted public meetings in local communities to share information about the proposal and the draft environmental analyses, to gather additional input from the public, and to answer questions and address concerns, as well as held virtual meetings. In addition, TVA conducted an awareness campaign ahead of the meeting date, and the venue was chosen based on accessibility to communities with environmental justice concerns. These public meetings enabled face-to-face conversations with community members and solicitation of formal comments to inform decision-making. In April 2024, TVA issued a Record of Decision on the Environmental Impact Statement.

Wilbur Reservoir Bridge Replacement Draft Environmental Assessment

TVA prepared a draft Environmental Assessment (EA) to address the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposal to replace the roadway bridge across Wilbur Reservoir in Carter County, Tennessee, near Elizabethton. The draft EA was released for public review and comment in June 2023. During the 30-day review period, TVA held two public meetings to provide information to the public and solicit comments about the proposal. Part of the goal of meeting with local communities potentially impacted by project was to discuss how to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts and solicit formal comments to inform decision-making.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the Tennessee Valley Authority, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

TVA has established government-to-government consultation and regularly consults with over 20 Tribes that have a religious or cultural interest in TVA’s service area. The majority of these Tribes were forcibly removed during the Indian Removal period. The current list of Tribes can be found at TVA’s Tribal Relations website. TVA prepared an updated action plan to implement the policies and directives of Executive Order 13175 as requested by the Presidential Memorandum of January 26, 2021. This detailed plan of action was developed in consultation with Tribes.

National Historic Preservation Act: Section 110 – Conditions Assessment for Removal Route Resources on TVA-Owned Land

TVA consults with Tribes regarding forced Native American Removal Routes (RR). Tribes consider some RRs as sacred. TVA recorded intact portions of RRs and associated archaeological sites within TVA’s region which assists TVA in the management and protection of resources. TVA provided Tribes with map data and an opportunity to participate in field conditions assessment of RRs intersecting TVA land.

TVA Updated Notice of Inventory Completion under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

In March 2023, TVA submitted a notice of inventory completion to the National Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) program in the Federal Register, effectively transferring legal control of all known Native American Ancestors and sacred items held by TVA back to Federally Recognized Indian Tribes. TVA is now able to facilitate reburial of these Ancestors and items with requesting Tribes.

TVA Native Plant Partnership

The Native Plant Partnership, formed in 2016, invited all 23 Tribes that historically lived in the Southeast to consult, plant, and harvest traditional plants of all kinds. TVA consults with Tribes regarding native plants and seeks to incorporate Indigenous Knowledge into land management practices. TVA partnered with Tribes to plant and restore rivercane habitat on TVA land as well as install a native plant garden on TVA land.

For example, TVA holds regular teleconferences and face-to-face consultations with Tribes. These consultations encourage communication between the agency and Tribes regarding current projects, issues, and pertinent activities. Agenda items include National Historic Preservation Act activities, Archaeological Resources Protection Act activities, Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act progress, Native American Reinterment, and other business. TVA consulted and engaged with Tribes regarding mutually beneficial partnerships that raise awareness and promote Tribal Sovereignty including: Archaeological Survey Partnerships, Native Plant Partnership, Tribal Cultural History Project, Sacred Site Management Plans, and Tribal Engagement events.

For example, TVA provided training to employees regarding: the federal government’s Nation-to-Nation relationship with Tribes, Executive Order 13175 and TVA’s Tribal Consultation responsibilities, Tribe’s involvement in federal preservation law, TVA’s moral commitment to Tribes, and mutually beneficial partnerships that promote Tribal Sovereignty.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the Tennessee Valley Authority including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

TVA is founded on a mission of service to all people of the Tennessee Valley region, including the Valley’s disadvantaged communities. TVA is committed to the just treatment and meaningful involvement of local communities in TVA’s decision-making. We seek diverse partnerships that deliver broad and inclusive positive impacts through investment programs, community engagement, employee volunteerism, and customer and supply chain partnerships. TVA has a dedicated office that leads efforts in the Environmental Justice Program, with goals of increasing strategic and focused outreach, enhancing internal communication, and aligning and coordinating how TVA supports and engages with communities.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

TVA’s Environmental Justice Best Practices for Community Engagement

TVA’s Environmental Justice Best Practices for Community Engagement document aims to treat communities with environmental justice concerns justly, and meaningfully involve those communities in TVA decisions that could affect their environment, health and safety, and socioeconomic well-being.

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

The Tennessee Valley Authority worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Best Practices Guide for Federal Agencies Regarding Tribal and Native Hawaiian Sacred Sites

TVA participates in the Working Group of the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Interagency Coordination and Collaboration for the Protection of Indigenous Sacred Sites, which developed a best practices guide for federal agencies regarding Indigenous sacred sites. The best practices guide was developed in consultation with Tribes and published in December 2023.

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**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Agency logo

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

56 office(s), 9 location(s), 25,000 employees, and 5,500 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is to deliver vital engineering solutions, in collaboration with our partners, to secure our nation, energize our economy, and reduce risk from disaster.

USACE Civil Works Mission is to serve the public by providing the nation with quality and responsive management of the nation’s water resources through: support of commercial navigation; restoration, protection and management of aquatic ecosystems; flood risk management; and providing engineering and technical services in an environmentally sustainable, economic, and technically sound manner with a focus on public safety and collaborative partnerships. USACE aims to align its mission with the Biden-Harris Administration’s goals to ensure fair, inclusive, and equitable solutions for all communities’ water resource needs. Throughout the agency’s Environmental Justice Strategic Planning process, USACE will revisit its longstanding approach to problem solving, outreach, engagement, and decision making with rural, urban, and Tribal communities throughout the United States and its territories. These changes and subsequent actions will allow USACE to equitably serve communities and be more inclusive of communities with environmental justice concerns.

To learn more about environmental justice at USACE, please visit USACE's environmental justice website.

Some examples of well-known USACE offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

Engineer Research and Development Office

Institute for Water Resources

USACE Headquarters Office

Get Involved

Check out the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers's public engagement events

Latest News & Updates

Find out the latest news at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Get Funding & Support

Find NOFOs, grants, and technical assistance

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights (show more/show less)

St. Paul District Held 41 Engagements Related to Environmental Justice

USACE led multiple community engagements to discuss collaboration. The St. Paul District, which is one of 38 districts at USACE (geographical boundaries organized by watershed), had 41 engagements related to environmental justice concerns. The engagements covered three major themes: how USACE executes its mission (30 engagements), how USACE works with partners (8 engagements), and general outreach activities (3 engagements).

Galveston District Worked on the Lower Rio Grande Valley Watershed Assessment with Local Stakeholders

The study analyzes water resources needs in a four-county area with persistent flooding and populations that are vulnerable due to pervasive poverty and a lack of resources. This assessment is the first step in understanding flood problems that can be addressed in partnership with USACE or other organizations to advance environmental justice.

Learn more

Walla Walla District Partnered with Owyhee Combined School Students on Owyhee River Ecosystem Restoration Project

USACE collaborated with students in the Owyhee Combined School on the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation to complete macrobenthic organism surveys of the Owyhee River as part of an adaptive management plan for the Owyhee River Ecosystem Restoration project. Macrobenthos are organisms that live at the bottom of a water column and are generally visible to the naked eye (roughly larger than one millimeter).

USACE Partnered with Acequia Communities in New Mexico

The Albuquerque District aims to provide the irrigators of New Mexico reliable, permanent facilities requiring minimal maintenance of these 18th century community irrigation ditch systems through the Acequia Rehabilitation Program.

Learn more

USACE’s Stump Creek Little Rock, Arkansas Section 208 Study is Evaluating Options to Reduce the Flood Risk

The disadvantaged communities near Stump Creek had previously experienced flooding due to blockages caused by vegetation, debris, and garbage. This project aims to clear out the stream channel of debris or blockages in order to improve flood safety for these affected disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Policy and Planning Improvements for Environmental Justice

Photo credit: Jerica Richardson

Agency logo

Teams at each of the USACE Districts, which are geographic organizational boundaries based on watersheds, prepared initial outreach and engagement strategies to advance environmental justice with a focus on technical assistance programs. The agency is working to reduce barriers to participation in the decision-making process and to quantify and analyze impacts and benefits of USACE projects to affected communities. USACE also prepared a Draft Environmental Justice Program Management Plan, a Headquarters Environmental Justice webpage, and has increased training to build environmental justice literacy among our staff.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

USACE continues to look for ways to benefit more communities under all its programs, including those covered by the Justice40 Initiative. With respect to Justice40 specifically, three of USACE’s 11 Justice40 covered programs (Planning Assistance to States, Floodplain Management Services, and the Tribal Partnership Program) offer technical assistance to communities, and USACE staff have increased outreach to disadvantaged communities to increase the accessibility of these programs to them. In addition, USACE is evaluating applications from rural, disadvantaged, and Tribal communities for water resources development projects submitted under the Continuing Authorities Program Pilot Program (WRDA 2020 Section 165a). Overall, USACE has made climate adaptation progress a priority in 10 of the 11 Justice40 covered programs. The 11th covered program is the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), which must be implemented under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and National Contingency Plan. The FUSRAP program provides other kinds of benefits locally. USACE integrates climate adaptation considerations and analysis into all planning studies, project design efforts, and construction projects, which supports the Justice40 Initiative. Because adverse climate change impacts are likely to include disadvantaged communities, USACE uses climate adaptation and analysis tools to evaluate potential investments in these communities under its Justice40 covered programs.

In February 2023, USACE added a website for environmental justice. It provides links for environmental justice-related resources (i.e., the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, Environmental Justice Scorecard, policy guidance, agency environmental justice highlights, and USACE Justice40 covered programs, and federal agency webpages to their environmental justice-related programs) in a whole-of-government approach to environmental justice. Regarding the Justice40 Initiative, USACE is funded by Congressional Authorities and does not provide grants directly.

For more information on USACE's Justice40 covered programs, please contact Environmental.Justice@usace.army.mil

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has:

11 Justice40 covered program(s), including 9 Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, USACE has:

Approximately $9 billion in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, USACE is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 11 covered program(s) at USACE working to deliver benefits for communities include:

10 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

1 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that

people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Emphasis on Outreach in Technical Assistance Programs

Each USACE District program received additional funding for outreach efforts for Floodplain Management Service and Planning Assistances to States program to ensure USACE is building relationships with and increasing access to our programs disadvantaged communities, rural communities, small communities, and Tribal Nations.

Cost Share Waiver for Planning Assistance to States Technical Assistance Program

Section 8119 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 provided a waiver of the 50% local cost share typically required of all communities that participate in the Planning Assistance to States program. This “cost-share waiver” now reduces all local costs (to $0) for communities that meet the definition of economically disadvantaged. In 2023, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) issued implementation guidance and USACE began applying this waiver to the Planning Assistance to States program where appropriate.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Village of Owego – Flood Resilience Study

On July 31, 2023, USACE initiated a technical analysis that includes stormwater and floodproofing analyses with the Village of Owego. The analysis includes stormwater mapping and modeling and will develop options for flood risk management to address the stormwater flood risk. These include elevation, acquisition, dry floodproofing, and wet floodproofing.

Section 14 Chickasaw Park Emergency Streambank Stabilization Project

This project partners with the Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation. It aims to evaluate and address roughly 250 linear feet of significantly eroded Chickasaw Park shoreline in west Louisville, Kentucky. Active erosion affects the northern section of the park including a park access road. The project aims to reduce the risk to the northern section of the park from Ohio River from these erosional forces.

Learn more

Advancing Environmental Justice through Community-Centered Emergency Action Planning

The small, unincorporated historic city of Marin City, California, partnered with USACE to convene multiple agencies to jointly prepare a flood emergency action plan (EAP). Marin City staff and community members also trained in sandbags, participated in a tabletop exercise, and initiated a follow-on EAP to advance protections for community members with access and functional needs.

Learn more

Lower Brule Sioux Tribe Sewage Lagoon Protection and Ecosystem Restoration Project

USACE constructed its first Tribal Partnership Program project with the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe to address erosion to Tribal lands, infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources. An offshore breakwater and planting bench restore wetlands and protect the local wastewater sewage lagoons. The project includes features informed by Indigenous Knowledge that safely reconnect Tribal members to the river.

Learn more

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USACE’s Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Works Planning Studies, dated January 2023, ensures that more communities will be able to participate in our study process. NEPA-focused training modules include environmental justice as well.

Project Modifications

10 project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

New York District, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay, Queens, New York City

When this project was in the design phase, additional coordination was undertaken to determine where community gardens could be relocated as the original project footprint did not allow for this. The team developed a path forward, and the community gardens will be moved to other locations on the property to minimize negative community impacts.

Omaha District, Screening of Alternatives that Would Affect Lake Traverse Reservation from Watertown Feasibility Study

The USACE project team met with staff of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribal Council on this Watertown Feasibility Study to discuss potential impacts on and received a Tribal Resolution that opposed structural alternatives in the Watertown Feasibility Study project that would affect lands on the reservation. In response, the project team removed those alternatives from further consideration.

Charleston Peninsula, South Carolina, Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study

The NEPA process resulted in completing an Environmental Impact Statement to allow for a more robust assessment of environmental justice, historic, and aesthetic impacts such as equitable access to water and public spaces. Of the $1.3 billion coastal storm risk management project, $54 million was allocated for equitable aesthetic mitigation in the project engineering and design phase.

Training

5 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

120 to 200 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, in May 2023, the headquarters of USACE conducted a NEPA meeting on how to incorporate environmental justice as a part of quarterly planning for our communities of practice. USACE is in developing an agency-specific environmental justice course, and several district-level courses to help train new employees. The vast majority of NEPA-related training sessions were conducted via one-hour lunch and learn sessions.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Environmental or Health Protection (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The USACE Regulatory Program implements and enforces Section 404 of the Clean Water Act involving the placement of fill in wetlands and Waters of the U.S. The permitting process and resolution of violations through wetland restoration advances the goal of balanced implementation of the program, including in areas where unauthorized activities may not be noticed or reported and where after-the-fact permitting may be required. Interaction with the public provides educational opportunities and oversight of aquatic resources in rural and disadvantaged communities. Resolution of effective permitting and enforcement to address violations reduces harm and provides environmental benefits to adjacent communities.

Salton Sea Regulatory Enforcement Action

The Los Angeles District Regulatory Division completed an enforcement action pertaining to a violation of the Clean Water Act, in the Salton Sea, California. The violation was dewatering a very large wetland area (due to drain extensions) of many hundreds of acres. This violation placed air quality burdens on the surrounding communities with environmental justice concerns as the dewatering was leading to the soil drying out and agricultural chemical laden material becoming airborne.

Wilmington District Regulatory Program Resolution of Unauthorized Activities

Wilmington District’s Regulatory Program resolved a total of 116 Unauthorized Activities in North Carolina. 53 of these resolutions occurred in communities with environmental justice concerns.

St. Paul District Revocation of Permit

USACE’s St. Paul District issued a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit in March 2019 authorizing fill material into ~900 acres of wetlands in association with construction of a large copper-nickel mine (NorthMet) in the headwaters of the St Louis River. St Paul District suspended the permit in March 2021 based on EPA’s concerns under CWA Section 401(a)(2) that the permit may violate the downstream water quality standards of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Following receipt of and extensive review of information from EPA, Fond du Lac, the project proponent, and the public (during the USACE’s first-ever public hearing specific to CWA Section 401(a)(2) water quality requirements), the USACE St. Paul District determined it was not able to identify permit conditions that would ensure compliance with the Fond du Lac Band’s water quality requirements, and could not re-instate or modify the permit. Therefore, in June 2023, USACE officials revoked the CWA Section 404 permit. The decision to revoke the permit under CWA Section 401(a)(2) does not prevent the project proponent from submitting a new application that would meet all applicable water quality requirements, along with all other applicable requirements.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The following updated or improved policies, memorandum, or assessments prepared or completed during the FY 2023 reporting period enhance USACE’s ability to advance environmental justice: USACE-Civil Works Tribal Consultation Policy (completed in December 2023); Planning Policy for Conducting Civil Works Planning Studies, ER 1105-2-103 (prepared in FY 2023, completed in December 2023); Planning Tribal Partnership Program, EP 1105-2-64 (modified in FY 2023, guidance updates completed in FY 2024, February 2024); USACE, Floodplain Management Services and Planning Assistance to States Outreach Plan: Providing Technical Assistance to Underserved Communities (March 2023); Memorandum: Implementation of the Environmental Justice Strategic Plan for Civil Works Studies (December 2022); and Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Works Planning Studies (January 2023).

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USACE has several projects across the nation that have focused on environmental justice in the decision-making process. For example, USACE has conducted feasibility studies in Miami-Dade County, and worked in Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands and Miami Back Bay. USACE’s Jacksonville District continuously coordinates environmental justice outreach efforts with local, state/local, and non-government organizations.

USACE has updated our presentation and outreach materials so that they explain and consider environmental justice issues and are easier to understand. The agency often seeks out community engagement venues where community-based organizations already convene to discuss our programs and how we could support or address a need.

Technical Assistance (show more/show less)

65 technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’s technical assistance events, please visit https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Technical-Assistance

Upper St. Croix River Solon Springs Floodplain Management Services Program Study and Wild Rice Workshop

At a project site visit with Tribal partners on the St. Croix River in May 2023, St. Croix Chippewa (Ojibwe) Indians of Wisconsin and other partners expressed interest in adding habitat enhancements to a project that integrate wild rice cultivation. The Tribal partners provided valuable information regarding critical life cycle requirements of wild rice. As a result, USACE’s St. Paul District is developing a regional wild rice workshop, to include Tribes in the Mississippi Headwaters area.

Southern California Post-Fire Mitigation, Recovery and Resilience Workshop for Tribes at the Pechanga Reservation near Temecula, California

At the Southern California Post-Fire Mitigation, Recovery and Resilience Workshop, Tribal representation included the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Pechanga Band of Indians, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, the Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the Mesa Grande Reservation, the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians of the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation, along with a guest speaker from the Hopi Tribe. Tribal participants reported gaining new relationships and acquiring helpful resources and information to support their own hazard mitigation efforts. This “test” case set stage for anticipated future similar workshops in the region.

Learn more

All-In Prichard Outreach, City of Prichard, Alabama

USACE’s Mobile District held a listening session in the City of Prichard, Alabama, to identify flood prone areas and educational needs which resulted in a formal request for technical assistance from USACE.

Public Processes (show more/show less)

80 public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management Project

The USACE project team participated in approximately five civic league meetings and Southside Task Force meetings to engage with communities with environmental justice concerns for input on the project.

Gullah Geechee Listening Session

In FY 2023, USACE’s Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina Districts worked to jointly host a Gullah Geechee Listening Session with Mr. Jaime Pinkham, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, at the International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina. The listening session occurred on December 7, 2023. This resulted in a USACE-Gullah Geechee Working Group for ongoing relationship building, focusing on water resource projects.

Portland District, Bradford Island Community Involvement Plan

For the Bradford Island Superfund site, USACE’s Portland District in Oregon developed the communication plan to advance environmental justice across all of its communities including a separate agreement with interested Tribal Nations.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USACE is committed to implementing an accountable process to ensure early, meaningful, and timely input through consultation with Tribal Nations in the development of policies that have Tribal implications. Much of this work occurred throughout FY 2023, including hosting a series listening sessions. The result was an updated USACE Tribal Consultation Policy that advances USACE’s ability to consult with and collaborate with Tribal Nations on the full breadth of issues that may affect Tribal Nations’ exercise of treaty rights or other reserved rights to meet the nation’s trust responsibilities within the Civil Works program.

104 Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

New England District Hosted Tribal Engagement

USACE’s New England District is consulting with and providing technical assistance to the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) in Aquinnah, Massachusetts. The goal is to collaborate on methods to manage culturally significant natural resources, mitigate the consequences of environmental degradation, and adapt to climate change.

Seattle District, Tribal Treaty Right Determinations Information Submittals

In FY 2023, USACE’s Seattle District met with Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and member Tribes seven times to collaborate on reducing the burden on our Tribal partners when asked to submit information to substantiate a permit objection based on Tribal Treaty Rights. Through ongoing consultation, USACE staff continue to listen to the Tribes’ concerns and provide clarity of the process.

Savannah District Listening Sessions

USACE’s Savannah District hosted a listening session in Tulsa, Oklahoma with four removed Tribes with ancestral homelands within the district’s area of responsibility: Cherokee Nation, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, and the Thlopthlocco Tribal Town. The Tribes shared their histories, emphasizing the importance of water and water resources to their cultural identity. This session was the start of consultations and anticipated collaborations between the district and the Tribes.

29 Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, Army Civil Works leadership and USACE hosted over 12 listening sessions related to the effort to modernize the Civil Works Program on the update to the USACE Tribal consultation policy and on guidance for the Tribal Partnership Program, and the Environmental Justice Policy. The listening sessions and associated government-to-government consultations resulted in developing the final updated Tribal Consultation Policy and the final Tribal Partnership Program, USACE’s Implementation of Environmental Justice and the Justice40 Initiative (March 2022), and the Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Works Planning Studies (January 2023). Individual District listening sessions focused on District initiatives within their areas of responsibility and how the District could better support Tribal Nations.

Training

11 agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

325 employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, USACE’s trainings focused on awareness that Tribal Nations often have environmental justice concerns, on Tribal treaty and reserved rights, and on incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into USACE projects. This was accomplished during onboarding of new employees and incoming District Commanders (leaders of each District). The annual USACE Consulting with Tribal Nations Course held in September 2023 also covered critical updates proposed by Tribes through consultation on the draft Tribal Consultation Policy and the roll out of the Tribal Application tool.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

USACE is advancing environmental justice institutionally by updating policy and guidance to reduce disproportionate environmental burdens and human health effects and to increase access to benefits of our programs. Our approach also reduces barriers to participation in our decision-making process, helps teams identify communities with environmental justice concerns, and works toward a whole-of-government approach to environmental justice. The agency is also working to cultivate and sustain an inclusive and responsive workforce with diverse lived experience ready to address rural, urban, and Tribal water resource needs across the nation and in the U.S. territories. In 2023, USACE, due to its large Civil Works Mission, began working to issue a USACE-specific Environmental Justice Strategic Plan. In FY 2023, USACE worked on developing the Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Planning Studies, which directs districts to include communities early in the study initiation process and all the way through construction. USACE also hired a full-time, headquarters-level environmental justice program manager and assigned environmental justice specialist positions in each Division and District.

57 staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity

10 new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

Over 50 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

Over 500 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, the “Designing for Diversity Training” provided by the USACE Institute for Water Resources, Collaboration and Public Participation Center of Expertise has expanded the outreach and collaboration capacity of USACE’s Districts. Planning Assistance to States and Floodplain Management Services outreach training has also contributed to expanding a district’s capacity to conduct environmental justice outreach to economically disadvantaged communities with flood risk or floodplain management concerns.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Memorandum: Implementation of the Environmental Justice Strategic Plan

The memorandum, dated December 2022 and signed by Major General William Graham, transmits the USACE Interim Environmental Justice Strategic Plan for immediate implementation across the Civil Works enterprise. Additionally, it provides requirements for the development of district strategic plans.

Learn more

Implementation Guidance for Section 160 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020, Definition of Economically Disadvantaged Community

WRDA 2020 Section 160 directs the Secretary of the Army to define the term “economically disadvantaged community” for purposes of the act and amendments made. This definition is used to help identify the criterion used to determine eligibility under the program for projects that will advance environmental justice.

Learn more

Implementation of Environmental Justice and the Justice40 Initiative

The memorandum, dated March 22, 2022 and issued by the Assistant Secretary of the Army of Civil Works, outlined the need to modernize the Civil Works program to better serve the needs of disadvantaged communities. By incorporating environmental justice initiatives into the Civil Works program, USACE will build innovative, climate-resilient infrastructure that protects communities and ecosystems throughout the country from the impacts of climate change.

Learn more

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://www.usace.army.mil/Media/News-Releases/News-Release-Article-View/Article/3220423/us-army-corps-of-engineers-signs-partnership-agreement-with-the-american-indian/

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

3 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

USACE Internal Tools to Advance Environmental Justice

USACE is developing three internal tools that its project teams can use to understand the location of environmental justice concerns, identify disadvantaged communities in project areas, and help understand potential impacts to disadvantaged communities. However, USACE has not developed any public-facing tools.

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees (show more/show less)

32 new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice

8 new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

USACE-AZ Governor’s Office of Resiliency Partnership

USACE met with the Arizona Governor's Office of Resiliency to better understand Arizona’s environmental justice and Justice40 Initiative priorities and develop opportunities to partner on projects and studies to support Tribal communities and disadvantaged communities.

Seattle District, Puget Sound Federal Task Force

The Puget Sound Federal Task Force includes 15 federal agencies who play a role in protecting Puget Sound and are directed to coordinate and collaborate with the Tribal Management Conference and a newly formed State Advisory Committee. The agencies are charged with incorporating Tribal treaty rights in their strategies for Puget Sound restoration, as highlighted in the Treaty Rights at Risk document created by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission which outlined the federal government’s responsibilities to address habitat loss as noted in the 1974 Boldt Decision.

New England Federal Partners

USACE identified disadvantaged communities in each state within New England District (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut), identifying each agency’s activity in that community, resulting in outreach to State Partners to initiate further potential efforts in those communities. The New England Federal Partners (NEFP) Environmental Justice Subgroup determined disadvantaged communities in each state to identify what agencies are doing what work in these communities and how the group collectively can assist further. The NEFP is a group of 17 federal agencies formed to work together on complex environmental issues. The goal of the Environmental Justice Subgroup is to reduce the burden on disadvantaged communities by organizing federal resources that equip them with information and tools to assess their climate and environmental risks and develop climate and environmental justice resilience solutions most appropriate for them.

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

Los Angeles District staff are the “Ambassadors” to the Los Angeles River Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP). This interagency partnership includes USACE, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of the Interior, among other agencies and their subgroups. The group disseminates federal resources directly to non-profits, local government, watershed groups and others through meetings, workshops, and tours. The partnership is focused on identifying, supporting, and implementing regional priorities, programs, and projects in support of Justice40 communities. The UWFP passes on federal resources such as grants, technical assistance, trainings, informational webinars, and direct access to federal staff in an efficient manner. The UWFP strives to reduce barriers to federal resources, recognizing local communities have limited resources, funds and time to fully understand the breadth of complex federal programs.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Navajo Nation Silver Jackets Response to Little Colorado River Flooding within the Birdsprings Chapter

As the Birdsprings Chapter of the Navajo Nation has experienced significant flooding along the Little Colorado River and has accumulated associated sedimentation at the N71 Bridge over the Lower Colorado River, USACE worked with other agency partners to address the following: (1) USACE Emergency Management installation of temporary flood protection barriers and sandbags. (2) USACE & Silver Jackets to develop an Emergency Action Plan for flood response with Tabletop Exercise. (3) Navajo Nation Department of Transportation work to fix washed out roads to reconnect communities. (4) Bureau of Indian Affairs and Navajo County worked to clear out sediment & debris from beneath bridge to prevent future flooding.

Southeast Natural Resources Leaders Group Meeting to Discuss Implementation of Environmental Justice Policy

In May 2023, the Southeast Natural Resources Leaders Group met to discuss implementation of environmental justice policy. The meeting goals included increased understanding of each agency’s strategic approach to implementing environmental justice policy and identification of environmental justice projects in each agency.

Pittsburgh District and State Coordination to Support Local FEMA Applications

USACE’s Pittsburgh District in Pennsylvania has been coordinating with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to identify communities who had unsuccessful Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) applications to determine whether USACE could provide technical assistance to help lift those applications in the next round. Through this effort, the Pittsburgh District team provided coordination and support to two disadvantaged communities and expects to continue this effort on the next round.

Agency logo

Understanding the Nexus of Operations and Environmental Justice

USACE’s Albuquerque District created an environmental justice summary for each operation site within its area of responsibility. These summaries are meant to be attached to grant applications, used for internal planning, and to raise awareness that these sites serve communities with environmental justice concerns.

Learn more

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**U.S. National Science Foundation**

Agency logo

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U.S. National Science Foundation

1 office(s), 1 location(s), 1,418 employees, and 18 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023

The U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency that supports science and engineering in all 50 states and U.S. territories, spurring innovation anywhere and opportunity everywhere. NSF was established in 1950 by Congress to promote the progress of science; advance the national health, prosperity and welfare; and secure the national defense. NSF fulfills its mission chiefly by making grants. NSF’s investments account for about 25% of federal support to America’s colleges and universities for basic research: research driven by curiosity and discovery. NSF also supports solutions-oriented research with the potential to produce advancements for the American people.

As part of NSF’s mission, NSF fosters environmental justice broadly, and more specifically, through environmental compliance, relationship building, staff training, and knowledge building. Through broader impacts, NSF-funded research activities benefit many communities with environmental justice concerns.

Some examples of well-known NSF offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

NSF Office of Legislative and Public Affairs

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Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the U.S. National Science Foundation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights(show more/show less)

Advancing Environmental Justice Research and Training in the Geosciences

The Directorate for Geosciences awarded seven research projects in FY 2023 related to education, undergraduate training, and workforce development that contained an environmental justice component.

The ACTION (Alaska Coastal Cooperative for Co-producing Transformative Ideas and Opportunities in the North) Project

In FY 2023, through approximately $9.5 million, the ACTION project supports process-based problem solving through community-driven science and education via partnerships among researchers and Tribal and Indigenous Arctic communities studying increasingly climate-driven coastal hazards and environmental change.

Learn more

Sociocultural and Place-Aware Civil and Environmental Engineering Scholars

An approximately $1.5 million project supports the retention and graduation of high-achieving, low-income students with financial need by providing 24 full-time scholarships to students pursuing bachelor’s degrees in civil and/or environmental engineering. This five-year project awarded in FY 2022 will develop engineers who have a holistic community and place-based perspective and drive the future civil and environmental engineering workforce to produce solutions that appropriately address justice and equity.

Learn more

Development of NSF’s Language Assistance Plan

NSF developed a Language Assistance Plan (LAP) to assist in providing translation and interpretation services to limited English proficient individuals who participate in NSF-conducted programs, including on environmental justice.

NSF Program Complaints Discrimination Process

NSF updated the internal tracking portion of its program complaints system to include environmental justice as a characteristic of a discrimination complaint.

CIVIC Accelerates Transition of Emerging Technologies and Ideas for Addressing Climate Challenges in Communities

Photo credit: Kannan Thiruvengadam

Agency logo

The Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC) program awarded $19 million from NSF and its partner agencies to 19 pilot projects led by collaborations of researchers and local community partners. The pilots were focused on two research tracks: “Living in a Changing Climate” and “Resource and Service Equity,” which focus on disadvantaged communities.

Learn more

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the U.S. National Science Foundation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

NSF’s approach to resilience explicitly includes the concept of environmental justice, reaching and involving the most at-risk or vulnerable communities to play a lead role in their resilient future through community-driven engagement as agenda-setters and active participants in resilience research. Disadvantaged communities will directly build, and benefit from, these NSF-funded activities.

For more information on NSF’s Justice40 covered programs, please visit the NSF’s website for the Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC), the Coastlines and People Hubs for Research and Broadening Participation (CoPE), and Smart and Connected Communities (S&CC).

For more information on NSF's Justice40 covered programs, please contact info@nsf.gov

Justice40 Covered Programs (show more/show less)

The U.S. National Science Foundation has:

3 Justice40 covered program(s)

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda and other sources, NSF has:

Approximately $46 million in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 through its Justice40 covered programs.1

Through President Biden’s Justice40 Initiative, NSF is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of seven investment categories, and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The 3 covered program(s) at NSF working to deliver benefits for communities include:

3 program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change

2 program(s) advancing clean and affordable energy for communities

2 program(s) delivering and advancing clean transportation options for communities

1 program(s) advancing affordable and sustainable housing

2 program(s) delivering training and workforce development benefits

2 program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

2 program(s) delivering critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure benefits

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

1In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency’s budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged communities.

Justice40 Covered Program Highlights (show more/show less)

The U.S. National Science Foundation is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through grants or awards made through its Justice40 covered programs, such as:

Strengthening Resilience of Ojibwe Nations Across Generations (STRONG)

In FY 2023, through the Smart and Connected Communities (S&CC) program, the STRONG project partners with Indigenous Peoples to synthesize traditional and scientific knowledge to advance innovations in resilience research and guide development plans by deploying state-of-the-art sensors to continuously measure water and ecosystems conditions.

Learn more

Kickstarting A Youth-Centered Green Economy for the Disadvantaged Community of East Boston, Massachusetts

In FY 2023, through the Smart & Connected Communities (S&CC) program, the STRONG project creates a local, accessible green workforce development program for youth in East Boston, Massachusetts teaching biological and social science research skills, hands-on training in a zero-emissions greenhouse, and implementing green infrastructure solutions in their community to advance environmental justice.

Learn more

Leveraging Existing Infrastructure to Identify and Manage Urban Environmental Hazards in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

In FY 2023, through the Smart & Connected Communities (S&CC) program, this project is developing and deploying sensors, which interpret vibrational signals from existing underground telecommunication fiber-optic cables to detect and pinpoint hazards such as sewer leaks and landslides in real-time across Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Learn more

Funding Announcements (show more/show less)

The U.S. National Science Foundation has:

2 funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative

$65,450,000 available through Justice40 covered program(s) funding announcements2

Smart & Connected Communities

The Smart & Connected Communities (S&CC) program encourages researchers to work with community stakeholders to identify and define challenges they are facing, enabling those challenges to motivate use-inspired research questions. The S&CC program supports integrative research that addresses fundamental technological and social science dimensions of smart and connected communities and pilots solutions together with communities.

Learn more

Civic Innovation Challenge

The Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC) is a research and action competition that accelerates the transition to practice of foundational research and emerging technologies into communities through civic-engaged research. By addressing priorities at the local scale that are relevant across the United States, CIVIC is laying the foundation for a broader and more fluid exchange of research and technology capabilities and civic priorities through joint partnerships involving civic stakeholders and the research community.

Learn more

2Further, this section also includes funding that was made available through an agency’s Justice40 covered programs in FY 2023. The funding was made available through various mechanisms, like grants, loans, agreements, contracts, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169).

Covered Program Design or Modification (show more/show less)

The U.S. National Science Foundation made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Civic Innovation Challenge: Track on Resource and Service Equity

The Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC) includes a new research track, under which FY 2023 awards were made, designed for projects bridging the gap between essential resources and services and community needs, including addressing environmental justice challenges.

Civic Innovation Challenge: Track on Living in a Changing Climate

The Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC) also includes a new research track, under which FY 2023 awards were made, designed to address pre-disaster action around adaptation, resilience, and mitigation, especially focusing on working directly with disadvantaged communities.

Smart & Connected Communities

The Smart & Connected Communities program, which removed proposal deadlines, advances foundational research on smart technologies addressing climate and environmental resilience, food and agriculture, education and workforce development, and many other priorities areas relevant to disadvantaged communities.

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

Learn more

Justice40 In Action (show more/show less)

The U.S. National Science Foundation is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

Reimagining Urban Resilience and Education Hubs Using a Community-Engaged, Equity-Centered Approach in Central Florida

In FY 2023, through the Smart & Connected Communities program, the University of Central Florida is building and deploying an equity-centered, portable resilience hub, co-designed with its community partners, to provide pre- and post-disaster necessities and connectivity for disadvantaged communities in Central Florida. The solar-powered, modular hub also serves as a hands-on STEM education center during non-emergency times.

Learn more

Creating the West Virginia Flood Resilience Framework for Comprehensive Disaster Response and Long-Term

In FY 2023, through the Smart & Connected Communities program, in response to a devastating history of flooding, the project is collaborating with West Virginia’s resiliency office, local governments, flood plain managers, and non-profits to create the West Virginia Flood Resilience Framework, an online toolkit with flood visualizations, tools, and exercises for building capacity in communities and local governments to better prepare for future floods.

Learn more

Smart and Safe Prescribed Burning for Rangeland and Wildland Urban Interface Communities

In FY 2023, through the Smart & Connected Communities program, this project has developed community sensing, planning, and learning infrastructure using a novel data-driven burn condition and fire behavior model on a cloud-based platform, to support smart and safe prescribed burning for communities that use these practices. Prescribed burning is a powerful land-management tool, but it has significant safety and environmental concerns.

NSF CIVIC: Smart Kids and Cool Seniors

Photo credit: Clint Andrews

STEM workshop on local air pollution monitoring for high school students living in public housing in Elizabeth, NJ.

A legacy of pollution and poverty challenges the abilities of disadvantaged communities to cope with heat stress and poor air quality. Through the NSF Civic Innovation Challenge (CIVIC) program, this project, in partnership with the community of Elizabeth, New Jersey, deploys an environmental sensor network that provides senior public housing communities with actionable data insights to enact change for the communities. It also provides STEM educational programming on environmental sensing to help youth gain employment skills.

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country’s bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the U.S. National Science Foundation has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the U.S. National Science Foundation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Existing policy documents include the Proposal and Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) and the Proposal and Award Manual. These policy documents describe need for compliance with federal environmental laws such as NEPA, which includes environmental justice considerations. Current instructions for NSF’s environmental impact screening tool highlight areas of potential environmental justice concern (e.g., potential impacts on Tribes, children, and minorities).

Training

6 agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews

128 employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, through formal training, NSF continues to highlight, especially to new staff, the importance of potential environmental impacts in areas related to environmental justice concerns.

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

Learn more

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (show more/show less)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the U.S. National Science Foundation in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

During FY 2023, NSF proposed new language in its Proposal and Award Policies & Procedures Guide (PAPPG) regarding proposals that may impact Tribal resources and interests, taking effect in 2024. NSF issued STEM Access for Persons with Disabilities and Workplace Equity for Persons with Disabilities in STEM and STEM Education. These initiatives advance civil rights protections for persons with disabilities, including those within communities with environmental justice concerns. NSF also provides reasonable accommodations. NSF developed a Language Assistance Plan to assist providing translation and interpretation services to limited English proficient individuals who participate in NSF conducted programs such as public involvement events, including on environmental justice. NSF updated the internal tracking portion of its program complaints system to include environmental justice as a characteristic of a discrimination complaint.

NSF can investigate Title VI environmental justice complaints and initiate Title VI environmental justice pre-award and post-award compliance reviews of awardee organizations.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the U.S. National Science Foundation including to implement Executive Order 14008 and Executive Order 14096, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

NSF continues to review and evaluate its policies, tools, and training to enhance awareness and knowledge of environmental justice issues. Through enhanced awareness, the agency is better poised to fulfill its mission and optimally serve its customers. All NSF proposals are reviewed according to two merit review criteria: Intellectual Merit and Broader Impacts. Broader Impacts are defined as the potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes. Examples of desired outcomes include both inclusion and societal well-being, each of which dovetails with environmental justice. In addition, NSF staff routinely work to advance equity and outreach to communities with environmental justice concerns and populations that have been underserved.

Training

6 agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice

128 employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, through formal and informal training, NSF continues to highlight, especially to new staff, the importance of potential environmental impacts in areas related to environmental justice concerns.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy (show more/show less)

Has issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Dear Colleague Letter on CO2 Removal and Solar Radiation Modification Strategies: Science, Governance, and Consequences

NSF encouraged proposal submissions on fundamental understanding and assessment of environmental processes, and/or social, cultural, and ethical impacts of CO2 removal and solar radiation modification strategies, including environmental justice issues.

Learn more

Dear Colleague Letter on Updates to the Navigating the New Arctic Program

NSF issued updates to the Navigating the New Arctic Program that highlighted the importance of empowering local and Tribal voices in Arctic research and new ways of knowing through meaningful Arctic community engagement.

Learn more

Has assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities

For more information on how the U.S. National Science Foundation has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit https://nsf-gov-resources.nsf.gov/files/nsf24\_1.pdf?VersionId=1kJf1ldESF8i4HjouuJ7Q6A0oJD3ClK3

Over the past four years is working to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to Executive Order 14096

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources (show more/show less)

4 tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

Organization Environmental Impacts Checklist

NSF’s data collection and screening tool includes environmental justice areas of concern to help inform of potential impacts from proposed activities as part of the agency decision-making process.

Learn more

Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee Website on Planned Research Vessel Movements through Alaska and Arctic Waters

NSF contributed to the development of a public-facing website of research expeditions (dates, planned routes, research goals, mooring locations) to enhance communication and coordinate activities with local communities and Tribes.

Learn more

Website on Arctic Community Engagement

NSF maintains a website with information on Arctic programs, initiatives, external collaborations, and other resources to facilitate sustained effective and respectful engagement with local, Tribal, and Indigenous Peoples.

Learn more

Interagency Collaboration (show more/show less)

NSF participates in the National Science and Technology Council’s Environmental Justice Subcommittee, launched in 2023 by President Biden’s executive order on environmental justice. The purpose of the Environmental Justice Subcommittee is to address the need for a coordinated federal strategy to identify and address gaps in science, data, and research related to environmental justice. NSF staff are actively working to design interagency guidelines on environmental justice applications to federal activity regarding data and research collection, access, and stewardship. NSF participates in meetings to learn and become informed about environmental justice related activities, including opportunities to improve agency practices. Additionally, NSF participates in federal interagency activities focused on environmental justice related to the geosciences.

The U.S. National Science Foundation worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Ocean Climate Action Plan

Through its participation on the Ocean Policy Committee, NSF played a key role in developing the Ocean Climate Action Plan (OCAP), which was released in March 2023. During implementation of OCAP, agencies will incorporate environmental justice principles, reaffirming the importance of minimizing impacts of ocean climate action to communities already facing disproportionate burdens.

Learn more

Chairing the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee

The Director of NSF serves as Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC) Chair, supporting IARPC’s five-year Arctic Research Plan (2022-2026), which includes principles to respect Indigenous Knowledge and culture as well as to build and sustain relationships with state, local, and Tribal authorities, research institutions, and nonprofit, private sector, and international organizations.

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