

TEXAS
 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
 COLLABORATIVE ACTION PLAN

FOCUS AREA 1: HEALTHY AIR, WATER, AND LAND

Goals:
 1. Work with respective authorities to implement rules and programs to protect natural resources and build healthier communities.
 2. Implement strategies that address geographic priorities by connecting environmental justice needs with existing resources within EPA and beyond.

	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	RESOURCES	COMMENTS / STATUS
Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years	<p><i>Policy</i> <i>Work in partnership to ensure implementation and compliance of all EPA laws and regulations.</i></p> <p>1. The Clean Power Plan to reduce carbon pollution from power plants and fight climate change</p> <p><i>Complete list can be found at: http://www.epa.gov/laws-regulations</i></p>	6MM and Respective Authorities	<p>EPA conducted a Clean Power Plan Community Training on November 4-5, 2015 in Port Arthur, Texas. The training focused on what communities need to know about State and Federal Plans, the Clean Energy Incentive Program, the Importance of State Engagement, the Stakeholder Perspective on the Clean Power Plan, Organizing and Developing Effective Public Comments, including an overview of EJ Screen, and other community resources. EJ stakeholders from Texas and other Region 6 states helped plan and conduct the training. (R6)</p> <p>On February 9, 2016, the Supreme Court stayed implementation of the Clean Power Plan pending judicial review. The Court’s decision was not on the merits of the rule. EPA firmly believes the Clean Power Plan will be upheld when the merits are considered because the rule rests on strong scientific and legal foundations. For the states that choose to continue to work to cut carbon pollution from power plants and seek the agency’s guidance and assistance, EPA will continue to provide tools and</p>

	<p><u>Communications</u></p> <p>1. <i>Create a state-wide Environmental Justice network to categorize challenges, form workgroups and begin strategic work plans.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Host quarterly conference calls with EJ constituents to exchange information, report on progress, and explore strategies to remove barriers.</i></p>	<p>OEJTIA</p> <p>OEJTIA</p>	<p>support. We will make any additional information available as necessary.</p> <p>In January 2016, EPA began a series on calls and visits to begin to categorize and prioritize challenges, enlist collaborators and champions and form workgroups to develop action plans for challenges identified in this action plan. Meetings have been held in the Texas Lower Rio Grande Valley, Nueces County, Houston, Dallas and San Antonio.</p> <p>An extensive electronic e-mail database has been created and will continue to be updated as new members join the EJ Network for Texas.</p>
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FOCUS AREA 3: PERMITTING and ENFORCEMENT

Goal: Empower communities to take action before and after permits are issued and work with proper authorities to investigate possible violations.

	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Conduct training on early public participation.</i> 2. <i>Enhance awareness of processes to report possible violations.</i> 3. <i>Work with proper authorities to investigate and address problematic permitted facilities that have been reported by environmental justice communities.</i> 	OEJTIA & 6EN	<p><i>Communities with concerns include;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>East Side Community in Texas City,</i> • <i>Manchester Community</i> • <i>Pleasantville Community in Houston</i> • <i>Port Arthur</i> • <i>Freeport, Clute & Oyster Creek</i> • <i>Port Freeport</i> • <i>Galenda Park</i> • <i>Pasedena</i> • <i>Gleenbrook</i> • <i>San Antonio – Kelly AFB Area</i> • <i>West Dallas</i>

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FOCUS AREA 4: URBAN, RURAL AND UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES

Goals:

1. Create healthier communities by restoring urban waters through partnerships and by forming funding collaborations to bring infrastructure for drinking water and sanitary sewer services to EJ communities.
2. Reduce pesticide risks of farmworkers and their families by working collaborative with proper authorities.
3. Better prepare rural and unincorporated communities for man-made or natural disasters.

	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
<i>Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years</i>	<u>Urban</u> <i>Coordinate and provide assistance to the City of San Antonio and the San Antonio River Authority (SARA) in support of their Urban Waters Projects</i>	6WQ	February 2016 - The City of San Antonio and the San Antonio River Authority conducted a Public Participation Workshop
	<u>Rural</u> <i>1. Work collaborative with proper authorities to expand awareness of the Worker Protection Standards (WPS) program and create bridges where gaps may exist.</i>	6MM	In the fall of 2015, EPA updated standards to increase safety and protect the health of America’s farmworkers. EPA’s updates reflect extensive stakeholder involvement from federal and state partners and the agricultural community including farmworkers, farmers and industry. These provisions will help ensure farmworkers nationwide receive annual safety training; that children under the age of 18 are prohibited from handling pesticides; and that workers are aware of the protections they are afforded under today’s action and have the tools needed to protect themselves and their families from pesticide exposure. View the video to learn more about EPA’s revised worker protection standards: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pOPMYSirxIY
		6SF	

	<p>2. <i>Coordinate HAZMAT and emergency response training targeting rural and unincorporated communities.</i></p> <p><u>Unincorporated Areas</u></p> <p>1. <i>Facilitate collaboration for priorities identified by 14 colonias in the Texas Lower Rio Grande - and replicate successful strategies in other areas.</i></p> <p>2. <i>Work with the Texas Secretary of State, USDA-RD and County Officials to Identify priority areas for Nueces County and begin a collaborative plan</i></p> <p>3. <i>Facilitate discussions between partners to explore options for bringing drinking water and sanitary sewer services to the Sandbranch community in Dallas County.</i></p>	<p>OEJTIA/6SF</p> <p>OEJTIA</p> <p>OEJTIA</p>	<p>In order to strengthen Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), Region 6 issues a quarterly LEPC newsletter, supports the national HOTZONE conference for local responders and conducts LEPC workshops. LEPCs are voluntary organizations made up of local industry, government, first responders, elected officials and citizens. These LEPCs are important organizations in responding quickly and effectively to emergencies These workshops focused on requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act for industry and communities, emergency preparedness oil spills, and the Chemical Safety Executive Order</p> <p>EPA Region 6 hosted 32 LEPC workshops throughout TX, NM, OK, AK, and LA in 2016.</p> <p>Work in progress. Priorities bring address include wastewater plant concerns, emergency preparedness, and public awareness of risks associated with contaminated fish from Donna Canal.</p> <p>Held meetings and teleconferences with Nueces County leaders and officials to assess current conditions of the Colonias and rural subdivisions in the County. We are currently looking at all the maps and inventories that have been done in the past to determine critical areas. Flooding and failing septic tanks are a major concern for residents of these communities at this time. The County has been working infrastructure issues – one or two colonias at a time.</p> <p>On March 22, 2016, EPA convened a governmental partners meeting with 11 organizations to address the barriers that had prevented water and wastewater services in the past. To date the community has obtained authority to run their</p>
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	<p>4. <i>Coordinate with TWDB, TDA & other State and federal partners to provide water and waste water infrastructure to Cindi Park Colonia and surrounding Colonias</i></p> <p>6WQ</p>		<p>own water supply corporation if needed. They are in the process of securing an engineer to complete the Preliminary Engineering Assessment and are now eligible to apply for grants and loans to rehabilitate homes. The federal and state partners will continue to assist the community until a final determination for water and wastewater services is made.</p> <p>EPA reviewed engineer plans and design documents in May 2016. Target date for construction funding is December 2016.</p>
	<p>5. <i>Collaborate with USDA to help provide approximately \$2 million in funding for the construction of the Cuadrilla (El Paso County, TX) project to supplement \$3.5 million in EPA's BEIF funding for the construction of a wastewater collection system to provide service to 25 homes.</i></p> <p>6WQ</p>		<p>The Cuadrilla colonia received wastewater service through a package plant that service the area. Over the last 5 years the treatment plant stopped treating its incoming raw wastewater to an irrigation canal. The Cuadrilla area was transferred to the Lower Valley Water District which is the project sponsor. Because of the high groundwater table in the area, the project increased to approximately \$5.5 million therefore requiring the sponsor to work closely with EPA, the BECC and the Texas Secretary of State's Ombudsperson to secure USDA funding. The planning and design is complete and the project sponsor is in the process of securing the additional funding with anticipation to be ready for construction in 1st quarter FY17.</p>
	<p><u>Border Water Infrastructure</u></p> <p>1. <i>Provide \$1.8 million dollars to North Alamo to provide access to wastewater collection and treatment services for 471 (approximately 1,680 residents) homes with funding assistance from NADB's administered BEIF funding.</i></p> <p>6WQ</p>		<p>Technical assistance as part of the project development was provided by USEPA through the Project Development Assistance Program administered by the BECC. In February 2011, The Hidalgo County Health & Human Services Department issued a Nuisance letter to North Alamo Water Supply Corporation. This was followed in April 2012 by the Texas Department of State Health Services issuance of Nuisance Findings Determination. These investment will</p>

	<p><i>2. Provide \$3.7 million dollars to Brownsville Public Utilities Board provide access to wastewater collection and treatment services for 685 (approximately 2,630 residents) homes, of which up to 465 new residential connections will be installed through NADB-BEIF funding.</i></p>	<p>6WQ</p>	<p>eliminate untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges. The project is projected to receive TWDB funding for the collection and wastewater treatment system in the amount of \$9 million. The estimated total construction cost of the project is approximately \$11 million. The project is expected to initiate construction in 3rd quarter FY16.</p> <p>Technical assistance for the hookup portion of the project was also provided by USEPA through the Project Development Assistance Program administered by the BECC in the amount of \$85,000. These investment will eliminate untreated or inadequately treated wastewater discharges of approximately 0.21 million gallons per day and therefore reduce the likelihood of groundwater and surface water contamination in the Brownsville area. The BEIF funding will supplement \$24.5 million in EDAP grant and \$840,000 loan from TWDB. The hook up portion of the project is expected to initiate construction in 3rd quarter FY16.</p>
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FOCUS AREA 5: IMPACTS FROM PORTS AND PORT EXPANSION

Goal: Reduce environmental impacts on communities near ports through federal cooperation and public awareness.

	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years	<p>1. <i>Enhance outreach efforts and information sharing for activities that impact the environment of nearby communities</i></p> <p>2. <i>Address issues surrounding the Harbor Bridge Project, present and future Impact on Hillcrest, West Cole, and Dona Park.</i></p>	<p>6MM</p> <p>Federal Highways/TX DOT</p>	<p>EPA has collaboratively developed three draft tools to support effective stakeholder engagement between near-port communities and port facilities;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ports Primer 2. Community Action Plan 3. Environmental Justice Primer <p><i>The drafts are currently open for public comment.</i></p> <p>Deadline for Comments is August 31, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. ET by one of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online <u>Submit Comments - Draft Ports Primer for Communities</u> • Email <u>Talk About Ports</u> (TalkAboutPorts@epa.gov) <p>We are looking for Ports and Near-Port Communities to pilot EPA's new collaboratively developed draft stakeholder engagement and capacity building tools. EPA will provide direct technical assistance to community stakeholders and port facility stakeholders to test and refine the draft tools and the associated processes. <u>For information go to the links above.</u></p>

			EPA completed the NEPA review. Work continues under Department of Transportation's leadership.
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FOCUS AREA 6: LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS

Goal: Prevent or minimize chemical accidents or exposure risks through partner collaboration, strong enforcement, community awareness and public involvement.

	COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years	1. <i>Prevent, prepare for and respond to oil spills that occur in and around inland waters of the United States.</i>	6SF	EPA Region 6 conducts over 200 inspections annually to ensure that necessary precautions are taken to prevent spills. When spills do happen EPA is ready to respond to them. When an oil spill occurs that threatens waters of the U.S. and exceeds 1000 gallons, EPA Region 6 will dispatch a response team to investigate and address the spill, if necessary. These response actions include plugging abandoned oil wells, removing oil from abandoned containers, pipes and barges and overseeing companies as they clean up oil that has spilled. All of these activities support citizens living in the shadow of the oil industry.
	2. <i>Build capacity with the local emergency planning committees (LEPCs) which include local officials, first responders, citizens, on roles responsibilities and best practices – as well as increase awareness of the chemicals in their communities.</i>	6SF	In order to strengthen Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPCs), EPA Region 6 issues a quarterly LEPC newsletter, supports the national HOTZONE conference for local responders and conducts LEPC workshops. LEPCs are voluntary organizations made up of local industry, government, first responders, elected officials and citizens. These LEPCs are important organizations in responding quickly and effectively to emergencies. These workshops focused on requirements of the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act for industry and communities, emergency preparedness oil spills, and the Chemical Safety Executive Order.