

Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice



The EJ IWG helps to ensure that the federal government is

ACCESSIBLE

Easily reached by communities, advocates, and other stakeholders regarding environmental justice concerns;

AWARE

Knowledgeable of the environmental justice concerns and issues facing communities in order to facilitate collaboration and coordination; and

ACCOUNTABLE

Capable of explaining the actions and decisions related to the implementation of Executive Order 12898

Creating Change through Collaboration

Established by Executive Order 12898, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG) comprises 17 federal agencies and White House offices that work together to advance environmental justice principles across the federal government, to engage and support local communities in addressing environmental and human health impacts, and to promote and implement comprehensive solutions to environmental justice concerns.

Guiding Principles of the EJ IWG

The EJ IWG provides leadership, guidance, and support to federal agencies by:

- coordinating a focused and concerted effort by federal agencies to directly address the environmental, social, economic, and public health burdens in minority, low-income, indigenous and tribal communities;
- implementing policies with measureable impacts on environmental justice;
- focusing federal agency resources and technical assistance to address disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects.

For more information, please consult the EJ IWG Framework for collaboration (<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/ej-iwg-framework-collaboration>), which outlines the fiscal years 2016-2018 goals to advance greater federal agency collaboration to improve the quality-of-life and support economic opportunities in overburdened and under-resourced communities.

Did You Know?

The EJ IWG is releasing a series of videos on key documents of the National Environmental Policy Act as well as community spotlights like the Educate, Motivate, Innovate initiative - go to the EJ IWG website to learn more about these activities!



EJ IWG Highlights

The EJ IWG plays a central role in creating healthy and sustainable communities by bringing together the federal agencies, state, local and tribal governments, educational institutions and community stakeholders to address critical environmental justice issues. Examples include the College/Underserved Community Partnership Program (CUPP), federal grants and funding opportunities, and the Educate, Motivate, Innovate (EMI) climate justice initiative.

The College/Underserved Community Partnership Program

promotes interagency collaboration and community engagement with local colleges and universities. CUPP provides opportunities for government agencies to partner with local colleges and universities to address environmental justice concerns and provide free technical assistance to communities. Through these partnerships, students gain practical experience and earn course credits while communities and government agencies benefit from the collaborative efforts to address environmental and human health impacts.

Community Spotlight:

Savannah State University is working with the Coastal Commission of Georgia to assist students in small cities, such as Riceboro and Midway, to develop designs for sustainable buildings and improvements to water infrastructure systems.



Arthur Blazer (USDA) tours Dine College, a community college serving the Navajo Nation.

Educate, Motivate, Innovate (EMI) Climate Justice Initiative

started by the EJ IWG, in collaboration with the White House, highlights the needs of vulnerable populations, particularly those related to climate resilience and adaptation. The initiative supports federal conversations and actions on climate change, which are informed by and responsive to the needs of communities with environmental justice concerns.

This initiative aims to engage the next generation of climate justice leaders by expanding partnerships with Minority Serving Institutions, including outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Tribal Colleges and Universities.

Community Spotlight:

The EJ IWG hosted an EMI workshop at the 2016 National Environmental Justice Conference (NEJC), which featured presentations on climate justice projects from students attending Minority Serving Institutions. Students were able to share their work and gain valuable insight from other professionals and activists in the environmental justice movement.



EMI participant engages with community members during air quality testing.



Following their presentations at the 2016 NEJC EMI workshop, the student participants meet with representatives from the EPA, DOE and various stakeholders.

Federal Grants and Funding Opportunities provide communities with valuable resources to develop, implement and sustain long term development projects that address community needs in meaningful and equitable ways.

To learn more about federal grants, visit: <http://www.grants.gov/>

Community Spotlight: Friends of Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, Los Jardines Institute, and Mountain View Neighborhood Association are collaborating to write the first site-specific “Environmental and Economic Justice Strategic Plan” (EEJSP) for Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge using a community based process that will match Refuge goals and missions with the needs of the community.

Funding from three sources - the EPA’s Environmental Justice Small Grant and Urban Waters Grant and the DOI’s Fish and Wildlife Service Urban Refuge Partnership Grant - is being leveraged to complete the strategic plan, which when complete, will be the first public land site in the nation with a Strategic Environmental Justice Plan.

The project uses surveys, dialog with community leaders, public outreach, and training to establish baseline community knowledge around environmental and public health concerns and the relationship between the Refuge and sustainable solutions to the concerns, and to raise awareness of the Refuge and its development and encourage community participation. The Refuge serves as a model for the DOI for the incorporation of Urban Refuge Standards of Excellence and the development of new Urban National Wildlife Refuges nationwide.



Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge during their 2016 “Abrazos- A Community Celebration of Environmental Justice Day” event.



For More Information

To find out more about the EJ IWG, call the EJ hotline 800-962-6215 (Toll Free) and visit: <http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/interagency/>