

Oklahoma Environmental Justice Collaborative Action Plan



Introduction

In June 2016, EPA Region 6 hosted an Environmental Justice (EJ) workshop in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to gain a better understanding of today's environmental justice challenges, discuss strategies and best practices for healthy communities, and to begin a dialogue for a collaborative action plan that addresses State-wide EJ priorities. The workshop was designed and implemented to bring together grassroots organizations and partners, academia, local officials and government representatives for real time solutions and understanding of concerns and challenges facing EJ Communities and to begin a dialogue for a collaborative action plan that addresses EJ priorities in the state of Oklahoma. Participants heard from numerous federal, state and local agencies, community organizations and academic institutions about the challenges facing EJ communities. The principal part of the workshop consisted of a series of presentations and breakout sessions. Community leaders and government representatives discussed key topics of concern in Oklahoma. The breakout sessions allowed for deeper discussion and understanding on those challenges.

The Focus Areas in this plan are the outcome of the presentations and breakout sessions. EPA Region 6 will use these concerns as the basis for an on-going dialogue with communities and organizations in Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Environmental Justice Workgroup Members

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Issues and Challenges

1. Earthquakes readiness, includes impacts to water and wastewater treatment systems
2. Inclement weather – impacts of flooding and wildfires
3. Energy production and transportation - impact on land and water resources
4. Enhancing Tribal and State Collaboration

Recommended Focus Areas:

Focus Area 1: Disaster Response and Recovery

Focus Area 2: Energy Production – Fracking and Pipelines

Focus Area 3: State/Tribal Collaboration

Oklahoma

Environmental Justice

Collaborative Action Plan Focus Areas

Focus Area 1: Disaster Response and Recovery

Oklahoma experiences environmental disasters like inclement weather, flooding, extreme heat, wildfires and earthquakes.

Oklahoma residents need information about how to be prepared in the event of a disaster and where to get assistance.

Proposed Goals:			
	KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
<i>Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years</i>	1. Identification of the federal and/or state agency, or nongovernmental organizations that has responsibility for administration of Disaster Response and Recovery programs as it relates to potential impacts to the environment and human health.	OEJTIA	In December 2016, EPA began a series of calls to discuss Disaster Response Recovery programs. EPA also visited with state agencies, federal partners and academia to cross-reference work related to disaster response and recovery activities in Oklahoma.
	2. Identify the types of assistance available to communities after a disaster from state and federal agencies for the following: advisory and counseling services, Federal/state grants, Federal/state loans, and other needs.	OEJTIA	Work in progress. OEJTIA is working with federal, state, and local agencies to provide information on disaster assistance available to the communities.
	3. Make communities aware of Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC's). Provide training to community organizations.	OEJTIA/ SF	In order to strengthen 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

			<p>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>In 2016, EPA Region 6 hosted 32 LEPC workshops throughout TX, NM, OK, AK, and LA in 2016. Six of these workshops were held throughout Oklahoma. The Region is working with the State of Oklahoma to schedule the 2017 workshops.</p>
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Focus Area 2: Impacts of Energy Production and Transport

Fracking and the related environmental impacts are a concern in Oklahoma. Also, the oil production and transport are concerns. Oklahoma residents need information on what to do in the event of a spill, or when there is a concern of contamination.

Proposed Goal:			
	KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
<i>Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years</i>	1. Provide outreach and education to disadvantaged communities on energy production and transport issues.	OEJTIA	Work in progress. OEJTIA is planning a series of calls and visits to begin to categorize and prioritize challenges, enlist collaborators, and form workgroups to identify energy production and transportation issues affecting disadvantaged communities. Next partners call is scheduled for April 20, 2017.

Focus Area 3: State/Tribal Collaborative Projects:

Oklahoma is the home to 38 federally recognized tribes. Each tribe has its own environmental program with varying degrees of environmental expertise. EPA Region 6 will facilitate collaboration with the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) and Tribal governments on projects involving environmental protection and environmental justice.

Proposed Goal:			
	KEY ACTIVITIES	LEAD	COMMENTS / STATUS
<i>Proposed Activities for the Next Two Years</i>	1. Provide outreach to federally recognized tribes and collaborate on environmental projects of interest to both ODEQ and the tribes.	OEJTIA and ODEQ	OEJTIA will meet with various tribes on issues identified by tribal communities.
		SF	Brownfields staff presented information about the 128a program that establishes and enhances state and tribal response programs at the November Regional Tribal Operations Committee (RTOC) meeting. Kansas State Technical Assistance Brownfields (KSU TAB) hosted a training session at the RTOC meeting for the brownfields 128a tribes. This session was utilized to provide training on various tools available on the KSU TAB website.
	2. Ponca Tribe – requested assistance with issues related to air emissions, water quality monitoring, and landfill.	OEJTIA	OEJTIA is planning to meet with the Ponca Tribe in FY2017 to understand environmental issues.
	3. Provide assistance to federally recognized tribes seeking treatment in the same manner as a state (TAS) for the Clean Water Act (CWA) water quality standards (Section 303(c)) program approval.	WQ-EW	As a preliminary matter and as required by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2005 (SAFETEA), on January 13, 2011, EPA approved an environmental Cooperative, Agreement between the Citizen Potawatomi Nation

	4. Citizen Potawatomi Nation (CPN) – complete the review and approval process for the Nation’s TAS CWA 303(c) application.	WQ-EW	and the State of Oklahoma for the joint administration of water programs within the Nation. In November 2016, EPA initiated the public comment period for review of the TAS application. State, federal and local entities were notified of the opportunity to comment on the Nation’s assertion of authority to regulate the quality of tribal waters identified in the application. Consultation was offered to five neighboring Indian tribes and notice was published in two local newspapers. Region 6 is following the review process outlined in Attachment A of EPA’s 2008 “TAS Strategy” to evaluate the TAS application for the regulatory requirements in 40 CFR 131.8.
	5. Provide surface water quality monitoring and assessment workshop to interested tribal agency staff.	WQ-PT	Assessment, Listing & TMDL (ALT) staff will continue to provide technical water monitoring training, TAS support, Tribal Authority Rule (TAR) support, and Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) support as it relates to section 106 grant program, depending on travel resources in FY17. This work may also include collaboration with Oklahoma state agency staff.