

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
ADVISORY COUNCIL
PUBLIC TELECONFERENCE MEETING
WASHINGTON, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
AUGUST 14, 2019

PREFACE

The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) is a federal advisory committee that was established by charter on September 30, 1993, to provide independent advice, consultation, and recommendations to the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on matters related to environmental justice.

As a federal advisory committee, NEJAC is governed by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). Enacted on October 6, 1972, FACA provisions include the following requirements:

- Members must be selected and appointed by EPA.
- Members must attend and participate fully in meetings.
- Meetings must be open to the public, except as specified by the EPA Administrator.
- All meetings must be announced in the Federal Register.
- Public participation must be allowed at all public meetings.
- The public must be provided access to materials distributed during the meeting.
- Meeting minutes must be kept and made available to the public.
- A designated federal official (DFO) must be present at all meetings.
- The advisory committee must provide independent judgment that is not influenced by special interest groups.

EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) maintains summary reports of all NEJAC meetings, which are available on the NEJAC web site at <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/national-environmental-justice-advisory-council-meetings>. Copies of materials distributed during NEJAC meetings are also available to the public upon request. Comments or questions can be directed via e-mail to NEJAC@epa.gov.

NEJAC Executive Council – Members in Attendance

Richard Moore, NEJAC Chair, Los Jardines Institute

Sylvia Orduño, Vice-Chair, Michigan Welfare Rights Coalition

April Baptiste, Colgate University

Charles Chase, University of Colorado-Denver

Ellen Drew, Rural Communities Assistance Corporation

Jan Marie Fritz, University of Cincinnati, University of Johannesburg, University of South Florida

Rita Harris, Sierra Club

Melissa McGee-Collier, Mississippi Department of Environmental Equality

Jeremy Orr, Natural Resources Defense Council

Na'Taki Osborne Jelks, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance and Proctor Creek Stewardship Council

Millicent Piazza, Washington State Department of Ecology

Dennis Randolph, City of Grandview, Missouri

Cynthia Kim Len Rezentes, Mohala I Ka Wai

Jerome Shabazz, JASTECH Development Services and Overbrook Environmental Education Center

Karen Sprayberry, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Hermila "Mily" Trevino-Sauceda, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas

Sandra Whitehead, National Environmental Health Association

Sacoby Wilson, Maryland Institute of Applied Environmental Health

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL
Public Teleconference
August 14, 2019

MEETING SUMMARY

The National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) convened by teleconference on Wednesday, August 14, 2019. This synopsis covers NEJAC members' deliberations during the teleconference meeting and the issues raised during the public comment period.

1.0 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Matthew Tejada, the NEJAC Designated Federal Officer, welcomed attendees and took a roll call to establish a quorum. He noted that 182 members of the public had joined the call and reminded everyone of the mechanics of the teleconference. He then asked Sylvia Orduño to make some opening remarks as Richard Moore, the NEJAC Chair, had not yet joined the teleconference.

Sylvia Orduño, the NEJAC Vice-Chair, welcomed everyone and thanked the Office of Environmental Justice staff for hosting the call.

Mr. Tejada introduced Brittany Bolen and thanked her for joining the teleconference from her off-site location where she was engaging with other stakeholders.

1.1 Remarks from the EPA's Associate Administrator for the Office of Policy

Brittany Bolen, the Associate Administrator for the Office of Policy, thanked NEJAC members for their service and the external parties for joining the call and expressing interest in environmental justice. She expressed Administrator Wheeler's regrets that he was unable to join the teleconference and stated that he is committed to participating in the face-to-face NEJAC meeting that will be scheduled for early 2020. Ms. Bolen expressed interest in the public comments section and stressed the importance of the NEJAC's advice and recommendations for the Agency. She reaffirmed EPA senior leadership's commitment to environmental justice, highlighting the release of the EPA's environmental justice progress report for FY18. Ms. Bolen then fielded questions from NEJAC members about the Environmental Justice and Community Revitalization Council and the recent executive order requiring federal agencies to review their advisory committees.

Na'Taki Osborne Jelks asked Ms. Bolen about the Environmental Justice and Community Revitalization Council and its effect on the regions. Ms. Bolen stated that all 10 regions are represented on the EJCRC and that they serve on both a community-driven solutions workgroup and a state-focused workgroup.

Richard Moore, the NEJAC Chair, asked Ms. Bolen if there had been discussion about the ongoing relationship between the EPA and the NEJAC, in light of the recent executive order from the President requiring federal agencies to review their advisory committees. Ms. Bolen expressed that the EPA is going through an internal process to review its committees but

could not share further details. However, she reiterated the importance of the NEJAC to the EPA.

Sacoby Wilson asked Ms. Bolen about the administrator's focus on risk assessment. Ms. Bolen restated that her remarks were referring to the way risk is communicated to the public and deferred to the Office of Research and Development (ORD) to discuss risk assessment.

2.0 Presentation from the EPA's Office of Research and Development on the STAR Grants Program and EnviroAtlas

Dr. Bruce Rodan, the Associate Director for Science in ORD, gave introductory remarks on behalf of ORD. He stated ORD's commitment to identifying and mitigating environmental stressors with solutions-based research, with a specific focus on aspects of those stressors experienced by disadvantaged communities. Dr. Rodan also discussed the concept of translational research, working with communities to identify and characterize their struggles and do the research to move toward solutions. ORD would ask the NEJAC to provide advice on how to systematize environmental justice and outreach in ORD's work, and how to disseminate results to other communities. Dr. Rodan then turned the floor to Kacee Deener.

Kacee Deener, Director of ORD's Office of Science Policy, addressed the NEJAC with a presentation that addressed questions that were raised at the previous NEJAC meeting and provided some updates on topics that had been mentioned.

First, she gave updates on the Environmental Health Disparities Research Centers, a partnership with the National Institutes of Health to award grants in 2015 to five universities—The University of New Mexico, the University of Arizona, the University of Southern California, Harvard University, and Johns Hopkins University—for the purpose of creating centers that are conducting multidisciplinary research and partnering with local communities to address the environmentally-driven health disparities that those communities face. Ms. Deener provided several examples of how the research centers approach community engagement.

Ms. Deener presented general information about the STAR grant program, including the three-year competition process to select grant recipients and the methods ORD uses to educate potential applicants and encourage minority-serving institutions to apply.

Next, Ms. Deener presented updates about EnviroAtlas, sharing that ORD is developing data layers for Alaska and Hawaii and will be developing data layers for the U. S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico in 2020. She also shared that a new widget allowing EnviroAtlas users to better refine data will be available in late 2019 or early 2020.

Finally, Ms. Deener shared ORD's commitment to engaging with the Office of Environmental Justice, regional and state offices, tribes, and partner organizations such as public health organizations in order to get ORD's research to the communities it could benefit. Ms. Deener ended her presentation encouraging NEJAC members to join the STAR grants process as peer reviewers and to share any ideas they have about how to get word out more broadly about

funding opportunities and other tools and resources to overburdened communities.

Sacoby Wilson recommended that ORD refer to the EJ Academy in Region 4 as a model to create a community advisory group. He also suggested partnering with the Center for Disease Control on their community engagement work for guidance on best practice, looking at it through the lens of an inter-agency working group. Finally, he recommended that for grants that have a community engagement component and an EJ component, ORD should place an emphasis on peer reviewers who are community practitioners to add equity to the review process.

Richard Moore recommended that ORD include grassroots environmental justice organizations in the development of its EJ council. He noted that historically, there has been a lack of engagement with college and university institutions such as HBCUs, land grant institutions, and Native American institutions regarding funding opportunities such as the STAR grants program. Regarding community engagement, he advised that ORD focus not just on its research, but on how to implement the findings in those communities.

Sylvia Orduño recommended that ORD should identify how to fund transition projects and work with community groups to transfer data into developing a strategic plan for policy development and action items. ORD could identify ways to help prepare communities and research institutes to take the available information and use it to achieve EJ goals within the community.

Milli Piazza recommended creating how-to videos on YouTube to demonstrate how members of the community could make use of available resources and tools. She also recommended tapping into existing EJ groups and networks to share those tools.

Cynthia Rezentes recommended reaching out to local university systems in Alaska and Hawaii, in addition to the Alaska Native Corporations and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, in order to disseminate information about grants and RFPs.

Dr. Rodan and **Ms. Deener** thanked the NEJAC members for their comments and shared that Danielle Branch, the EJ coordinator for ORD, would be working to incorporate the feedback.

3.0 Presentation from the EPA's Office of Public Affairs on Risk Communication

Andrea Drinkard, senior adviser in the Office of Public Affairs, gave remarks on the topic of risk communication, stating that it is an important component of EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment and is a priority of Administrator Wheeler. The Administrator stresses the importance of all of EPA, including all of the program offices and regions, speak with one voice and convey the same information to the American public about environmental health risks associated with different chemicals and pollutants. Ms. Drinkard thanked the NEJAC for partnering with the EPA on risk communication, acknowledging that environmental hazards disproportionately impact individuals in marginalized communities and asking the NEJAC for feedback on how the Agency can more effectively communicate risks to those communities. She announced that at the behest of Administrator Wheeler, the EPA has formed an agency-wide risk communications group to assess how each office is approaching risk communication and how these efforts may be improved in the future. One of the proposed actions is to hire a new senior risk communication adviser who will

serve as a checkpoint for all the offices and regions to enhance the consistency of risk communication at the EPA. Ms. Drinkard asked the NEJAC to share feedback about ways the EPA can improve its risk communication, both through comments following her presentation and through future participation in an ad-hoc sub-group on the topic.

Dennis Randolph suggested ensuring that technical concepts are communicated simply so that individuals without a scientific background can understand what is being conveyed.

Sacoby Wilson recommended focusing on risk communication to increase environmental health literacy of the public.

Sylvia Orduño recommended focusing on emergency risk communication and increasing trust between the EPA and the public. Ms. Drinkard acknowledged that risk communication and emergency response are two separate efforts, but certain concepts can be shared across those lines to benefit both programs.

Na'Taki Osborne Jenks, Kelly Wright, Jerome Shabazz, Sacoby Wilson, and Dennis Randolph offered to be part of the ongoing risk communication conversation suggested by Ms. Drinkard in her remarks.

4.0 NEJAC Letter Review

4.1 Aboveground Storage Tanks Letter

Melissa McGee-Collier led the NEJAC in its discussion about the recommendation letter regarding aboveground storage tanks. She summarized the position taken by the NEJAC in the letter, including prior recommendations the NEJAC had made to the EPA on the subject, incidents in the United States involving aboveground storage tanks, the currently existing regulations, and the benefit of the EPA implementing further regulations.

Kelly Wright asked that the letter be amended to include language about agricultural storage.

Sylvia Orduño ensured there were no final comments and called for the NEJAC to vote on approval. The letter was approved to go forward to the Administrator with the proposed amendment.

4.2 Data Limitations Letter

Cynthia Rezentes led the NEJAC in its discussion about the recommendation letter regarding data limitations. recognized that some of the issues discussed in the letter about data limitations—namely, that the available tools do not cover all of the areas of the United States and territories that the EPA is responsible for—were addressed by ORD in their presentation. However, it was still recommended to submit the letter to the Administrator, with an edit to the language stating that certain areas were excluded by EnviroAtlas until recently.

Sylvia Orduño ensured that there were no final comments and called for the NEJAC to vote on approval. The letter was approved to go forward to the Administrator with the proposed amendment.

4.3 PFAS Letter

Sylvia Orduño led the NEJAC in its discussion about the recommendation letter regarding the PFAS class of chemicals. She summarized the position taken by the NEJAC in the letter that the EPA should strengthen its PFAS action plan and the specific recommendations proposed by the NEJAC.

Jan Fritz suggested that the letter be edited to note that there are currently 712 PFAS sites in 49 states in the country.

Karen Sprayberry proposed the addition of a recommendation that the EPA form a scientific community for drinking water similar to the Clean Air Act Advisory Committee, stating that the health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion may be difficult to achieve across the board as each state has very different levels. After discussion, Ms. Sprayberry agreed that the letter could proceed as is. Ms. Orduño suggested making a change to an existing recommendation that would acknowledge the differences between states and the challenges of establishing a limit at the federal level. Charles Chase volunteered to assist with changing the language for this recommendation.

Sacoby Wilson recommended adding examples of contamination from other communities across the country. He also recommended adding a recommendation to look more closely at occupational health impacts.

Sylvia Orduño ensured that there were no final comments and called for the NEJAC to vote on approval. The letter was approved to go forward to the Administrator with the proposed additions and amendments.

4.4 NEPA Letter

Dennis Randolph led the NEJAC in its discussion about the recommendation letter regarding the National Environmental Policy Act and its relation to Environmental Justice. He summarized the position taken by the NEJAC in the letter and the points that the NEJAC advised for further scrutiny.

Karen Sprayberry suggested the addition of a recommendation that an external party review how the EPA responds to requests or suggestions.

Sacoby Wilson agreed with the addition about an external review and recommended adding a section that requires health impact assessments as part of the NEPA process. He also recommended that the EPA should take the plain language approach to disseminating information to communities, and that health economists should be part of the team doing NEPA review.

Sylvia Orduño recommended that Mr. Randolph, Ms. Sprayberry, and Mr. Wilson work together to make the proposed changes to the letter and called for the NEJAC to vote on its approval. The letter was approved to go forward to the administrator once the proposed changes have been made.

5.0 Public Comment Period

Sylvia Orduño apologized for the meeting being behind schedule due to the conversation during the letter review section and opened the floor for public comment.

5.1 Kate Macintosh – Louisiana Bucket Brigade

Kate Macintosh wanted to call attention to RISE St. James, a state-based community organization in Cancer Alley, an area along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. She offered thanks to the NEJAC for urging the EPA to regulate ethylene oxide, as well as to preserve the chemical disaster safety rule. Ms. Macintosh stated that Cancer Alley residents are being poisoned by toxic air emissions, and these regulations are saving them from further toxic pollution. She then referred to environmental racism in St. James Parish, stating that there are petrochemical plants concentrated in two districts with a majority African-American population and that those residents bear a pollution burden and cancer risk. The St. James district has eight operating plants with two

under construction and four slated for approval. One is Formosa, aka FG LA LLC, a complex comprised of 14 new plants. Formosa would emit 800 tons of toxic air pollutants each year, doubling the toxic air pollution for St. James residents and serving as the largest new source of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Ms. Macintosh stated that to date, RISE St. James has received no contact from the EPA.

Mr. Tejada confirmed that Gloria Vaughn, the Environmental Justice coordinator from Region 6 of the EPA, would be in contact to discuss the issue further.

5.2 Juan Parras – Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services (TEJAS)

Juan Parras wanted to register his disappointment that the next NEJAC in-person meeting would not be taking place in Houston and that the NEJAC was not given the opportunity to vote on the location. He stated that there is a plastic boom taking place in Texas that will be releasing billions of pounds of ethylene oxide.

Matthew Tejada, DFO shared that due to changes in political leadership in Region 6, the EPA was unable to commit to hosting the NEJAC in Texas, so the responsibility shifted to Region 4 and Florida, specifically Jacksonville. Houston is still a priority location, but the NEJAC meeting could not be postponed until Region 6 was ready to host. The selection of meeting locations is a partnership between the Office of Environmental Justice and EPA leadership.

Sylvia Orduño suggested that the NEJAC figure out how to better communicate with impacted communities, instead of relying on in-person meetings. She also suggested that a separate discussion take place to focus on the issues affecting Houston.

5.3 Nil Adjukoff – Bethel, Alaska

Nil Adjukoff commented that he hopes that there will be follow-up on the discussion about the NEPA process and EIS statements. He also seconded Mr. Wilson's comments on using actual science in environmental impact statements.

5.4 Marvin Robinson

Marvin Robinson commented that the EPA needs to be doing more to relay to other governmental agencies, such as the Department of the Interior and the Veterans Administration, the importance of community engagement.

5.5 Louis Zeller – Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

Louis Zeller thanked the NEJAC for its work. He then raised issues that have occurred in Virginia and North Carolina regarding environmental quality agencies issuing permits that, while in compliance with national ambient air quality standards, have an adverse impact on communities.

Sacoby Wilson recommended asking these agencies to look at cumulative risk and to gather site-specific data rather than regional monitors to inform decision making and to focus on local ordinances rather than just the national standard. He recommended that Mr. Zeller contact an organization in Maryland called Communing Communities.

5.6 Emma Cheuse – Earth Justice

Emma Cheuse offered solidarity for the comments offered by TEJAS and the Louisiana Bucket Brigade. She thanked the NEJAC for responding to public comments with its letters on ethylene

oxide and the EPA's risk management program. She asked that the NEJAC share any updates received from the EPA on either of these issues. She stated the importance of the NEJAC providing ongoing advice on environmental issues and supported the request that the NEJAC hold a meeting in Houston and bring attention to the need for environmental justice and health protection in that area.

5.7 Stephanie Herron – Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform

Stephanie Herron echoed Ms. Chu's comments of appreciation regarding the NEJAC letters, which were a result of public comments received at the last NEJAC in-person meeting in Bethesda, Maryland. She also echoed Mr. Parras' request for a NEJAC meeting in Houston, emphasizing that meetings should take place in communities facing environmental justice concerns. Ms. Herron also asked that the NEJAC provide any updates or response received from the EPA. Mr. Tejada committed to having responses received from the EPA posted onto the NEJAC website so that any interested party can access them.

6.0 Adjournment

Sylvia Orduño ensured that there were no further public comments, thanked all the participants, and adjourned the meeting.

APPENDIX A

AGENDA



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL PUBLIC TELECONFERENCE MEETING August 14,
2019 - 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

AGENDA

3:00 pm - 3:10 pm

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- **Matthew Tejada** – U.S. EPA Designated Federal Officer
- **Karen L. Martin** – U.S. EPA Designated Federal Officer
- **Richard Moore** – National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Chair
- **Jill Witkowski Heaps** – National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Vice-Chair
- **Sylvia Orduño** – National Environmental Justice Advisory Council Vice-Chair

3:10 pm - 3:30 pm

WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS

- **Brittany Bolen, Associate Administrator** – U.S. EPA Office of Policy

3:30 pm – 4:15 pm

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT – RESEARCH FUNDING

- **Bruce Rodan** – U.S. EPA – Office of Research and Development
- **Kacee Deener** – U.S. EPA – Office of Research and Development
- **James Gentry** – U.S. EPA – Office of Research and Development

4:15 pm – 4:45 pm

RISK COMMUNICATION

- **Andrea Drinkard** – U.S. EPA - Office of Public Affairs

4:45 pm – 5:30 pm

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION OF ISSUE LETTERS

- **Above Ground Storage Tanks - Melissa McGee-Collier** – Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
- **Data Limitations – Cynthia Rezentes** – Mohala I Ka Wai
- **PFAS/PFOA – Sylvia Orduno** – Michigan Welfare Rights Organization
- **NEPA – Dennis Randolph** – City of Grandview, Missouri

5:30 pm – 6:00 pm

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Members of the public will be given three (3) minutes to present comments on their issue or concern to the NEJAC.

6:00 pm

CLOSING REMARKS & ADJOURN

APPENDIX B

MEETING ATTENDEES

Teleconference Attendees		
First Name	Last Name	Company
Nile	Aguchak	Orutsararmiut Native Council
Yvette	Arellano	Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services
Samantha	Bayer	Oregon Farm Bureau
Agatha	Benjamin	US EPA
Brittany	Bolen	US EPA
John	Brakeall	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Tara	Brown	The Wilderness Society
Omari	Burrell	US EPA
Sylvia	Carignan	Bloomberg Environment
Emma	Cheuse	Earthjustice
Anna	Cummins	The 5 Gyres Institute
Deidra	Davis	Texas A&M University
Hailey	Duncan	NAACP
Frances	Eargle	US EPA
Aris	Efting	City of Tacoma
Ngozika	Egbuonu	Waterkeepers Chesapeake
Jane	Eyre	U.S. House of Representatives
Cynthia	Ferguson	US Dept. of Justice / ENRD
Anna	Fletcher	Energy & Mineral Law Foundation
Laura	Flores Cantrell	Andy Hill Cancer Research Endowment
Running	Grass	US EPA - Region 10
Stephanie	Herron	Environmental Justice Health Alliance for Chemical Policy Reform
Nalleli	Hidalgo	Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services
Marcus	Holmes	US EPA - Region 1
Allison	Hoppe	US EPA
Ben	Hughey	Office of Senator Cory Booker
Patricia	Juarez	University of Texas at El Paso - Center for Inter-American and Border Studies
Michele	Knorr	US EPA
Katie	Kruse	Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
Sara	LaBelle	Old Dominion University Graduate Student
Diane	Lauricella	Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs
Charles	Lee	US EPA
Michael	Malcom	The People's Justice Council
Tynechia	Marshall	Alabama Department of Environmental Management
Mary	Matthias	Orutsararmiut Native Council
Kate	McIntosh	Louisiana Bucket Brigade
Jean	Mendoza	Friends of Toppenish Creek
Danielle	Mercurio	Van Ness Feldman LLP

Teleconference Attendees		
First Name	Last Name	Company
Althea	Moses	US EPA - Region 7
Roopa	Mulchandani	US EPA - OIG
Jasmin	Muriel	US EPA
Bridgette	Murray	Achieving Community Tasks Successfully (ACTS)
Crystal	Myers-Wilkins	Illinois EPA
Julie	Narimatsu	US EPA
Daria	Neal	Department of Justice
William	Nichols	US EPA
Yomi	Noibi	ECO-Action
Jacqueline V	Norris	Prince George's Environmental Equity Marginalized Community Collaborative
Shannon	O'Neil	Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Justin	Onwenu	Sierra Club
Ashley	Overton	City of Gary - Environmental Affairs
David	Padgett	Tennessee State University
Ana	Parras	Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services
Juan	Parras	Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services
Millicent	Piazza	Washington State Department of Ecology
Raquel	Pinderhughes	San Francisco State University
Chris	Pressnall	Illinois EPA
Elise	Rasmussen	State of Washington Department of Health
Amani	Reid	Department of the Interior - Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
Danielle	Ridley	US EPA
Gary	Ringer	Detroit Fire Department
Elisa	Ringholm	Story of Stuff Project
Vanessa	Rivas Villanueva	
Marvin	Robinson	Quindaro Ruins / Underground Railroad- Exercise 2020
Jonathan	Sandau	Oregon Farm Bureau
Oral	Saulters	National Tribal Brownfields Working Group
David	Schultz	Bloomberg Environment
Stephanie	Schwarz	Environmental Defense Fund
Isabel	Segarra	Earthjustice
Deneen	Simpson	Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection
Darius	Sivin	International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)
Stephen	Stetson	Sierra Club
Elyse	Sutkus	US EPA – OLEM/OBLR

Teleconference Attendees		
First Name	Last Name	Company
Ean	Tafoya	Colorado Latino Forum
Steven	Taylor	Coming Clean
Larry	Taylor	Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection
Kathy	Triantafillou	US EPA - Region 5
Kim	Tucker-Billingslea	General Motors LLC
Fatima	Ty	US EPA - Region 9
Gloria	Vaughn	US EPA - Region 6
Brian	Warner	New York Power Authority
Yolanda	Whyte	Dr. Yolanda Whyte Pediatrics
Carolyn	Yee	CalEPA - Department of Toxic Substances Control
Jonathan	Young	California Municipal Utilities Association
Louis	Zeller	Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League
Victor	Zertuche	US EPA
Kate	Zielke	North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)

APPENDIX C

WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

Juan Parras,
Executive
Director

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

August 14, 2019

Ana Parras,
Executive Co-
Director

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

August 14, 2019

Yvette Arellano,
Policy Research

RE: Teleconference Issues EPA must Invest in rectifying access issues

As grassroots advocates in Texas specifically the Houston and Greater Houston area we are concerned with the lack of accessibility to follow information's during the NEJAC meeting. EPA is able to provide a series of webinars for a number of issues. Why can we not have a webinar line for this issue to better share information? We see this as a barrier to better understanding the information being presented.

We seek support from NEJAC to rectify this issue by providing a letter of support on recommendations concerning access to information. As a grassroots organization that struggles with community engagement, we invited a number of our partners including seniors, research partners, youth led organizations, faith-based groups and others. Many of which were confused and could not follow the material. How are we supposed to utilize tools and resources like the research grants, community tools and EnviroAtlas if that we cannot even see them. We are not the first group to raise this concern and hope you strongly consider to a webinar, live video feed or other platform. We see NEJAC as vital to our advocacy work and one of the few times we can follow work our partners state, local and tribal have developed.

It is vital for our continued participation to access the resources being presented as they are spoken about during the NEJAC. Whether intentionally or unintentionally this is an issue of a lack of access and limits our participation compared to groups who have resources to participate in person. A lack of resources should not limit access disproportionately compared to entities who are able to view them. This would be one less burden to our already overburdened communities. Access to a webinar is a simple request that would make a world of difference.

We hope to gain your support and assistance.
Yvette Arellano
Policy Research and Grassroots Advocacy

Juan Parras,
*Executive
Director*

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL

August 14, 2019

Ana Parras,
*Executive Co-
Director*

RE: EJ Screen & Toxic Release Inventory – Problems

Yvette Arellano,
Policy Research

As grassroots advocates in Texas specifically the Houston and Greater Houston area we are concerned with how restricting the EJ screen and Toxic release Inventory is for our community members. The limited access and use to computers, Internet connection, and tool development is difficult for community members to readily learn about their community through online resources, such as the EJ Screen and Toxic Release Inventory. Below are a sets of problems that have been brought to our attention. The EJ Screen Workshops are compressed into one day and do not allow the community members to understand the depth of the EJ Screen, nonetheless understand the complexity of the ArchGIS version. Part of our work includes providing EJ Screen printed reports for community members to take home. Currently the bookmark section only permits the web user to save their project to the page without an option to share electronically. Any wrong click and the selected area will erase permanently. The creation of a save, share, and undo option on the EJ Screen would further facilitate community research or the creation of EJ Screen Online profiles in which community member could sign-in and share data and information readily. Also when working on the EJ Screen the census map only allows the user to select one Census block at a time and does not allow the user to select multiple census blocks into one cluster. The EPA Toxic Release Inventory Map links are broken, when the sites are clicked on, a page is displayed with and error message. The download button for TRI reports is also broken and the spacing in the table cells hide the “next” button that prompts you to the following page. We seek support from NEJAC to rectify these issues by providing a letter of support on recommendations concerning the problems.

We hope to gain your support.

Nalleli Hidalgo, Community Outreach

From: [Mary Matthias](#)
To: [Nejac](#)
Subject: Written Comment Submission
Date: Wednesday, August 14, 2019 4:37:45 PM

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COUNCIL (NEJAC) Public Comment Submission

Name: Mary Matthias

Name of Organization or Community: Orutsararmiut Native Council

City and State: Bethel, Alaska

Telephone Number: 907-543-2608

E-mail Address: mmatthias@nativecouncil.org

Brief description of concern: EPA has allowed the state of Alaska to issue wastewater permits to mining industries, who have not adopted EPA's Clean Water Act policies.

Alaska is known to have rich abundance in wild salmon stocks, rural communities throughout our state participate in the gathering of subsistence foods from both land and waterways. Communities are residing along the Kuskokwim River, who all gather, hunt, and fish from this river.

We are facing a large mining industry, called the Donlin Gold Mine Project. Donlin is backed up by the state. It received over 16 Permits from ADF&G, DNR and DEC Division of Air and Water Quality issued approvals for this mine to discharge treated wastewater into the Crooked Creek river. This river connects to the Kuskokwim River, which is highly known as one of the largest rivers in Alaska, where salmon migrate in and out from to the salmon spawning tributaries. There are other non-salmon species

Our traditional cultural values are going unrecognized by the State of Alaska who wants to do away with ANILCA Laws that protect lands and waterways. While we are working hard to protect our natural resources, our environment, and our way of lifestyles. The federal government is bound by law to deal with Tribes as sovereign governments.

What you want the NEJAC to advise EPA to do:

Enforce stricter regulations to the mining industries where states don't have adopted policies from EPA's the Clean Water Act and not to overlook the tribal communities who live in areas where cultural traditions are highly valued. There are many communities who have Indian General Assistance Programs funded by EPA and their mission is to strive towards keeping their communities and environment clean from contaminated and hazardous waste.

Best Regards,

Mary C. Matthias

Natural Resources Director
Orutsararmiut Native Council
Direct line: 543-0522

Main office: 907-543-2608
Cellphone: 545-4755

From: [Reed, Sunny Jason](#)
To: [Nejac](#)
Subject: he NEJAC will convene a public teleconference meeting on Wednesday, August 14, 2019, starting at 3:00 p.m
Date: Sunday, July 28, 2019 11:27:36 AM

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to post a proposal to the upcoming NEJAC teleconference taking place August 14th. I would like to propose the withholding of federal dollars allocated to the City of Milwaukee, WI if the city should fail to fund the replacement of the lead lateral lines in several underserved communities. Milwaukee continues to receive federal dollars from several federal agencies and continues to fund projects in the revitalized downtown areas. One such project is the Milwaukee Trolley, referred to as the HOP. The city has expended more than \$50 million to date and plans on expanding the trolley line at an expense estimated at more than \$30 million. Doing so through federal, state and local tax incremental financing districts and other funding mechanisms. Still, the lead water lines remain an unfunded project. There should not be extravagant spending on non-essential and obsolete transpiration systems for the wealthy when there are families being exposed to lead in their drinking water.

I sincerely hope this issue can be resolved in an expeditious fashion.

Sunny J Reed
Port Washington, WI 53074
sunnyjr2@illinois.edu

Yolanda Whyte, MD

August 9, 2019

Re: National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) Public Comment

Dear NEJAC,

As a pediatrician and environmental health expert who has advocated for environmental justice communities for the past decade, I fully support the work that you do. On behalf of the children and families I see, and physician colleagues, I am very grateful for the guidance that you provide the EPA.

In consideration of the regulatory rollbacks, EPA budget cuts and rising number of environmental justice communities and environmental-related diseases when the focus has highlighted the impact of environmental pollution on the poor and minorities, I am now recommending the EPA restructure its priorities on highlighting the health impact of pollution on wealthy Caucasians.

As we all know, African-Americans are more EXPOSED to pollution with regard to living within close proximity to coal plants, chemical plants and other hazardous sites. However, Caucasians, especially male children, are more AFFECTED by pollution with regard to their rising rates of autism and cancer, according to the CDC and National Cancer Institute, respectively.

Currently in Georgia, a wealthy Caucasian community in Smyrna, GA, a suburb of Atlanta, has been dealing with uncontrolled ethylene oxide emissions from a medical sterilization plant. A middle class Caucasian community in Juliette, GA is now a ghost town after their cancer clusters were linked to uranium poisoning that residents attribute to the nearby coal plant. Waycross, GA has been dealing with pediatric cancer clusters for almost a decade now. While that population is ethnically diverse, the cancer clusters occur almost exclusively in Caucasian children.

Having the EPA refocus on a different demographic will hopefully generate compassion and empathy that has been missing for so long. I have high hopes that this strategy will result in stronger protections, stricter enforcements of environmental rules and regulations, increased funding for the EPA and most importantly, improved health outcomes and peace of mind for all Americans.

Thank you.

Yolanda Whyte, MD

PO Box 720164

Atlanta, GA 30358

APPENDIX D

MEETING PRESENTATIONS

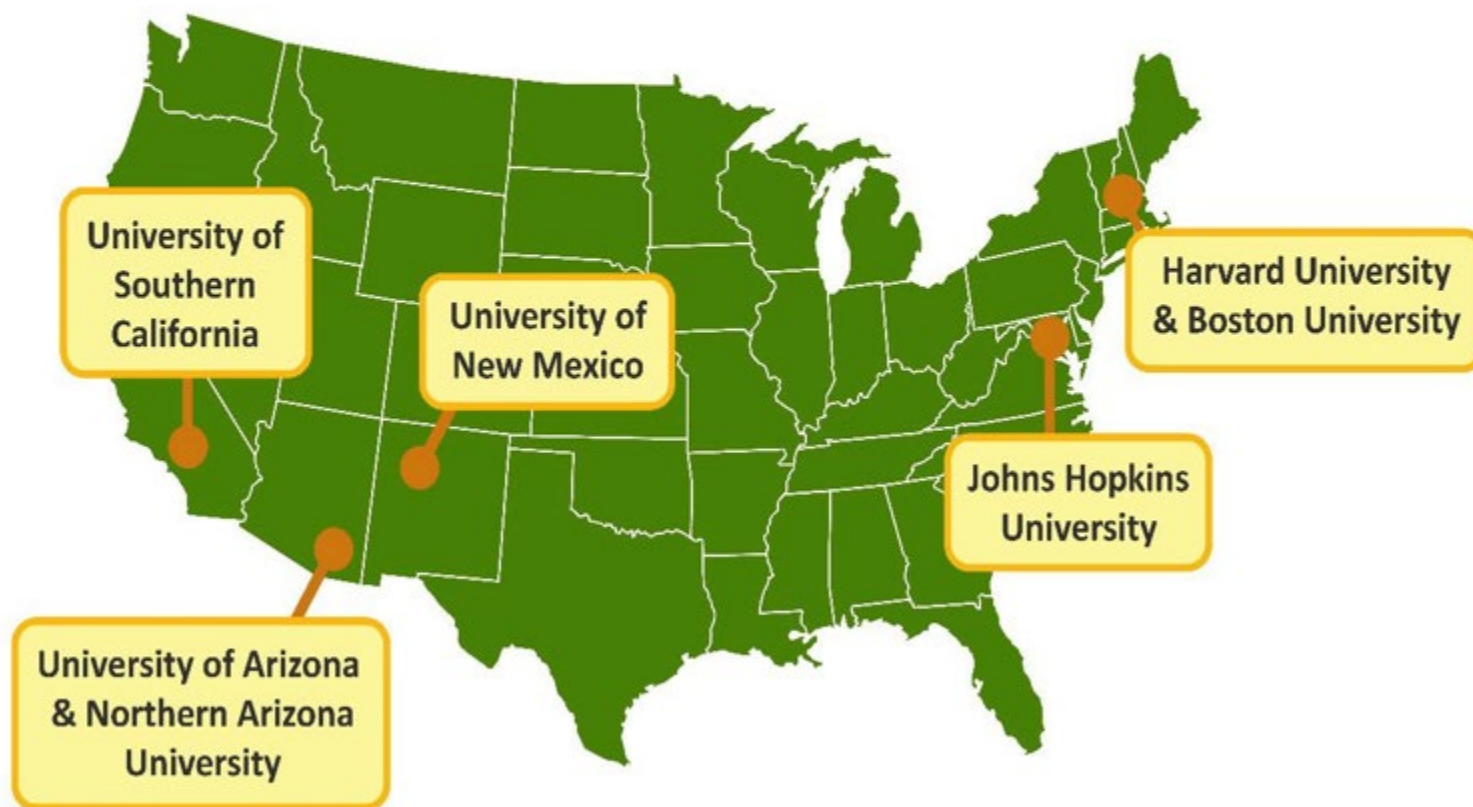


**Office of Research and Development:
Update for the
National Environmental Justice Advisory Council**

**National Environmental Justice
Advisory Council Meeting**
August 14, 2019



NIH-EPA Environmental Health Disparities Research Centers



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Community-Based, Community-Engaged Research



- Differential Exposures
- Environmental Sustainability and Health Disparities.



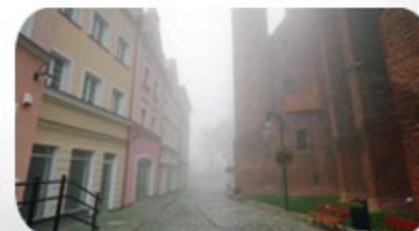
- Cumulative Effects of Multi-Environmental, Physical, and Social Stressors.



- **Community Partnerships and Engagement**



- Land Use Considerations and Health Disparities
- Built Environment, Housing, and Transportation





Community Engagement



University of New Mexico Researcher presentation to Navajo Trustee Team, EPA Region 9, community members and researchers on limestone sorption research results, July 2018

University of New Mexico Researchers teamed up with a tribal artist to communicate scientific information to the community



U Damages Immune Cell DNA

+ ZN



Zinc Repairs Damage to DNA

=



Healthy Immune Function Restored

Through the eyes of Zuni artist Mallery Quetawki, 2017



Community Engagement

**The Johns Hopkins University Environmental Health Disparities Center
Comparing Urban and Rural Effects of Poverty on COPD**



**Cleaning Products, Hidden Toxins,
and our Health**



**University of Southern California
Maternal and Developmental Risks from
Environmental and Social Stressors
(MADRES) Center**

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STAR Research Project Making Difference in Environmental Justice Communities

- University of North Carolina STAR “Total Environmental Health” Research Project partnered with a minority community without municipal water supply annexation.
- Scientific Evidence from STAR project helped support the annexation petition.
- **Water service coming this fall!**

Right: STAR project team member Sydney Lockhart (MS student) presents at community meeting with Irongate Drive residents (June 2019)



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STAR and EJ Science and Research

“EPA strongly encourages all eligible applicants identified in Section III, including minority serving institutions (MSIs), to apply under this opportunity.”

- Since STAR began, 381 research grants have been awarded to Minority Serving Institutions
- New STAR funding opportunity: Contaminated Sites, Natural Disasters, Changing Environmental Conditions and Vulnerable Communities: Research to Build Resilience. OPEN: July 29, 2019 - CLOSE: Sept. 10, 2019



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Additional Resources

- Environmental Public Health Indicators Impact Report: Data and methods that support environmental public health decision-making by communities:
https://cfpub.epa.gov/si/si_public_record_report.cfm?Lab=NCER&dirEntryId=341077
- A Decade of Tribal Environmental Health Research: Results and Impacts from EPA's Extramural Grants and Fellowship Programs:
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-08/documents/results-impacts.pdf>
- 2017 Summary Report of Environmental Health Disparities:
https://cfpub.epa.gov/si/si_public_file_download.cfm?p_download_id=536319
- The Pilot EPA-NIMHD Centers of Excellence on Environment and Health Disparities:
https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2017-11/documents/health_disparities_book_110217508finalv2.pdf
- Working with Tribes to Assess, Manage, and Improve Ecosystem Function through EPA's Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Grants Program and Collaborative Research Projects:
https://cfpub.epa.gov/si/si_public_record_report.cfm?Lab=NCER&dirEntryId=341810



Opportunities to Engage

- **Sign up for EPA Research Grants Listserv:**
<https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/research-grants-fellowship-and-sbir-listserv>
- **Peer Review Participant:** Peer reviews ensure all funded activities and research are technically sound, competently performed, properly documented and consistent with established quality criteria. Contact: Meta Bonner, bonner.meta@epa.gov



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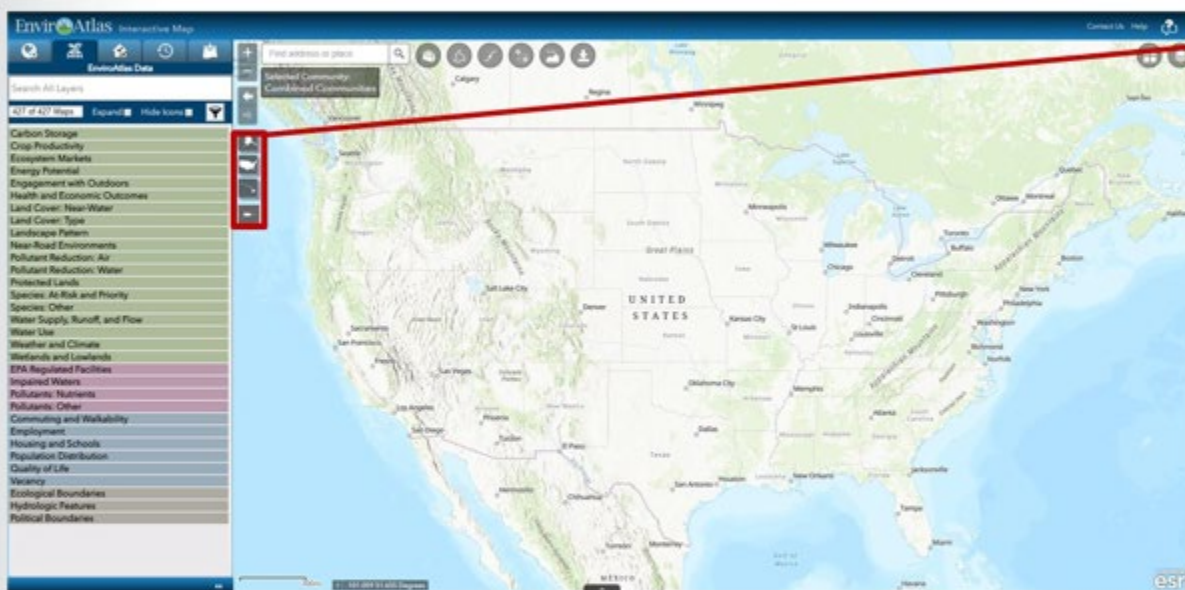
EnviroAtlas Updates

Alaska, Hawaii, USVI, and Puerto Rico EnviroAtlas Data

- Some EnviroAtlas data layers are already available for Alaska and Hawaii and can be viewed in the EnviroAtlas Interactive Map
 - Demographic variables from the US 2000 and 2010 Censuses
 - Demographic variables 2012-2016 American Community Survey
 - Ecosystem Markets
 - 303d Assessed and Impaired Waters
 - EPA Regulated Facilities Data (Superfund, RCRA, Brownfields)
 - National Wetlands Inventory
- ORD is developing ~100 data layers for Alaska and Hawaii to include in EnviroAtlas by 12/2019. Data for USVI and Puerto Rico in 2020.



Alaska, Hawaii, USVI, and Puerto Rico in EnviroAtlas



Alaska
Lower 48
Hawaii
Puerto
Rico & US
Virgin
Islands

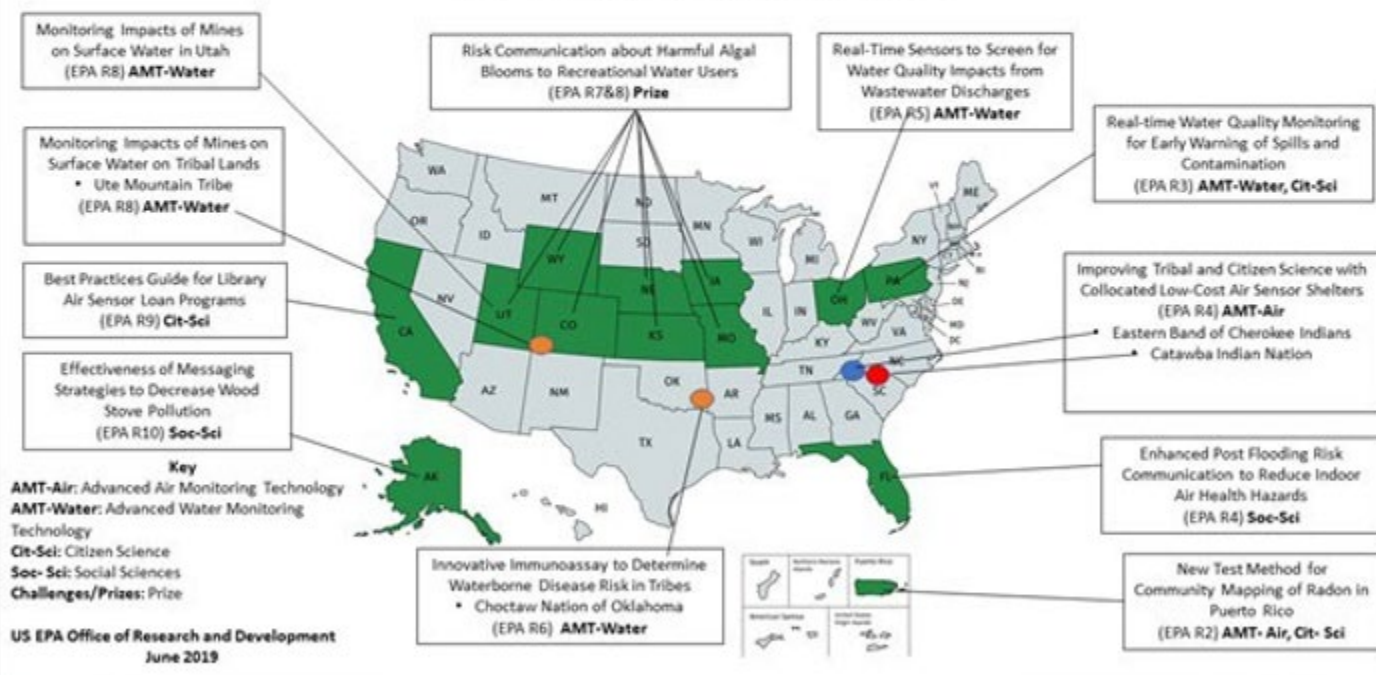
EnviroAtlas developing new widget that will let users select geography of interest from map. Only maps available for that extent will show up in Table of Contents.



Regional-State-Tribal Innovation Projects

2019 Regional-State-Tribal Innovation Projects

Partnerships for Environmental Priorities



<https://www.epa.gov/innovation/2019-regionalstatetribal-innovation-projects>



Additional Updates

- Pb mapping to identify communities with high exposures
- ORD research planning and consideration of EJ priorities
- Partner engagement (public health, states, tribes)
- Solutions-driven research
- ORD Tools and Resources webinar series:
<https://www.epa.gov/research/epa-tools-and-resources-webinar-series>



ORD Reorganization





We would like your input

- How best to share information about relevant grant findings?
- How to increase awareness of STAR grant program, funding opportunities, and application process?
- How can we best share ORD tools and resources with communities?
- How can we continue this dialogue?

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Thank you