



FY 2025 EPA ECCR Annual Report



Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution
FY 2025 Annual Report

Executive Summary

This report highlights the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) key achievements in providing Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) in Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 and the infrastructure that supports this work. In FY 2025, EPA's Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC) provided facilitators and mediators who helped EPA address some of its most challenging cases.

CPRC provided these services either directly by its staff or, more often, through its \$85 million Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution Services (ECCRS) contract. These professional facilitators and mediators assisted EPA on many high-level cases and projects, including the following: Thunder Butte Petroleum Facilitation, Columbia River Facilitation, Veolia Facilitation, St. Louis Airport Community Advisory Group (CAG) Facilitation, Cinnabar Mine Assessment, and the Fifth Ward/Kashmere Gardens CAG Facilitation.

EPA continued to serve as a leader among federal agencies in ECCR use, with 146 cases and projects in FY 2025. Each region, and most program offices, utilized ECCR in their work. CPRC also built EPA's capacity to engage in ECCR practices; staff trained nearly 750 employees in 21 training sessions, totaling nearly 120 hours of training.

Importantly, EPA staff and managers continued to report important benefits from using ECCR, including timely outcomes, more efficient processes, better decisions, avoidance of litigation, and the advancement of EPA's mission to protect human health and the environment. ECCR continues to be an essential tool used to advance the agency's Powering the Great American Comeback Initiative and its Five Pillars:

Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land and Water for Every American

Pillar 2: Restore American Energy Dominance

Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership

Pillar 4: Make the United States the Artificial Intelligence Capital of the World

Pillar 5: Protecting and Bringing Back American Auto Jobs

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Introduction

Throughout its history, EPA has sought input from the public, worked with affected parties to reach common ground, and negotiated agreements on contentious issues as it strives to fulfill its mission. Each action that EPA takes to serve the public is the product of dialogue with interested and affected groups. Developing environmental policies and involving multiple affected groups in decision-making processes is often complicated. An impartial facilitator or mediator who has expertise in ECCR can help EPA staff and managers work more effectively with impacted groups and the public. CPRC seeks to be instrumental in assisting EPA meet the challenges of public engagement and resolve environmental conflicts.

CPRC staff advise EPA staff and managers on topics such as public meeting design and communication with affected groups. CPRC also provides facilitators and mediators who help those who are impacted have a voice in EPA decisions, often resulting in more acceptable, cost-effective, holistic, and timely outcomes than traditional alternatives.

CPRC offers services directly through its staff and through its ECCRS contract, which provides every EPA office with timely access to professional facilitators, mediators, and trainers who specialize in ECCR. In addition, during FY 2025, ECCR professionals mediated cases before the Environmental Appeals Board (EAB) and the Administrative Law Judges (ALJ). In sum, EPA is an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) government leader, applying ECCR more than most other federal agencies, and CPRC continues to lead in the federal government space when it comes to ECCR practices and expertise.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) have required an ECCR Annual Report since 2005.¹ This year's report was prepared by CPRC with input from its Regional ECCR Specialists and contacts from national program offices.

The report is important for a cross-government understanding of the use of ECCR. The report is also a tool for EPA management, staff, and the public to understand EPA's use of ECCR and to educate readers on the variety of situations in which CPRC uses ECCR to effectively engage with the public and other affected parties to resolve conflicts.

¹ Office of Management and Budget & Council on Environmental Quality, "Memorandum on Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution" (Washington, D.C., 2012), http://www.udall.gov/documents/Institute/OMB_CEQ_Memorandum_2012.pdf. This year, the report is optional and CPRC appreciates the opportunity to continue to report on the incredible work it engaged in during FY 2025.

Background

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) is the use of a neutral third party to conduct “any procedure that is used to resolve issues in controversy, including but not limited to, conciliation, facilitation, mediation, fact finding, mini-trials, arbitration, and use of ombuds, or any combination thereof.”² All aspects of ADR are voluntary, including the decision to participate, selection of the neutral, and the content of any final agreement. Communications during ADR processes are confidential, except for certain circumstances, allowing for more open dialogue with third party neutrals and between parties.

ECCR is essentially environmental ADR, but it also includes proactive collaborative decision-making aimed at preventing future conflict. OMB and CEQ define ECCR as “third-party assisted collaborative problem solving and conflict resolution in the context of environmental, public lands, or natural resources issues or conflicts, including matters related to energy, transportation, and water and land management.”³

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Several statutes direct or support EPA’s work to provide ECCR. The **Administrative Dispute Resolution Act** (1996) encourages the use of ADR in agency actions, directs all federal agencies to appoint a Dispute Resolution Specialist and promulgate agency ADR policies, and provides guidance on the issue of confidentiality during ADR processes. The **Negotiated Rulemaking Act** (1996) promotes the use of facilitated consensus in developing federal regulations.



The **Alternative Dispute Resolution Act** (1998) directs the federal courts to establish ADR provisions and processes. **EPA’s ADR policy** (65 FR 81858) affirms EPA’s support of ADR to address environmental and other conflicts.

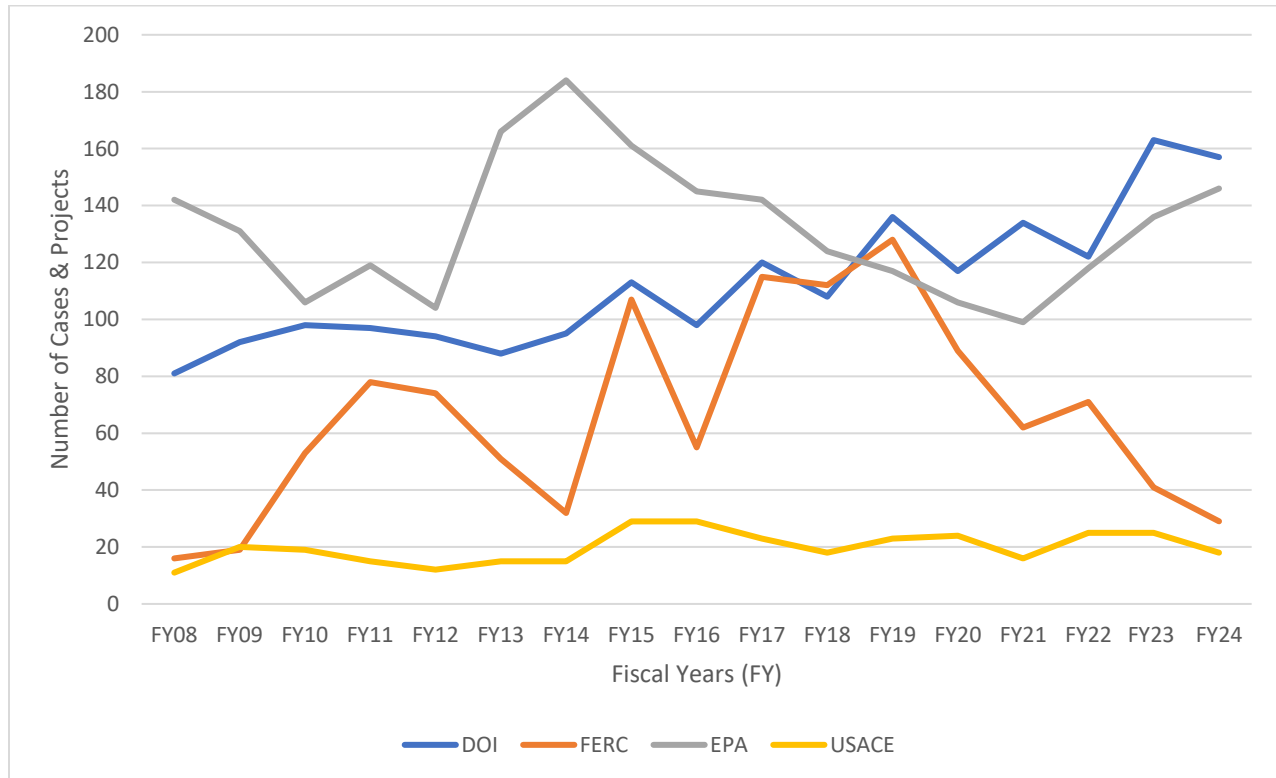
In addition to EPA, several federal agencies that implement environmental statutes and whose actions have significant environmental impacts also maintain ECCR services. EPA has been and continues to serve as a government-wide model for effective use of ECCR. EPA has been a national leader in the practice, teaching, and evaluation of ECCR for over two decades.

² 5 U.S.C. § 571(3) (1996).

³ Office of Management and Budget & Council on Environmental Quality, “Memorandum on Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution”(Washington, D.C., 2012), http://www.udall.gov/documents/Institute/OMB_CEQ_Memorandum_2012.pdf.

As of FY 2024, the most current year for which ECCR data are available, EPA continued to have one of the highest numbers of ECCR cases in the federal government (see Figure 1).⁴

Figure 1: Four Agency Index of ECCR Cases - FY 2008 to FY 2024



ECCR Infrastructure at EPA

CPRC is the agency lead for ECCR services and training. In addition to CPRC, the Office of the ALJ and the EAB support the agency with ECCR services consistent with EPA's ADR policy.⁵

The Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC) leads EPA's ECCR program and provides most ECCR services at EPA. At the end of FY 2025, CPRC transitioned into EPA's Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication (OCRA) as part of the disestablishment of the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights and EPA's reorganization. CPRC's director serves as EPA's Dispute Resolution Specialist, as designated in the Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 and EPA's ADR Policy.

⁴ Adapted from the John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution, "Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (ECCR) in the Federal Government: Synthesis of Fiscal Year 2024 Reports" (Tuscon, AZ, 2024).

⁵ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Policy on Alternative Dispute Resolution," *Federal Register* 65, no. 249 (2000): 81858 – 81860, https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2018-04/documents/epa_adr_policy.pdf.

CPRC assists regions (See Figure 2) and program offices with preventing environmental matters from escalating into environmental disputes and facilitates resolving environmental disputes when they arise. CPRC offers ECCR services through its expert staff and by utilizing its \$85 million ECCRS contract to access services from private sector experts in the ECCR field. In addition to mediation and facilitation, CPRC provides ECCR training, coaching, and related services through its expert staff and contract.

ECCR services are also provided across the agency by approximately 30 skilled **ECCR Specialists** throughout all 10 EPA regions, who work closely with CPRC staff. Many are attorneys in the Offices of Regional Counsel; others work in a variety of contexts, including public participation. ECCR Specialists perform their ECCR roles as a collateral duty. They have been trained in a variety of ECCR skills, including facilitation, mediation, negotiation, and conflict coaching.

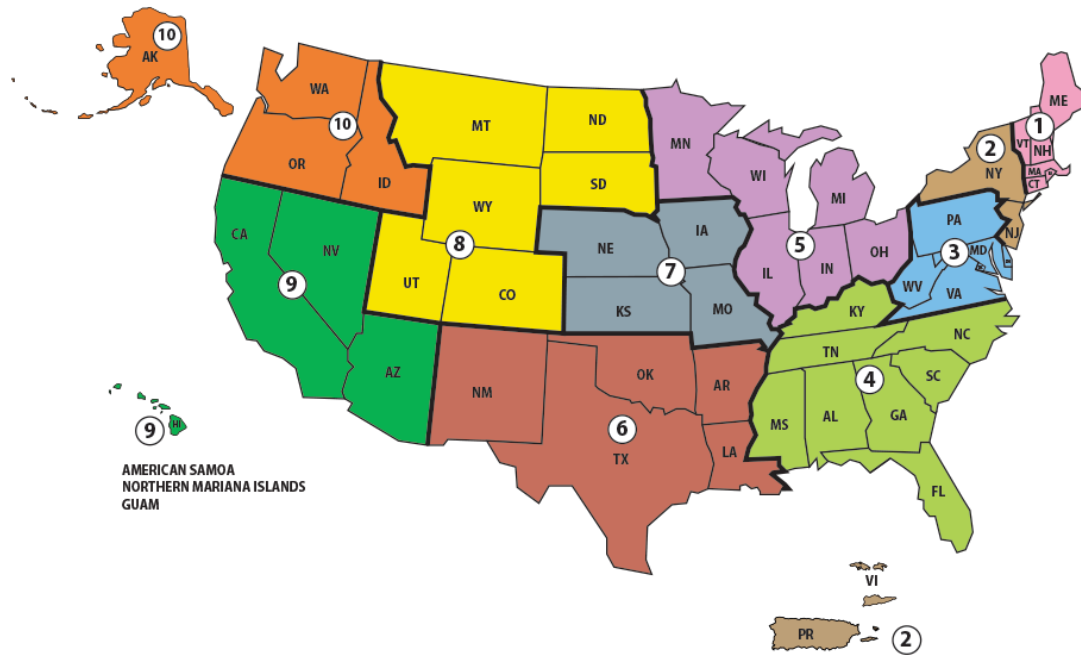
ECCR Specialists advance the use and understanding of ECCR at EPA by, among other things, serving as CPRC liaisons for ECCR activities; supporting ECCR education and training; building and supporting communities of practice; tracking requests for assistance; managing ECCR cases and projects; and contributing to the development of this annual report. When possible, they also serve as mediators, facilitators, trainers, and conflict coaches. EPA's network of ECCR Specialists actively engaged in providing ECCR services by serving as facilitators for multiple cases and delivering conflict resolution trainings.

CPRC also provides ECCR support to EPA's External Civil Rights Division (ECD) in OCRA, which enforces several civil rights laws, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, disability, and national origin, including limited English proficiency, by recipients of federal financial assistance. CPRC assists ECD by offering mediation and facilitation to parties involved in these discrimination complaints, such as facilitating dialogue as part of ECD's Informal Resolution Agreement (IRA) process.

The Administrative Law Judges (ALJs) - In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (1946), the ALJs conduct hearings and render decisions in enforcement and permit proceedings between the EPA and those regulated under environmental laws. The ALJs also may conduct hearings related to findings of discrimination by ECD. All litigants before the ALJs are offered ECCR to resolve their cases. In FY 2025, ALJs used ECCR to resolve four cases.

The Environmental Appeals Board (EAB) - The EAB hears appeals of permitting decisions and administrative penalty decisions. A wide range of affected parties appeal to the EAB, including companies, state and local governments, Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and citizens. The EAB offers parties ECCR to resolve disputes with the assistance of an EAB judge and EAB senior counsel who serve as mediators. The EAB's ECCR program fosters negotiated settlements that speed up the resolution of EAB cases and conserves government resources. In FY 2025, EAB continued to provide ECCR services.

Figure 2: EPA Regions



epa.gov/aboutepa/visiting-regional-office

FY 2025 ECCR Use at EPA

Since 1978, EPA has used ECCR to fulfill its mission to protect human health and the environment. Using ECCR allows EPA, its partners, and the public it serves to more effectively engage with one another and develop a common understanding of environmental issues, prevent conflict, address differences, and resolve disagreements. **In FY 2025, EPA used ECCR in 146 cases; this is the same number of cases as in FY 2024, which was the highest usage the agency had reported since FY 2016.**

Noted Benefits of ECCR

- *Furtheres EPA's mission and strategic goals*
 - *Improves relationships*
 - *More productive conversations*
 - *Greater efficiency*
 - *Better outcomes*
-

Over the years of reporting on ECCR, EPA's program and regional offices have noted its many benefits. They've reported that ECCR helped them establish collaborative processes to resolve environmental problems in support of clean air, land, and water. ECCR has been used to improve collaboration and working relationships, which has resulted in more effective engagement with a broad range of affected groups, including federal, state, Tribal, and community partners. In FY 2025, multiple projects served as examples that both advanced EPA's mission and involved extensive collaboration with many impacted parties. Some examples included the following: Thunder Butte Petroleum Facilitation; Columbia River Facilitation; Veolia Facilitation; St. Louis Airport CAG Facilitation; Cinnabar Mine Assessment; and Fifth Ward/Kashmere Gardens CAG Facilitation.

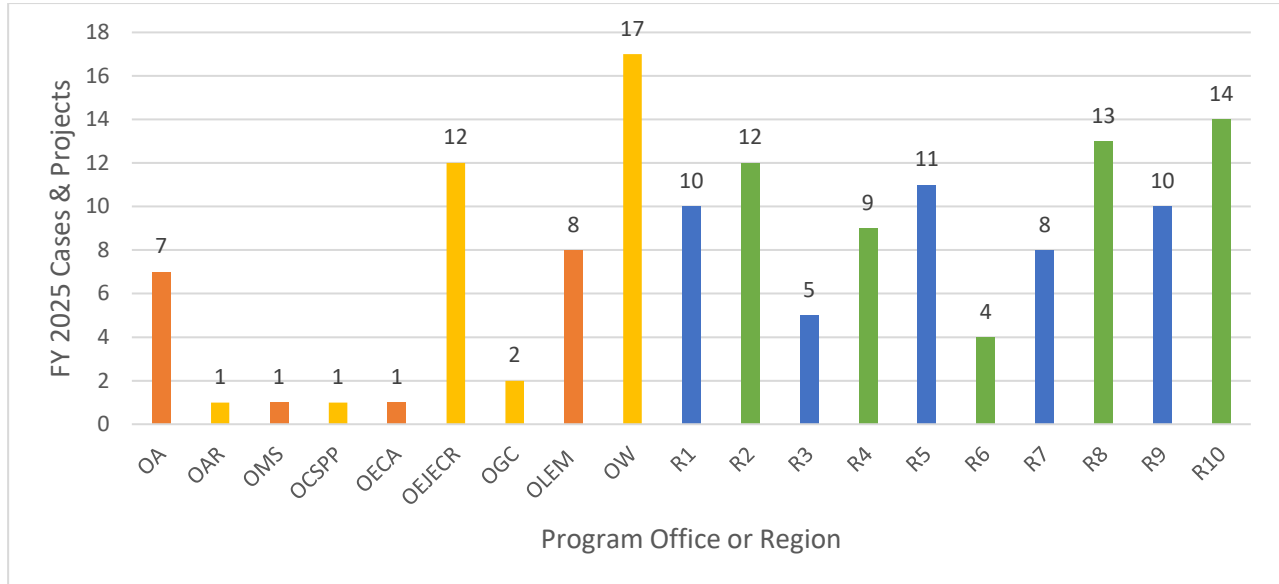
The use of ECCR also led to **more efficient and cost-effective processes**. When the agency used an impartial third party, it often provided greater structure and focus to negotiations and moved cases along more quickly. Offices also noted that, compared to litigation, ECCR provided an opportunity for early resolution of enforcement cases, which resulted in significant cost savings.

Finally, ECCR resulted in **more effective outcomes**, some of which likely could not have been achieved without impartial third-party assistance. ECCR helps the agency make sound decisions, work with affected groups more productively, and attain sustainable environmental outcomes.

Overall Use of ECCR at EPA

In FY 2025, EPA used ECCR in all 10 regions and several program offices for a broad range of applications. Figure 3 illustrates the level of ECCR use across EPA's program offices and regions in FY 2025.

Figure 3: FY 2025 ECCR Use by EPA Program Office and Region



Notes: Cases or projects that were tied to a specific location are included in the counts for the regions; those counted as program office cases were national or programmatic in scope or were led by a program office. The program office names in the figure reflect the organizations in which work was completed in FY25; they may differ from current names of the program offices following agency reorganizations.

EPA also used ECCR in a wide variety of circumstances. For example, EPA used ECCR to mediate disputes over Superfund cleanups, gather public input during complex meetings, and mediate environmental enforcement disputes in EPA regions. In these matters, facilitators and mediators designed and led meetings so EPA staff could focus on technical and substantive issues and keep projects moving forward.

The 146 cases in FY 2025 addressed a broad range of matters across the country, including Superfund cleanups, brownfields redevelopments, cooperative federalism, permitting, and civil rights.

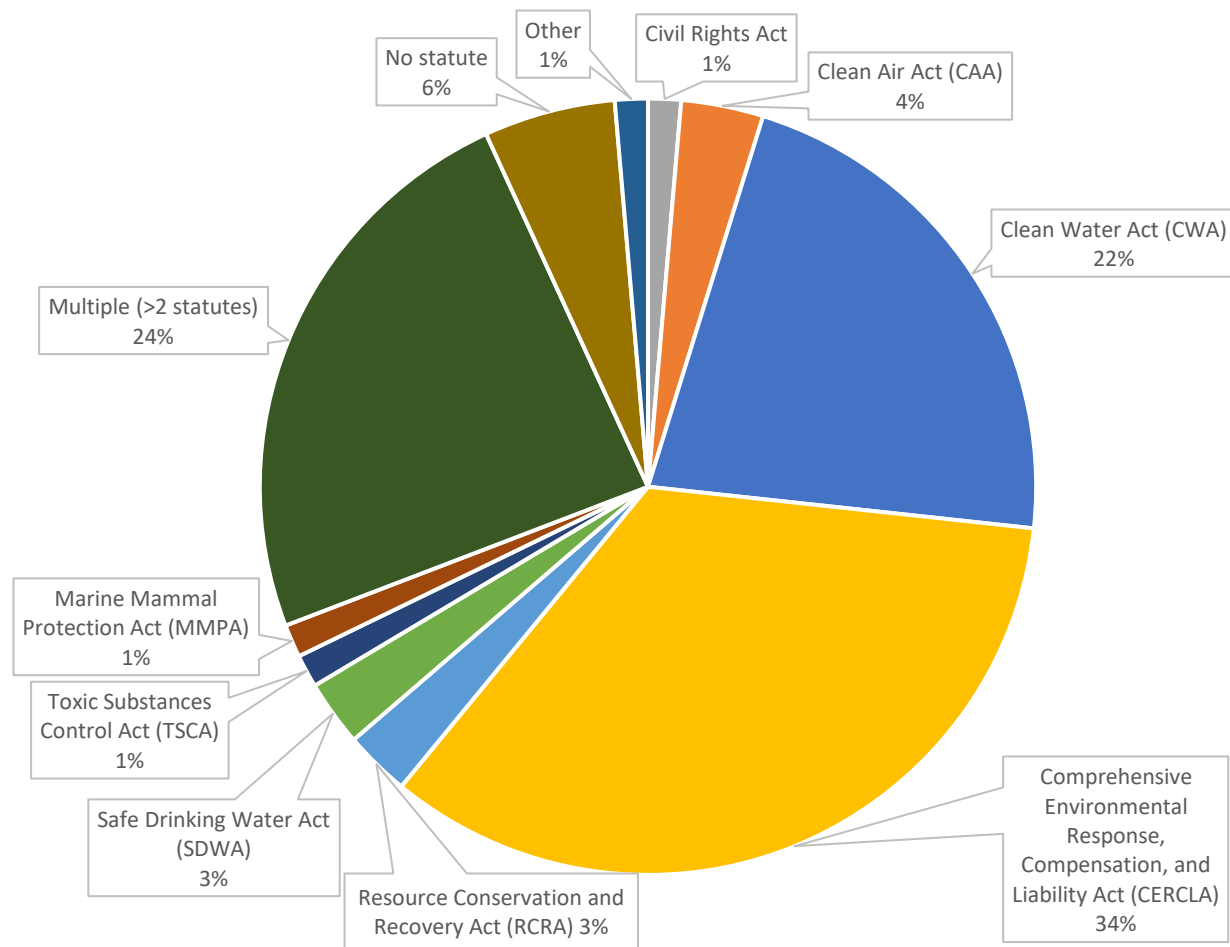


Figure 4: FY 2025 ECCR Cases & Projects by Primary Statute

As in past years, in FY 2025 EPA used ECCR most frequently to address issues under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA, commonly known as Superfund, used in approximately 34% of cases) and the Clean Water Act (CWA, used in approximately 22% of cases), as seen in Figure 4. Cases classified as “multiple” were predominantly facilitated processes involving communities with several environmental issues.

In FY 2025, CPRC provided services for approximately 84% of EPA’s ECCR cases. CPRC handled 122 cases on behalf of regions and program offices. ECCR Specialists and other EPA facilitators handled three cases in FY 2025. The EAB mediated one ECCR case, and ALJs mediated four cases. Of the CPRC cases, two were civil rights complaints where ECRD used CPRC facilitation assistance to include recipient agencies and complainants in meaningful dialogue with EPA about the complaints.

Furthermore, EPA was involved in eight environmental matters in litigation that were addressed with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ). Other federal agencies mediated or facilitated five cases to which EPA was a party. Finally, EPA was involved in at least seven ECCR cases that were provided by a combination of means (for example, multiple parties paid for a facilitated or mediated process, or another federal agency led the process).

EPA senior leaders continue to use ECCR to help the agency achieve its mission. Senior leadership actively engaged in and strongly supported the use of ECCR in several high-profile cases and projects in FY 2025, including:

- East Palestine Facilitation
- Fifth Ward/Kashmere Gardens UPRR CAG Facilitation and Public Meetings
- St. Regis CAG Facilitation
- St. Louis Airport CAG Facilitation
- National Water Reuse Action Plan Facilitation
- Portland Harbor Superfund Site Facilitation
- Red Hill Collaborative Process Facilitation
- Thunder Butte Petroleum Facilitation
- Trash Free Waters Facilitation and Public Involvement

In FY 2025, EPA used ECCR in air, water, and land cases and projects under the Clean Air Act (CAA), CWA, Superfund, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), and the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). EPA also used ECCR in multiple cases involving the Civil Rights Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the Save our Seas 2.0 Act, and additional cases involving other statutes.

Air - The air program at EPA continues to consistently use ECCR services, both for facilitating efforts to reduce air pollution in communities and for mediating cases in litigation. EPA used ECCR in five air cases in FY 2025.

Water - Historically, EPA has used ECCR to resolve issues with water-related cases, and this continued to be the case in FY 2025. EPA has many different water programs and contentious disputes often arise in the context of water permitting, planning, and enforcement actions. Of the 36 water-related ECCR cases in FY 2025, half arose in nine of EPA's ten regions and half were programmatic or national in scope.

Land - For decades, EPA's most frequent use of ECCR has been supporting Superfund cleanups under CERCLA. Superfund cleanups involve planning, community involvement, outreach about complicated scientific matters, and sometimes contentious negotiations and litigation. EPA most often uses ECCR to provide support to facilitate challenging public meetings, establish and facilitate CAGs, provide conflict coaching so EPA staff involved in site cleanups can work more effectively with those impacted, and mediate disputes over responsibilities and terms of cleanups. In FY 2025, EPA provided ECCR support for 51 Superfund cases, which included facilitating various community involvement processes, leading situation assessments, conducting allocation negotiations with potentially responsible parties, and helping to resolve conflicts and improve collaboration between EPA and other federal agencies at Superfund sites on federal facilities.

Support for Cooperative Federalism - As experts in public participation, CPRC staff and ECCR Specialists routinely use ECCR services with all EPA programs and regions to increase transparency and meaningful public participation. Facilitation services provide critical support for collaboration between local, state, and Tribal governments, and EPA. Such collaboration is key to efficiently securing clean air, land, and water, and other agency priorities.

The Pacific Northwest Fire and Smoke facilitated meetings provide a good example of ECCR support for cooperative federalism. The meetings, which convened federal, state, and Tribal partners around prescribed fire and smoke management practices, helped establish a new prescribed fire and smoke management task force. Another example is the meeting coordination and facilitation for Navajo Uranium Mines, which resulted in the parties being able to collaborate independently and facilitate meetings without a third-party neutral.

FY 2025 ECCR Case Highlight

Demonstrating the importance and potential of ECCR's impact, a professional facilitator worked with EPA Region 8 to support a high-profile collaboration between EPA and the Mandan, Hidasta, and Arikara (MHA) Nation. Together, they addressed issues related to a new petroleum refining facility on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota.

The facilitator helped EPA and the MHA Nation review options for the refinery facility, which is expected to convert petroleum to hydrogen, bring liquid natural gas to market, and connect the facility to the existing nearby Enbridge pipeline. Region 8's desire to proactively communicate with the Tribe and other interested parties led them to request ECCR support. The use of an expert facilitator helped the region to demonstrate its interest in the Tribe's success.

The facilitator consulted with multiple Region 8 divisions and convened all appropriate federal and Tribal parties for a roundtable discussion. They designed processes to break potential impasses, helped communicate technical information, and helped the parties reach an agreement on how to obtain a permit for new emissions and other EPA authorizations concerning construction and operation of a new facility.

During the roundtable discussion, the facilitator helped EPA provide a comprehensive response to Tribal representatives' questions about the reasons the RCRA permitting process takes at least two years. With the support of the facilitator, EPA provided details about testing, public comment, scoping, and appeals. In addition, the facilitator helped EPA sufficiently explain the need for waste storage tanks, which the Tribe had not previously included in its plan.

Given the success of the roundtable discussion, due in large part to expert facilitation support, EPA is optimistic that the Tribe and its contractors can continue to work toward construction and operation of a successful new petroleum refining facility with full awareness of all permitting and regulatory requirements and applicable timelines. This case represents some of the many benefits ECCR provided

across the agency, notably improving multi-party communication to ensure efficiency and continuity of work and reaching agreement on environmental outcomes that result in clean air, land, and water for all Americans.

ECCR Training at the EPA

In FY 2025, CPRC and ECCR Specialists led the agency's ECCR training activities to strengthen EPA staff's skills and promote the use of ECCR. In FY 2025, CPRC and ECCR Specialists trained a total of 746 EPA personnel in 21 sessions, totaling approximately 119 hours of training.⁶

CPRC staff and ECCR Specialists delivered the following trainings virtually and in person in FY 2025: *Negotiate Better: An Interest-Based Approach*; *Facilitating Difficult Conversations & Consensus Building*; *Virtual Facilitation 101*; *Harnessing Intense Emotions: De-escalation in Communication*; *Public Participation and Collaboration: Tools for Success*; *Engaging Constructively in Difficult Conversations*; and *Facilitating Dialogue*. ECCR Specialists in Region 2 also led *Mediation for Advocates* training for the Office of Regional Counsel.

As part of the total personnel trained, CPRC provided training for over 270 EPA employees during its 19th annual Conflict Resolution Day program on October 15-17, 2024. CPRC holds annual events around Conflict Resolution Day to increase EPA staff and managers' awareness of ECCR services at the EPA and improve their ECCR knowledge and skills. In FY 2025, CPRC hosted a training, *Negotiate Better: An Interest-Based Approach*, and the following presentations: *ECCR Resources for Emergency Response: East Palestine Case Study* and *The Guides on the Side: How ECCR Specialists Can Help You*.

In addition to internal sessions, CPRC delivered a 90-minute training, *Addressing Civil Rights Complaints Through Facilitated Dialogue*. CPRC delivered this training to 40 participants from multiple federal agencies as part of the Interagency ADR Working Group fall meeting.

Furthermore, CPRC consistently reviewed trainings and updated training content after each delivery to continuously improve the content quality and presentation delivery. In FY 2025, CPRC updated its *Public Participation and Collaboration: Tools for Success* training to align with current EPA guidance on engaging with the public. Additionally, CPRC continued to develop a new training, *ECCR Foundations*, it hopes to make available on demand to all EPA employees in FY 2026.

Finally, CPRC sustained engagement with past training participants by coordinating the EPA ECCR Community of Practice, which is open to any EPA personnel who have completed CPRC training or have

⁶ This total reflects the cumulative number of participants across all training sessions. As such, EPA personnel who attended multiple training sessions were counted separately each time (e.g., if an EPA employee attended a training and one of the Conflict Resolution Day events, they are counted for each).

an interest in ECCR. The EPA ECCR Community of Practice hosted three peer learning sessions in FY 2025 on topics such as consensus building, negotiation strategies, and situation assessments.

ECCR Evaluation at the EPA

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, CPRC continued to conduct survey-based evaluations in FY 2025, the 19th year of its evaluation program. CPRC evaluated one facilitated process in Region 5. Through the survey responses, CPRC found participants largely were satisfied with and would recommend the process and the facilitator. Notably, the evaluation identified positive changes in participants' ability to work together and trust each other.

CPRC continued to evaluate its ECCRS contract by annually surveying all task order contracting officer representatives who use it. Their input helped CPRC improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the contract's use.

Additionally, CPRC formally evaluated one of its training deliveries to ensure participant learning and continuously improve training offerings. Results showed that participants valued case study examples and interactive elements throughout the session and access to training materials for reference both during and after the training. Participant feedback contributed to CPRC's update of the *Public Participation and Collaboration: Tools for Success* training.

Opportunities for ECCR at EPA

While EPA has used ECCR effectively in a variety of cases, as described above, there are still opportunities for greater use of ECCR in the agency. ECCR could be used more routinely at EPA to support collaboration between EPA and its partners at the state and federal levels in direct support of Pillar 3 (Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership) under the agency's Powering the Great American Comeback Initiative.

In multiple contexts, including permitting, ECCR services, such as mediation and facilitation, can provide opportunities for EPA to engage in joint problem-solving and conflict resolution with state and federal partners. These opportunities can produce outcomes that attend to all parties' interests and needs.

In addition, ECCR can improve engagement and resolve conflicts between EPA and industry. Although CPRC has provided facilitation and mediation support in cases involving industry, particularly in the context of Potentially Responsible Parties at Superfund sites, CPRC's services have not been utilized in most situations where there is conflict or the potential to build better relationships. Broader awareness of ECCR and CPRC's role in bringing ECCR services to EPA would likely increase opportunities for CPRC to provide greater assistance in this arena.

Conclusion

In FY 2025, EPA remained a leading federal agency in the provision of ECCR services and CPRC offered easy access to high-quality ECCR services to help the agency achieve its mission and strategic goals. As described above, ECCR was used in every EPA region and most program offices to assist with cases across all media in EPA (air, water, land and chemicals).

In FY 2025, ECCR services helped EPA to engage effectively and efficiently with the public, states, Tribes, and industry to facilitate informed, transparent, and fair decision making. As the agency strives to ensure access to clean air, land, and water, ECCR processes are essential tools for making progress on those goals. ECCR helps the agency to plan as well as prevent and resolve disputes so that we better serve all communities in the United States.



Appendices

Appendix A - OMB & CEQ Questionnaire

In collaboration with the John S. McCain III National Center for Environmental Conflict Resolution (the agency which collects and summarizes these reports for OMB and CEQ), EPA continued to produce a reformatted ECCR Annual Report. EPA did this to make the report more understandable and useful for the reader. Below are the summarized questions from the OMB and CEQ questionnaire and references to where the corresponding answers can be found in this report (in *italics*).

1. Agency Submission Information

Name of Department/Agency responding: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Name and Title/Position of person responding: Gina Langan Garcia, Director, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center

Division/Office of person responding: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center; Advice, Conflict Resolution, and Data Division; Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication; Office of the Administrator

Contact information (phone/email): 202.564.0838, langangarcia.gina@epa.gov

Date this report is being submitted: September 24, 2026

2. ECCR Capacity Building and Investment:

Describe any **NEW, CHANGED, or ACTIVELY ONGOING** steps taken by your department or agency to build programmatic and institutional capacity for environmental collaboration and conflict resolution in FY 2025, including progress made since FY 2024.

Please also include any efforts to establish routine procedures for considering ECCR in specific situations or categories of cases, including any efforts to provide institutional support for non-assisted collaboration efforts.

Please refer to the mechanisms and strategies presented in Section 5 and attachment C of the [OMB-CEQ ECCR Policy Memo](#) for additional guidance on what to include here. Examples include, but are not restricted to, efforts to:

- Integrate ECCR objectives into agency mission statements, Government Performance and Results Act goals, and strategic planning;
- Assure that your agency's infrastructure supports ECCR;
- Invest in support, programs, or trainings; and focus on accountable performance and achievement;
- ECCR programmatic FTEs;
- Dedicated ECCR budgets;

- Funds spent on contracts to support ECCR cases and programs.

The memorandum further advises agencies as follows:

- a) Please refer to your agency's FY 2024 report to only include new, changed, or actively ongoing ECCR investments, or capacity building. **If none, leave this section blank.**

Description of EPA infrastructure on pages 5-7

- b) Please describe the trainings given in your department/agency in FY 2025. Please include a list of the trainings, if possible. If known, please provide the course names and total number of people trained. Please refer to your agency's FY 2024 report to include ONLY trainings given in FY 2025. **If none, leave this section blank.**

ECCR Training at the EPA on pages 13 and 14

3. ECCR Case Example

Using the template below, provide a description of an ECCR case (preferably **completed** in FY 2025). If possible, focus on an interagency ECCR case. Please limit the length to **no more than 1 page**.

- Name/Identification of Problem/Conflict: *[Please add case "title" here]*
- Overview of problem/conflict and timeline, including reference to the nature and timing of the third-party assistance, and how the ECCR effort was funded.
- Summary of how the problem or conflict was addressed using ECCR, including details of any innovative approaches to ECCR, and how the principles for engagement in ECCR outlined in the policy memo were used.
- Identify the key beneficial outcomes of this case, including references to likely alternative decision-making forums and how the outcomes differed as a result of ECCR.
- Please share any reflections on the lessons learned from the use of ECCR.

Other ECCR Notable Cases

Briefly describe any other notable ECCR cases in FY 2025. **(OPTIONAL)**

ECCR case example on pages 12 and 13

4. ECCR Case Number & Context Data (OPTIONAL)

Final ECCR Case Numbers for EPA on pages 8-11

Appendix B – Abbreviations

ACRD – EPA, OCRA, Advice, Conflict Resolution, and Data Division

ADR – Alternative Dispute Resolution

ALJ/ALJD – Office of the Administrative Law Judge, now in OCRA as Administrative Law Judges Division

CAA – Clean Air Act

CAG – Community Advisory Group

CEQ – Council on Environmental Quality

CERCLA – Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act or “Superfund”

CPRC – Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center, now in EPA, OCRA, ACRD Division

CWA – Clean Water Act

DOI – U.S. Department of the Interior

DOJ – U.S. Department of Justice

EAB/EABD – Environmental Appeals Board, now in OCRA as Environmental Appeals Board Division

ECCR – Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution

ECCRS – Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution Services

ECRD – External Civil Rights Division, now in OCRA

EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

FERC – U.S. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

FTE – Full-Time Employee

FY – Fiscal Year

IRA – Informal Resolution Agreement

OA – Office of the Administrator

OAR – Office of Air and Radiation

OCRA – Office of Civil Rights and Adjudication

OCSPP – Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention

OECA – Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance

OGC – Office of General Counsel

OLEM – Office of Land and Emergency Management

OMB – Office of Management and Budget

OMS – Office of Mission Support

ORD – Office of Research and Development

OW – Office of Water

RCRA – Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

SDWA – Safe Drinking Water Act

TSCA – Toxic Substances Control Act