

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ)?

- U.S. EPA defines environmental justice as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies" to ensure that each person enjoys:
 - The same degree of **protection from environmental and health hazards**, and
 - **Equal access to the decision-making process** to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) & TITLE VI

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is a cornerstone of EJ.
- Title VI requires recipients of federal funding to ensure that their programs or activities do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency).
- EJ and Title VI are both rooted in the same basic principle that no person should bear an unfair share of harm on account of their race, color, or national origin.
- Going beyond Title VI, EJ specifically involves consideration of economic status, among other demographic/social determinant factors, and it is focused on **environmental and human health** burdens, benefits, and decision making.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ): WHAT IS THE COMMITMENT OF THE AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Under the Performance Partnership Agreement (PPA) with U.S. EPA, **ANR has committed to:**

- Adopt an Environmental Justice Policy by 2023.
- Continue to implement Civil Rights compliance.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ): WHAT IS THE COMMITMENT OF THE AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ANR's EJ and Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator focus for 2022/2023:

- Establish Agency-wide investigation process and manual consistent with ANR Civil Rights & Nondiscrimination Grievance Procedure – complete by 2022
- Adopt a final Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEPP) with community engagement – complete by summer/fall 2022
- Develop and provide training for ANR staff for the above – ongoing
- Ongoing coordination with Department Civil Rights/EJ Liaisons, Department EJ Teams or Working Groups, and ANR Diversity & Equity Committee

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ): WHAT IS AVAILABLE AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

The following tools are available to ANR from the EPA:

- Support and training from EPA Region I staff in EJ and Civil Rights.
- Federal mapping tools, such as EJSCREEN 2.0 and the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool.
- EJ resources, guidance, and toolkits for states.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ): WHAT IS LACKING AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

More support needed in the following areas:

- A federal mapping tool is based on census data and geared toward a national perspective; it may not provide the necessary granularity for identifying and addressing disparities among Vermont communities and may not be as effective in depicting the issues affecting less populated, more rural states.
- Create space for the Biden Administration to provide further guidance to states on shared definitions and the application of the federal "Justice40 Initiative" to state federally funded programs.
- Appropriate levels of funding to match the magnitude of the work.



THANK
YOU