

# The Improving Air Quality in Overburdened Communities Initiative

Air Quality Program

Meeting of the Environmental Justice Council

August 2022

# Introductions

## **Rob Dengel**

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Justice Planner

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Reduction Specialist

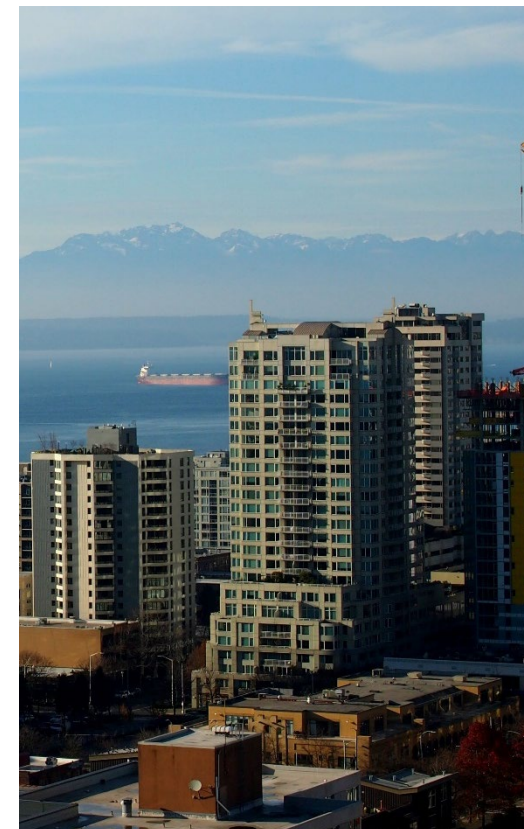
## **Erin Torrone**

Climate Commitment Act Community  
Engagement Specialist

# Recap: The Improving Air Quality in Overburdened Communities Initiative

Section 3 of the Climate Commitment Act directs Ecology to:

- **TODAY'S TOPIC: Identify overburdened communities that are most impacted by criteria air pollutants**
- Expand air quality monitoring of criteria air pollutants in these communities
- Establish standards and strategies for reducing criteria air pollution within these communities



# Meeting Goal

Ecology staff would like Council's input on:

1. Draft process for identifying overburdened communities highly impacted by air pollution.
2. Ecology's plan for Fall public engagement for this Initiative

# What are Criteria Pollutants?

## EPA's Six Criteria Pollutants

Particulate Matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>, PM<sub>10</sub>)

Ground-level Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>)

Sulfur Dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>)

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)

Carbon Monoxide (CO)

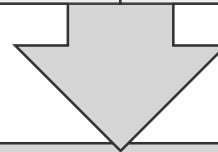
Lead (Pb)

# Engagement: Proposed Timeline

## January – April 2022: Engagement (Phase I)

Public listening sessions, survey, comment map; Tribal consultation

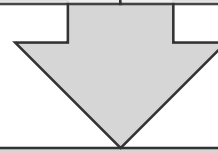
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## Summer – Fall 2022: Engagement (Phase 2)

Feedback on draft indicators

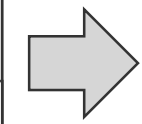
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## Final List of Overburdened Communities: Likely Late 2022

Outreach to share results

Community education on monitors' placement



**2023**  
Placing AQ monitors

# Initial Engagement (January-April)– What We Heard

## Air Quality

- Transportation
- Agriculture
- Land use
- Industry
- Ports
- Wildfire smoke
- Dust
- Smoke

## Socioeconomics

- Health disparities
- Outdoor workers
- Unhoused people
- Children and elderly

## Ideas for Change

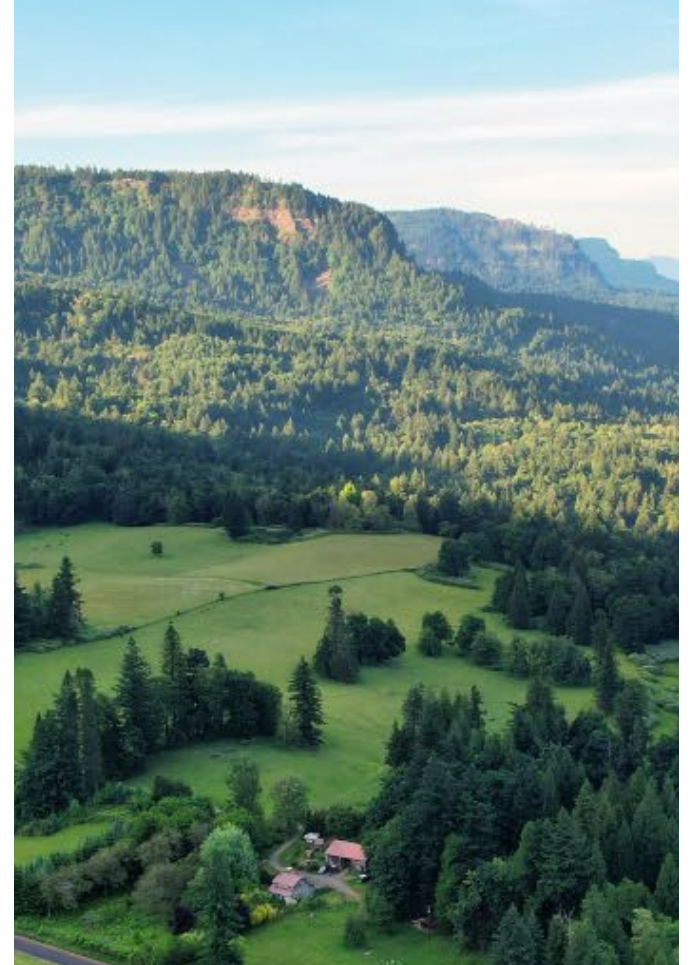
- Education
- Regulation
- Grants

## Out of Scope

- Odor
- Indoor air quality
- Air Toxics
- Methane

# What do we mean by draft indicators?

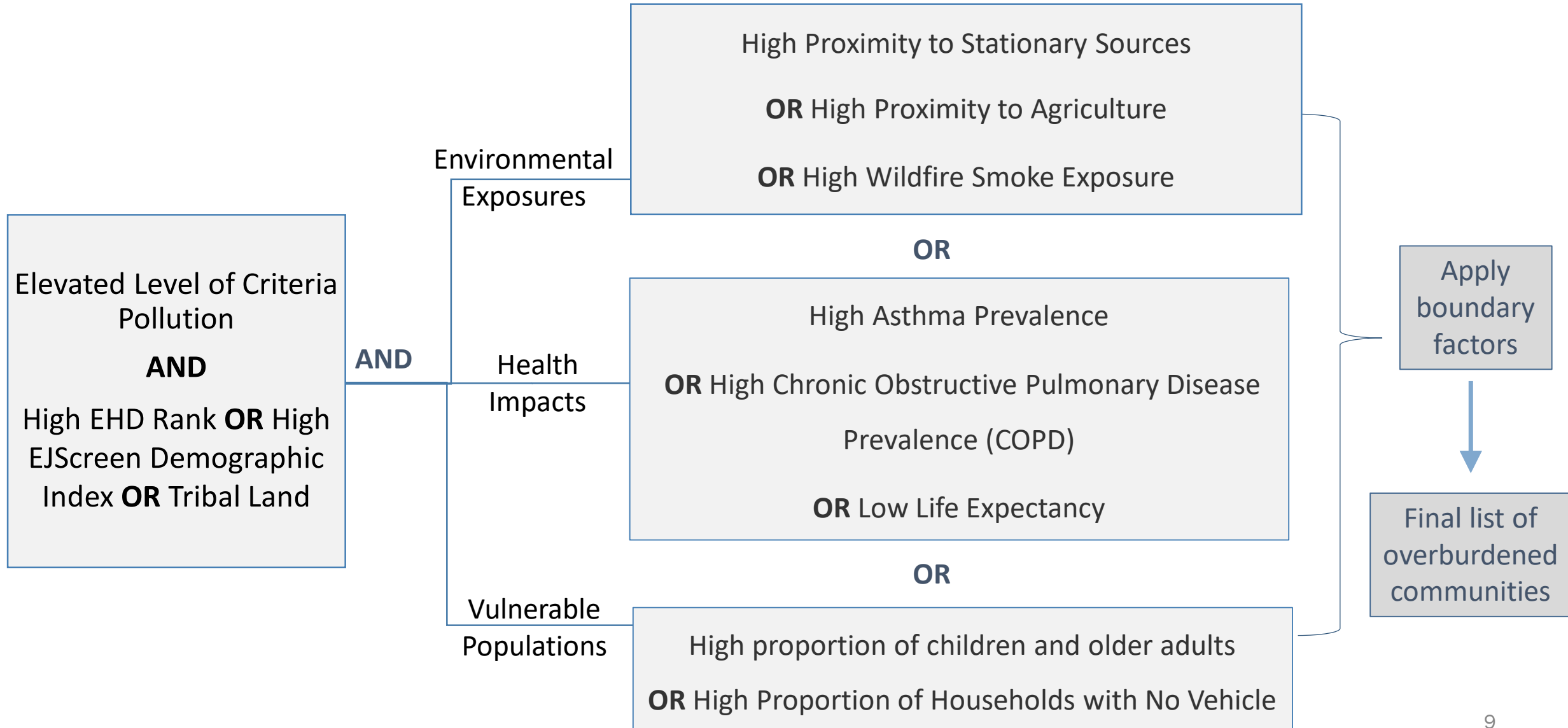
“Indicators” are:  
categories that represent issues related to air quality  
within communities.



- Examples:
  - Environmental factors
  - Health impacts
  - Income & race
- Informed by public input
- Measureable

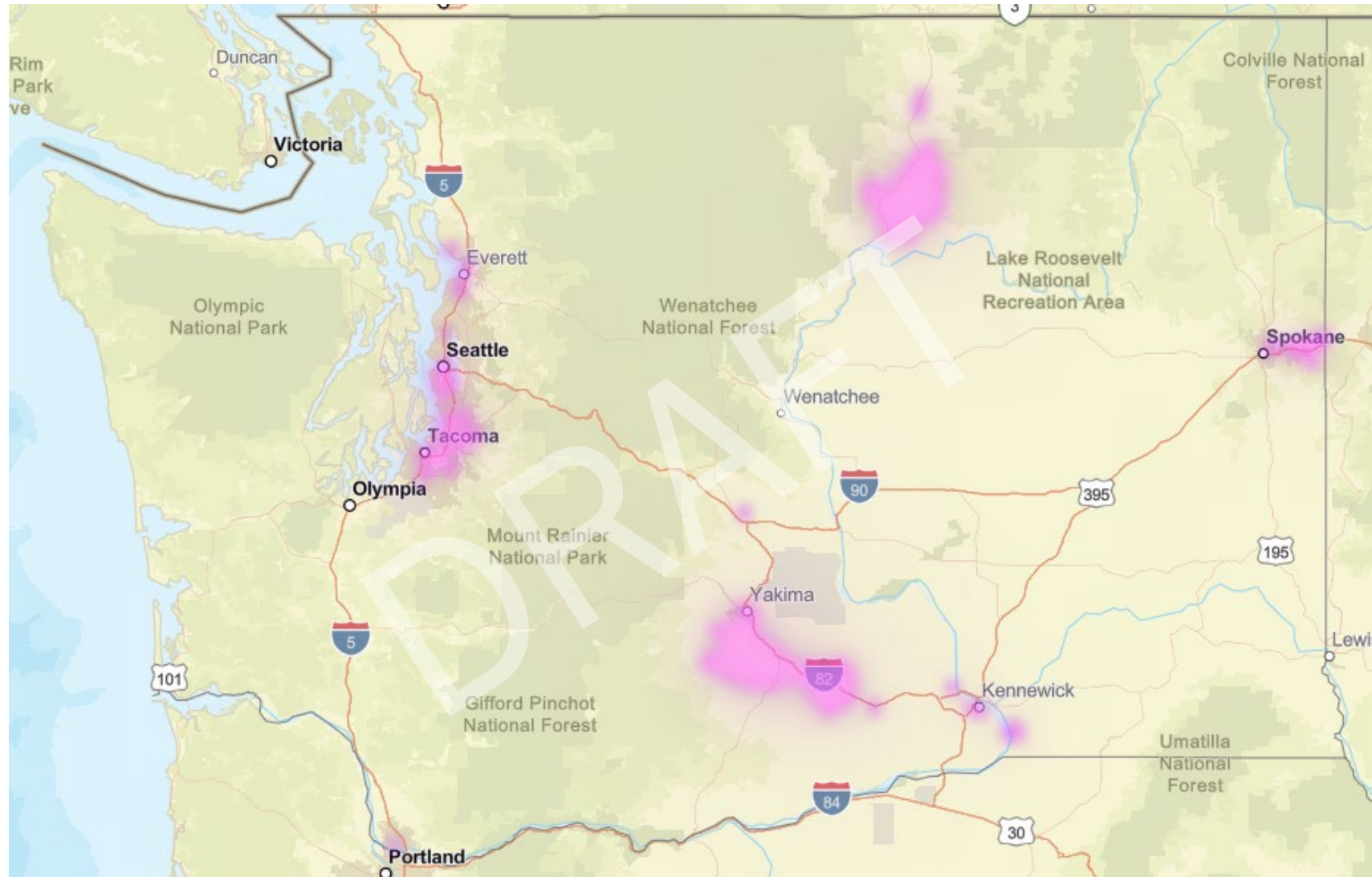


# Draft Indicators



# Draft Screening Area Map

Note: Areas subject to change based on feedback on draft indicators



# What are the Boundaries of a Community?

## Possible Factors:

- Statewide indicators
- Existing community boundaries
- Locations of schools, childcare centers, healthcare facilities, detention centers, etc.
- Local and regional health, pollution, environmental justice studies
- Additional air quality data and tools
- Community size
- Public input

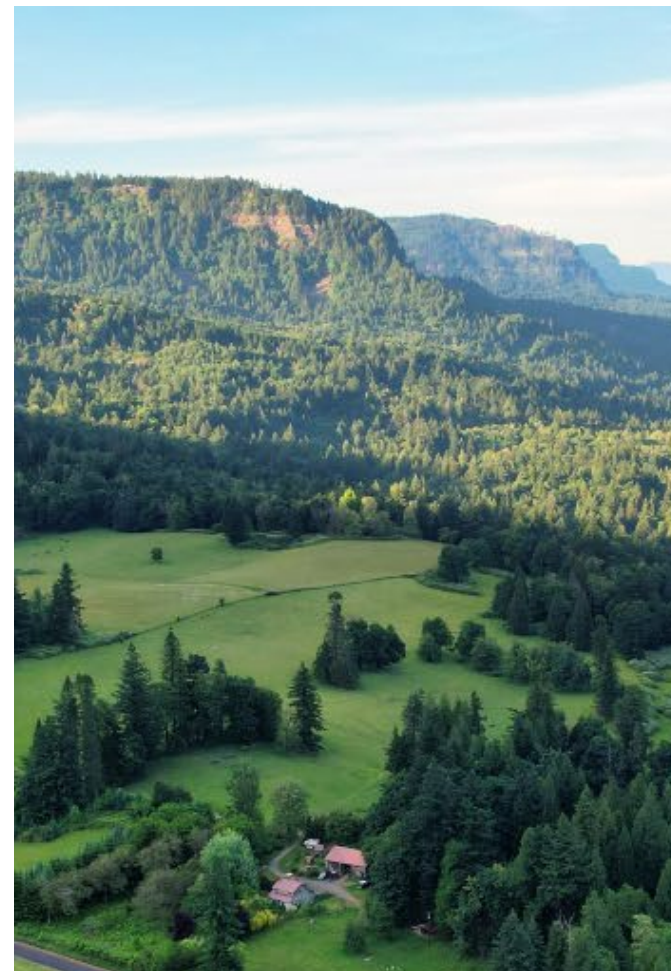
# How do we select data?

Questions we considered:

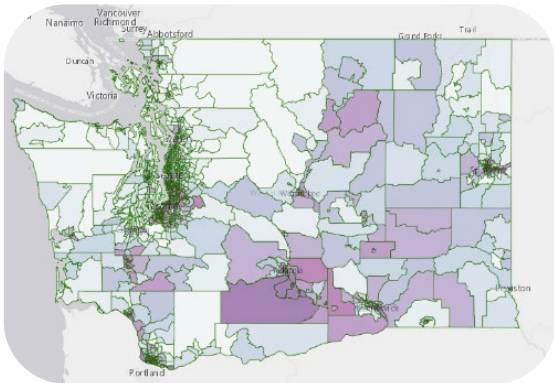
Does the information represent communities across the state?

Does data exist?

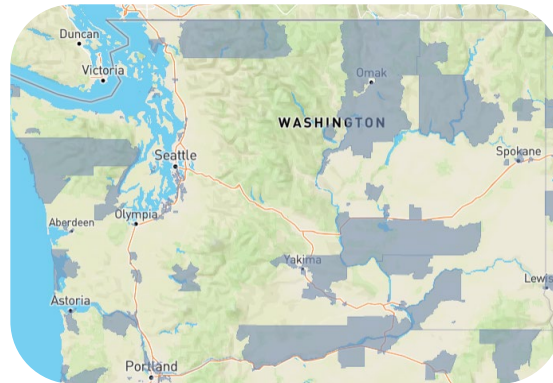
What are the different ways others have put data together?



# Data Sources



Environmental Health Disparities Map



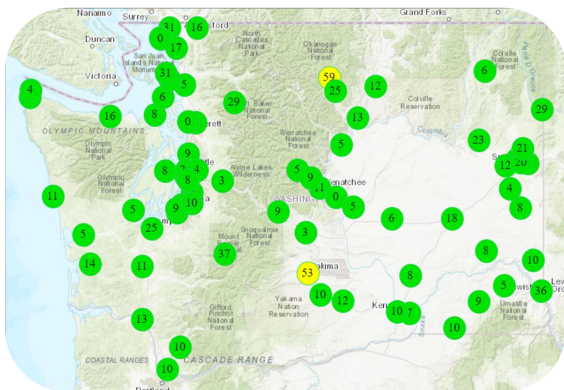
EJScreen (and other federal tools)



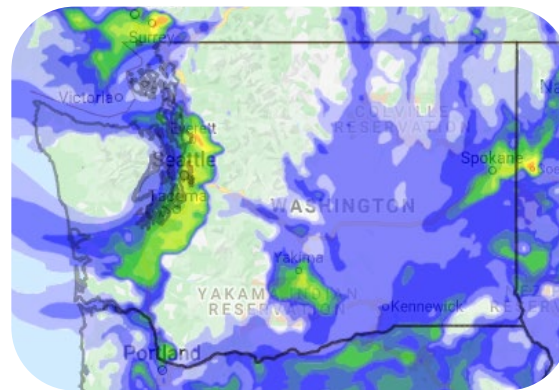
Socioeconomic & Population Data



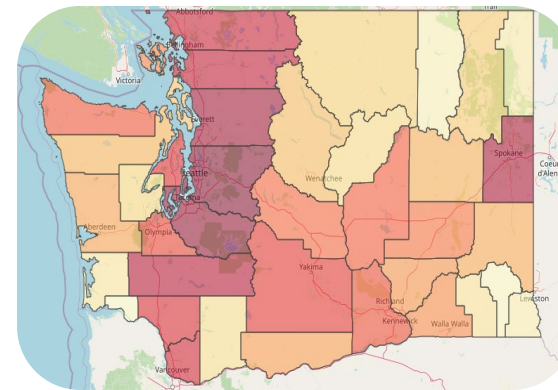
Public/Partner Input



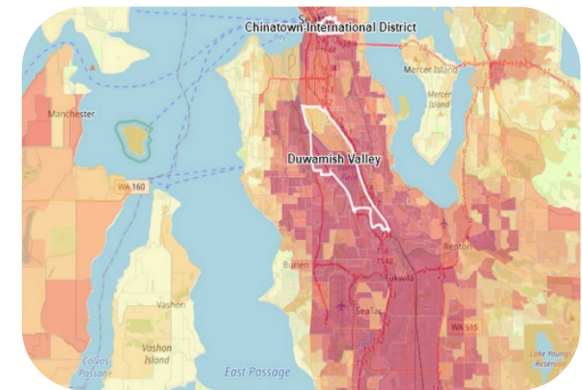
Monitoring



Modeling



Emissions Inventory



Additional Ecology and LAA data

# Fall Engagement Process – Dates & logistics

## **Draft dates for public engagement: Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> – Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> (47 days)**

- 7 virtual public hearings at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.
  - Translated materials and interpretive services
- Tribal meetings & government-to-government consultation offered prior
- Online comments
- Ecology available to meet with groups in person, if requested

## **We will solicit feedback on:**

- Draft indicators for identifying overburdened communities highly impacted by poor air quality
- Draft factors for boundaries
- Data sources

# Thoughts for more effective engagement?

## Ideas for inclusive engagement – what else?

- Spanish language public hearing
- Promoting public Wi-Fi and computer access options
- Evaluation: Post-hearing survey
- Voicemails
- ?

## Getting the word out

- Media release
- Public Service Announcement
- Flyer
- Social media posts
- Online events listings
- Email invitations
- Ecology website materials
- ?

# Initiative Summary

- New opportunity in Washington to address criteria air pollution in communities most impacted.
- Multiple stages of public input to identify communities.
- Implications for identified overburden communities:
  - Expanded air monitoring networks
  - New emission control mechanisms
  - Funding to address criteria air pollution



# Next Steps

## - EJ Council Follow-up

- Ecology is available to meet throughout this process.
- Ecology will notify the Environmental Justice Council when dates & details for the Fall public process are available

### Links -

[Improving Air Quality in Overburdened Communities Initiative](#)

[Climate Commitment Act](#)

[Environmental Justice at Ecology](#)

Sign-up for email updates via first two links.



**Thank you!**