

Environmental Justice Council

October 10, 2025 Meeting Materials

Table of Contents

Agenda - Español	1
Agenda - English	6
Approval of Past Meeting Notes	10
Draft May 9, 2025 Meeting Notes.....	10
Draft July 24, 2025 Meeting Notes	16
Draft September 25, 2025 Gathering Notes.....	23
Council Ethics Procedure and Form	29
Memo.....	29
Draft Ethics Procedure and Form.....	30
Council 2026 Supplemental Budget Values and Principles	35
Memo.....	35
Draft Budget Values and Principles	37
Legislative Session Procedure (already adopted, for reference only)	40
Emissions-Intensive, Trade-Exposed Industries (EITEs)	44
Memo.....	44
Draft 2026 Legislative Policy Statement	52
Memo.....	52
Draft 2026 Legislative Policy Statement.....	53
Community Connection with Health Disparities Council Staff	57
Memo.....	57
HEAL Act Agency Annual Reports	58
Memo.....	58
HEAL Act Agency Annual Report	60
Letter from Attorney General’s Office: Environmental Justice Updates.....	111
Written Public Comments.....	No written public comments have been received as of 10/7/25

Consejo de Justicia Ambiental (Consejo de EJ)

Viernes 10 de octubre de 2025

De 10:00 a. m. a 1:00 p. m.

Para unirse al webinar, haga clic en el siguiente enlace:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81747864781>

Id. del webinar: 817 4786 4781

O únase por teléfono: +1 253 215 8782

Id. del webinar: 817 4786 4781

Números internacionales disponibles: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kd6MqgTvTL>

Objetivos de la reunión

1. Debatir y posiblemente adoptar el Procedimiento y Formulario de Ética elaborados por el Comité Directivo del Consejo para aplicar el artículo V (Ética del Consejo) de los [Estatutos del Consejo](#).
2. Debatir y posiblemente adoptar los Principios y Valores del Presupuesto Suplementario del Consejo para 2026.
3. Debatir ideas con el Departamento de Ecología sobre qué deberían pagar las EITE (por sus siglas en inglés, industrias intensivas en emisiones y expuestas al comercio) por las emisiones de carbono que generan y cómo usar esos ingresos.
4. Debatir y editar, según sea necesario, un borrador de la Declaración de Política Legislativa del Consejo para 2026 que guíe el trabajo del Consejo en la sesión legislativa de 2026. Se estima adoptar la declaración en la reunión de diciembre del Consejo.
5. Aprender más del Consejo sobre Desigualdades de Salud y su trabajo. Hablar sobre cómo los dos Consejos trabajan en conjunto.

Orden del día

Únase a las 9:50 a. m. para ver una presentación sobre cómo activar los subtítulos y conectarse al canal con interpretación al español y al ASL (por sus siglas en inglés, Lenguaje de Señas Americano).

De 10:00 a. m. a 10:05 a. m.	I. Bienvenida y pase de lista para verificar que haya cuórum	Copresidenta Tatiana Brown Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson Miembros del Consejo
De 10:05 a. m. a 10:10 a. m.	II. Aprobación del orden del día por parte del Consejo III. Aprobación de las notas de la reunión del 9 de mayo, 24 de julio y 25 de septiembre de 2025 por parte del Consejo - Posibles medidas del Consejo	Copresidenta Tatiana Brown Miembros del Consejo
De 10:10 a. m. a 10:30 a. m.	IV. Consulta popular	Copresidenta Tatiana Brown
De 10:30 a. m. a 10:45 a. m.	V. Debate y posible adopción: Procedimiento y Formulario de Ética del Consejo Objetivo: Debatar y posiblemente adoptar el Procedimiento y Formulario de Ética elaborados por el Comité Directivo del Consejo para aplicar el artículo V (Ética del Consejo) de los Estatutos del Consejo .	Miembro del Consejo Running-Grass Comité Directivo Christy Hoff, personal del Consejo Sierra Rotakhina, personal del Consejo Miembros del Consejo

	- Posibles medidas del Consejo	
Receso de 10 minutos		
De 10:55 a. m. a 11:50 a. m.	<p>VI. Debate y posible adopción: Principios y Valores del Presupuesto Suplementario del Consejo para 2026</p> <p>Objetivos: Debatir y posiblemente adoptar los Principios y Valores del Presupuesto Suplementario del Consejo para 2026</p> <p>- Posibles medidas del Consejo</p>	<p>Maria Batayola, miembro del Consejo</p> <p>Grupo de Trabajo para Recomendaciones Presupuestarias sobre la CCA (por sus siglas en inglés, Ley de Compromiso Ambiental)</p> <p>Christy Hoff, personal del Consejo</p> <p>Sierra Rotakhina, personal del Consejo</p> <p>Miembros del Consejo</p>
Receso de 10 minutos		
De 12:00 p. m. a 12:25 p. m.	<p>VII. Debate y posibles medidas: Industrias intensivas en emisiones y expuestas al comercio (EITE)</p> <p>Objetivo: Debatir ideas con el Departamento de Ecología sobre qué deberían pagar las EITE por las emisiones de carbono que generan y cómo usar esos ingresos.</p>	<p>Jonathan Chen, personal del Consejo</p> <p>Personal del Departamento de Ecología</p> <p>Miembros del Consejo</p>

	- Posibles medidas del Consejo	
De 12:25 p. m. a 12:45 p. m.	<p>VIII. Debate: Elaboración de la Declaración de Política Legislativa del Consejo para 2026</p> <p>Objetivos: Debatir y editar, según sea necesario, un borrador de la Declaración de Política Legislativa del Consejo para 2026 que guie el trabajo del Consejo en la sesión legislativa de 2026. Se estima adoptar la declaración en la reunión de diciembre del Consejo.</p>	<p>Miembro del Consejo Tatiana Brown</p> <p>Christy Hoff, personal del Consejo</p> <p>Sierra Rotakhina, personal del Consejo</p> <p>Miembros del Consejo</p>
De 12:45 p. m. a 12:55 p. m.	<p>IX. Conexión comunitaria: Presentación y conversación con personal del Consejo sobre Disparidades de Salud</p> <p>Objetivos: Aprender más del Consejo sobre Desigualdades de Salud y su trabajo. Hablar sobre cómo los dos Consejos trabajan en conjunto.</p>	<p>Cristina González Torres, miembro del Consejo</p> <p>Sierra Red Bow, personal del Consejo</p> <p>Judith Barba Perez, personal del Consejo sobre Desigualdades de Salud</p> <p>Jasmine Alik, miembro del Consejo sobre Desigualdades de Salud</p>
De 12:55 p. m. a 1:00 p. m.	X. Agradecimientos y cierre	Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson

Información importante

- El Consejo puede cambiar los asuntos del orden del día el mismo día de la reunión.

- El número de contacto de emergencia durante la reunión es 360-584-4398.
- Para solicitar este documento en otro formato o en un idioma diferente, envíe un correo electrónico a Sierra Rotakhina en cualquier idioma a envjustice@ejc.wa.gov o llame al 360-584-4398.

Environmental Justice Council (EJ Council)

Friday October 10, 2025

10:00am – 1:00pm

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81747864781>

Webinar ID: 817 4786 4781

Or Join by Phone: +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 817 4786 4781

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kd6MqgTvTL>

Meeting Goals

1. Discuss and possibly adopt the Ethics Procedure and Form that the Council's Governance Committee drafted to implement Article V (Council Ethics) of the [Council's Bylaws](#).
2. Discuss and possibly adopt the Council's 2026 Supplemental Budget Values and Principles.
3. Discuss with the Department of Ecology ideas for what EITEs should pay for their carbon emissions and how to use that revenue.
4. Discuss and edit as needed a draft 2026 Council Legislative Policy Statement to guide the Council's work during the 2026 legislative session. Possible adoption scheduled for December Council meeting.
5. Learn more about the Health Disparities Council and their work. Have a conversation about how the two Councils are working in solidarity.

Agenda

Please join us at 9:50am for a presentation on how to turn on closed captions and join the Spanish or ASL interpretation channel.

10:00 AM – 10:05 AM	I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum	Co-Chair Tatiana Brown The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson Council Members
10:05 AM – 10:10 AM Meeting notes on page 10 .	II. Approval of Agenda by Council III. Approval of May 9, July 24, and September 25, 2025 Meeting Notes by Council -Possible Council Action	Co-Chair Tatiana Brown Council Members
10:10 AM – 10:30 AM	IV. Public Comment	Co-Chair Tatiana Brown
10:30 AM – 10:45 AM Materials on page 29 .	V. Discussion and Possible Adoption: Council Ethics Procedure and Form Goal: Discuss and possibly adopt the Ethics Procedure and Form that the Council’s Governance Committee drafted to implement Article V (Council Ethics) of the Council’s Bylaws . -Possible Council Action	Council Member Running-Grass Governance Committee Christy Hoff, Council Staff Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff Council Members
10 Minute Break		

<p>10:55 AM – 11:50 AM</p> <p>Materials on page 35.</p>	<p>VI. Discussion and Possible Adoption: Council 2026 Supplemental Budget Values and Principles</p> <p>Goals: Discuss and possibly adopt the Council’s 2026 Supplemental Budget Values and Principles</p> <p>-Possible Council Action</p>	<p>Council Member Maria Batayola</p> <p>Climate Commitment Act (CCA) Budget Recommendation Workgroup</p> <p>Christy Hoff, Council Staff</p> <p>Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff</p> <p>Council Members</p>
<p>10 Minute Break</p>		
<p>12:00 PM – 12:25 PM</p> <p>Materials on page 44.</p>	<p>VII. Discussion and Possible Action: Emissions-Intensive, Trade-Exposed Industries (EITEs)</p> <p>Goal: Discuss with the Department of Ecology ideas for what EITEs should pay for their carbon emissions and how to use that revenue.</p> <p>-Possible Council Action</p>	<p>Jonathan Chen, Council Staff</p> <p>Department of Ecology Staff</p> <p>Council Members</p>
<p>12:25 PM – 12:45 PM</p> <p>Materials on page 52.</p>	<p>VIII. Discussion: Draft 2026 Council Legislative Policy Statement</p> <p>Goals: Discuss and edit as needed a draft 2026 Council Legislative Policy Statement to guide the Council’s work during the 2026</p>	<p>Council Member Tatiana Brown</p> <p>Christy Hoff, Council Staff</p> <p>Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff</p> <p>Council Members</p>

	legislative session. Possible adoption scheduled for December Council meeting.	
12:45 PM – 12:55 PM Materials on page 57 .	IX. Community Connect: Presentation and Conversation with Health Disparities Council Staff Goals: Learn more about the Health Disparities Council and their work. Have a conversation about how the two Councils are working in solidarity.	Council Member Cristina González Torres Sierra Red Bow, Council Staff Judith Barba Perez, Health Disparities Council Staff Jasmine Alik, Health Disparities Council Member
12:55 PM – 1:00 PM	X. Appreciation and Adjournment	The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson

Important Information

- The Council may move agenda items around on the day of the meeting.
- Emergency contact number during the meeting is 360-584-4398.
- To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Draft Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council

May 9, 2025

Virtual ZOOM Platform

Due to limited staff capacity, Environmental Justice Council (Council) staff are working to streamline the Council meeting notes. The notes now include only very high-level points and the final decisions made along with voting records. The full meeting recordings can be found on the Council's website: [Environmental Justice Council Meetings | WaPortal.org](https://www.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJusticeCouncilMeetings). However, it is important that meeting notes are useful to the Council Members and the public. Please share feedback with Council staff on how we can make these notes most useful to you by emailing envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or by calling 360-584-4398.

Council Members present:

- Maria Batayola
- Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair), joined at 1:23 pm
- David Mendoza
- Esther Min, joined at 1:50 pm
- Faaluaina Pritchard
- Running-Grass
- The Honorable Monica Tonasket, joined at 1:35 pm
- Raeshawna Ware

Council Members absent:

- Nichole Banegas
- Maria Blancas
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)
- Cristina González
- Rosalinda Guillen (leave of absence)
- Todd Mitchell
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Jennifer Grove, Department of Commerce
- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture
- Eliseo (EJ) Juárez, Department of Natural Resources
- Emilie Litsinger, Puget Sound Partnership

- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation
- Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Dana Myers
- Rowena Pineda
- Sierra Red Bow
- Sierra Rotakhina

Guests and other participants:

- Elaine Harvey, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
- Edwin Alberto Hernandez Reto, Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association

I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum

Maria Batayola, Council Member, called the meeting to order. Rowena Pineda, Council Staff, facilitated roll call. At the time of the initial roll call, there were five voting members present, not meeting quorum (see table). Three members joined later, allowing the Council to meet quorum for action items (see attendance above).

15 Members / 1 Vacancy / 1 Leave of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola	Community Representative	Present
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Council Co-Chair)	Community Representative	Absent
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Council Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
Cristina González	Community Representative	Absent
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Leave of Absence
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	Present
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	Absent
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Absent

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Present
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Present
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	Absent
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	Present
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

II. Approval of Agenda by Council

Member Batayola facilitated adoption of the agenda.

Motion: The Council adopts the agenda.

No objections noted. **The Motion passed.**

III. Approval of March 20, 2025 Meeting Notes by Council

Member Batayola facilitated adoption of the March meeting notes.

Motion: The Council adopts the March 20, 2025 meeting notes with the edit as discussed during the meeting.

No objections noted. **The motion passed.**

IV. Public Comment

David Mendoza, Council Member, opened up the public comment period.

Anonymous Commenter shared information about a program where community members can attend ten weeks of training in environmental justice. They would like to expand garbage and recycling access in Burien, South Park, Highline, Des Moines, SeaTac, and Kent. They are also looking for more Spanish language information on local food programs (e.g., community gardens and public school meals). They would like to be connected to free or low-cost drug prevention programs for youth. They said that while websites are often accessible in Spanish, many community members do not have access to computers.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Member Mendoza noted that there was written public comment submitted and encouraged Council Members to review it.

V. Discussion and Possible Adoption: Council Work Plan

Tatiana Brown, Council Co-Chair, introduced the agenda item. She said the goal of this item is to discuss and possibly adopt a workplan that will take the Council through December 2026. Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, reviewed the process and discussions the Council has had about work planning. She walked Members through the draft workplan. She said staff met one-on-one to brief Members on the workplan prior to the meeting.

Motion: The Council adopts the proposed Work Plan and Timeline as presented at the May 9, 2025 meeting.

Motion/Second: Maria Batayola/Lua Pritchard. **The motion passed.**

A: Yes, I approve.

B: Yes, with reservations.

C: Not voting until we have further discussions.

D: I don't approve, but I won't block.

E: I block, have serious concerns.

F: I stand aside, recuse myself.

15 Members / 1 Vacancy / 0 Leaves of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Maria Batayola	Community Representative	A
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Council Co-Chair)	Community Representative	A
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson	Tribal Representative	Absent

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

(Council Co-Chair)		
Cristina González	Community Representative	Absent
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Leave of Absence
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	A
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	A
Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Absent
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	A
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	A
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	A
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	A
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

Running-Grass, Council Member, said Council Member engagement and attendance was more robust in the work planning process and attributed that to the time-bound tasks and concrete deliverable. He asked Members to sign up for a 4-6 week commitment to set up each workgroup for success with project level workplans and report on progress at the July meeting.

VI. Budget Briefing

Member Mendoza asked staff to provide a briefing on the 2025-2027 biennial budget and how the Council's budget recommendations were incorporated. Christy Curwick Hoff, Council Staff, referred members to the [crosswalk](#) outlining how the Council's budget recommendations were included in the budget as passed the legislature. She shared more detailed information about HEAL implementation funding.

VII. Standing with Frontline Tribes and Communities

Member Mendoza said the actions the federal government is taking are not laws, they are executive orders. Courts and other actors are pushing back strongly, including Washington

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

State's Attorney General. They are committed to ensuring the HEAL Act is protected and implemented. Sierra Rotakhina shared information about Executive Order 14260, Protecting American Energy from State Overreach. Co-Chair Brown said the Council wants to assure the community that the HEAL Act and the Climate Commitment Act are still being implemented.

VIII. EJ Council Community Connection

Member Batayola, introduced the agenda item. Elaine Harvey, Watershed Department Manager for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, gave her presentation.

IX. Presentation and Conversation with Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association (DVSA)

Member Batayola, introduced the agenda item. Edwin Alberto Hernandez Reto, Executive Director of the Duwamish Valley Sustainability Association (DVSA) shared a [presentation](#) about the Community Engagement Methodology Project in South Park. Member Brown said she attended the DVSA convenings and the work is super exciting.

X. Public Comment

No comments provided during this period.

XI. Appreciation and Adjournment

Co-Chair Brown thanked the presenters and congratulated the Council for adoption of the workplan. She said the next meeting is in July and she looks forward to hearing about the progress of the workgroups

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Draft Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council

July 24, 2025

Virtual ZOOM Platform

Due to limited staff capacity, Environmental Justice Council (Council) staff are working to streamline the Council meeting notes. The notes now include only very high-level points and the final decisions made along with voting records. The full meeting recordings can be found on the Council's website: [Environmental Justice Council Meetings | WaPortal.org](https://www.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJusticeCouncilMeetings). However, it is important that meeting notes are useful to the Council Members and the public. Please share feedback with Council staff on how we can make these notes most useful to you by emailing envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or by calling 360-584-4398.

Council Members present:

- Maria Batayola, joined at 4:00 pm
- Maria Blancas, departed at 5:30 pm
- Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair), departed at 4:40 pm
- Cristina González, departed at 5:00 pm
- David Mendoza, departed at 4:45 pm
- Esther Min, departed at 5:30 pm
- Running-Grass
- Raeshawna Ware

Council Members absent:

- Nichole Banegas
- Rosalinda Guillen (leave of absence)
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)
- Todd Mitchell
- Faaluaina Pritchard
- The Honorable Monica Tonasket
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Jennifer Grove, Department of Commerce
- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture

- Olgy Diaz, Department of Natural Resources
- Emilie Litsinger, Puget Sound Partnership
- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation
- Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Angie Ellis
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Dana Myers
- Sierra Red Bow
- Sierra Rotakhina

Guests and other participants:

- Marie Bravo, Latino Civic Alliance
- Rob Dengel, Department of Ecology
- Martha Hankins, Department of Ecology
- Abby Ruskey, Department of Ecology

I. Welcome and Roll Call for Quorum

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, called the meeting to order. She shared that Council Member Rosalinda Guillen sent a letter to the EJ Council letting members know that she does not intend to reapply for a second term. Raeshawna Ware, Council Member, noted that she was not going to seek reappointment to the EJ Council at the end of her term. She said she will serve until her seat is filled. Christy Hoff, Council Staff, facilitated roll call. At the time of the initial roll call, there were 7 voting members present, not meeting quorum (see table below).

14 Members / 1 Vacancy / 1 Leave of Absence / Current Quorum = 8		
The Honorable JJ Wilbur	Tribal Representative	Absent
Raeshawna Ware	Community Representative	Present
The Honorable Monica Tonasket	Tribal Representative	Absent
Running-Grass	EJ Practitioner	Present
Faaluaina Pritchard	Community Representative	Absent

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Todd Mitchell	Union Representative	Absent
Esther Min	EJ Practitioner	Present
David Mendoza	Representative At Large	Present
Rosalinda Guillen	Community Representative	Leave of Absence
Cristina González	Community Representative	Present
The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)	Tribal Representative	Absent
Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)	Community Representative	Present
Maria Blancas	Community Representative	Present
Maria Batayola	Community Representative	Absent
Nichole Banegas	Business Representative	Absent
Vacant	Tribal Representative	Vacant

II. Approval of Agenda by Council

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, facilitated adoption of the agenda. She noted that even though a quorum of Members was not present, the [Council Bylaws](#) allow them to adopt the agenda as it is an administrative matter.

Motion: The Council adopts the agenda.

No objections noted. **The Motion passed.**

III. Approval of May 9, 2025 Meeting Notes by Council

The EJ Council skipped this agenda item as they did not have a quorum of Members present.

IV. Public Comment

David Mendoza, Council Member, opened up the public comment period.

Stacy Valenzuela said that Kenmore is considering clearcutting 50 acres of Saint Edwards State Park to build housing units. They are opposed to the destruction of the natural ecosystem, noting the wildlife that live there and the damage that would be caused. They cited Washington State laws and regulations to protect the habitat. They also outlined past efforts to protect and clean up the area. They requested assistance and support from the EJ Council including information on

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

who they could connect with and next steps they could take. They stated that they had requested open public hearings on the project but were ignored. Member Mendoza asked for the name of the State Park and Stacey Valenzuela replied that it is Saint Edwards State Park, adding that Bastyr University is on part of the property.

V. Briefing: Climate Commitment Act Rulemaking for Improving Air Quality for Overburdened Communities

Member Mendoza, said an important role of the EJ Council is to provide consultation to the Department of Ecology (Ecology) and other HEAL Agencies. He said Ecology is developing rules for improving air quality for overburdened communities as a part of their responsibilities under the Climate Commitment Act (CCA). He said this agenda item provides an opportunity to ask questions and discuss if the EJ Council should continue to provide feedback.

Abby Ruskey, Department of Ecology, provided an introduction and Martha Hankins, Policy and Planning Manager, Department of Ecology Air Quality Program provided the content of the [presentation](#). She shared information about the CCA and the rulemaking timeline. She said the goal of rulemaking is stricter standards and reducing emissions of critical pollutants to reach air quality targets. The timeline would have the EJ Council provide review of preliminary and revised drafts in early 2026. Members asked questions and discussed participation in the program's community listening sessions, the source of health data used, and the impacts of federal funding and regulatory cutbacks. They also discussed how they wanted to engage on this topic in the future and agreed that they wanted to request another presentation after the draft rules are out in order to hear how the agency incorporated public comments.

The EJ Council took a break and returned at 4:42 pm.

Additional Council Member Comments Related to Agenda Item I.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Upon returning from break, Cristina Gonzalez, Council Member shared some additional comments related to the announcement during the first agenda item about Council Member Rosalinda Guillen's letter. Member Gonzalez said Council Member Rosalinda Guillen's letter of resignation recommended that the Department of Labor and Industries be required to comply with the HEAL Act. The letter also stressed the importance of updating the heat rules at the Department of Labor and Industries, the need for enhanced community engagement for the EJ Council, and the need for funding for Community Assemblies. Member Gonzalez commented on a number of issues, including deportations, family separation, unfair treatment in the workplace, exposures to air pollution, and wildfire smoke. She said communities are afraid to show up and voice their concerns. Member Batayola said that Council Member Guillen always reminded them to focus on engaging with communities who are hardest to reach. Sierra Red Bow, Council staff, said she looks forward to talking more about this with the Emergent Issues Workgroup, adding the need to be more agile and timely in their response.

VI. Updates and Feedback: Council Project Workgroups

Maria Batayola, Council Member, said that the Council convened three project workgroups, see memo on page 15 of the [meeting materials](#). The workgroups have been meeting to develop workplans. Running-Grass, Council Member, and Jonathan Chen, Council Staff, gave an update on the Community and Tribal Engagement Workgroup and its workplan to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Health, see meeting materials (link above) starting on page 21. They explained the need for an MOU and why the Community and Tribal Engagement Workgroup was taking this task on.

Member Running-Grass and Emilie Litzinger, Ex Officio Liaison for the Puget Sound Partnership, updated the Council on the work of the Environmental Justice Assessment (EJA) Guidance Workgroup, see meeting materials (link above) starting on page 27. He said their current focus is on developing guidance for the community engagement requirement of EJAs and he shared a [presentation](#).

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Staff, shared an update on the CCA Budget Recommendation Workgroup and the strategic direction the workgroup is providing to focus supplemental budget recommendations on technical corrections as well as sharing some values and principles to uphold with budget writers. See meeting materials (link above), starting on page 35.

Members then signed up to serve on the next phase of each workgroup and staff will follow up with Members who are not at the meeting.

VII. Discussion and Possible Adoption: Council Ethics Procedure and Form

Member Running-Grass referred Members to the draft procedure, see pages 38-58 of the [meeting materials](#). He said the Governance Committee developed the procedure in order to operationalize the Ethics requirements in the bylaws. Sierra Rotakhina reviewed the procedure, examples of conflicts of interest, and the attestation form.

She said the goal is to provide a briefing on the procedure at this meeting for possible adoption at the next meeting. Member Batayola said they use the social determinants to address health disparities and is wondering if the form needs to be edited to specify that affiliations related to work on social determinants should also be noted. Member Ware asked if the document will be public and Sierra said the attestation forms will be posted on the Council's website (as described in the Council's Bylaws).

VIII. EJ Council Community Connection

Sierra Red Bow, Council Staff, said the purpose is to learn from community-based organizations about environmental justice issues, concerns, and victories in their communities. She said they were scheduled to learn from two organizations, but they will need to reschedule one of the presentations.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Marie Bravo, Resource Development and Administrative Director, Latino Civic Alliance, said they had a partnership to support agricultural workers addressing climate related challenges affecting worker safety and wellbeing. She shared a presentation with information about climate risks to agricultural workers. The Latino Civic Alliance provides education, workshops, legal advocacy, and resources. They also distributed climate-related supplies. Marie and Council Members discussed how the EJ Council can cultivate the necessary trust with communities during this difficult time. Sierra Rotakhina thanked Marie, adding how it was important to see what they were able to do with the Worker Safety and Health Grant funding. She said this is important for the EJ Council to hear so they can amplify that with Legislators when budget writers are making decisions about which programs to fund and which to cut.

IX. Public Comment

Member Batayola, opened up the second public comment period.

Jean Mendoza said that what undocumented workers are currently experiencing is a human rights abuse. She is disappointed that more people do not speak up and say it is wrong. She provided comments about the Department of Ecology's rulemaking. She asked Members to think about the section that requires the agency to identify significant emitters in each community and to work with local air authorities. She said there is an air pollution control authority in Yakima that actively defends the dairy industry. She said there should be a section in the rules that provides consequences for air authorities that do not cooperate with the Department of Ecology, and ideally a citizen enforcement provision.

X. Appreciation and Adjournment

Member Batayola adjourned the meeting.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Draft Minutes of the Environmental Justice Council Gathering

September 25, 2025

Swinomish Casino & Lodge

This gathering was held in-person and there were no formal Council actions taken. This meeting did not have a virtual option, and the meeting was not recorded. Most of this in-person gathering was dedicated to roundtable discussions. Council staff are working on summaries of those roundtable discussions and are centering consent from roundtable participants for what is captured in those summaries. Once the roundtable summaries are completed, they will be posted on the Council's website. The following notes focus on capturing attendance and public comments provided during the formal public comment period.

Council Members present:

- Maria Batayola
- Tatiana Brown (Co-Chair)
- David Mendoza
- Faaluaina Pritchard
- Running-Grass

Council Members absent:

- Nichole Banegas
- Maria Blancas
- The Honorable Jarred-Michael Erickson (Co-Chair)
- Cristina González
- Esther Min
- Todd Mitchell
- Raeshawna Ware
- The Honorable JJ Wilbur

Agency Ex Officio Liaisons present:

- Jennifer Grove, Department of Commerce
- Lauren Jenks, Department of Health
- Nicole Johnson, Department of Agriculture

- Jerry Rivero, Department of Natural Resources
- Emilie Litsinger, Puget Sound Partnership
- Ahmer Nizam, Department of Transportation
- Millie Piazza, Department of Ecology

Council staff:

- Jonathan Chen
- Christy Curwick Hoff
- Dana Myers
- Sierra Red Bow
- Sierra Rotakhina

I. Welcoming from the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community

II. Opening of Public Meeting and Meaningful Introductions

Tatiana Brown, EJ Council Co-Chair and Sierra Red Bow, Council Staff, facilitated welcomes among EJ Council Members and tribal and community members in attendance.

III. Context for Afternoon Roundtables

Council Members and staff and Department of Ecology staff (for Group #2) provided brief overviews of the topics and goals for the afternoon roundtables so that attendees could decide which roundtable group(s) to join. The information provided on each group is outlined in the [presentation slides](#):

- Group #1: Council's Process for Emerging and Urgent Issues (Brainstorming) (see slides 5-6)
- Group #2: Emissions Intensive Trade Exposed Industries (EITE) and the local impacts of oil refineries and industrial gas plants (Briefing and Preliminary Input) (see the Department of Ecology's slides [here](#))

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

- Group #3: Local Environmental Justice Issues and Solutions (Listening Session) (see slides 9-10)
- Group #4: Uplifting Immigrants and Refugees (Brainstorming) (see slides 11-12)
- Group #5: Council's 2027-2029 Budget Recommendation Process (Co-Creating) (see slides 13-15)

IV. Public Comment

David Mendoza, Council Member, opened up the public comment period.

Julian Medina, Vamos Outdoors Project, which is a program for Latino youth in Whatcom and Skagit Counties. It is an outdoor community-building program for youth and families at no cost. This work sits at the intersection of environmental justice and community-building, creating belonging in outdoor spaces. There are many outcomes to programming, including connection and time spent in nature (which is shown to support healthy communities). Communities need basic needs met to engage in environmental justice. We need to bridge the gap between people and policy. We used funding from Commerce to facilitate environmental workshops to engage in housing, transportation and community design. While the state funding ended, the energy and commitment has not. Short timelines for funding and long-term community vision do not match. We have a responsibility to honor the trust that families place in us by ensuring their efforts to engage are not left hanging. We need to uphold the HEAL Act. Communities have the knowledge.

Morgan Brown, provided thanks to the Swinomish people and the land. They said they previously worked as the Coordinator for the Protect Mother Earth Community Engagement Group of the Swinomish Tribe and as an Indigenous science teacher in La Conner Public High School. The work that we're doing can't be of face value. It takes love to do this work and to break down the barriers. They encountered barriers working in the public school system advocating for students to have traditional ways to be on the land and be in relationship. They think about what it is like

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

to have an Indigenous world view and how that is important. It is important to look at who is at the table when they're making decisions and it is rooted in the land that we're on and that we try to make ourselves as available as we can for that guidance. This is not a face value space. There are leaders in this room that are in important roles in the State and there is also the heart. That gives hope. There is so much wisdom if we can create the platforms to be welcoming of those people. They love that at the center of the room, there is a space for children and that speaks to the underlying intention. We need to scoop in all of our children, not just some of them or certain groups. They all need to be educated in the classroom, and we need to help them to be back on the land. It is about relationships. If there is not a ground, then our children will not feel that in their heart. Always remember the children in the work. Acknowledge that Swinomish is the first Tribe to create a climate action adaptation plan. Also, a teaching from an elder mentor is the teaching of a value to lift each other up. It took everyone to lift the sky. It takes us all. They said they see that happening here. One or two years ago there was a spill that happened in front of the casino. Basically too many cars of the train were coming through and it was illegal and not a part of the agreement with the Tribe to have that many train cars linked up, and it led to the spill that affected the Tribe and we need to show up when that happens and spread information. There is a lot of potential for that here. We need each other in emergencies. Encourage people to look into the history of the March Point oil refinery. Orient yourself in the space. Remember our children.

Isaac Cavazos, community member, said they are from a migrant farmworker family with deep roots in Skagit County from Texas. They follow the harvest with their hands, backs, and lives. They pick strawberries, tulips, whatever. Without shade and less protection from chemicals. They didn't know what they were exposed to and are still feeling the effects and nothing has changed. Pesticides are still used, and farmworkers are not told the short-term and long-term effects. There are families living close to treated land. There are health effects and stories that don't make the news. Runoff leaches into water systems, streams, irrigation canals and drinking water

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

of communities including farmworker families. Harm is spread out to communities that didn't consent. Stronger regulations are needed. Mandatory disclosure of all effects. Regular water testing and protection in areas of pesticide runoff are needed, as are investments. We are people with deep roots. This is a matter of environmental justice and public health. Farmworkers are not disposable. Their lives and safety must be protected.

Xitlali Herrera, community member, said there is a movement to address CAFOs in Washington State. They've met with several groups as a community liaison. They want to see this topic elevated as an environmental justice issue. Research looks at EJ implications of these facilities. It's done in other states but not analyzed with an EJ lens in this state. There is a significant amount of unpermitted CAFO facilities in communities with limited English proficiency and low-income households and communities of color. In the Lower Yakima Valley and Royal City areas. Whatcom County has the second highest density of CAFOs. The overlap is further exacerbating pollution in these communities. There is no formal CAFO map accessible to the public. They have a fact sheet for CAFOs. Interested in GIS and looking at special components of EJ.

Rosalinda Guillen, C2C, said they grew up in Skagit County. Their hometown is LaConner. Somehow, we have to get the Department of Labor and Industries to opt into the HEAL Act. The agriculture industry is in rural Washington State mostly. The impact on the workers and the fact that farmworkers are majority people of color. Also, construction workers are impacted by climate change. The Department of Labor and Industries is the agency charged with the health and safety of workers. They have to respond to the climate crisis to protect the workers. For Labor and Industries to not opt into HEAL, leaves a gap of catching up to climate policies that are being implemented to protect everyone. Bringing this to the EJ Council and the new Governor to get Labor and Industries to opt into the HEAL Act. Data are necessary to look at the impacts of climate. Having Labor and Industries look at how they are keeping their data on worker protections, safety, and impacts of heat domes and climate impacts is important. Not having

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

these data has impacted the unions and advocates ability to implement policies and rules because the data is not there. Wants to urge the Council to continue to do that.

Tatiana Brown, Council Co-Chair, and Maria Batayola, Council Member, summarized what they heard in the testimony.

V. Two Rounds of Open Roundtable Discussions

Environmental Justice Council staff are finalizing the summaries of the roundtable discussions and these will be posted on the Council's website when they are ready.

VI. Closing Remarks – Open to Everyone

Council Member Batayola thanked attendees and adjourned the meeting.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: October 10, 2025

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Sierra Rotakhina, Environmental Justice Council Manager

Subject: Council Ethics Procedure and Form

Background and Summary

The Environmental Justice Council adopted its [bylaws](#) on March 8, 2024. Article V of the Bylaws, related to Council Ethics, outlines requirements for Council Member ethics training, disclosure of affiliations, and recusal from voting when a conflict of interest arises.

At its July meeting, the Council received a briefing on a proposed Ethics Procedure, Conflict of Interest Examples, and Ethics Attestation and Disclosure Form. Members had an opportunity to discuss and provide feedback on the materials.

Council Staff Recommended Actions

After a review of the materials, the Council may wish to consider adoption of the Ethics Procedure, Conflict of Interest Examples, and Ethics Attestation and Disclosure Form.

Proposed Motion: The Council adopts the Ethics Procedure, Conflict of Interest Examples, and Ethics Attestation and Disclosure Form as submitted on October 10, 2025, with any changes agreed to by the full Council.

Staff Contact

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, sierra.rotakhina@ejc.wa.gov, 360-584-4398

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

Environmental Justice Council – Ethics Procedure

October 10, 2025

This is a proposed final draft for review and discussion at the EJ Council's October 10, 2025 meeting – this has not been approved by the EJ Council

1. The Council Manager, who serves as the Environmental Justice (EJ) Council's designated Ethics Advisor, will connect with Council Members and Ex Officio Liaisons upon initial appointment and reappointment of each term, and annually thereafter, to ensure they have the following materials:
 - [Ethics in Public Service Act](#)
 - [Ethics in Public Service Act training](#)
 - [Advisory Opinion 96-09A](#)
 - EJ Council's Ethics Procedure (this document, once finalized by the Council), which includes examples of conflicts of interest and an attestation and disclosure form.
 - EJ Council's Bylaws
2. The Council Manager will make themselves available to meet with and answer any questions the Members and Ex Officio Liaisons may have about the materials.
3. The Council Manager will collect the completed attestation and disclosure form (see page 5) from Members and Ex Officio Liaisons, with a goal of completion and posting within 30 days of initial appointment and reappointment of each term, and annually thereafter. Council Members should update the attestation and disclosure form within 30 days of changes to their affiliations.
4. Per the bylaws, the Council Manager will post Members' affiliations to the Council's website.

5. Per the bylaws, at any time a conflict of interest arises, Members and Ex Officio Liaisons will disclose the conflict to the Council and the public and recuse themselves from discussing and voting on those matters.
6. Per the bylaws, at any time Members and Ex Officio Liaisons are communicating with each other or other partners, they will indicate whether they are doing so on behalf of the Council, as an individual Council Member or Ex Officio Liaison, or as a representative of another organization or entity.

DRAFT

Environmental Justice Council – Conflict of Interest Examples

As state officers and employees, Council Members, Ex Officio Liaisons, and Council staff must comply with chapter 42.52 RCW, the Ethics in Public Service Act. Per its bylaws, the Council will also comply with the model rules approved by the Executive Ethics Board in Advisory Opinion 96-09A, which require Members to disclose conflicts of interest (at any time a conflict arises) and recuse themselves from discussing and voting on those matters.

RCW 42.52.020 indicates that “no state officer or state employee may have an interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in a business or transaction or professional activity, or incur an obligation of any nature, that is in conflict with the proper discharge of the state officer's or state employee's official duties.”

Kinds of examples of conflicts of interest can include direct or indirect financial relationships, including employment relationships between Council Members and organizations with interest in Council decisions and associations with policy-driven entities that have a substantive interest in Council decisions. The Council encourages Members to interpret “interests” broadly and lean toward transparency with each other and the public in disclosing affiliations and potential conflicts of interest.

The following list includes possible examples of conflicts of interest that may arise for Council Members and Ex Officio Liaisons. The Council intends this to be a living document and will add examples as they arise. These are examples only, and this is not a comprehensive list of all types of conflicts of interest that could arise.

- At its September 28, 2023 meeting, the Council was voting on its 2024 budget recommendations. One of the recommendations under consideration that was submitted by an external agency and community partners would pass \$3,000,000 through to the Peoples Economy Lab, Front and Centered, and Statewide Poverty Action Network to

pilot a statewide network of community assemblies. Council Member Aurora Martin who serves as the Executive Director of Front and Centered recused herself from the discussion and vote on that budget recommendation.

- The Department of Social and Health Services is hiring a consultant to perform an equity review of a new program and asks a Council Member to serve on the review panel that will select the consultant. The Council Member occasionally performs work as a subcontractor for one of the consulting firms that has applied for the contract. Recognizing that they may be asked to work on the contract if their firm is selected, the Member declines to serve on the review panel.
- A Council Member serves on a review panel for a grant program. The agency administering the grant selects a community-based organization that the Member is not affiliated with, though the Member is acquainted with the organization's Director. Later the Director reaches out to the Member to share they received the grant and offers to take the Member out for dinner as a thank you. The Member recognizes that may be perceived as a conflict of interest and declines the offer.
- A Council Member is offered a paid consulting opportunity with a HEAL Act agency related to the agency's implementation of the HEAL Act. The Member recognizes that, while they may be receiving the offer based on their reputation even outside of the Council as an expert in environmental justice, this could create a perception of using their position as a Council Member to secure work for their consulting business, which is an ethical violation-
-so the Member declines the offer.

Environmental Justice Council – Ethics Attestation and Disclosure Form

Name:

Date:

Do you attest that you have reviewed the [Ethics in Public Service Act training](#) and [Advisory Opinion 96-09A](#)?

YES NO

Do you attest that you have reviewed the examples of conflicts of interest?

YES NO

List all of your paid or volunteer affiliations that are related to the Environmental Justice Council’s scope of work:

Affiliation	Are you compensated (salary, stipend, hourly, contract, etc.)?*
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
*RCW 42.52.010 defines “compensation” as “anything of economic value, however designated, that is paid, loaned, granted, or transferred, or to be paid, loaned, granted, or transferred for, or in consideration of, personal services to any person.”	

Environmental Justice Council

Date: October 10, 2025

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Sierra Rotakhina, Environmental Justice Council Manager

Subject: Budget Values and Principles

Background and Summary

The Environmental Justice Council has authority under RCW 70A.65.040 to adopt budget recommendations for how Climate Commitment Act revenue should be spent. During the upcoming 2026 legislative session, the Legislature will adopt a supplemental budget. Due to the ongoing state budget shortfall and increased cuts in funding from the federal government, the EJ Council's Budget Recommendation Workgroup has recommended that the EJ Council not make recommendations for new spending this year. Instead, the Budget Recommendation Workgroup has recommended that the Council focus on: (1) needed technical corrections (none of which have been identified by the EJ Council) and (2) a set of values and principles that the Governor and Legislature could consider when developing the supplemental budget. The full Council discussed and informally supported this approach and the Workgroup's workplan at the July 24, 2025 Council meeting.

During today's meeting, the EJ Council will have an opportunity to review, discuss, and consider adoption of Budget Values and Principles that were drafted by the EJ Council's Budget Recommendation Workgroup.

Council Staff Recommended Actions

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

After review and discussion, the Council may wish to consider adoption of the Budget Values and Principles.

Proposed Motion: The Council adopts the "Budget Values and Principles for the Governor and Legislature to Inform 2026 State Budget Development" as submitted on October 10, 2025, with any changes agreed to by the full Council.

The Council directs staff to submit the values and principles to the appropriate committees of the Legislature, the Governor, and the Office of Financial Management to inform the development of the 2026 supplemental budget.

The Council will follow its procedure for "[Advocating for the Council's Budget Recommendations](#)" adopted by the full Council on November 21, 2024 when advocating for these budget values and principles.

Staff Contact

Sierra Rotakhina, Council Manager, sierra.rotakhina@ejc.wa.gov, 360-584-4398

Environmental Justice Council

Budget Values and Principles for the Governor and Legislature to Inform 2026 State Budget Development

For Discussion at October 10, 2025 Environmental Justice Council Meeting

- **Investing in Tribes and Communities:** While the state budget must reflect the legal mandates under [RCW 70A.65.230](#) and provide transparency in how it does so, to address health disparities the state should **strive to exceed the minimum requirements** and set a goal of investing 45% of Climate Commitment Act (CCA) funding in ways that benefit overburdened communities and 20% toward programs supported by Tribes. Additionally, the Council is concerned that the state did not meet its legal obligation in the 2023-2025 biennial budgets to ensure a minimum of 10% of CCA investments go toward projects supported by a tribal resolution (as reported by the [Office of Financial Management](#) and the [Department of Ecology](#)). [Analyses of draft versions](#) of the 2025-2027 budgets also found that this biennium's budgets may fall short of the 10% requirement.
- **Transportation Focused on Community Connectivity and Health Equity:** CCA investments are supporting multimodal transportation opportunities. These investments are critical to connecting resources, services, and opportunities in the hope of producing environmental justice benefits and improving social determinants of health for communities. Transportation is a critical physical connector for communities—therefore Tribes, overburdened communities, and vulnerable populations should be meaningfully engaged in planning and implementation.
- **Reducing Gaps in Access to Services:** Funding should fill gaps in access to transportation, health service and social service programming, etc. rather than perpetuating the problem of underserving Tribes and overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.
- **No Added Harm:** Decision-makers should be mindful of potential unintended environmental justice consequences when funding programs through the CCA or any other accounts. Unintended consequences can be identified with information from Tribes and communities, equity and environmental justice questions in agency decision-packages, and the Environmental Health Disparities Map.

- **Sustaining Agents of Change:** Transformational change takes years of time and investment. During this time of transformational change to co-governance, it is critical that we have dedicated expert staff. The goal is to transform agencies under the HEAL Act. Implementation of the HEAL Act is foundational to promoting environmental justice in Washington State; and therefore, HEAL implementation funding should be **sustainable, have dedicated staffing, and have appropriate funding levels.**
 - **Sustainable** funding means that funding duration should be based on need and should be ongoing. Community and tribal capacity-building take time and need sustainable funding for the intent to match the end goal. Similarly, state agency capacity-building and transformation and responsiveness to Tribes and communities requires time to build.
 - **Focused staffing** means that in addition to increasing environmental justice and equity knowledge/capacity for all state agency staff, agencies need dedicated staff with expertise leading the implementation of environmental justice, equity, and HEAL work.
 - **Appropriate** level of funding means that all HEAL agencies should have the basic resources to meet their HEAL obligations, and agencies with greater HEAL responsibilities should have more staff and resources to meet their HEAL obligations under [chapter 70A.02 RCW](#), including conducting Environmental Justice Assessments of significant agency actions, consulting with Tribes, and ensuring meaningful community engagement and public participation into agency decision-making.
- **Leveraging Resources:** Given the budget shortfall, to leverage Climate Commitment Act funding, expenditures should fund programs, activities, and projects that maximize benefits by ensuring funded work meets multiple goals outlined in the CCA. As an example, the HEAL Tribal and Community capacity grants funded through the Department of Health provided direct and meaningful benefits to Tribes and communities (one goal of the CCA) **AND** funded projects to meet **additional** CCA goals such as reducing environmental health disparities (for example one project piloted approaches to creating life-saving heat refuge during extreme heat events) or reducing greenhouse gas emissions (for example another project raised awareness about regional alternatives to replace fossil fuel-based chemical fertilizers).
- **HEAL & CCA Allocation Clarity:** When directing Climate Commitment Act funding to overburdened communities and Tribes, the Governor and Legislature should clearly specify whether the total appropriation or a certain percentage is meant for overburdened communities and Tribes.
- **Sustaining Equity Capacity:** When proposing across the board cuts, equity and parity should be considered. For example, larger agencies can more easily absorb a

percentage cut. A smaller agency is less likely to have space in its budget to absorb cuts; and therefore, larger reductions to staffing will likely need to be made. As another example, agencies that have been impacted greatly by federal funding cuts are less able to absorb across the board state funding cuts. Adverse impacts of state agency funding cuts on Tribes and overburdened communities should also be heavily weighted in decision-making. A criterion was previously used by the Governor and Legislature to make reductions to recently-funded programs first. This approach has and will disproportionately impact environmental justice and equity programming, as well as direct investments in Tribes and communities, because the state has more substantially invested in these programs since the passage of the HEAL Act and the CCA in 2021. This means that a large proportion of these important programs and direct investments are recently funded.

- **Scientific and Technical Resources: Science and technical resources build tribal and community capacity to inform their health, environmental and climate advocacy, harm prevention and mitigation design, and grant writing. These resources are critical to meet the goals of the HEAL Act and the CCA.**

Environmental Justice Council

Legislative Session Procedure

Adopted November 21, 2024

1. Purpose and Background

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to guide Environmental Justice Council (Council) Members and Council staff in their communications with the Governor's Office, Legislature, and others regarding: (1) advocating for inclusion of the Council's budget recommendations in the final adopted budget and (2) communicating the Council's policy positions during legislative session.

Background:

The Healthy Environmental for All (HEAL) Act, [RCW 70A.02.110](#), and the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), [RCW 70A.65.040](#), give the Council statutory authority and direction to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature in several areas:

- The Council may, in consultation with the HEAL Interagency Work Group, make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve agency compliance with the HEAL Act;
- The Council may make recommendations for amendments to the HEAL Act, proposed laws, or other existing laws to promote environmental justice;
- The Council may recommend funding strategies and allocations to build capacity in vulnerable populations and overburdened communities to address environmental injustices;

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the development and implementation of the cap and invest program established in the CCA (RCW 70A.65.060 through 70A.65.210); and
- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the programs funded by the CCA accounts.

2. Procedure

2.1 Advocating for the Council's Budget Recommendations:

- The Council directs staff to advocate for the Council's budget recommendations to the Governor's Office, the Office of Financial Management, and the Legislature.
- Any Council Member who wishes to advocate for the Council's budget recommendations **on behalf of** the Council must inform and coordinate with the Council Executive Committee first. Council Members must clearly disclose that they are representing the Council (consistent with Article V of the Council's bylaws), and they must be familiar with and stick to sharing the information in the Council's formally adopted recommendations.
- Council Members may also represent their own or any other organization or affiliation in support of the Council's budget recommendations. In these cases, Council Members must clearly disclose to legislators, the Governor's Office, and agency staff that they are not representing the Council but rather their own or any other organization or affiliation (consistent with Article V of the Council's bylaws). Council Members should inform the Council Executive Committee of their intent to advocate for Council priorities.
- Any Council Member who receives questions from the Governor's Office, Office of Financial Management, legislators, or legislative staff about the Council's budget recommendations may respond, using the information in the Council's formally adopted 2025 budget recommendations and adopted Policy Statement and Procedure as a guide. Council Members who do provide responses to questions should inform Council staff for

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

tracking and coordination purposes. Council Members may also refer the inquiry to staff for a response. Where there is no clear response, the Council Member must refer the question to the staff who will share it with the Council Executive Committee for a solution.

- Council staff will set up meetings with legislators serving on relevant policy and budget committees to share the Council’s budget recommendations. In doing so, staff will coordinate and include Council Members in those meetings as Member interest, expertise, and availability permits. Council Members and staff who participate in meetings with legislators must file required lobbying reports with the Public Disclosure Commission.

2.2 Sharing the Council’s Formally Adopted Policy Positions:

- As Council staff identify bills that have a specific impact to any of the Council’s formally adopted policy positions, they will add them to the tracking list and analyze the bill to determine if Council action is warranted.
- The Council directs members of the Executive Committee to relay the Council’s positions in letters to legislative committees, through written or verbal testimony during public hearings, and/or through meetings with legislators or the Governor’s Office. As needed, Members of the Executive Committee may delegate to other Council Members the responsibility to relay the Council’s positions. Council staff will support the Executive Committee and Council Members in relaying the Council’s positions as needed.

2.3 Routine Staff Activities During Session:

- Council staff will monitor pre-filed bills and bill introductions to identify bills that affect the Council’s membership, responsibilities, or authority or that are directly related to any of the Council’s adopted policy positions.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

- Council staff will review budget bills as they are introduced and amended and identify where Council recommendations are included and where gaps remain.
- Council staff will track the progress of any relevant bills as they move through session.
- Council staff will maintain a log of any legislative inquiries to ensure timely response is provided.
- Council staff will complete fiscal notes when assigned. Staff will center environmental justice and equity when estimating costs (e.g., costs for interpretation and translation, Tribal and community engagement and co-creation, community stipends, etc.).
- Council staff will share regular legislative updates to the full Council throughout session by email and during Council meetings, and the legislative updates will include information on when Council Members coordinate with the Executive Committee to advocate for the Council's budget recommendations and/or policy positions as outlined above.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: October 10, 2025

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Jonathan Chen, Climate Justice Advisor

Subject: Input on Emissions-Intensive and Trade-Exposed industries (EITEs)

Background and Summary

EITEs

The Climate Commitment Act (CCA) defines Emissions-Intensive and Trade-Exposed industries (EITEs), as large manufacturers in Washington State—like those making steel, cement, paper, food and fuel—that use a lot of energy and face strong competition from outside the state or country. Because these businesses produce a lot of emissions but are also important for the state economy, the Legislature gave them free carbon emission allowances until 2034 to help them stay in the state and avoid job losses. However, the CCA did not set the allowance cost structure for EITEs from 2035-2050 and gives the Legislature until December 1, 2027, to make that policy decision. To help the Legislature make an informed decision, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) is drafting a Legislative report with recommendations for how to manage allowances for EITEs from 2035 to 2050.

Council Responsibility

Under RCW 70A.65.040, the Environmental Justice Council (Council) must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor in the development of the CCA, including the designation of EITEs. As a result, Ecology is requesting Council input on

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

their draft Legislative report. During today’s meeting, Ecology will answer questions from the Council about EITEs and receive any input on their draft Legislative report.

The Council held a Gathering on September 25, 2025 at the Swinomish Lodge and Casino to engage tribal and community members on local environmental justice issues. There, Council staff and Council Member Mendoza co-facilitated two roundtable discussions on EITEs.

In [Appendix A](#), the feedback from both discussions is organized into three core concerns and four community recommendations.

[Appendix B](#) is a transcription of the notes from both discussions. The roundtable participants consented to these notes being captured and shared on the Council's website.

Council Staff Recommended Actions

After a review of the materials and discussion, the Council may wish to consider adopting a motion that Ecology include the community recommendations from the September 25, 2025 Environmental Justice Council Gathering EITEs Roundtable Discussions ([Appendix A](#)) in their Legislative report.

Proposed Motion: The Council recommends Ecology include the community recommendations from the September 25, 2025 Environmental Justice Council Gathering EITEs Roundtable Discussions in their Legislative report as submitted on October 10, 2025.

The Council directs staff to submit the community recommendations from the September 25, 2025 Environmental Justice Council Gathering EITEs Roundtable Discussions to Ecology to inform their development of recommendations for EITEs to the Legislature.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

The Council may also wish to consider providing recommendations today to Ecology for how to conduct more robust community engagement for EITEs to connect with overburdened communities directly impacted by EITEs.

Staff Contact

Jonathan Chen, Climate Justice Advisor, Jonathan.Chen@ejc.wa.gov, 564.669.3837

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

Appendix A: Community Feedback from September 25, 2025 EJ Council Gathering

Core Concerns Raised by Community

1. EITs Harm Local Communities and Provide Few Benefits for Them

- a. Very few residents of the Duwamish Valley (only 2%) are employed by nearby EITs or other industries. So, the potential loss of jobs due to paying for allowances does not impact them, but the pollution still does.
- b. Ashgrove Cement and Nucor Steel are two EITs in the Duwamish Valley that are seen as bad neighbors because they are not addressing the environmental health concerns of the community.
- c. Some of these industries are sometimes falsely branded as “green” (e.g., liquid natural gas projects), but they still have harmful impacts on the environment and to Tribes.

2. EITs Create Environmental and Health Inequities

- a. Pollution from EITs in the Duwamish Valley is linked to serious health issues, such as asthma hospitalization rates that are 2.7x higher than in wealthier, whiter parts of Seattle.
- b. The cost of cumulative negative health impacts from EITs pollution needs to be factored into the economic calculation, not just the cost of “leakage.”

3. EITs Cost/Benefit Analysis is Incomplete

- a. The “economic bottom line” comes at the expense of:

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

- i. Human health and lives
 - ii. Environmental protection
 - iii. Community well-being
- b. Human life and health should outweigh financial interests.
- c. Protecting environmental health is more important than supporting polluting businesses.
- d. Businesses often get a louder voice than communities.

Community Recommendations

1. Reduce Number of Free Allowances for EITEs

- a. Include the full environmental health costs, especially for overburdened communities and Tribes, when evaluating how to give allowances to EITEs.
- b. Do not extend or expand the number of free allowances allocated to EITEs.
- c. Do not extend or expand the number of industries categorized as EITEs.

2. Invest in Clean Technology and Green Jobs

- a. Regulations can *create* new industries and jobs, especially in clean energy.
- b. Incentivize businesses to invest in local job creation, clean technology, and pollution reduction.

3. Increase Community Engagement

- a. The most impacted communities need to be engaged and informed about EITEs.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

- i. Ecology should host in-person community engagement events at various EITEs locations representing different manufacturing industries to get more input on their impacts.
- ii. Take Legislators on tours of EITEs sites and speak with the communities impacted by them, especially the Legislators representing districts with EITEs.

4. Review EITE Policies Regularly

- a. EITE allowance policy should be regularly evaluated and updated.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

Appendix B: Transcribed notes from Roundtable

Discussions

Notes from the 1st Roundtable

- Local communities are not employed by EITEs (only 2% of the population in Duwamish Valley are employed at the factories in that area)
 - Are not seeing the economic benefits
 - Ashgrove Cement Company + Nucor Steel Company
 - Bad neighbors to the Duwamish Valley
- Child asthma hospitalization rates 2.7x higher than city (Seattle) white, wealthier parts of Seattle
- Do not extend the program/timeline
 - Do not expand the program/timeline
- Regulations can create new jobs + new industries
- Incentivize investment for local economic benefit through the CCA
- Engage with the most-impacted people/groups
 - Review definitions of "stakeholders"¹
 - Community vs businesses
- Calculate the monetary value of the health impacts of the no-cost allowances and excess emissions and use that information to evaluate the cost of these allowances in comparison with the cost of not providing these allowances
- Legislators take tours of EITEs sites and speak with the communities impacted by them.

¹ We included the term "stakeholders" as it was used by one of the roundtable participants. However, the Council does not endorse this term as it has negative connotations to many Native Peoples.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

Themes identified by participants from the 1st Roundtable

1. Human life (inequities who is experiencing) vs "bottom line"
2. Environment vs "bottom line"
3. Businesses vs. community ("stakeholders")
4. Pollution vs. "economic growth"

Notes from the 2nd Roundtable

- These types of industries sometimes get branded as "green energy" despite harmful impacts
 - Mainly concerned with environmental & tribal impacts of "green energy" technologies like liquified natural gas
- Avoiding pollution does have economic benefits
 - Suggest legislators to encourage industries to move/push in that direction (incentives)
- Local EITs are highly sought jobs
 - Although in plain sight, they're not seen as polluting industries
 - Have tight relationships w/ community orgs/schools, so what they do is excusable
 - Local community is "subconsciously" aware of pollution
 - Only certain communities fish in Fidalgo Bay, primarily immigrant vs other fishing areas
- Policies should be regularly reviewed & updated

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398.

TTY users can dial 711.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: October 10, 2025

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Christy Hoff, Council Staff

Subject: 2026 Legislative Session Policy Statement

Background and Summary

The Environmental Justice Council has made it a practice to adopt a Legislative Policy Statement prior to the start of each legislative session. The Legislative Policy Statement documents official Council positions on issues, allowing it to take a position on bills in a timely fashion during session.

In preparation for today's meeting, the Council's 2025 Legislative Policy Statement was sent to Council Members on July 30, 2025 and Members were asked to review and provide input into an updated draft for 2026. The track changes shown in the draft on [page 53](#) show suggested changes to the 2025 statement. At today's meeting, the Council will have an opportunity to review and discuss the draft 2026 Legislative Session Policy Statement. Suggested edits received at today's meeting will be incorporated into an updated draft for the Council to review and consider adopting at the December Council meeting.

Staff Contact

Christy Hoff, Policy Advisor, christy.hoff@ejc.wa.gov, 360-688-4699.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

Environmental Justice Council

2025-2026 Legislative Session Policy Statement

Adopted November 21, 2024

1. Purpose and Background

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy statement is to document the Environmental Justice Council's (Council) policy positions ahead of the [2025-2026](#) Legislative session. This document will guide Council members and staff in determining whether the Council may want to take a position on legislation this session.

Background:

The Healthy Environmental for All (HEAL) Act, [RCW 70A.02.110](#), and the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), [RCW 70A.65.040](#), give the Council statutory authority and direction to make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature in several areas:

- The Council may, in consultation with the HEAL Interagency Work Group, make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature on ways to improve agency compliance with the HEAL Act;
- The Council may make recommendations for amendments to the HEAL Act, proposed laws, or other existing laws to promote environmental justice;
- The Council may recommend funding strategies and allocations to build capacity in vulnerable populations and overburdened communities to address environmental injustices;

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the development and implementation of the cap and invest program established in the CCA (RCW 70A.65.060 through 70A.65.210); and
- The Council must provide recommendations to the Legislature, agencies, and the Governor on the programs funded by the CCA accounts.

2. Policy Positions

2.1 The Council opposes policies that would alter the Council’s membership, duties, and/or authority in ways that are counter to the intent of the HEAL Act or would significantly disrupt or delay the Council’s work.

- Note: The Council’s positions on alignment with the HEAL Act regarding topics like community engagement and environmental justice assessments can be extrapolated from official Council letters or position statements.

2.2 The Council supports policies that would direct the Department of Labor and Industries, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council to comply with [environmental justice requirements](#) in the HEAL Act, RCW 70A.02.

~~**2.3** The Council supports policies that both align with the intent of the HEAL Act and, where relevant, the intent of the CCA to promote environmental justice AND significantly align with the intent of, or would be necessary to implement, any of the 2025 budget recommendations formally adopted by the Council.~~

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

2.42.3 The Council requests that it (the Council) only be added to legislation or budget proposals when the inclusion is directly related to the HEAL Act or CCA and when doing so aligns with the Council's capacity, authority, and structure as an advisory body of volunteer community members. The Council believes that legislative and budgetary proposals should center free, prior, and informed consent from Federally Recognized Tribes; community engagement; co-governance; and co-design. Therefore, the Council opposes being included in any legislation or budgetary proposals when the sole reason for doing so would be for the Council to serve as a proxy for meaningful Tribal Government Consultation and community engagement.

2.52.4 The Council has adopted a [statement](#) uplifting Tribal Sovereignty; Self Determination; and Free, Prior, and Informed Consent. The Council supports policies that are supported by Tribes that affirm sovereignty and self-determination and that would codify the practice of free, prior, and informed consent into state law.

2.62.5 The Council supports policies that would ensure diverse Tribal representation, including but not limited to at least one representative from both Eastern and Western Washington and representatives of overburdened communities, in the membership of the Interagency Clean Energy Siting Coordinating Council created by [chapter 43.394 RCW](#).

2.72.6 The Council supports policies that would ensure diverse Tribal representation, including but not limited to at least one representative from both Eastern and Western Washington to the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council created by [chapter 80.50 RCW](#).

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

2.7 The Council supports HB 1262/SB 5228, Updating the Governor’s Interagency Coordinating Council on Health Disparities. The Health Disparities Council was established in 2006 as an advisory body charged with making recommendations to eliminate health disparities. During the 2025 legislative session, the Health Disparities Council’s request legislation was introduced (HB 1262/SB 5228) to modernize its authorizing statute in alignment with community priorities. The EJ Council supports the Health Disparities Council’s efforts to update its statute, and it will look to and follow the Health Disparities Council’s positions on the legislation moving forward.

3. Executive Committee Authority

3.1 The Council authorizes the Executive Committee to determine whether and how the Council will take a position on legislation (in its original form and as it is amended through session) where it aligns with the policy statements above. The Council authorizes the Executive Committee to offer suggestions for amendments to center environmental justice principles when weighing in on legislation.

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: October 10, 2025

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Sierra Rotakhina, Environmental Justice Council Manager

Subject: Community Connection

Background:

Each Council meeting includes time on the agenda for “Community Connections.” Today we welcome Judith Barba Perez and Jasmine Alik, staff for the [Health Disparities Council](#), to share information about the Health Disparities Council and their work.

There are many opportunities for collaboration between the Environmental Justice Council and the Health Disparities Council, and today’s agenda item provides an opportunity to have a conversation about how the two Councils are working in solidarity.

Staff Contact:

Sierra Red Bow, Council Community and Tribal Engagement Supervisor,
Sierra.RedBow@ejc.wa.gov, 564-669-4791

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

Environmental Justice Council

Date: August 19, 2025

To: Environmental Justice Council Members

From: Dana Myers, Environmental Justice Advisor, HEAL Interagency Workgroup

Subject: Summary of HEAL covered agencies' updates to the Environmental Justice Council

Background and Summary

As required by [RCW 70A.02.090](#), the HEAL Act, by September 1st of each year, each covered agency must annually update the Environmental Justice Council on the development and implementation of environmental justice in agency strategic plans, budgets and funding, community engagement, and environmental justice assessments.

The annual update from the covered agencies on HEAL implementation is contained in the content (slide deck) that follows on [page 60](#). The slides are organized to highlight each agency's effort to implement community engagement plan updates, strategic plan updates, stories of agency environmental justice implementation and impacts, obstacles and opportunities, and HEAL Interagency Workgroup wins. The budgets and funding and environmental justice assessment information are available on the OFM website [HEAL Act dashboards | Office of Financial Management](#).

A letter from the Attorney General's Office (a HEAL opt-in agency) detailing its environmental justice activities over the past year is available on [page 111](#).

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

In 2025, the Environmental Justice Council's Executive Committee and Environmental Justice Council staff recommended that the due date for the HEAL agencies budget and funding annual update to the Environmental Justice Council be delayed to October 15th for the following reasons:

- The budget and funding data will be posted on the HEAL dashboard by October 15 because the closure of the state fiscal year occurs on September 6 and agencies are given until September 18 to submit their budget and funding data to the Office of Financial Management (OFM).
- The HEAL dashboard will have information on agencies' strategic plans and environmental justice assessments but will be incomplete until the posting of the budget and funding data on October 15th.

The HEAL Act dashboards contain information on agencies' strategic plans, environmental justice assessments, and budget and funding: [HEAL Act dashboards | Office of Financial Management \(wa.gov\)](#).

Staff Contact

Dana Myers, Environmental Justice Advisor, dana.myers@ejc.wa.gov, 564-233-5286

To request this document in an alternate format or a different language, please contact Sierra Rotakhina in any language, at envjustice@ejc.wa.gov or 360-584-4398. TTY users can dial 711.

HEAL Act Agency Annual Report to the Environmental Justice Council

Fall 2025



Annual Report Content

Reporting Period:
October 2024- September 2025

Each HEAL Agency will share:

- Updates to Community Engagement and Implementation Plans
- Stories of Environmental Justice Implementation and Impacts
- Obstacles and Opportunities

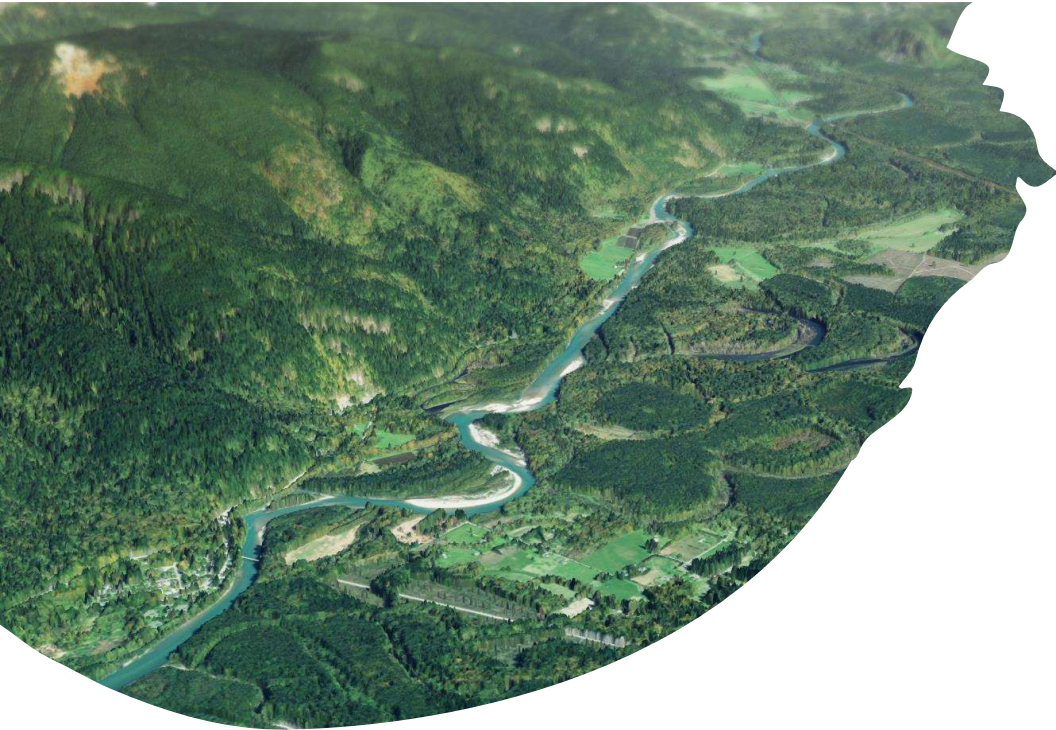
Note that this year the HEAL Agencies are only including information in this report to the Environmental Justice Council that is not available in the annual reporting to [OFM.HEAL Act dashboards](#) | [Office of Financial Management](#)



Photo credit: WA ECY



Community Engagement Plan Updates



Environmental Justice Council Input for Community Engagement Plans

Community Engagement Values and Guidance Adopted by the Environmental Justice Council on August 25, 2023 ([link to document](#))



Agencies are incorporating this guidance in their community engagement plans and work. The following slides show examples of plan implementation and adaptive management.

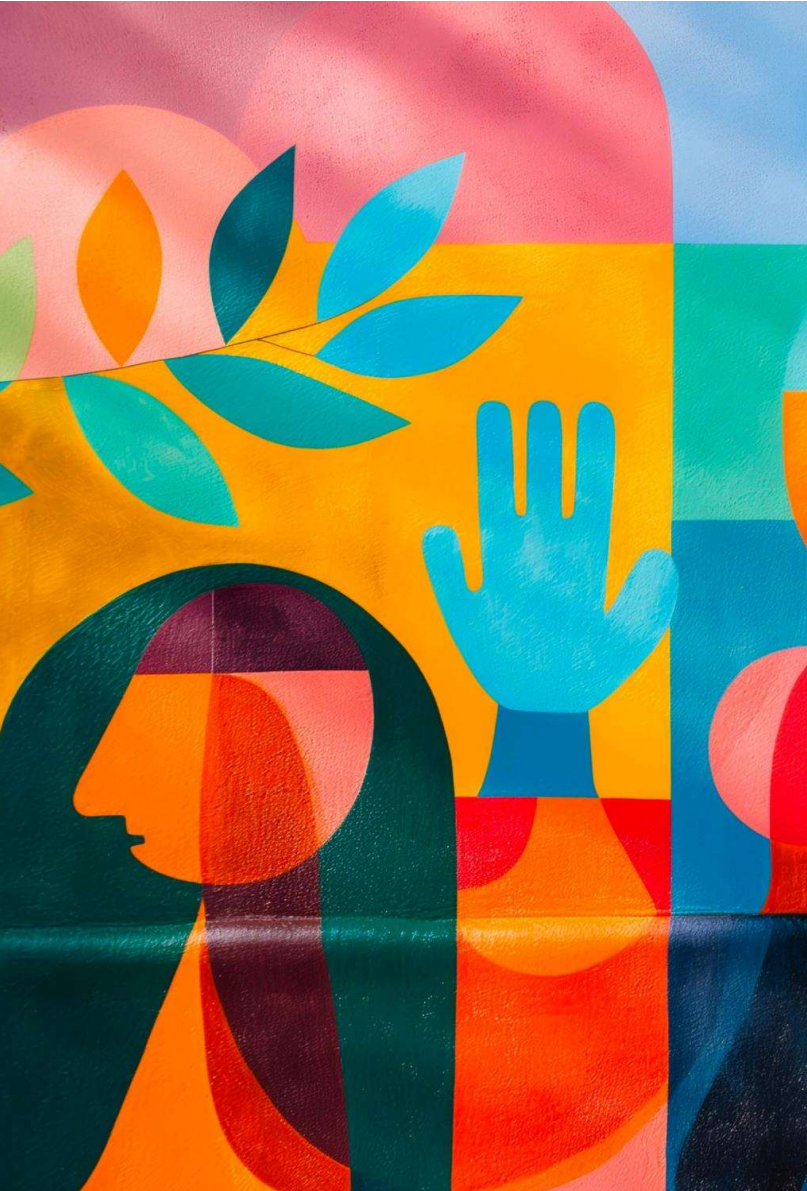


Department of Commerce

"Thank you for finally having something in our language, directly, without interpretation." - monolingual Spanish participant

Community involvement on EJAs!

- Since April 2024, Commerce has hosted six tribal briefings on EJAs with 103 tribal leaders, staff, and representatives
- Piloted a new model of quarterly Community Involvement Sessions in March – July 2025. Community members learned about current EJ Assessments, joined breakout groups for further discussion, and gave direct feedback to program managers about how these sessions could benefit or harm their communities. Feedback was integrated into the agency action and the EJ Assessment.
- Two in English, two in monolingual Spanish, two trilingual with English, Spanish, ASL (6 sessions total)



Department of Commerce

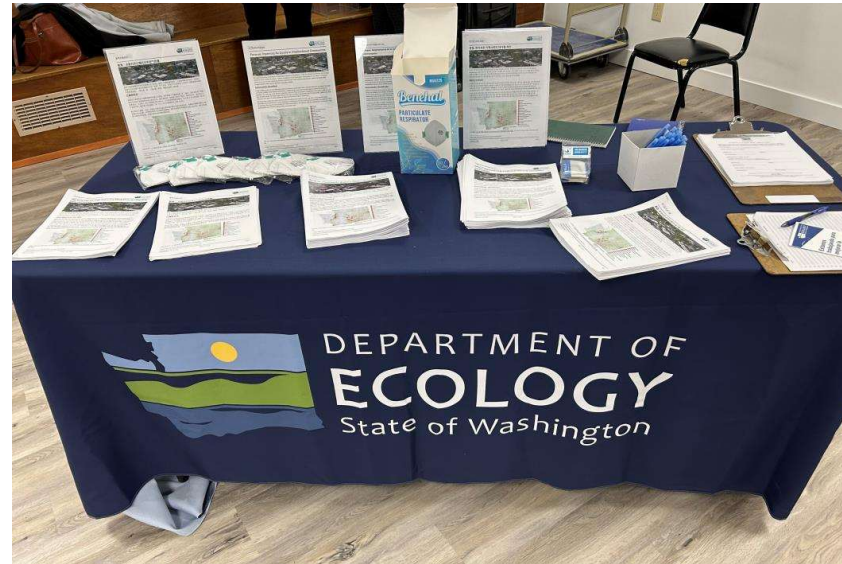
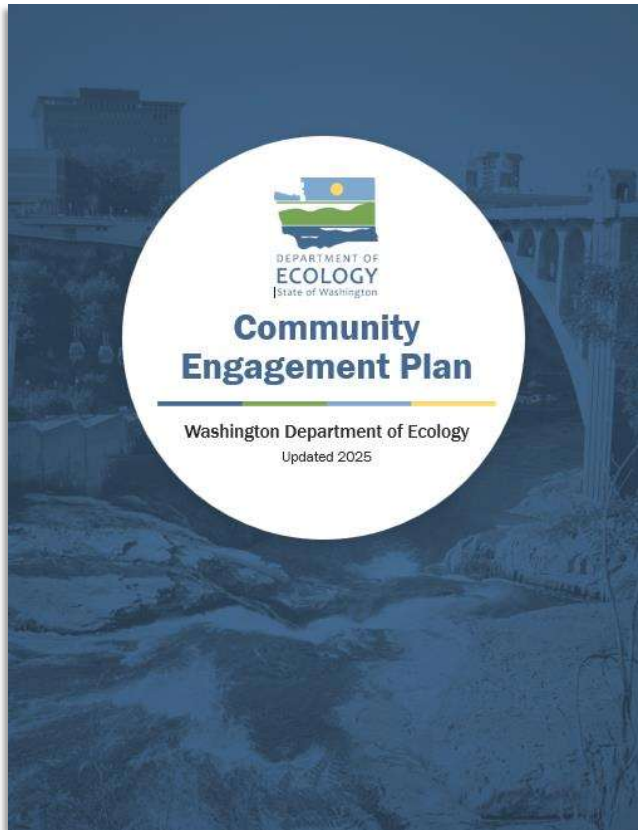
Continued Community involvement on EJAs!

- 225 community members attended, 33+ communities represented, 28% engaged in Spanish, and 72 Commerce staff presented
- Piloted new model of partnering with bilingual community members as co-facilitators/small group moderators
- Offered community compensation to all participants and to community moderators
- 68% of attendees stated that it was their first time ever participating in a government workshop.

Community Engagement Plan Updates:

- Commerce created a modified Community Engagement two-pager for easier access to the Community Engagement Plan
- Improved accessibility of full Community Engagement Plan for readability and usability

Department of Ecology



- Ecology is currently finalizing its updated Community Engagement Plan.
- The EJC's Values and Guidance for Community Engagement anchor the concept of "meaningful engagement" advanced in the Plan.
- The Council's Values and Guidance are also translated into updated Ecology-specific process guidance and best practices for scoping, planning, implementing, and evaluating community engagement.
- Ecology has invited Tribal consultation on the updated Plan. In late 2025-early 2026, after incorporating Tribal input, the Plan will be released publicly, and an extended period of community engagement will begin.

Department of Health



Community Engagement Plans

- DOH published our Community Engagement (CE) guide in a [website format](#) for easier access and incorporated EJC guidance into the new format.
- Staff plan to assess state of CE practices at DOH using EJC guidance as an evaluation tool.
- Launched pilot DOH Environmental Justice Community Workgroup to understand priority issues and amplify voices of marginalized, vulnerable communities experiencing unaddressed environmental health disparities, per EJC guidance recommendation.



DOH HEAL Capacity Grantee Convening Fall 2024. Photo credit: Front and Centered.

Department of Natural Resources

- DNR is in the process of **reviewing and implementing the EJC Community Engagement Values document and integrating updates to our Community Engagement Guide.**
- DNR Recently hired Jerry Rivero as the new Director for the Office of Environmental Justice, Equity, and Civil Rights. DNR aims to update and finalize our Community Engagement plan using the guidance document from the EJC utilizing Jerry's leadership and expertise.



Washington Department of Natural Resources
Provisional Community Engagement Guide
2022-2025

Puget Sound Partnership



PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

Last updated: August 2025



- Completed an updated community engagement plan (which we call a community engagement guide), tailored to our agency's operations and incorporating what we heard from community about how they would like to see the Partnership act as a partner to them. The guide also includes worksheets to help direct staff through the process of building a community engagement initiative. Find the guide online [here](#).
- Developed a suite of community engagement resources for agency staff to accompany the community engagement guide. These resources include:
 - **an approach document** to help provide the broach goals and approach to the work, and how it fits into agency operations
 - **a tracking system** to help staff maintain relationships and avoid overwhelming points of contact with too many requests
 - **a strategic plan** (under development) to establish goal posts and measure success
- Continuing to build and strengthen meaningful, trust-based relationships.
- Designed and/or implemented community engagement for all three Significant Agency Actions. The nature of engagement varied depending on the project scope, staff capacity and budget, and timeline.
- We have continued work to co-create a Community Advocacy Council (CAC) with community leaders. The CAC was formed in June 2024 and is a space for agency accountability as well as for co-creation on work that is a priority for all parties involved.
- Strengthened our system for direct compensation payments from our agency to community members. Developing a standard operating procedure to communicate the process with staff and advocating for changes to the compensation system based on community feedback.
- Completed three workshops in partnership with CBOs, gathering feedback from OBC and VP that will inform the development of new indicators of human wellbeing in the Puget Sound region.



Department of Transportation

- Adopted updated Community Engagement (CE) Plan in 2025 incorporating Environmental Justice Council's values and guidance on community engagement
- Established annual CE Academy in 2024 and then hosted expanded opportunity to further train staff in 2025 with community partners
- Community engagement compensation policy developed and implemented by staff for projects and planning efforts
- Transportation justice leadership grant program and Sandy Williams Connecting Communities program established community advisory boards to inform funding decision-making

Strategic Plan Updates



▲ Photo credit: Washington Department of Agriculture



▲ Photo credit: Department of Ecology

Department of Commerce

- Mission: **Strengthen Communities** through 400+ programs
- In 2023, Commerce's draft Strategic Plan included, for the first time, goals related to Environmental Justice.
- Commerce's new administration is leading a strategic planning process incorporating equity and environmental justice; it is expected to be completed by year-end 2025.

Over the biennium, Commerce has:

- **Partnered with tribes** by launching tribal [memorandum of understanding \(MOU\) process](#) to formalize partnerships, remove administrative barriers, and ensure data and tribal sovereignty. Commerce has MOUs established with nine federally recognized tribes. Commerce's Office of Tribal Relations, with the Office of Equity and Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, is creating a government-to-government training with Tribal nations to share knowledge and skills.



Continued

Department of Commerce



Continued - Over the biennium, Commerce has:

- **Operationalized HEAL Act in the ARL process.** Commerce revised the agency process for proposing, developing, and selecting agency request legislation (ARL) to incorporate HEAL Act, the EJA process, community involvement sessions, and a tribal briefing.
- **Centered lived experienced** by adopting an agency policy for compensating community members for their participation in Commerce workgroups, including a lived experience recruitment toolkit, and implemented it for participants in six HEAL Community Involvement Sessions, two of which were monolingual Spanish, and two others were trilingual.
- **Deepened our commitment to equity** through the adoption of an agency policy in summer 2025, "Valuing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" that outlines active commitments to DEI.
- **Expanded language access.** Integrated Language Access (LA) into the Communications Team. In October, the EJ team created attestation forms in several languages to ensure people with lived experiences who are not English speaking can engage with Commerce and obtain compensation.

Continued...

Department of Commerce



Continued - Over the biennium, Commerce has:

- **Advanced equity in contracting.** We're creating a uniform definition of "by-and-for" that works across agency divisions to create a transparent and consistent meaning for communities. We're also creating internal controls around direct/sole source and noncompete contracts to ensure we're making state resources available to historically overlooked applicants. In development now, we're working with other state agencies to provide training to small and under-resourced entities to prepare them for contracting with state agencies and public funding. This aligns with the Governor's Executive Order to [address equity in public contracting](#).
- **Listened to community.** The Community Engagement and Outreach Team (CEOT) just finished a [major effort to reach more than 4,000 people](#) across the state. The feedback is guiding Commerce's priorities around accessibility in contracting with Commerce and is deepening partnerships with the Department of Enterprise Services, the Office of Equity and Results WA to create single applicant profiles that can be used in all agency applications.

Department of Ecology

- Ecology has shifted from a 2-year to a 5-year strategic plan model for 2025-2030, to be able to more meaningfully plan, measure, iterate and improve over time.
- We have added **new goals and initiatives** since our 2023-2025 plan, including, but not limited to:
 - Goal: Infuse equity in our policies, initiatives, processes, and activities to address environmental and health disparities and create a healthy environment for all.
 - Goal: Strive to provide equitable access to all who use our services, which includes providing pathways for those with limited English proficiency or disabilities to access our information, programs, and services.
 - Initiative: Implement environmental justice goals and initiatives to reduce environmental and health disparities and advance environmental justice in our programs.
 - Initiative: Implement Ecology's Community Engagement Plan, leveraging our internal engagement network to coordinate and promote the guidance and best practices in the plan.
 - Initiative: Strengthen Ecology's language access practices through policy, guidance, training, technical assistance, and performance measures.
 - Initiative: Implement a process for community members and organizations to submit environmentally beneficial project ideas for Ecology's review and approval. Individuals or businesses that we take enforcement actions on can then propose to implement these ideas as part of an enforcement settlement.
- We are currently in the process of developing both **process measures** as well as **outcome measures** to evaluate our current starting point on identified priorities (TBD), set grounded long-term goals, and develop strategies to meet these goals.
- Read the updated plan [here](#).



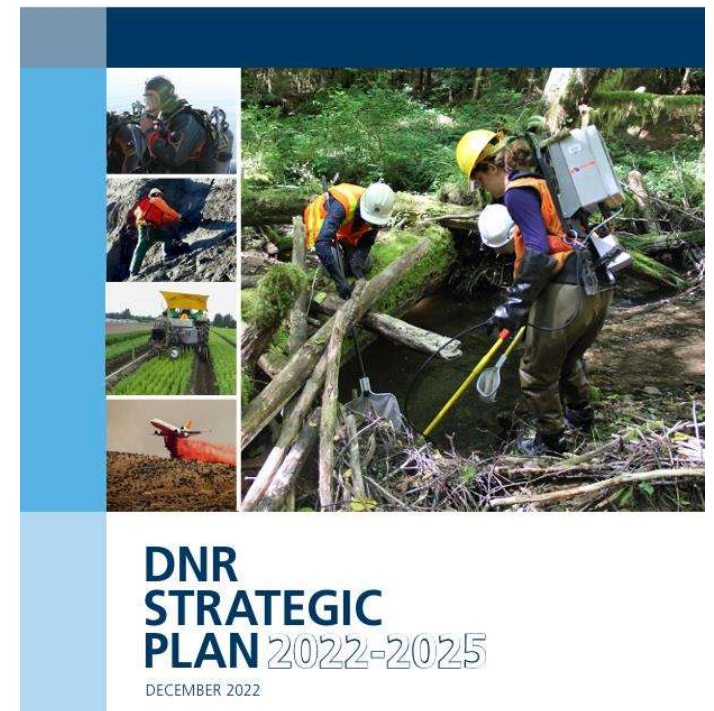
Department of Health

- The HEAL team created several HEAL 101 videos for community in top 16 languages. We plan to share them publicly in Fall 2025
- HEAL Team held 7 monthly learning sessions for DOH staff to increase knowledge and skills related to Environmental Justice and HEAL requirements.
- We continue to work with on evaluation planning to report on program metrics related to agency Transformational Plan. This has involved creating new data collection processes.



Department of Natural Resources

- Building on the commitments outlined in the [2022-2025 strategic plan](#), the **Department of Natural Resources is actively drafting its next Strategic Plan for 2025-2029**. This upcoming plan will feature a continued focus on integrating Environmental Justice goals to ensure equitable outcomes for all communities in Washington State.
- DNR's updated strategic plan will reflect Commissioner Upthegrove's focus on protecting clean air, clean water, and habitat, continuing to improve wildfire prevention and response, and building more equitable access to recreational opportunities. In the spirit of transparency and community engagement, the new strategic plan will undergo an Environmental Justice Assessment and follow the best practices outlined in DNR's [Draft Provisional Community Engagement Plan](#).





Puget Sound Partnership

- **Revised PSP Strategic Plan-** we completed a comprehensive review and update of our agency's strategic plan, ensuring alignment with environmental justice practices and community feedback
- **HEAL Implementation Plan-** currently revising to align with EJ requirements and best practices and to better meet needs that Tribes and community groups have shared
- **Enhanced EJ Implementation Capacity-** expanded staffing and resources within our EJ Matrix Team to strengthen support for agency-wide EJ strategic planning, data analysis, and integration of EJ-focused decision-making tools and resources
- **EJ Integration-** actively working to embed EJ strategies into all program areas, including delivering all-staff presentations; facilitating program-level discussions; and developing practical tools to guide daily operations



Department of Transportation

- Established 5 full time employment positions dedicated to HEAL Act implementation efforts across agency
- Active participation with the Interagency Work Group and the Environmental Justice Council
- EJ assessment processes developed and engaged in continuous improvement efforts
- Culture change management in progress throughout agency to integrate EJ principles in agency decision making
- Policy development to embed EJ into agency manuals and other guiding documents
- Cultivating relational partnerships throughout large agency to support varying HEAL Act implementation needs in regions, divisions, and modes different books of buisness



Stories of Agency Environmental Justice Implementation and Impacts

Photo credit: Washington Department of Agriculture

▲ Photo credit: Department of Ecology

Department of Agriculture

- Expansion of apple maggot quarantine community engagement efforts may help save local, direct marketing farm
- Firewood quarantine helps stop invasive insects without compromising home heating assistance
- Expansion of banned plants help get upstream of noxious weeds issues
- Adopted more protective standards for agrichemicals

External:

- Internal agency work groups drafting final language for agency Community Engagement plan.
- Standardized announcement of Significant Agency Actions and other informational topics: [Blog Posts | Washington State Department of Agriculture](#)
- More here: [News and Media Relations | Washington State Department of Agriculture](#)



Department of Agriculture

- [Focus on Food / We Feed WA / Farm to Food Bank](#)
- Benton County ground water testing that led to five reverse osmosis systems installed from local county health
- Food Bank to Compost
- Soil Health: Compost reimbursement & soil carbon testing program helped farmers place 33,166 tons
- Investigating chemical drift complaints
- Continued work on: Hunger relief, small farm & direction marketing, and Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Management Area
- Protecting farms & forests
- Banned invasive weeds
- Progress on out of state, untreated firewood imports



Department of Commerce

The Home Rehabilitation Grant Program supports safe, energy efficient, healthy housing across rural Washington

- For Home Rehabilitation Grant Program (HRGP) Program Manager at Commerce, Gerardo Gonzalez Gomez, this work is personal (see quote on right) and fuels his commitment to the work. The HRGP is gaining momentum across rural Washington after shifting from a loan-based to a grant-funded model.
- Formerly known as the Low-income Rehabilitation Loan Program (HRLP), the previous loan model inadvertently created barriers to participation. Organizations were reluctant to participate out of concern it could push vulnerable and low-income households in debt — especially as inflation drove interest rates higher.
- In 2023, the Legislature passed HB 1250, converting the loan program into HRGP – a grant program. Commerce's Weatherization team got to work on the rulemaking quickly after. Partnering with the [Healthy Environment for All \(HEAL\)](#) team, they completed an Environmental Justice Assessment and developed a community engagement plan.
- The EJ Assessment confirmed what many already knew: overburdened rural communities face higher risks from both housing instability and environmental hazards. Financially stressed households are less able to afford repairs and are often located in higher-pollution areas — conditions that can lead to long-term health issues, especially in homes with children.
- Common repair needs for participants in the HRGP include addressing mold, asbestos, and lead hazards — dangers that disproportionately affect children and financially vulnerable households. The program supports aging-in-place retrofits and improved home accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

"I lived very poorly once in my life...
My house was destroyed by a storm, and we were left without a home. Just analyzing the way people live and **thinking of how you can improve the way they live — that's what drives me.**"
- Gerardo Gonzalez Gomez, HRGP Program Manager, Commerce



Department of Commerce (story continued...)

A measurable impact

- The HRGP supports low-income homeowners with critical home repairs that ensure safety, accessibility and livability.
- Priority is given to seniors, people living with disabilities, families with children under five, veterans and tribal communities.
- The grant model empowers local agencies to complete repairs without saddling households in debt, improving housing equity and stability
- This change allowed the Weatherization team to process **87 loan reconveyances, formally forgiving debts** of past participants who still owed balances on their loans.

“Drafting the letter to notify borrowers about the modification to the program that included **loan forgiveness** was one of the most gratifying moments as a program manager. As an approach to **meaningful engagement**, our team decided to contact all loan borrowers **by phone** to deliver the great news and explain the process. It was a true blessing to share that message — **one woman even sang a happy song when she learned her debt would be wiped out!**”

- Gerardo, Program Manager

Department of Commerce (story continued...)

The Home Rehabilitation Grant Program supports safe, energy efficient, healthy housing across rural Washington

Advancing Environmental Justice

The HRGP delivers healthy and safe housing to those who need it most. With \$5M allocated from the Capital Budget to the Weatherization unit, in just eight months:

- \$3.679M has been contracted
- 21 counties currently have active services
- Agencies estimate 50 home projects will be completed by June 2025
- 154 homeowners remain on the waitlist, signaling high demand

Looking Ahead

- The Weatherization Team is proud of HRGP's progress and its alignment with Commerce's mission
- The new \$5M award for the 25-27 biennium will help expand the program's reach
- Commerce's goal is to ensure every county in Washington has access to this impactful program.
- For more information on the program, you can [email Gerardo](#).

Story written by Rachel Lucas, Communications and Community Support Specialist. Modified for length by Laura Armstrong, EJ/CE Section Manager.



"It's better living, healthier living, safer living — and that's what we're after," said Gerardo. "It's a service that allows people to live comfortably and safely in their homes."

Department of Ecology*

Local Air Quality Monitoring

- Over the last several years, Ecology has **expanded the statewide ambient air monitoring network** due to CCA requirements and interest from communities and Tribes.
- Ecology **engaged with communities, environmental organizations, and Tribes** to learn about concerns regarding air quality.
- Air monitoring technical staff took those learnings to identify specific air monitoring locations that meet EPA siting criteria.
- **39 new air monitors have been placed in overburdened communities** across the state as part of this effort and more are planned in the coming months.

SensWA used for supplemental non-regulatory PM2.5 monitoring



*This is not an exhaustive list. More examples will be available in Ecology's 2025 HEAL Act Budget Equity Written Report.

Department of Ecology

Environmental Justice Working Group for Cap-and-Invest Offsets Rulemaking

- Ecology formed an Environmental Justice Working Group as part of the rulemaking process to **update the offset protocols that are included in the Cap-and-Invest Program**
 - **Composed of 11 community members with lived experience**, compensated through the community compensation program
- Built **sustained relationships with community members**, identified areas where community can help **shape agency decisions**, and **addressed barriers through compensation**



Department of Ecology

Climate Resilience Regional Challenge Awards

- In fiscal year 2025, Ecology received **\$73.6 million** from **NOAA's Climate Resilience Regional Challenge** to advance a portfolio of **14 partner-led resilience projects**, developed locally across the state to address local issues
- One of these projects is a partnership between Samish Indian Nation and Friends of the San Juans in San Juan County. \$499,000 will be used to develop an **updated flood and erosion hazard assessment**
 - The updated assessment will integrate **protection and enhancement of cultural resources**, values, and priorities into restoration planning and create **a model for including Tribal cultural values** and resources into **ecosystem and resilience planning efforts**

Samish Indian Nation homelands



Department of Ecology

MOU Between Ecology and Tribes

- The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Nooksack Indian Tribe, and the Tulalip Tribes **signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with Ecology** to allow air quality managers to work together **to monitor and mitigate air pollution**
- These MOUs uphold a **Government-to-Government relationship with Tribes**, which pre-dates the HEAL Act. Through these MOUs Ecology is collaborating with Tribes to promote outcomes that will **improve environmental health in Tribal communities**.
- The partnerships will help Washington State meet federal air quality standards, analyze regional air pollution trends, and serve people in Tribal and other communities where air pollution has impacted public health.
- Tribes will also become eligible for various grant programs that can reduce the levels of criteria air pollutants like PM2.5

On March 26, 2025 Colville Tribes Chairman Jarred-Michael Erickson and Ecology Director Casey Sixkiller signed the MOU



Department of Health

Implementation & Impact

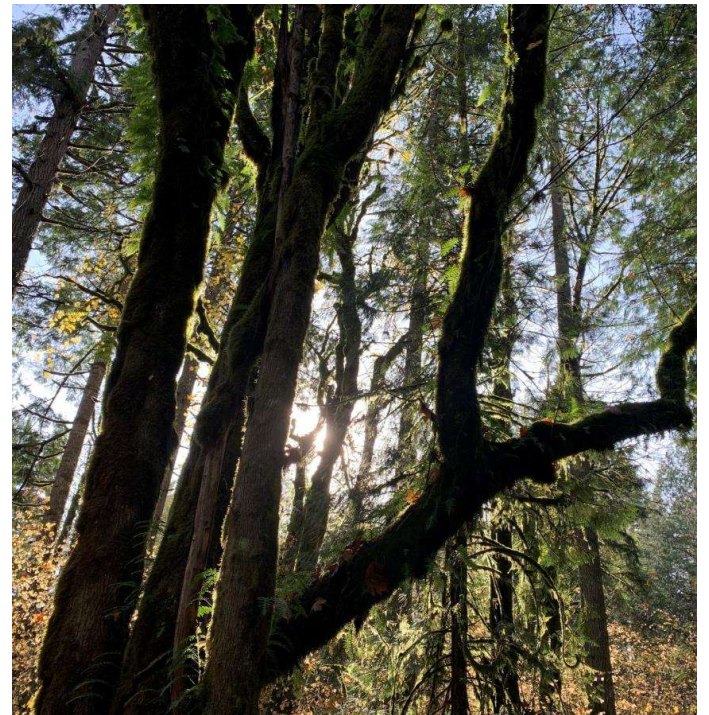
- Normalized using “plain language” and creating informational 2-pagers that are translated and emailed in Spanish.
- Improved on use of Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) and Washington Tracking Network (WTN) map layers and other data for engagement planning.
- Listening sessions held with the Governor's Indian Health Advisory Council related to communication, user experience, and potential new measures.
- Additional sessions held related to EJ Grants, including HEAL Tribal Capacity and Workplace Safety grants
- Contracted for “equitable grantmaking” templates and guidance materials.
- Significant EJAs performed related to Cottage Food Operations, Water Recreation, and SBOH Environmental Rules for Schools



Department of Natural Resources

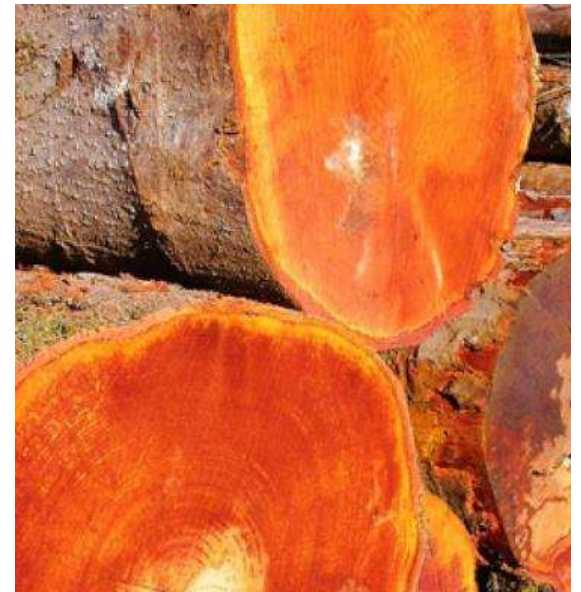
Select EJ-specific investments for Tribes include:

- A **partnership with the Colville Tribes for air filter and air filter kit distribution** to community centers and communities in need,
- Support for additional monitoring work led by the **Lower Elwha Klallam Tribes in the footprints and downstream from the former Elwha dams,**
- Support for the **Tulalip Tribes to reforest portions of their lands that burned in the Bolt Creek fire,**
- Support for the development of an additional cohort with the **2025 Careers in Conservation Internship Program which focuses on connecting minority high school students with career opportunities and pathways in natural resources;** this funding focused specifically on the Toppenish school district and **funding to support Indigenous students in the program.**



Department of Natural Resources

- **DNR Service Forestry has developed a sliding scale for their cost share program, centered on principles of equity.**
- DNR supported the **development of a low-impact, eco-forestry educational curriculum aimed at minority and women forest workers by Boots on the Ground Forestry.** This curriculum includes three levels of modules, and utilizes experts in the field from tribal, minority, rural, and small forest contractors and businesses.
- **More than \$4.5 million in urban and community forestry (UCF) grants have been awarded in support of efforts centered around supporting environmental justice- and equity-centered projects.** The UCF Program is a major leader in our state's Tree Equity Collaborative, which is working with communities across the state to analyze current tree equity needs and work to implement more equitable tree cover across Washington.
- DNR developed [the Spanish Resources webpage](#). This page is in development, and we continue to add translated DNR documents.



Department of Natural Resources

- Events for cultural affinity groups—**organized and facilitated events for Latino Conservation Week and for the cultural affinity group Outdoor Asian** to provide programming for communities we have not served well historically.
- **Developed a decision-making matrix for evaluating equity in outreach events to schools statewide.**
- Funding for substitutes and transportation—this funding enabled us to provide **equitable access to Youth Education Outdoor Program's programming**. Funding is available for schools that rank high or medium priority in our decision-making matrix
- Gear libraries—we maintain **forestry and PPE gear kits in DNR's regional offices. The kits are free for check out and support equitable access to forestry education, as many schools cannot afford equipment.**
- **Training for DNR staff on instructional methods for students, including how to design educational experiences that are culturally responsive and meet the needs of diverse learners.**



Puget Sound Partnership

- Convened 4 productive Tribal consultation periods on agency actions
- Sponsored 3 Tribal events across the region
- Convened 4 Human Wellbeing Workshops in partnership with CBOs around the Puget Sound region
- Provided Community Engagement training to Lead Entities
- Increased EJ implementation capacity through hiring EJ Matrix Team members and extending participation to other programs engaged in EJ work
- Collaborated with IAWG staff and DOH's Office of Water Quality to hold a discussion with HEAL Capacity Grantee For the People's environmental justice team to provide clarity on agency roles around water work
- In partnership with Puget Sound CBOs, PSP conducted community engagement through co-designed workshops focused on the Action Agenda's EJ Assessment



Department of Transportation

- Engaging in culture change review to support EJ implementation and meet varying operational needs across large and diverse agency
- Secured funding for an online engagement tool to support more active two-way digital communication between project teams and community members
- Engaging in process improvement trainings and collaborations related to incorporation of EJ assessments into various actions like transportation project development, grant programs, rulemaking, and agency request legislation
- Collaborated with local public transit agency on a joint EJ assessment effort for a grant award over \$15M



Obstacles and Opportunities

A photograph of a forest fire. In the foreground, several firefighters in yellow gear are walking on a dirt path. In the background, a large fire is burning in a forest, with thick smoke rising. The scene is dramatic and highlights the challenges of firefighting in a forest environment.

Department of Agriculture

Opportunities:

- Heard from Community... more evening & weekend meeting/public comment, small farmers need representation, partners like Conservation Commission and Washington State University Extension Services are understaffed, and food affordability & access.

Continue to:

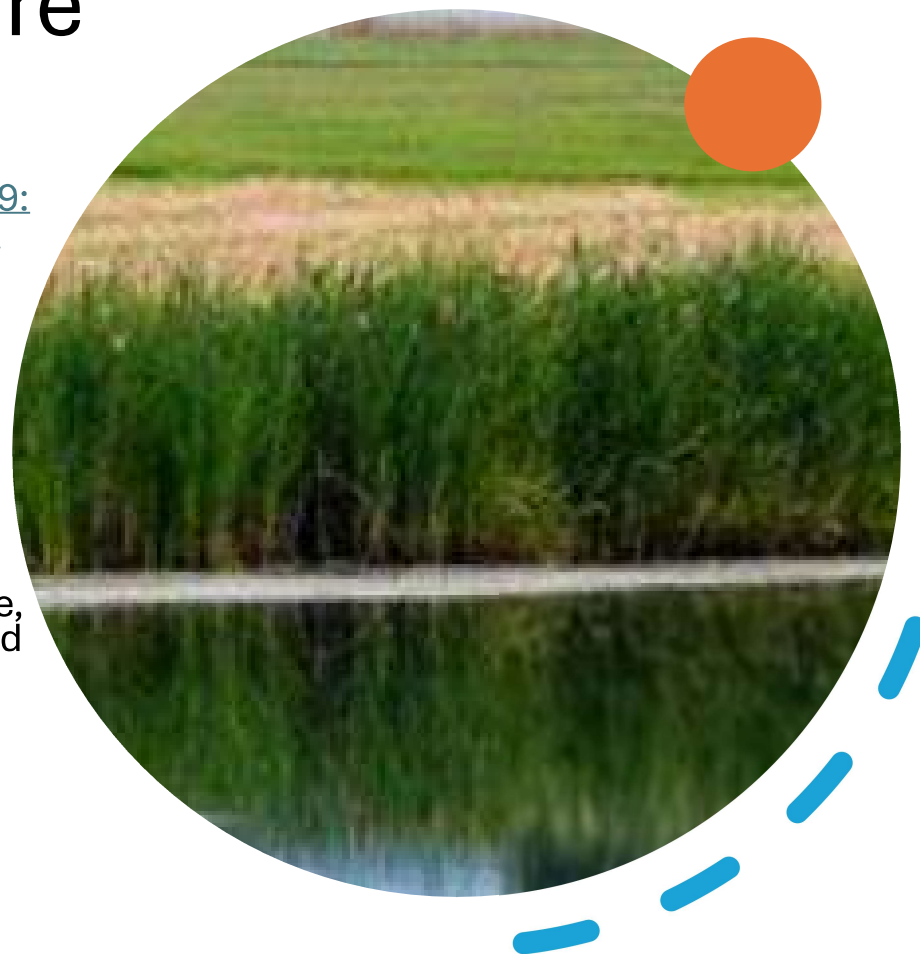
- Increase community access both language & engagement opportunities
- Encourage community friendly farm practices
- Provide technical services to farmers & respond to community feedback
- Provide fair & professional public services, like food assistance grants



Department of Agriculture

Challenges:

- Food insecurity is growing ([WAFOOD Brief 16 – Food Security and Food Assistance in the Wake of COVID-19: A 5th Survey \(2024\) of Washington State Households | Food Systems, Nutrition, and Health](#))
- Losing small farms (2017- 2022 loss of 3,700 farms, most in farms 10ac or less)
- Funding for staff to meaningfully engage community
- Managers and staff have willingness, but we lack staffing and resources to create programing and develop new resources.
- Increasing cost of farming; land, water more expensive, and pressures from urbanization without plans for food production
- Nitrogen & other contaminates in groundwater
- Farmers still experiencing higher rates of suicide than other professions
- Threat of/Loss of pass-through grant & loans form Federal sources



Department of Commerce

Opportunities

- Refine Community Involvement Session processes by giving more advance notice and meeting agenda
- Continue expanding and evolving the quarterly HEAL tribal briefings – integrate HEAL briefing with Commerce's Tribal Advisory Committee in fall '25
- Deeper dive and qualitative analysis of what we've learned from the 69 (and counting) agency EJ Assessments since July 2023
- Continue developing engagement directly in Spanish with bilingual community co-moderators in break-out rooms
- Exploring agency solutions to ease the burden and increase accuracy of annual budget and funding reporting for HEAL and CCA; however, HEAL budget shortfall will limit Commerce's ability to do this.



Department of Commerce

Obstacles

- Significant reduction to agency HEAL budget by 50% for the biennium, therefore limiting capacity of strategic HEAL/EJ work and requiring focus on compliance. Budget reduction also limits ability to invest in tech-based reporting tools.
- Balancing multi-lingual language access offerings through external contracting, and the costs of multi-lingual interpretation and translation – requires staff time to collaborate and funding for third-party contracts during budget constrained environment.
- Limited opportunities for in-person engagement in the new budget landscape.
- Lack of sophisticated centralized enterprise reporting system that accurately marries program and financial data for annual HEAL and related, CCA reporting.





Department of Ecology: Challenges

Navigating a Time of Transition

We are operating during a period of rapid and significant change, which brings both uncertainty and the need for adaptability. We are actively assessing these shifts so we can respond with clarity and foresight.

Adapting to New Tools and Resources

Some long-standing federal resources are no longer available to us, highlighting the need to diversify our approaches to environmental justice analysis. While identifying and integrating new solutions requires staff time, it may ultimately strengthen our resilience.

Additionally, data collection practices at the agency are being refined to better and more accurately assess if benefits were experienced by vulnerable populations in overburdened communities.

Shifting Workforce Dynamics

Changes in staffing, including the departure of colleagues across IAWG with valuable institutional knowledge, have required us to adapt quickly. This also creates space to bring in new perspectives and expertise.

Balancing Consistency and Flexibility

While the HEAL Act allows agencies flexibility in how they implement environmental justice, this can result in varied approaches. Without shared processes for certain cross-agency issues—such as grantmaking, environmental incident reporting, and addressing both topical and regional concerns—solutions can take longer to develop or will remain fragmented.

Focusing Our Efforts

Some interagency workgroups have concluded in order to focus limited resources on solidifying core internal implementation. While this has improved depth in some areas, it also still requires new strategies for cross-agency collaboration.



Department of Ecology: Opportunities

Learning from Experience

After completing multiple environmental justice assessments, teams are building on lessons learned to refine processes, improve clarity, and strengthen outcomes. Many programs are now entering their second or third assessment with greater confidence, accuracy, and efficiency.

Strengthening Strategic Planning

A more intentional and clearly defined strategic plan—with realistic timelines, expectations, and clear measures—will help align priorities and produce better outcomes for environmental justice work.

Early Investments Showing Results

The foundational work in change management, while time-intensive, is beginning to yield tangible improvements across the agency's programs and processes.

Advancing Equity in Incident Reporting

Ecology is leading a statewide effort to evaluate and improve environmental incident reporting, with a focus on equity, accessibility, and responsiveness—especially for overburdened communities, vulnerable populations, and rural areas. This work will produce actionable, community-informed recommendations for the legislature may change how multiple HEAL covered agencies do this work.

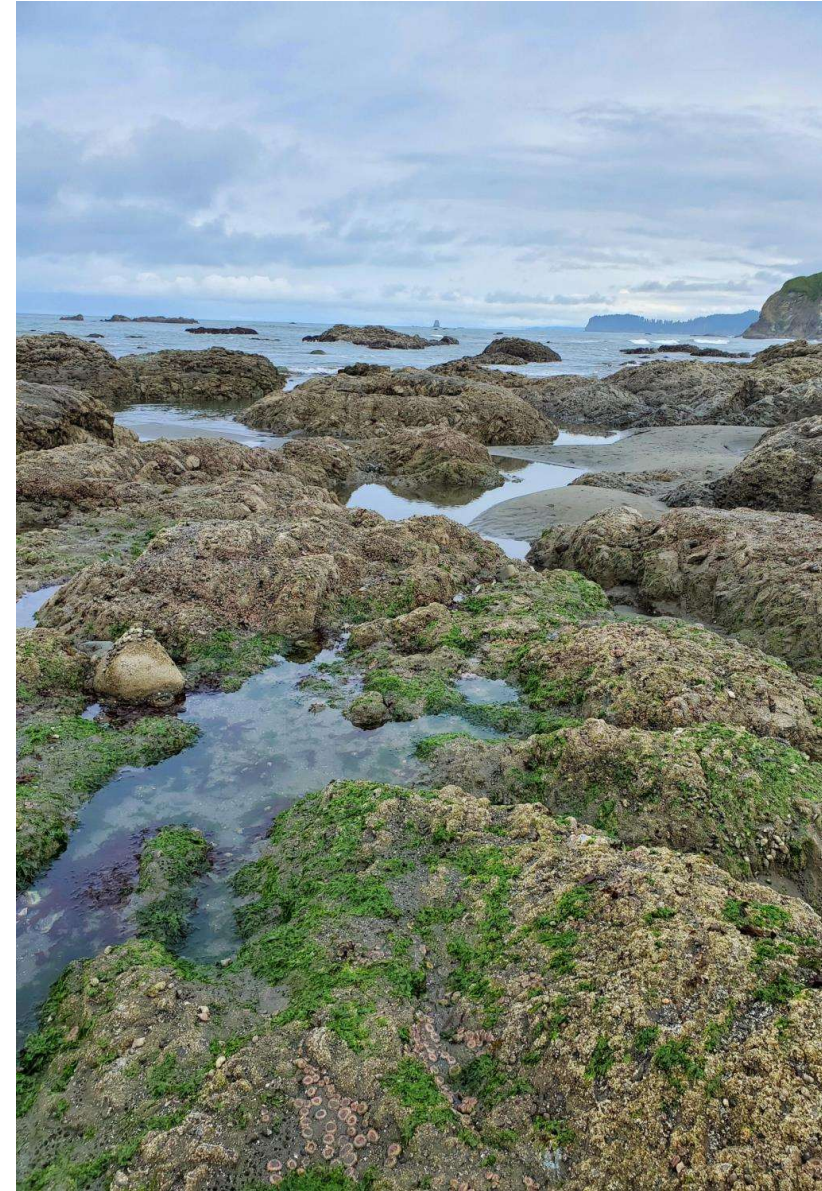
Exploring New Frontiers in Enforcement and Grants

The agency has formed a Grants Equity Group with grant managers across environmental programs to share best practices and strengthen equity guidance across all grant programs.

Department of Health

Obstacles

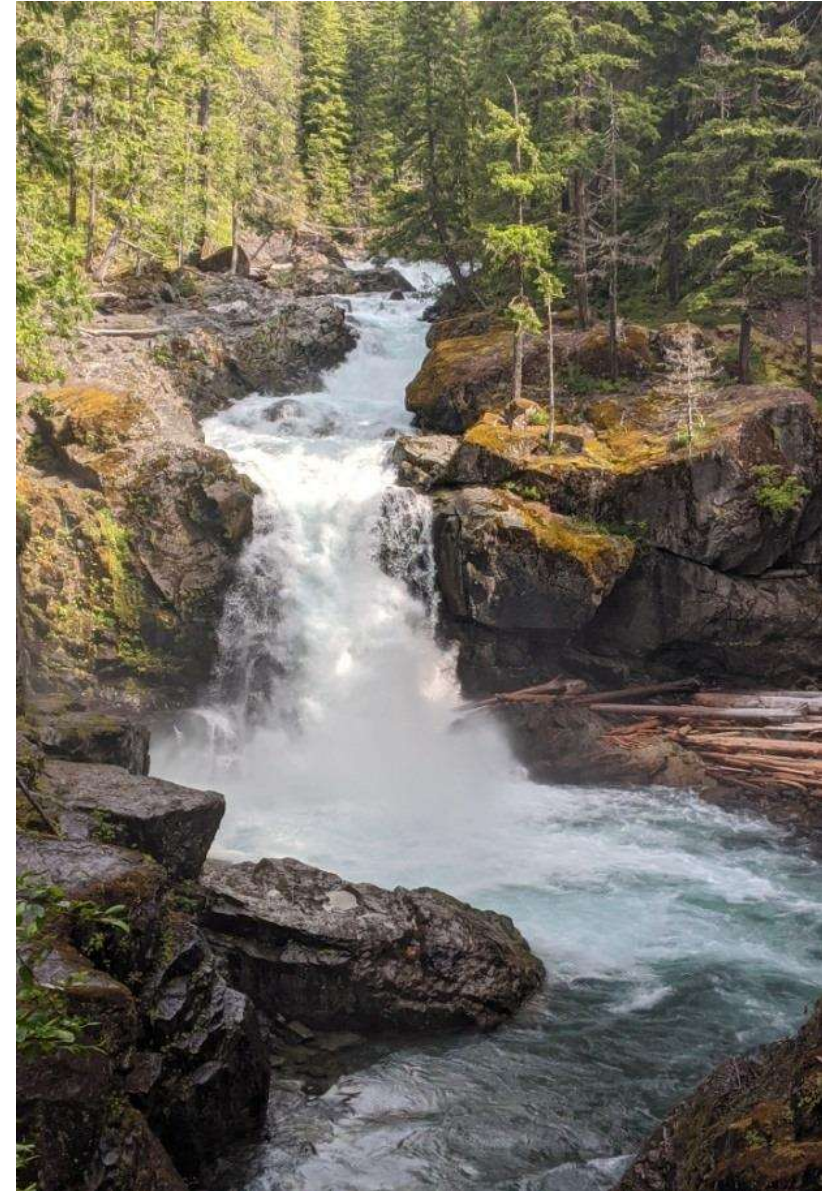
- Organizational uncertainty and reductions in funding.
 - Reduced capacity to do Tribal and community engagement and support local organizations.
 - Loss of important relationships with community members and organizations due to staff reductions.
- Planned expansion of EJAs within DOH will be made more difficult without adequate staffing.
 - DOH plans to make smaller budget asks to support staffing.
 - Most HEAL Implementation work has taken place within the EPH Division, with less attention to EJ work in other parts of the agency.



Department of Health

Opportunities

- Conversations about better coordination between community engagement efforts at DOH taking place.
- Increasing recognition about need for broader usage of EJ Assessments throughout the agency.
- New Secretary seems very committed to community engagement, opportunity to participate in strategic planning and integrate EJC guidance.
- EHD Map Tool and data layers are being moved into a GIS environment that will make interacting with and visualizing spatial data about EJ and communities faster and easier.



Department of Natural Resources

Obstacles

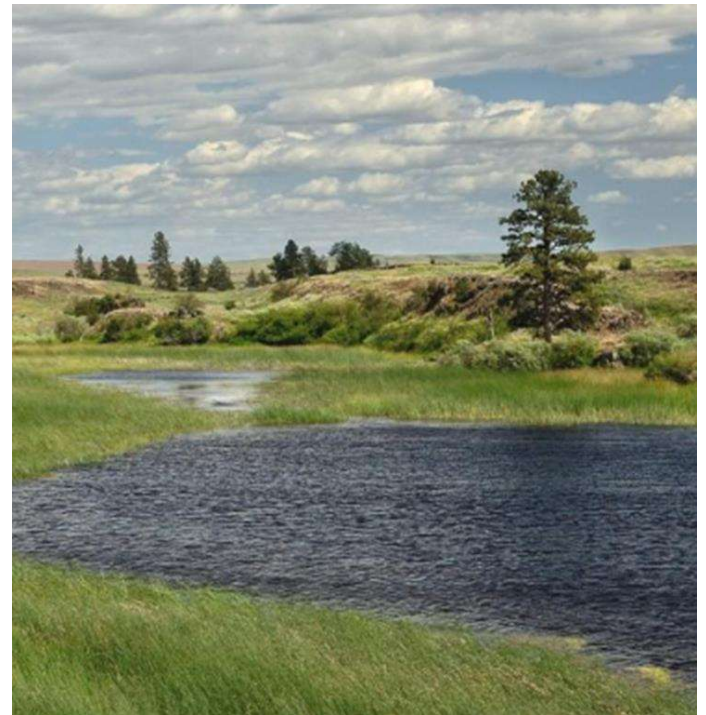
- The Environmental Justice program faces a substantial staffing constraint with **only three full-time equivalent positions dedicated to its EJ operations**, impacting overall capacity.
- **A lack of adequate funding presents a significant barrier to the effective implementation of crucial EJ activities**, including:
 - Providing fair compensation to impacted communities
 - Facilitating community engagement and outreach in underserved areas
 - Supporting vital programs such as "Outdoors for All" and youth education/outreach
 - Expanding access to recreation and green spaces
 - Ensuring language accessibility through translation services



Department of Natural Resources

Opportunities

- The Forest Resources Division has a team working with the State Office of Equity and other state agencies (such as Commerce and RCO) to **develop more equitable practices, protocols, and application procedures for our grant program**. We are also looking at how to **develop more equitable community engagement practices for our grant programs**.
- DNR is **developing summary documents that succinctly describe the Environmental Justice Assessment process, Community Engagement best practices, and examples of incorporating EJ into DNR daily work**.





Puget Sound Partnership

- **Challenges:**

- Navigating EJ implementation through the challenging federal landscape
- Using metrics that reflect accountability to community-led priorities in EJ implementation
- EJ data maps do not reflect Tribal and community concerns, often missing significant geographic considerations and treaty resources
- The terms OBC/VP can be offensive and minimizing

- **Opportunities:**

- Create structures that promote and enhance early and often engagement with Tribes and community partners
- Increase diversity and community representation in our agency boards
- Enhance EJ implementation and community thought partnership through developed compensation framework

Department of Transportation

- Scale of implementing systems change across large decentralized agency is big undertaking and requires significant time while agency is also engaged
- Challenge of misalignment of short-term implementation requirements in comparison with extent of change needed to ensure long term sustainability of efforts in agency
- Significant time needed to identify information on various agency processes, understanding processes, and then working to develop solutions for implementing change related to multiple HEAL Act requirements
- Engaged in ongoing process improvement to reassess how structuring HEAL Act implementation organization to better integrate EJ into existing agency processes
- Obstacle on clarifying with various project and program staff on when a decision is made internally to help align community engagement opportunities with when and how input can influence decisions
- Challenge to align efforts of environmental justice assessments with underlying actions (project development, new grant programs, rulemaking, agency request legislation) with timing for decision making
- Loss of data resources previously relied upon from various federal sources in conjunction with broader federal changes related to environmental justice
- Establishment of various staff positions for HEAL implementation led to underutilization of resources available within 23-25 biennial budget
- Funding dynamics for transportation projects limit extent of carrying out all new expectations for community engagement, in particular challenges to fund lived experience compensation for community participation
- Opportunity to incorporate environmental justice considerations into statewide planning efforts and inform legislature of implications of various different funding decisions



HEAL Interagency Workgroup Wins

- The Interagency Workgroup drafted a temporary guidance document to be more inclusive of 'Overburdened' communities in budget and funding reporting for Fiscal Year 2025. This document was informed by agency reflection of community engagement learnings with assistance from the HEAL Tribal Liaisons workgroup.
- EJ Assessment guidance collaboration with the EJ Council is ongoing and the Interagency Workgroup is committed to participating in this cooperative effort.
- As of July 2025, all legislative deadlines for the Interagency Workgroup are met. The work is growing into lessons learned and improvements.
- The Interagency Workgroup underwent redesign in October 2024 to focus energies on effective improvements and addressing current needs.
- In 2025, the IAWG held 4 community of practice sessions and has scheduled 5 more before the end of the year to learn from each other and explore new solutions.
- For the past year, IAWG and OFM have been co-creating Year 2 Reporting Dashboards for Strategic Planning, EJAs, and Budgeting & Funding

Contact Information

- **Interagency Workgroup:** Dana Myers, dana.myers@ejc.wa.gov
- **Agriculture:** Jay Carmony, jay.carmony@agr.wa.gov
- **Commerce:** Laura Armstrong, laura.armstrong@commerce.wa.gov
- **Ecology:** Courtney Cecale, courtney.cecale@ecy.wa.gov
- **Health:** Colin Maloney, colin.maloney@doh.wa.gov
- **Natural Resources:** Rivero, Jerry, jerry.rivero@dnr.wa.gov,
Olgy Diaz olgy.diaz@dnr.wa.gov, and Corina Allen corina.allen@dnr.wa.gov
- **Transportation:** Will Golding, william.golding@wsdot.wa.gov
- **Puget Sound Partnership:** Lea Anne Burke lea-anne.burke@psp.wa.gov, Signe Lindquist signe.lindquist@psp.wa.gov, and Jill Wisehart, jill.wisehart@psp.wa.gov



Nick Brown
ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON

Policy Division
800 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000, Seattle, WA 98104

September 2, 2025

Dear Members of the Environmental Justice Council:

This letter details the environmental justice activities of the Washington State Attorney General's Office over the past year, and is submitted to you pursuant to RCW 70A.02.090.

Background

As you know, environmental justice is the principle that all people deserve a safe, healthy environment. It connects environmental protection and environmental health with human and community health and well-being, recognizing that humans are part of the environments in which we live.

Historically, due to practices and public policies, environmental harms, such as air and water pollution, disproportionately impacted marginalized communities, including low-income, rural, and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) communities. These environmental harms can lead to serious negative health outcomes, including premature birth, asthma, and cancer.

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act, the first state law to define environmental justice (EJ) and require EJ considerations in state agency activities and decision making. The Attorney General's Office (AGO) [committed](#) to implementing components of the HEAL Act. Over the past four years, the AGO developed a [community engagement plan](#), [EJ principles](#), an [EJ implementation plan](#), and a draft EJ assessment for significant agency actions. The AGO does not receive funding to implement the HEAL Act, but is committed to continued implementation.

Environmental Justice Principles

The AGO's EJ principles provide a foundation of shared beliefs and values to inform the development and execution of the HEAL Act's deliverables and environmental justice work.

1. EJ uses an intersectional lens to address disproportionate environmental and health impacts by prioritizing highly impacted populations, equitably distributing resources and benefits, and eliminating harm.
2. EJ requires focusing on racial equity and recognition of the ways in which systemic racism leads to disproportionate environmental impacts and health disparities in Black communities, Indigenous communities, communities of color (BIPOC)

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON

September 2, 2025

Page 2

- communities), and low-income communities, and demands deliberate anti-racist action.
3. EJ necessitates meaningful engagement with impacted communities about the development, implementation, and enforcement of laws, rules, and policies that impact the environment and health of Washingtonians, and require ongoing transparent and accessible communication throughout, without compromising the integrity of the AGO's legal work.
 4. EJ demands recognition that self-determination is a core principle to Tribal sovereignty and the AGO Tribal Consent and Consultation Policy is integral in decision making that affects Tribes, Tribal lands, and Tribal rights.

Summary of AGO Actions to Advance Environmental Justice in the Past Year

September 2024

Defending Disparate Impact Analysis Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

The AGO joined a [letter](#) emphasizing the benefits of using disparate impact analysis under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to address disproportionate environmental and health impacts in communities of color. Title VI prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating based on race, color, or national origin, and authorized federal agencies to issue rules and regulations to ensure compliance and end federal funding for non-compliance. The letter responded to a petition by other states asking EPA to change its regulations to remove the prohibition on methods, criteria, or facility sites or locations that have a disparate impact on people of a particular race, color, national origin, or sex.

October 2024

Holding Business Owner Accountable for Shoddy Work that Increased the Risk of Underground Fuel Leaks

Following a consumer protection [lawsuit](#) by the AGO's Civil Rights Division, a Pierce County judge ruled that a business owner must pay more than \$360,000 in penalties and restitution for unlawfully charging gas station owners for unfinished, unnecessary, or shoddy work on underground fuel storage tanks. The gas station owners were predominantly Korean or South Asian immigrants, and the consequences of unfinished and shoddy work on underground fuel storage tanks increased the risk of environmental and health damages from tank leaks.

2025

Supporting Legislation to Protect Human Health and the Environment

The AGO supported SB 5360, legislation sponsored by Senator Yasmin Trudeau (D-Tacoma), and developed in partnership with the AGO's Environmental Protection Division. The bill would provide sensible criminal enforcement tools to protect human health and the environment and bring Washington in line with federal law. This is particularly important because early this year

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON

September 2, 2025

Page 3

the Environmental Protection Agency announced that it is redirecting enforcement resources to other priorities. Although the bill did not pass, the AGO will continue supporting this change to state law.

Supporting Continuing EJ Work across Washington State Agencies

Upon taking office, the Trump Administration issued several executive orders that revoked prior orders to incorporate and advance EJ in federal government actions and decisions. These orders, and the subsequent closure of units or departments focused on EJ within several federal agencies, raised questions about impacts on state agency EJ work.

In March, AGO staff worked with EJ staff in other agencies and presented to the Environmental Justice Council to provide assurance that in Washington, EJ work should continue without interruption.

Protecting Washingtonians from Harm by the Federal Government

In addition to abandoning the federal government's EJ work, over the past eight months, the Trump Administration has undermined EJ work in Washington in numerous ways, such as withholding funding and eliminating programs that do important environmental and health work. The AGO challenged many of these actions, which included:

- New conditions requiring states to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement efforts to receive Department of Homeland Security grants, including funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to respond to natural disasters and protect against terrorism. Many state agencies receive these funds, including the Departments of Natural Resources, Ecology, Transportation, Fish and Wildlife, and local and tribal governments. **The AGO joined a multistate [lawsuit](#) in May to challenge the new conditions.**
- Illegally terminating billions of dollars approved by Congress to fund electric vehicle infrastructure, including more than \$71 million in Washington. **In May, the AGO led a multistate [lawsuit](#) challenging the termination of funding, and won a [preliminary injunction](#) in June.**
- Replacing the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFÉ) standards with weaker standards that threaten Washington's ability to reach its climate pollution reduction goals through improved fuel economy. **The AGO joined a multistate [challenge](#) in June, seeking to maintain the stronger CAFÉ standards.**
- Using the Congressional Review Act to disapprove of California's waivers for clean vehicle standards, which Washington also adopted. **In June, the AGO joined a multistate [challenge](#), seeking to allow California and other states, including Washington, to impose stronger emission standards.**

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF WASHINGTON

September 2, 2025

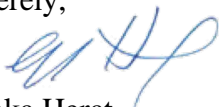
Page 4

- Unlawfully ending the Environmental and Climate Justice Block Grant Program, which provided funding for communities hardest hit by extreme weather events to address EJ issues, adapt to climate change, and improve public health. **In July, the AGO joined a multistate [amicus brief](#) supporting a group of organizations that challenged the end of this grant program.**
- Shutting down the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program, designed to protect communities from natural disasters before they strike. Twenty-seven open projects in Washington receive a total of \$182 million; nearly three-quarters of which goes to small towns and rural communities. **The AGO led the [challenge](#) to the shutdown of the BRIC program in July, and won a preliminary [injunction](#) in early August.**
- Withholding more than \$9 million in congressionally authorized funds to help Washington communities most vulnerable to the effects of climate change build resilience, including a program to reduce environmental and health disparities by supporting local efforts to address coastal hazards. **The AGO [challenged](#) this action in August, working with the Department of Ecology and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) Tribal Stewards Program.**
- Proposing new rules for several federal agencies under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that would narrow the scope of review and reduce or eliminate public input on major federal decisions. **In early August, the AGO led multistate comments to the [Department of Defense](#), [Department of Transportation](#), [Department of Energy](#), [Department of the Interior](#), and the [Department of Agriculture](#), opposing these new rules, which would deprive communities of a voice in decisions impacting their health and safety.**

The AGO challenged these actions and many others that threaten environmental and human health in Washington. These lawsuits are handled by numerous legal divisions in the AGO that closely monitor developments from the Trump Administration. Attorney General Brown remains committed to protecting Washingtonians and upholding the law.

We hope that you find this information helpful. If you have any questions, please contact us at Enoka.Herat@atg.wa.gov and Ellen.AustinHall@atg.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Enoka Herat
Policy Director



Ellen Austin Hall
Deputy Policy Director