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The Environmental Justice Scorecard has been updated. Phase Two of the Environmental Justice Scorecard was released on July 24, 2024.

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U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

56 office(s), 9 location(s), 25,000 employees, and 5,500 new hire(s) in Fiscal Year 2023


The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is to deliver vital engineering solutions, in collaboration with our partners, to secure our nation, energize our economy, and reduce risk from disaster.

USACE Civil Works Mission is to serve the public by providing the nation with quality and responsive management of the nation's water resources through: support of commercial navigation;

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restoration, protection and management of aquatic ecosystems; flood risk management; and providing engineering and technical services in an environmentally sustainable, economic, and technically sound manner with a focus on public safety and collaborative partnerships. USACE aims to align its mission with the Biden-Harris Administration's goals to ensure fair, inclusive, and equitable solutions for all communities' water resource needs. Throughout the agency's Environmental Justice Strategic Planning process, USACE will revisit its longstanding approach to problem solving, outreach, engagement, and decision making with rural, urban, and Tribal communities throughout the United States and its territories. These changes and subsequent actions will allow USACE to equitably serve communities and be more inclusive of communities with environmental justice concerns.

[technical assistance](#) 

To learn more about environmental justice at USACE, please visit USACE's [environmental justice website](#) .

Some examples of well-known USACE offices, bureaus, or agencies are:

- Engineer Research and Development Office
- Institute for Water Resources

- USACE Headquarters Office

Progress on Advancing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates key progress on advancing environmental justice at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Key Highlights ([show less ^](#))



Policy and Planning Improvements for Environmental Justice

Photo credit:
Jerica
Richardson

Teams at each of the USACE Districts, which are geographic organizational

St. Paul District Held 41 Engagements Related to Environmental Justice

USACE led multiple community engagements to discuss collaboration. The St. Paul District, which is one of 38 districts at USACE (geographical boundaries organized by watershed), had 41 engagements related to environmental justice concerns. The engagements covered three major themes: how USACE executes its mission (30 engagements), how USACE works with partners (8 engagements), and general outreach activities (3 engagements).

boundaries based on watersheds, prepared initial outreach and engagement strategies to advance environmental justice with a focus on technical assistance programs. The agency is working to reduce barriers to participation in the decision-making process and to quantify and analyze impacts and benefits of USACE projects to affected communities.

Galveston District Worked on the Lower Rio Grande Valley Watershed Assessment with Local Stakeholders

The study analyzes water resources needs in a four-county area with persistent flooding and populations that are vulnerable due to pervasive poverty and a lack of resources. This assessment is the first step in understanding flood problems that can be addressed in partnership with USACE or other organizations to advance environmental justice.

[Learn more](#) 

USACE also prepared a Draft Environmental Justice Program Management Plan, a Headquarters Environmental Justice [webpage](#) , and has increased training to build environmental justice literacy among our staff.

[Learn more](#) 

Walla Walla District Partnered with Owyhee Combined School Students on Owyhee River Ecosystem Restoration Project

USACE collaborated with students in the Owyhee Combined School on the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation to complete macrobenthic organism surveys of the Owyhee River as part of an adaptive management plan for the Owyhee River Ecosystem Restoration project. Macrobenthos are organisms that live at the bottom of a water column and are generally visible to the naked eye (roughly larger than one millimeter).

USACE Partnered with Acequia Communities in New Mexico

The Albuquerque District aims to provide the irrigators of New Mexico reliable, permanent facilities requiring minimal maintenance of these 18th century community irrigation ditch systems through the Acequia Rehabilitation Program.

Learn more 

USACE's Stump Creek Little Rock, Arkansas Section 208 Study is Evaluating Options to Reduce the Flood Risk

The disadvantaged communities near Stump Creek had previously experienced flooding due to blockages caused by vegetation, debris, and garbage. This project aims to clear out the stream channel of debris or blockages in order to improve flood safety for these affected disadvantaged communities.

[Learn more](#) 

Justice40 Initiative

This section demonstrates progress on the implementation of the Justice40 Initiative at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

USACE continues to look for ways to benefit more communities under all its programs, including those covered by the Justice40

What is the Justice40 Initiative?

The Justice40 Initiative set the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of


Initiative. With respect to Justice40 specifically, three of USACE's 11 Justice40 covered programs (Planning Assistance to States, Floodplain Management Services, and the Tribal Partnership Program) offer technical assistance to communities, and USACE staff have increased outreach to disadvantaged communities to increase the accessibility of these programs to them. In addition, USACE is evaluating applications from rural, disadvantaged, and Tribal communities for water resources development projects submitted under the Continuing Authorities Program Pilot Program (WRDA 2020 Section 165a). Overall, USACE has made climate adaptation progress a priority in 10 of the 11 Justice40 covered programs. The 11th covered program is the Formerly Utilized Sites Remedial Action Program (FUSRAP), which must be implemented under Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) and National Contingency Plan. The FUSRAP program provides other kinds of benefits locally. USACE integrates climate adaptation considerations and analysis into all planning studies, project design efforts, and construction projects, which supports the Justice40 Initiative. Because adverse climate change impacts are likely to include disadvantaged communities, USACE uses climate adaptation and analysis tools to evaluate potential investments in these

certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.

[Learn more](#) 

communities under its Justice40 covered programs.

In February 2023, USACE added a [website](#) for environmental justice. It provides links for environmental justice-related resources (i.e., the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, Environmental Justice Scorecard, policy guidance, agency environmental justice highlights, and USACE Justice40 covered programs, and federal agency webpages to their environmental justice-related programs) in a whole-of-government approach to environmental justice. Regarding the Justice40 Initiative, USACE is funded by Congressional Authorities and does not provide grants directly.

For more information on USACE's Justice40 covered programs, please contact Environmental.Justice@usace.army.mil 

Justice40 Covered Programs

([show less](#) ^)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has:

- **11** Justice40 covered program(s), including **9** Justice40 covered program(s) that is/are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, or both

Progress on the Justice40

Progress on the Justice40 Initiative

Through President Biden's [Investing in America](#) agenda and other sources, **USACE** has:

approximately

\$9 billion

in funds available to obligate (i.e., to spend) in Fiscal Years (FY) 2022 - 2027 through its Justice40 covered programs.¹

Through President Biden's [Justice40 Initiative](#), **USACE** is working to deliver benefits to disadvantaged communities. Each program that is part of the Justice40 Initiative delivers benefits in at least one of [seven investment categories](#), and many programs are delivering benefits to communities across multiple categories of investment. The **11** covered program(s) at **USACE** working to deliver benefits for communities include:

- **10** program(s) protecting communities from the impacts of climate change
- **1** program(s) addressing the remediation and reduction of legacy pollution

Overall, agencies are making concrete, tangible improvements to benefit disadvantaged communities across America through the Justice40 Initiative. These investments are resulting in cleaner air and water, more affordable clean energy, good-paying jobs, and other results that people are seeing and feeling today and into the future.

¹*In the Phase Two Scorecard, the Justice40 Initiative section contains information about federal investments that Congress has funded through both discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those that Congress made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58) and the Inflation Reduction Act (Pub. L. 117-169). The Phase Two Scorecard includes information on each agency's budget authority (that is, the total amount of funds that Congress has appropriated to the agency to spend on Justice40 covered programs) and the period of availability (that is, the period of time over which Congress has authorized the agency to spend the funds).*

In some cases, agencies may not yet have the authority to spend the full amount indicated, such as when Congress has appropriated funds that will only become available in future Fiscal Years. Agencies provided the data presented here in spring 2024, and therefore the data does not reflect the annual appropriations for Fiscal Year 2024 that Congress made in March 2024.

Thus, the information that the Phase Two Scorecard presents in this section includes what the agency has available to spend in its Justice40 covered programs (i.e., its budget authority). These figures represent the total funding amount for all Justice40 covered programs, not only the portion that benefits disadvantaged

communities.

Covered Program Design or Modification ([show less](#) ^)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers made program or design modifications to maximize benefits and/or remove barriers or constraints for disadvantaged communities, such as:

Emphasis on Outreach in Technical Assistance Programs

Each USACE District program received additional funding for outreach efforts for Floodplain Management Service and Planning Assurances to States program to ensure USACE is building relationships with and increasing access to our programs disadvantaged communities, rural communities, small communities, and Tribal Nations.

Cost Share Waiver for Planning Assistance to States Technical Assistance Program

Section 8119 of the Water Resources Development Act of 2022 provided a waiver of the 50% local cost share typically required of all communities that participate in the Planning Assistance to States program. This “cost-share waiver” now reduces all local costs (to \$0) for communities that meet the definition of economically disadvantaged. In 2023, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) issued implementation guidance and USACE began applying this waiver to the Planning Assistance to States program where appropriate.

Justice40 In Action ([show less](#) ^)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is delivering benefits, or is projected to deliver benefits, for disadvantaged communities through the Justice40 Initiative, including:

**Lower
Brule
Sioux
Tribe
Sewage
Lagoon
Protection
and
Ecosystem**

Village of Owego – Flood Resilience Study

On July 31, 2023, USACE initiated a technical analysis that includes stormwater and floodproofing analyses with the Village of Owego. The analysis includes stormwater mapping and modeling and will develop options for flood risk management to address the stormwater flood risk. These include elevation, acquisition, dry floodproofing, and wet floodproofing.

Restoration Project

USACE constructed its first Tribal Partnership Program project with the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe to address erosion to Tribal lands, infrastructure, and natural and cultural resources. An offshore breakwater and planting bench restore wetlands and protect the local wastewater sewage lagoons. The project includes features informed by Indigenous

Section 14 Chickasaw Park Emergency Streambank Stabilization Project

This project partners with the Louisville Metro Parks and Recreation. It aims to evaluate and address roughly 250 linear feet of significantly eroded Chickasaw Park shoreline in west Louisville, Kentucky. Active erosion affects the northern section of the park including a park access road. The project aims to reduce the risk to the northern section of the park from Ohio River from these erosional forces.

[Learn more](#) 

Knowledge
that safely
reconnect
Tribal
members to
the river.

[Learn more](#) 

Advancing Environmental Justice through Community-Centered Emergency Action Planning

The small, unincorporated historic city of Marin City, California, partnered with USACE to convene multiple agencies to jointly prepare a flood emergency action plan (EAP). Marin City staff and community members also trained in sandbags, participated in a tabletop exercise, and initiated a follow-on EAP to advance protections for community members with access and functional needs.

Learn more 

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country's bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has done in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Environmental Justice ([show less](#) ^)

This section demonstrates progress on environmental protections, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USACE's [Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Works Planning Studies](#), dated January 2023, ensures that more communities will be able to participate in

What is NEPA?

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose

our study process. NEPA-focused training modules include environmental justice as well.

Project Modifications

- **10** project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during NEPA process, including:

New York District, East Rockaway Inlet to Rockaway Inlet and Jamaica Bay, Queens, New York City

When this project was in the design phase, additional coordination was undertaken to determine where community gardens could be relocated as the original project footprint did not allow for this. The team developed a path forward, and the community gardens will be moved to other locations on the property to minimize negative community impacts.

Omaha District, Screening of Alternatives that Would Affect Lake Traverse Reservation from Watertown Feasibility Study

The USACE project team met with staff of the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribal Council on this Watertown Feasibility

the environmental health and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them.

[Learn more](#) 

Study to discuss potential impacts on and received a Tribal Resolution that opposed structural alternatives in the Watertown Feasibility Study project that would affect lands on the reservation. In response, the project team removed those alternatives from further consideration.

Charleston Peninsula, South Carolina, Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study

The NEPA process resulted in completing an Environmental Impact Statement to allow for a more robust assessment of environmental justice, historic, and aesthetic impacts such as equitable access to water and public spaces. Of the \$1.3 billion coastal storm risk management project, \$54 million was allocated for equitable aesthetic mitigation in the project engineering and design phase.

Training

- **5** agency training(s) on how to consider environmental justice considerations during NEPA reviews
- **120 to 200** employees trained on how to consider environmental justice during NEPA reviews

For example, in May 2023, the headquarters of USACE conducted a NEPA meeting on how to incorporate

environmental justice as a part of quarterly planning for our communities of practice. USACE is in developing an agency-specific environmental justice course, and several district-level courses to help train new employees. The vast majority of NEPA-related training sessions were conducted via one-hour lunch and learn sessions.

Environmental or Health Protection ([show less](#) ^)

This section demonstrates progress by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on environmental or health protection that also advances environmental justice in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The USACE Regulatory Program implements and enforces Section 404 of the Clean Water Act involving the placement of fill in wetlands and Waters of the U.S. The permitting process and resolution of violations through wetland restoration advances the goal of balanced implementation of the program, including in areas where unauthorized activities may not be noticed or reported and where after-the-fact permitting may be required. Interaction with the public provides educational opportunities and oversight of aquatic resources in rural and disadvantaged

communities. Resolution of effective permitting and enforcement to address

violations reduces harm and provides environmental benefits to adjacent communities.

Salton Sea Regulatory Enforcement Action

The Los Angeles District Regulatory Division completed an enforcement action pertaining to a violation of the Clean Water Act, in the Salton Sea, California. The violation was dewatering a very large wetland area (due to drain extensions) of many hundreds of acres. This violation placed air quality burdens on the surrounding communities with environmental justice concerns as the dewatering was leading to the soil drying out and agricultural chemical laden material becoming airborne.

Wilmington District Regulatory Program Resolution of Unauthorized Activities

Wilmington District's Regulatory Program resolved a total of 116 Unauthorized Activities in North Carolina. 53 of these resolutions occurred in communities with environmental justice concerns.

St. Paul District Revocation of Permit

USACE's St. Paul District issued a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404 permit in March 2019 authorizing fill material into ~900 acres of wetlands in association with construction of a large copper-nickel mine (NorthMet) in the headwaters of the St Louis River. St Paul District suspended the permit in March 2021 based on EPA's concerns under CWA Section 401(a) (2) that the permit may violate the downstream water quality standards of the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Following receipt of and extensive review of

information from EPA, Fond du Lac, the project proponent, and the public (during the USACE's first-ever public hearing specific to CWA Section 401(a)(2) water quality requirements), the USACE St. Paul District determined it was not able to identify permit conditions that would ensure compliance with the Fond du Lac Band's water quality requirements, and could not reinstate or modify the permit. Therefore, in June 2023, USACE officials revoked the CWA Section 404 permit. The decision to revoke the permit under CWA Section 401(a)(2) does not prevent the project proponent from submitting a new application that would meet all applicable water quality requirements, along with all other applicable requirements.

Civil Rights and Environmental Justice ([show less](#) ^)

This section demonstrates progress on civil rights related to environmental justice, for example, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or relevant laws other than Title VI of the Civil Rights Act at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY)

2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

The following updated or improved policies, memorandum, or assessments prepared or completed during the FY 2023 reporting period enhance USACE's ability to advance environmental justice:

[USACE-Civil Works Tribal Consultation Policy](#).

(completed in December 2023);

[Planning Policy for Conducting Civil Works Planning Studies](#)

, ER 1105-2-103 (prepared in FY 2023, completed in December 2023);

[Planning Tribal Partnership Program](#) , EP

1105-2-64 (modified in FY 2023, guidance updates completed in FY 2024, February 2024);

USACE,

[Floodplain Management Services and Planning Assistance to States Outreach Plan](#)

: Providing Technical Assistance to

Underserved Communities (March 2023);

[Memorandum](#) : Implementation of the Environmental Justice Strategic Plan for Civil

Works Studies (December 2022); and

[Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Works Planning Studies](#)

(January 2023).

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

This section demonstrates progress on

community engagement (e.g., partnerships with non-federal organizations, technical assistance, and public processes) and partnership and consultation with Tribal Nations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USACE has several projects across the nation that have focused on environmental justice in the decision-making process. For example, USACE has conducted feasibility studies in Miami-Dade County, and worked in Biscayne Bay Coastal Wetlands and Miami Back Bay. USACE's Jacksonville District continuously coordinates environmental justice outreach efforts with local, state/local, and non-government organizations.

USACE has updated our presentation and outreach materials so that they explain and consider environmental justice issues and are easier to understand. The agency often seeks out community engagement venues where community-based organizations already convene to discuss our programs and how we could support or address a need.

Technical Assistance ([show less](#) ^)

- **65** technical assistance outreach event(s) to improve access and information about federal programs related to environmental justice

For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers's technical assistance events, please visit

<https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Technical-Assistance>

Upper St. Croix River Solon Springs Floodplain Management Services Program Study and Wild Rice Workshop

At a project site visit with Tribal partners on the St. Croix River in May 2023, St. Croix Chippewa (Ojibwe) Indians of Wisconsin and other partners expressed interest in adding habitat enhancements to a project that integrate wild rice cultivation. The Tribal partners provided valuable information regarding critical life cycle requirements of wild rice. As a result, USACE's St. Paul District is developing a regional wild rice workshop, to include Tribes in the Mississippi Headwaters area.

Southern California Post-Fire Mitigation, Recovery and Resilience Workshop for Tribes at the Pechanga Reservation near Temecula, California

At the Southern California Post-Fire

Mitigation, Recovery and Resilience Workshop, Tribal representation included the Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians, La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, Cahuilla Band of Indians, Pechanga Band of Indians, Pala Band of Mission Indians, Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation, the Mesa Grande Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the Mesa Grande Reservation, the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians of the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation, along with a guest speaker from the Hopi Tribe. Tribal participants reported gaining new relationships and acquiring helpful resources and information to support their own hazard mitigation efforts. This “test” case set stage for anticipated future similar workshops in the region.

Learn more 

All-In Prichard Outreach, City of Prichard, Alabama

USACE's Mobile District held a listening session in the City of Prichard, Alabama, to identify flood prone areas and educational needs which resulted in a formal request for technical assistance from USACE.

Public Processes ([show less ^](#))

- **80** public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions, including:

Norfolk Coastal Storm Risk Management Project

The USACE project team participated in approximately five civic league meetings and Southside Task Force meetings to engage with communities with environmental justice concerns for input on the project.

Gullah Geechee Listening Session

In FY 2023, USACE's Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina Districts worked to jointly host a Gullah Geechee Listening Session with Mr. Jaime Pinkham, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, at the International African American Museum in Charleston, South Carolina. The listening session occurred on December 7, 2023. This resulted in a USACE-Gullah Geechee Working Group for ongoing relationship building, focusing on water resource projects.

Portland District, Bradford Island Community Involvement Plan

For the Bradford Island Superfund site, USACE's Portland District in Oregon developed the communication plan to advance environmental justice across all of its communities including a separate agreement with interested Tribal Nations.

Partnership and Consultation with Tribal Nations ([show less ^](#))

This section demonstrates progress on Tribal partnerships and consultations at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, including steps that that agencies take to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

USACE is committed to implementing an accountable process to ensure early, meaningful, and timely input through consultation with Tribal Nations in the development of policies that have Tribal implications. Much of this work occurred throughout FY 2023, including hosting a series listening sessions. The result was an updated USACE [Tribal Consultation Policy](#) that advances USACE's ability to consult with and collaborate with Tribal Nations on the full breadth of issues that may affect Tribal Nations' exercise of treaty rights or other reserved rights to meet the nation's trust responsibilities within the Civil Works program.

- **104** Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice

New England District Hosted Tribal Engagement

USACE's New England District is consulting with and providing technical assistance to the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) in Aquinnah, Massachusetts. The goal is to collaborate on methods to manage culturally significant natural resources, mitigate the consequences of environmental degradation, and adapt to climate change.

Seattle District, Tribal Treaty Right Determinations Information Submittals

In FY 2023, USACE's Seattle District met with Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and member Tribes seven times to collaborate on reducing the burden on our Tribal partners when asked to submit information to substantiate a permit objection based on Tribal Treaty Rights. Through ongoing consultation, USACE staff continue to listen to the Tribes' concerns and provide clarity of the process.

Savannah District Listening Sessions

USACE's Savannah District hosted a listening session in Tulsa, Oklahoma with four removed Tribes with ancestral homelands within the district's area of responsibility: Cherokee Nation, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the Seminole Nation of Oklahoma, and the Thlopthlocco Tribal Town. The Tribes shared their histories, emphasizing the importance of water and water resources to their cultural identity. This session was the start of consultations and anticipated collaborations between the district and the Tribes.

- **29** Tribal listening sessions and other engagements related to environmental justice

For example, Army Civil Works leadership and USACE hosted over 12 listening sessions related to the effort to modernize the Civil Works Program on the update to the USACE Tribal consultation policy and on guidance for the Tribal Partnership Program, and the Environmental Justice Policy. The listening sessions and associated government-to-government consultations resulted in developing the final updated

[Tribal Consultation Policy](#) and the final [Tribal Partnership Program](#), USACE's [Implementation of Environmental Justice and the Justice40 Initiative](#) (March 2022), and the [Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Works Planning Studies](#) (January 2023). Individual District listening sessions focused on District initiatives within their areas of responsibility and how the District could better support Tribal Nations.

Training

- **11** agency training(s) on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice
- **325** employees trained on Tribal Consultation or working with Tribes and Indigenous Peoples to advance environmental justice

For example, USACE's trainings focused on awareness that Tribal Nations often have environmental justice concerns, on Tribal treaty and reserved rights, and on incorporating Indigenous Knowledge into USACE projects. This was accomplished during onboarding of new employees and incoming District Commanders (leaders of each District). The annual USACE Consulting with Tribal Nations Course held in September 2023 also covered critical updates proposed

by Tribes through consultation on the draft Tribal Consultation Policy and the roll out of the Tribal Application tool.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

This section demonstrates progress to institutionalize environmental justice at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers including to implement [Executive Order 14008](#) and [Executive Order 14096](#) , in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023, which is from October 2022 to September 2023.

Overview

USACE is advancing environmental justice institutionally by updating policy and guidance to reduce disproportionate environmental burdens and human health effects and to increase access to benefits of our programs. Our approach also reduces barriers to participation in our decision-making process, helps teams identify communities with environmental justice concerns, and works toward a whole-of-government approach to environmental justice. The agency is also working to cultivate and sustain an inclusive and responsive workforce with diverse lived experience ready to address

Understanding the Nexus of Operations and Environmental Justice

USACE's
Albuquerque

rural, urban, and Tribal water resource needs across the nation and in the U.S. territories. In 2023, USACE, due to its large Civil Works Mission, began working to issue a USACE-specific Environmental Justice Strategic Plan. In FY 2023, USACE worked on developing the [Interim Environmental Justice Guidance for Civil Planning Studies](#), which directs districts to include communities early in the study initiation process and all the way through construction. USACE also hired a full-time, headquarters-level environmental justice program manager and assigned environmental justice specialist positions in each Division and District.

- **57** staff who work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity
- **10** new or strengthened office(s) or program(s) on environmental justice

Training

- **Over 50** agency training(s) for staff on environmental justice
- **Over 500** employee(s) trained on environmental justice

For example, the “Designing for Diversity Training” provided by the USACE Institute for Water Resources, Collaboration and Public Participation Center of Expertise

District created an environmental justice summary for each operation site within its area of responsibility. These summaries are meant to be attached to grant applications, used for internal planning, and to raise awareness that these sites serve communities with environmental justice concerns.

[Learn more](#) 

has expanded the outreach and collaboration capacity of USACE's Districts. Planning Assistance to States and Floodplain Management Services outreach training has also contributed to expanding a district's capacity to conduct environmental justice outreach to economically disadvantaged communities with flood risk or floodplain management concerns.

Advancing Environmental Justice Policy ([show less](#) ^)

- **Has** issued or updated policy, guidance, or directives related to environmental justice (internal or external)

Memorandum: Implementation of the Environmental Justice Strategic Plan

The memorandum, dated December 2022 and signed by Major General William Graham, transmits the USACE Interim Environmental Justice Strategic Plan for immediate implementation across the Civil Works enterprise. Additionally, it provides requirements for the development of district strategic plans.

Learn more 

Implementation Guidance for Section 160 of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 2020, Definition of Economically Disadvantaged Community

WRDA 2020 Section 160 directs the Secretary of the Army to define the term “economically disadvantaged community” for purposes of the act and amendments made. This definition is used to help identify the criterion used to determine eligibility under the program for projects that will advance environmental justice.

Learn more 

Implementation of Environmental Justice and the Justice40 Initiative

The memorandum, dated March 22, 2022 and issued by the Assistant Secretary of the Army of Civil Works, outlined the need to modernize the Civil Works program to better serve the needs of disadvantaged communities. By incorporating environmental justice initiatives into the Civil Works program, USACE will build innovative, climate-resilient infrastructure that protects communities and ecosystems throughout the country from the impacts of climate change.

[Learn more](#) 

- **Has** assessed barriers and obstacles related to regulations, policies, or practices, including historical inequities
- For more information on how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has removed barriers for communities with environmental justice concerns, please visit

<https://www.usace.army.mil/Media/News-Releases/News-Release-Article-View/Article/3220423/us-army-corps-of-engineers-signs-partnership-agreement-with-the-american-indian/>

- Over the past four years **is working** to create an Environmental Justice Strategic Plan pursuant to [Executive Order 14096](#)

Advancing Environmental Justice Tools or Resources ([show less](#) ^)

- **3** tool(s) or resources that advance environmental justice, including access to health, environmental or other impacts, such as:

USACE Internal Tools to Advance Environmental Justice

USACE is developing three internal tools that its project teams can use to understand the location of environmental justice concerns, identify disadvantaged communities in project areas, and help understand potential impacts to disadvantaged communities. However, USACE has not developed any public-facing tools.

Advancing Institutional Partnerships or Federal Advisory Committees

([show less](#) ^)

- **32** new or strengthened internal agency working group(s), committee(s), or partnership(s) to advance environmental justice, or new federal advisory committee(s) on environmental justice
- **8** new or existing federal advisory committee(s) related to environmental justice

USACE-AZ Governor's Office of Resiliency Partnership

USACE met with the Arizona Governor's Office of Resiliency to better understand Arizona's environmental justice and Justice40 Initiative priorities and develop opportunities to partner on projects and studies to support Tribal communities and disadvantaged communities.

Seattle District, Puget Sound Federal Task Force

The Puget Sound Federal Task Force includes 15 federal agencies who play a role in protecting Puget Sound and are directed to coordinate and collaborate with the Tribal Management Conference and a newly formed State Advisory Committee. The agencies are charged with incorporating Tribal treaty rights in their strategies for Puget Sound restoration, as highlighted in the Treaty Rights at Risk document created by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission which outlined the federal government's responsibilities to address habitat loss as noted in the 1974 Boldt Decision.

New England Federal Partners

USACE identified disadvantaged communities in each state within New England District (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut), identifying each

agency's activity in that community, resulting in outreach to State Partners to initiate further potential efforts in those communities. The New England Federal Partners (NEFP) Environmental Justice Subgroup determined disadvantaged communities in each state to identify what agencies are doing what work in these communities and how the group collectively can assist further. The NEFP is a group of 17 federal agencies formed to work together on complex environmental issues. The goal of the Environmental Justice Subgroup is to reduce the burden on disadvantaged communities by organizing federal resources that equip them with information and tools to assess their climate and environmental risks and develop climate and environmental justice resilience solutions most appropriate for them.

Interagency Collaboration ([show less](#) ^)

Los Angeles District staff are the "Ambassadors" to the Los Angeles River

Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP). This interagency partnership includes USACE, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of the Interior, among other agencies and their subgroups. The group disseminates federal resources directly to non-profits, local government, watershed groups and others through meetings, workshops, and tours. The partnership is focused on identifying, supporting, and implementing regional priorities, programs, and projects in support of Justice40 communities. The UWFP passes on federal resources such as grants, technical assistance, trainings, informational webinars, and direct access to federal staff in an efficient manner. The UWFP strives to reduce barriers to federal resources, recognizing local communities have limited resources, funds and time to fully understand the breadth of complex federal programs.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers worked side-by-side with other federal agencies to advance a whole of government approach to environmental justice, including:

Navajo Nation Silver Jackets Response to Little Colorado River Flooding within the Birdsprings Chapter

As the Birdsprings Chapter of the Navajo Nation has experienced significant flooding along the Little Colorado River and has accumulated associated sedimentation at the N71 Bridge over the Lower Colorado River, USACE worked with other agency partners to [address](#) the following: (1) USACE Emergency Management installation of temporary flood protection barriers and sandbags. (2) USACE & Silver Jackets to develop an Emergency Action Plan for flood response with Tabletop Exercise. (3) Navajo Nation Department of Transportation work to fix washed out roads to reconnect communities. (4) Bureau of Indian Affairs and Navajo County worked to clear out sediment & debris from beneath bridge to prevent future flooding.

Southeast Natural Resources Leaders Group Meeting to Discuss Implementation of Environmental Justice Policy

In May 2023, the Southeast Natural Resources Leaders Group met to discuss implementation of environmental justice policy. The meeting goals included increased understanding of each agency's strategic approach to implementing environmental justice policy and identification of environmental justice projects in each agency.

Pittsburgh District and State Coordination to Support Local FEMA Applications

USACE's Pittsburgh District in Pennsylvania has been coordinating with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency to identify communities who had unsuccessful Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) applications to determine whether USACE could provide technical assistance to help lift those applications in the next round. Through this effort, the Pittsburgh District team provided coordination and support to two disadvantaged communities and expects to continue this effort on the next round.

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