

Scorecard Appalachian Regional Commission



Appalachian Regional Commission

1666 Connecticut Ave N.W.,
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20009
[\(202\) 884-7700](tel:(202)884-7700)
arc.gov

About the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is an economic development partnership agency of the federal government and 13 state governments focusing on 423 counties across the Appalachian Region. ARC's mission is to innovate, partner, and invest to build community capacity and strengthen economic growth in Appalachia to help the Region achieve socioeconomic parity with the nation.

This page provides information on how **the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)** is working to advance environmental justice for communities across America. It is part of Phase One of the Biden-Harris Administration's Environmental Justice Scorecard.

Justice40 Initiative

As part of President Biden's [Justice40 Initiative](#), the federal government is working toward the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments reach disadvantaged communities that are marginalized and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment. In particular, the President's Justice40 Initiative applies to federal investments that address climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical water and wastewater infrastructure.

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This Phase One Scorecard provides an update on initial progress made by **the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)** in implementing the Justice40 Initiative. Future versions of the Environmental Justice Scorecard will provide additional information and updates on the benefits of Justice40 covered programs.

For more information on ARC's Justice40 covered programs, please contact info@arc.gov.

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights in Fiscal Year 2022 include:

- **2** Justice40 covered program(s)
- **6** funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative
- **\$364 million** in funding made available from Justice40 covered programs¹
 - The Partnerships for Opportunity and Workforce and Economic Revitalization (POWER) Initiative targets federal resources to help communities and regions that have been affected by job losses in coal mining, coal power plant operations, and coal-related supply chain industries due to the changing economics of America's energy production.

¹ This funding amount describes examples of the funding that was made available in Fiscal Year 2022 through Justice40 covered programs. The amount does not represent the total funding that benefits disadvantaged communities. The funding was made available through grants, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58). The Justice40 Initiative sets a goal that 40 percent of overall benefits from certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities.

ARC's Highlights

ARC targets resources to the most economically distressed counties and areas in the Appalachian Region, using a very conservative measure of economic distress based on three economic indicators: three-year average unemployment rates, per-capita market income, and poverty rates. An index-based classification system is used to compare each county in the nation with national averages on the three economic indicators. Based on that comparison, each Appalachian county is classified within one of five economic status designations: distressed, at-risk, transitional, competitive, or attainment. Distressed counties are those that rank in the worst 10 percent of the nation's counties.

In Fiscal Year 2022, there were 311 distressed counties in the nation and 81 of those were in the Appalachian Region. Because distressed communities lack financial resources, ARC adjusts its matching funds requirements according to the economic status of the counties affected by the particular

grants. ARC-funded projects in distressed counties need only a 20 percent match for the ARC dollars. That means that ARC can fund up to 80 percent of the cost of the project. Upon demonstration of need, ARC can waive the match requirement for projects. This is often done for larger infrastructure projects, particularly in Central Appalachia.

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 **the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022.

For more information, please visit [ARC's Strategic Plan](#) .

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

Federal agencies work to ensure that the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of communities are heard and reflected in the priorities, policies, and decision-making of the federal government. Agencies also take steps to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies. The following information highlights work **the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022 to center environmental justice in its decision-making.

Community Input and Engagement

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:

- ARC is a member of the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization and chairs the subcommittee on Community Engagement.
- **1** technical assistance outreach event(s) in Fiscal Year 2022
 - In July 2022, ARC launched READY Appalachia. This community capacity-building initiative offers flexible funding to Appalachian nonprofit organizations, community foundations, local governments, and Local Development Districts (LDDs), and no-cost cohort-based learning and hands-on training to the Appalachians who work for them.

Contact

Council on Environmental Quality
730 Jackson Pl NW
Washington, D.C. 20506
(202) 395-5750

More information

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