



Equity Plan

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Equity Strategies for the EPA National Estuary Programs

The purpose of the equity strategy is to ensure that each NEP/GEO program is reviewing RFAs, and potential projects that use BIL funds through the lens of equitable and fair access to the benefits from environmental programs for all communities. The equity strategy should outline how BIL funds will be used to sustain and increase investments in overburdened (disadvantaged) communities (including tribes), and the benefits that flow to them. These strategies are intended to meet the goals of Executive Orders 14008 and 13985 – Justice40 and EPA’s Equity Action Plan respectively.

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Governance Overview

The Lower Columbia Estuary is one of 28 estuaries designated by Congress as an “Estuary of National Significance.” National Estuary Programs (NEPs) focus on improving water quality in the water body and maintaining the *integrity of the whole system*—its chemical, physical, and biological properties, *as well as* its economic, recreational, and aesthetic values.

The Estuary Partnership predecessor, the Bi-State Water Quality Program (Bi-State Program), was convened by the Governors of Oregon and Washington in 1989 and charged with building a body of scientific evidence about the degradation of the lower river. The studies found that water, fish tissue, and sediments were contaminated with a range of toxic and conventional contaminants, specific sites were particularly contaminated, and over 50% of its wetlands had been damaged or destroyed since European settlement; negative effects from the entire upper basin compound in the estuary; and human impact and institutional constraints were areas of concern.

As a result of these findings, the Governors nominated the lower Columbia River estuary to the National Estuary Program (NEP) for designation as an “Estuary of National Significance.” They wanted a public entity to focus on the lower river; unite the two states, multiple federal, tribal, and local partners and the private sector; set regional strategies; and build on existing efforts to address the degradation in the lower river. Until that time, there was little focus on the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam. The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) accepted the lower river into the NEP in 1995—a distinction that means the water body is both of national significance and has been degraded by human activity. The NEP is administered by the EPA.

National Estuary Program

The National Estuary Program was created by Congress in 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act. The NEP is authorized in Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (33 USC §1330). (*All references to the NEP statute or authorizing legislation in this section refer to this citation.*) Federal NEP statute and EPA rules provide a framework for how a NEP works.

To become a NEP, the Governor(s) prepare a nomination packet to EPA when EPA calls for nominations to the Program. EPA has done so five times between 1987 when the NEP was created in federal statute and 1995; EPA has not opened a round of nominations since then. We were nominated and selected in 1995, in what EPA refers to as a “Tier V” estuary program. There are two key tests to becoming a NEP: the waterbody is of national significance; and it has been degraded by human activity. The nomination packet provided this justification.

The ***Estuary Partnership Management Conference*** was defined and accepted by the Governors and EPA in May 1996. At that time, the Estuary Partnership had what is known as a Management Committee and a Policy Committee. The Estuary Partnership now has a Board of Directors as its governing body. A key distinction between a Management Committee and a Board of Directors is that a Management Committee is advisory and is appointed by another entity or entities while a Board of Directors is a self-appointing, independent self-governing organization.

The ***Estuary Partnership Board of Directors has an Executive Committee*** that has been authorized by the Board to oversee the finances of the corporation, human resources, and to hire and manage the

Executive Director. The Executive Committee is a subset of the Board, it reports to the Board, and only voting members of the Board may be appointed by the Board to serve on the Executive Committee. The Estuary Partnership Board has formed the Science Work Group to guide technical work, the Board Development Committee to guide Board recruitment and development, and the DEI Steering Team to guide organizational policy on DEI. Over the years, the Board has had several other standing or ad hoc committees.

Required Composition of a NEP Governing Body. The NEP is designed to engage local communities in managing their local water bodies. The NEP authorizing legislation and EPA NEP guidance require that the governing body of each NEP include public and private interests and stakeholders from the local NEP’s study area. This requirement applies regardless of the NEP operating structure. The statute requires the governing body to include at a minimum:

- *“Each State and foreign nation located in whole or in part in the estuarine zone of the estuary for which the conference is convened;*
- *international, interstate, or regional agencies or entities having jurisdiction over all or a significant part of the estuary;*
- *each interested Federal agency, as determined appropriate by the Administrator;*
- *local governments having jurisdiction over any land or water within the estuarine zone, as determined appropriate by the Administrator; and*
- *affected industries, public and private educational institutions, and the general public, as determined appropriate by the Administrator.”*

The Administrator referred to is the US EPA Administrator.

For the Estuary Partnership, this includes tribal, federal, state, and local government entities, business, industry, fishing, agriculture, recreation, etc. This is codified in the Board Bylaws and Policies. At any one point, the specific representation on the Board is different.

The NEP requirement concerning composition of the governing body distinguishes NEPs that operate as 501(c)(3) corporations from typical nonprofits. We are regulated by both nonprofit requirements and NEP requirements and must meld those. One example of this, many nonprofit organizations require Board members to make or secure major donors and Board members often are elected in part for their ability to do so. For a NEP, many Board members are appointed because of the public entity they represent, so the Estuary Partnership has different requirements in appointing Board members and in their duties than many nonprofits would.

Decision-Making. The Estuary Partnership’s governing board employs collaborative decision-making and works by consensus rather than using more formal voting and parliamentary procedures such as Roberts Rules of Order.

The Estuary Partnership, as with all NEPs, is apolitical.

Work

NEPs are voluntary; use an ecosystem, watershed approach; are science based; cross jurisdictional boundaries; and as required in EPA guidance focus on improving the water quality in the water body and maintaining the *integrity of the whole system*—its chemical, physical, and biological properties, *as well as* its economic, recreational, and aesthetic values.

Because the NEP is authorized in the Clean Water act, water quality and implementing EPA core water programs (including wetlands protection and reducing toxic and conventional pollutants and stormwater) are high priorities. As noted, EPA requires that each local NEP create and implement a Management Plan that addresses water quality, sediment quality, living resources, land use, and water resources.

As a regional body, the Estuary Partnership, as with all NEPs, gather and advance the knowledge about the study area, identify problems, and common solutions, and build on the capacity of existing entities to create and sustain a regional framework and forum.

The 1987 authorizing statute identified specific tasks for a NEP:

- *“Assess trends in water quality, natural resources, and uses of the estuary;*
- *collect, characterize, and assess data on toxics, nutrients, and natural resources within the estuarine zone to identify the causes of environmental problems;*
- *develop the relationship between the in-place loads and point and nonpoint loadings of pollutants to the estuarine zone and the potential uses of the zone, water quality, and natural resources;*
- *develop a comprehensive conservation and management plan that recommends priority corrective actions and compliance schedules addressing point and nonpoint sources of pollution to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the estuary, including restoration and maintenance of water quality, a balanced indigenous population of shellfish, fish and wildlife, and recreational activities in the estuary, and assure that the designated uses of the estuary are protected;*
- *develop plans for the coordinated implementation of the plan by the States as well as Federal and local agencies participating in the conference;*
- *monitor the effectiveness of actions taken pursuant to the plan.”*

Annual EPA guidance (and sometimes subsequent amendments or reauthorizations of the NEP) have added various other areas of focus including climate change, blue green algae, air emissions, considering future sustainable commercial activities, etc. These change with different administrative priorities.

Estuary Partnership Governance Structure

The Estuary Partnership is a National Estuary Program operating as an independent 501(c)(3) public non-profit corporation. That description, in that order, is substantive. We were created to be a National Estuary Program and were accepted into the NEP in 1995. Until 1999-2000, we functioned as a two-state quasi-governmental program, housed within the State of Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. In 1998, we formed a 501(c)(3) corporation to facilitate raising funds to match and leverage the EPA NEP funds. In 2000, the two entities merged to function as an independent, voluntary, community-based entity. The governing bodies at the time (see the 1999 Management Plan for the structure and composition) decided after a thorough assessment of options that we would be more effective and efficient as a nonprofit corporation. This would remove the perception that we were working only in one state or had regulatory ties or authorities.

Since 1995, the Board has placed a high priority on making sure the Estuary Partnership serves all communities in our study area. Sometimes project scopes or funding may result in us working in one area more than another for a period; that does not diminish our commitment as a two-state entity working in the lower 146 miles of the Columbia River to work throughout our study area. The NEP defines our mission and our work; the 501(c)(3) status defines how we do our work.

We are the only two-state entity working with the private sector and local, state, federal, and tribal governments to address issues in the lower Columbia River. The Board of Directors includes representatives from the diverse interests and diverse geography of the region to meet its own needs and the requirements of the NEP.

The Estuary Partnership is organized as a nonprofit under Oregon law and adheres to those statutes and rules. The US Department of Treasury through the IRS makes the determination regarding status as a 501(c)(3) entity. The organization must meet specific requirements to retain this designation. A 501(c)(3) is a public charity organized for specific public benefit, the Estuary Partnership organized for scientific and educational purposes.

Nonprofit corporations have multiple requirements to ensure financial accountability and structure. The Board of Directors adopts Financial Procedures, Employee Policies, Bylaws, and Board Policies to ensure we meet the letter and intent of the law. The Board of Directors is the decision-making, policy body for the Estuary Partnership. A Board of Directors operates under specific comprehensive requirements by the State and the IRS in its operations and its structure; it has responsibility for the fiscal health of the organization. The Board of Directors may hire an Executive Director and authorize them to hire and manage other employees with a range of expertise needed to carry out the day-to-day responsibilities of the organization. The Executive Director of a nonprofit reports to and is accountable to the Board of Directors; the employees report to and are accountable to the Executive Director. The Board may delegate specific duties and authorities to its committees and or the Executive Director. Nonprofit organizations that receive more than a specific amount of federal funds, as set by the IRS, must undergo an independent financial audit and what is called an A-133 audit.

The Estuary Partnership Board of Directors is a policy board, meaning it hires and maintains professional staff. This is different than what is often referred to as a ‘working board’; in that case Board members play a more direct role in carrying out the day-to-day operations of the organization.

Study Area

The study area focuses on and along the lower 146 miles of the Columbia River, an area of approximately 5,900 square miles from Bonneville Dam to the Pacific Ocean that includes 28 cities, nine counties, and 45 school districts in Oregon and Washington. This geography was designated as part of the Lower Columbia River NEP nomination materials, which identified the study area as the tidally influenced waters of the mainstem Columbia River.



Figure 1 Map of the Estuary Partnership Study Area

The Estuary Partnership's Guiding Documents

Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan

Each NEP is required to create and implement a Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (Management Plan or CCMP) that addresses water quality, sediment quality, living resources, land use, and water resources. EPA provides NEP grants to create the base program.

Management Plans are by definition and intent long-range plans. The Estuary Partnership develops six-year implementation strategies to guide more specific objectives. Management Plans are developed with extensive public input. Please see our original Management Plan¹ and our 2011 update².

Management Plan Goals and Actions

- Increase habitat and habitat function for multiple species; restore 25,000 acres of habitat by 2025.
- Conserve land to protect water quality and habitat; reduce impacts from land use practices; reduce armored shoreline by 10% by 2025; maintain impervious surface at no more than 15%.
- Reduce or remove contaminants and clean up contaminated sites to improve water quality.
- Provide education and engagement activities and provide data and information for a range of audiences; reach 5,000 students each year and host at least ten volunteer events each year.
- Convene and coordinate partners to enhance regional strategies and partnerships and heighten protection of the lower Columbia River.

In 2011, the Board updated the actions to incorporate the sixteen years of regional experience implementing the Management Plan, incorporate climate change adaptations, set new targets, and streamline actions. The result is a set of 17 actions that give concise directions for the region and provide specific targets. Each of the 17 actions can be identified as shared actions or actions for which the Estuary Partnership has assumed sole responsibility. The Shared and Estuary Partnership actions are further categorized as follows:

- Shared Actions:
 - Habitat Restoration
 - Land Use Practices
 - Water Quality and Contaminant Reduction
- Estuary Partnership Actions:
 - Education and Stewardship
 - Regional Coordination and Synchronicity

The Estuary Partnership is currently in the early stages of a CCMP Update. Through the development of the Strategic Direction in 2022, which is detailed in the following sections, several areas were identified that may require further development within the CCMP. Those focus areas are either addressed minimally or not at all in the current CCMP and should be reexamined to identify if they are still accurate, require new actions, or should be updated in some other way within the CCMP. Those areas are:

¹ <https://www.estuarypartnership.org/1999-management-plan>

² <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.estuarypartnership.org/sites/default/files/CCMP%20Action%20Update%20Final%200212.pdf>

- Climate Change
- Recreation and Access
- Environmental Justice
- Community Education

Estuary Partnership Strategic Direction 2022-2025: A Revised Mission

In 2021 the Board and staff of the Estuary Partnership began a strategic planning process from which emerged the Strategic Direction for the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership 2022-2025. The Strategic Direction³ resulted in a renewed mission for the Estuary Partnership – *To restore and care for the waters and ecosystems of the lower Columbia River, for current and future generations of fish, wildlife, and people.* The revised mission joined our vision, commitment and core values in considering the lower river as an interconnected system of biological and human systems, all dependent upon a healthy river.

Estuary Partnership Commitment and Core Values

From our Strategic Direction, “realizing our vision and bringing new thinking and new approaches to our work requires a commitment to deep organizational change, a re-orientation towards a more collective and reciprocal way of being. To see the river and our relationship to it in a new way, we must also shift how we relate to each other, to our partners, and to the natural world. This commitment requires us to adjust many aspects of our work, from our restoration and education approaches to how we plan, budget, and fundraise. In addition, the biases we hold must be identified, and the language we use and the way we think will need to change accordingly. Completing these shifts will take many years, far beyond the life of this strategic plan. The detailed goals and strategies that follow describe the first steps towards realizing our vision.”

Our team, Board and staff, set this commitment, *Mirroring the relationship of the river and our communities, we are making a fundamental organizational shift towards an interconnected ethos of “We, not I.”* And the four following Core Values:

- Mutual Benefit- We work with partners to identify and achieve shared goals. We develop and nurture authentic connections within and outside our organization by listening carefully, building interpersonal relationships with organizations and individuals, and grounding ourselves in humility and shared leadership. We center the river and the good of the whole in our decisions.
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion- We take action and commit resources to connecting with the full diversity of communities and people living along the lower Columbia River. We engage, seek to understand, and follow the advice of communities of color and other people whose voices have been excluded from decision-making about the river.
- Science and Stewardship- Our strategies and actions reflect our commitment to scientific principles and traditional ecological knowledge. Our programs, projects, and operations take into account long-term consequences. We conserve natural resources and minimize the environmental and social impact of our actions. We prioritize solutions that benefit those who have been most affected by negative impacts to the health of the river.
- The Courage to Change- We step willingly into new ways of thinking. We encourage each other to be creative, flexible, adaptable, and innovative. We commit to the pursuit of our goals, even in the face of risk. We actively support the personal and professional development needed to

³ <https://www.estuarypartnership.org/who-we-are/strategic-direction-2022-2025>

evolve as an organization and as individuals. We recognize failures and mistakes as opportunities for learning.

Estuary Partnership's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 3-Year Strategy

Since 2017, the Estuary Partnership's Board and staff have placed a priority on work to further our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) goals. Board and staff attended multiple training sessions and engaged in deep conversation and learning. From that early work a DEI Steering Team was launched that includes representatives from the Board and all segments of the organization. The DEI Steering Team continues to meet monthly. In 2019, an effort to create an organizational Equity Engagement and Strategy Process (EESP) began. The DEI Steering Team developed the DEI 3-Year Strategy⁴ drawing from the bold vision and goals contained in the original EESP process.

In the DEI Strategy, the organization has identified a desired state consisting of priority areas that we see as the most relevant and urgent in moving our DEI work forward. Those priority areas are:

- Communications
- Programming
- Performance Measures
- Board
- Authentic Partnership
- Financial Position
- Workplace Culture
- Leadership and Capacity Building

Traditional Ecological Knowledge and DEI – Changing Approaches to Our Work

Land Acknowledgement

The lower Columbia River (Wimahl in Upper Chinook, Nch'i-Wàna in Sahaptin) has been inhabited and stewarded by numerous tribes and bands of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial, and these peoples continue to have a deep and abiding connection to our lands and waters. The broad geography of the lower Columbia historically included dozens of seasonal and permanent villages and an interconnected web of tribal affiliations. Tribes including the Chinook, Clatsop, Kathlamet, Wahkiakum, Multnomah, Cascades, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla, Wasco, Clackamas, Cowlitz, Skilloot and Atfalati have ancestral connections to the lower Columbia and continue to be stewards of the river. We recognize that tribal territories were often shared and overlapping, and that this may be an incomplete list of those who lived on these lands. Many of the people of these tribes and bands are now members of the federally recognized Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, Cowlitz Indian Tribe, Quinalt Indian Nation, and the still unrecognized Chinook Indian Nation.

We pay respect to the elders, both past and present, who have stewarded the waters and lands of the Columbia River throughout generations.

The Columbia River has provided generously for the people who live along it. But in the two centuries since the Lewis and Clark expedition first forged connections with local tribes in what would become the

⁴ <https://www.estuarypartnership.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/DEI%20Strategy%202022-2025.pdf>

Pacific Northwest, settlement and development by the United States has caused great harm to the health of the river, along with the tribes' spiritual and cultural connections to it. There is a legacy of displacement, violence and oppression that has brought many of us to this land. We acknowledge, too, that some of us share an unequal burden of responsibility for this harm, for there are many other communities of color affected by environmental racism, discrimination, and oppression.

With this acknowledgement⁵, it is the commitment of the Estuary Partnership to take responsibility for ways we have perpetuated inequality and oppression, and to act with respect and intention as we move forward alongside tribal partners. We commit to listening to the stories of tribal neighbors and elders, and to amplify their lessons. We commit to shift our perspective and to take inclusive approaches to integrate traditional ecological knowledge into education, land management and restoration practices.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

As the Estuary Partnership has grown in its DEI work, our learning about the rich Indigenous practices and cultures in the lower basin have gained prominence in our learning, discussion, and work. In April 2021, Dr. David Lewis from Oregon State University met with staff to share the Indigenous history in the lower river, understanding the importance of wapato and other resources, and the traditional relationships with the river and land that we now occupy. In 2020 the staff from the Estuary Partnership began participating in sessions of the Confluence⁶ Field School, an opportunity to learn directly from Indigenous peoples about their culture, history, and how we can be better partners as we work on their land. In 2022 the Estuary Partnership began sponsoring the Field School sessions and inviting participation from local, state, and federal partners.

As we continue to learn, we have begun to apply these lessons. During the completion of the Steigerwald Reconnection Project, the largest restoration project to ever be completed on the lower Columbia, the restoration team learned how to collect wapato seeds and bulbs and plant them elsewhere to increase their abundance. Wapato is an important first food that was previously abundant in lower river wetlands. In 2021 a tribal elder from the Chinook nation, Sam Robinson, along with other tribal members performed a traditional blessing and then led the planting of wapato at the project site. At the same project, we were honored to receive a blessing just prior to a fish salvage operation that resulted in the unprecedented collection of over 45,000 juvenile lampreys, another important species for Indigenous peoples in the region. In our Community Programs riparian restoration work the team has embarked on early efforts to change standard practices in site preparation and maintenance. The desire is to shift from practices that rely heavily on chemical applications toward practices that rely on mechanical preparation and maintenance. These practices are not only more reflective of our organizational values but may also result in restored areas being more reflective of traditional ecological knowledge and practices.

Current Integration of Environmental Justice into Estuary Partnership Programs

According to EPA's definition, Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards,

⁵ <https://www.estuarypartnership.org/who-we-are/land-acknowledgement>

⁶ <https://www.confluenceproject.org/>

and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work⁷. The Estuary Partnership has been working toward practices that more fully meet the goals of Environmental Justice throughout our work. Some recent examples and efforts include:

- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation-funded Bay-to-Bay Climate Resilience project begins with community engagement, rather than with a project. Along with our partners at Washington Sea Grant, we are working with local communities in Washington to identify community assets and risks related to climate change, particularly flooding, and will then work alongside them to identify nature-based solutions to help protect community resources.
- The Community Programs and Environmental Education Team has a long history of working with disadvantaged youth through a variety of opportunities including:
 - Stormwater retrofit projects that remove pavement and create greenspaces in schools, lessening heat islands and creating outdoor spaces for school communities. In the map to the right, are the schools where this work has been completed, the yellow stars were reported in the 2020 State of the Estuary Report while the white stars were reported in the 2015 State of the Estuary Report.
 - Paddling programs that work with local communities of color and other overburdened communities to increase their connection with the river. The map below shows the reach of Community Programs work throughout the study area.



Figure 2 School Yard stormwater retrofit projects.

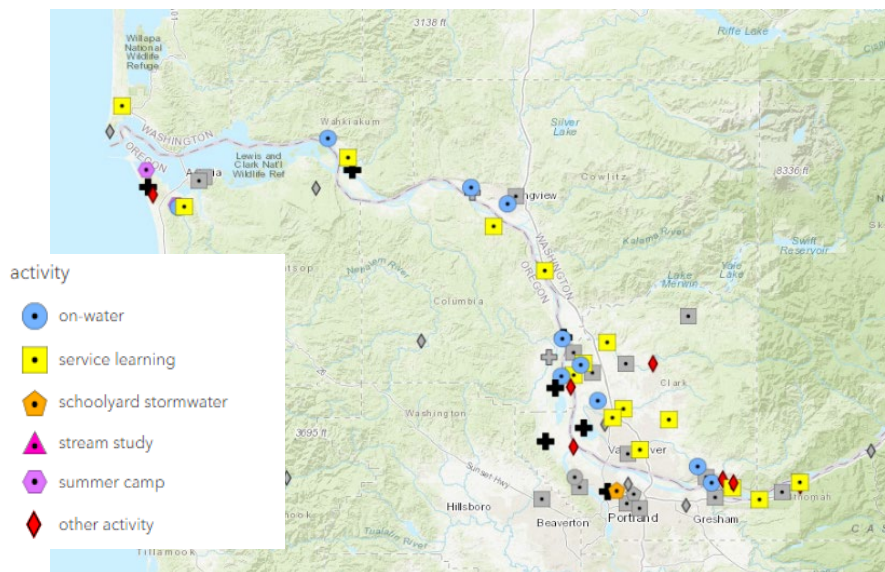


Figure 3 On Water Paddling programs by LCEP

⁷ <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

Defining Disadvantaged Communities in the Study Area

Disadvantaged, Overburdened, or Environmental Justice Communities?

The EPA describes in their Equity Plan Guidance, “there are several related terms used to describe communities facing hardship or who have historically benefitted unevenly from federal funds, including disadvantaged, overburdened, underserved. Under Justice40 EPA is using the term “disadvantaged” for consistency with E.O. 14008 and other programmatic terminologies. EPA notes that this terminology is distinct from “environmental justice” community, which is defined as a community facing disproportionate environmental, public health, and other burdens that reduce quality of life. These terms should not be used interchangeably. Most environmental justice communities are also likely disadvantaged (depending on the criteria set for the latter’s definition), but not all disadvantaged communities are environmental justice communities.”

There are multiple methodologies used to define and identify overburdened or disadvantaged communities, including definitions from the EPA, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), and by both Washington and Oregon. While the EPA will use one methodology to assess the Estuary Partnership’s baseline and progress towards meeting our equity goals, it is important to understand and review the landscape of methodologies and definitions that may be applied in our study area.

Existing Definitions:

The EPA Supplemental Demographic Index

EPA has created agency-specific Supplemental Indices Threshold Maps for use when implementing Justice40 related efforts. The Index is used to identify the baseline for NEP performance, as a definition for identifying communities, for tracking benefits, and for goal setting, related to communities that EPA refers to as *disadvantaged*. The updated EPA EJScreen tool includes a new five-factor Supplemental Demographic Index which offers a different perspective on community-level vulnerability. The supplemental demographic index averages:

- Percent low-income;
- Percent limited English speaking;
- Percent less than high school education;
- Percent unemployed; and
- Low life expectancy.

The Estuary Partnership’s Study area with the overlay of the Supplemental Demographic Index in EJScreen shows communities or portions of communities within the study area, shown shaded in red, that exceed 80% of the national percentiles in an average of the five metrics listed above.

The EJScreen tool requires an average of the five indicators to be above 80% and does not include indicators related to climate change, environment, or other factors that may put a

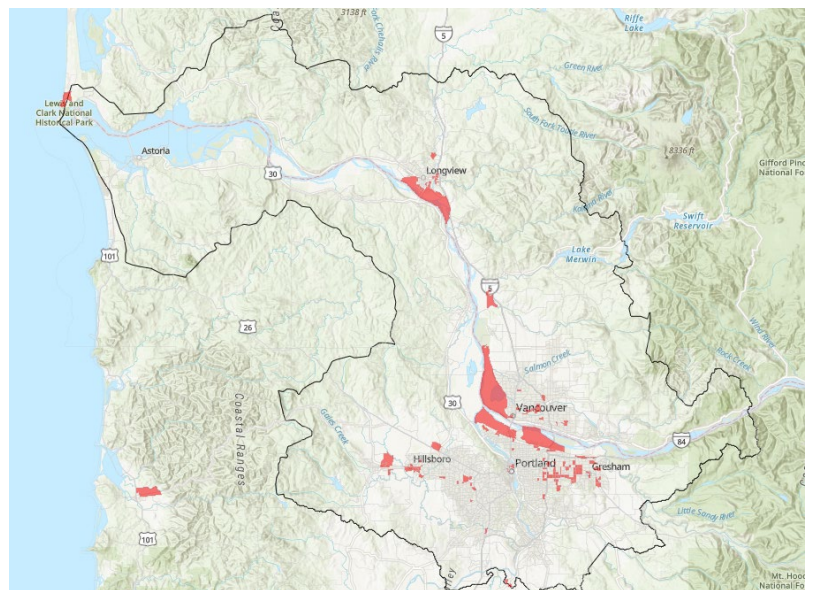


Figure 4 EPA's EJScreen mapping

community at a disadvantage. Further, while there are census tracts within the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area that are identified, once the screening tool is applied outside of the metropolitan area, using those five indicators tends to limit the results and identify communities based solely on socioeconomic indicators rather than including burdens that are widely recognized as falling unequally upon disadvantaged communities such as air and water pollution, impacts from transportation, and lack of access to healthcare.

The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) Justice40 Screening Tool

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), to provide guidance to agencies in meeting the requirements of Executive Order 14008, which includes the Justice40 initiative, created the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). This tool uses a methodology that identifies indicators of burdens within a specific census tract. Unlike the EJScreen methodology that identifies communities that meet a minimum of 80% of the national percentile across all five metrics, CEJST identifies communities as disadvantaged if they are at or above the threshold for one or more burdens or at or above the threshold for an associated socioeconomic burden. Additionally, the CEJST also identifies census tracts that are surrounded by identified disadvantaged communities and are at or below the 50% threshold for income to be disadvantaged.⁸

The CEQ CEJST tool defines a community as disadvantaged if any of the identified socioeconomic burdens, that may impact communities as a result of a lack of environmental justice, are met within a census tract:

- Climate Change – if a community is at or above the 90th percentile for:
 - Expected agriculture loss rate, or
 - Expected building loss rate, or
 - Expected population loss rate, or
 - Projected flood risk, or
 - Projected wildfire risk.
 - AND are at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Energy – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at the 90th percentile for energy cost or PM2.5 in the air.
 - AND are at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Health – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for asthma OR diabetes OR heart disease OR low life expectancy.
 - AND are at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Housing – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - Experienced historic underinvestment OR is at or above the 90th percentile for housing cost OR lack of green space OR lack of indoor plumbing OR lead paint
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Legacy pollution – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - Has at least one abandoned mine land OR Formerly Used Defense Sites OR is at or above the 90th percentile for proximity to hazardous waste facilities OR proximity to

⁸ <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/methodology#3/33.47/-97.5>

Superfund sites (National Priorities List (NPL)) OR proximity to Risk Management Plan (RMP) facilities.

- AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Transportation – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for diesel particulate matter exposure OR transportation barriers OR traffic proximity and volume.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Water and wastewater – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for underground storage tanks and releases OR wastewater discharge.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Workforce development – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for linguistic isolation OR low median income OR poverty OR unemployment.
 - AND fewer than 10% of people ages 25 or older have a high school education (i.e., graduated with a high school diploma).

The CEQs CEJST mapping tool identifies significantly more areas within the study area as disadvantaged including some overlapping areas identified by the EPA indices. The CEJST tool also identifies more rural communities that face challenges from the diverse set of climate, environmental, and social indicators. For example, much of Columbia County, Oregon is identified due to burdens from climate change, energy, legacy pollution, transportation, and the socioeconomic threshold of at or above 65th percentile for low income. This is an area that EJSscreen does not identify, but where the Estuary Partnership has



ongoing water quality and environmental education initiatives. The entire study area as mapped by CEJST, with identified disadvantaged communities shaded grey:

Figure 5 CEQ's CEJST mapping of the study area.

Environmental Justice in Washington and Oregon

The Estuary Partnership is well positioned within two states, Washington, and Oregon, that have strong commitments to and definitions that identify and prioritize communities impacted disproportionately by

exposure to environmental harms. Washington Chapter 70A.02 RCW⁹ defines Environmental Justice and obligations for state agencies when working with communities. The State of Washington also has an ongoing Partnership Agreement with EPA that, in the 2021-2023 Agreement¹⁰, added emphasis on Environmental Justice. In Washington, the Office of Equity and Environmental Justice leads the Department of Ecology implementation strategy to reduce pollution and health disparities in at-risk communities.

Washington Health Disparities

In Washington, the State Department of Health (DOH) manages data and mapping related to environmental justice, mapping communities based on health disparities. The tool recognizes that communities with lower incomes, less access to healthcare and education, and poorer overall health share a disproportionate burden of environmental pollution¹¹. The tool uses census data from the American Community Survey. The environmental risk factors used to map community health disparities include:

- Limited English – Percentage of the population aged 5+ who speak English less than very well. This data is based on the annual Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). According to DOH, “Among individuals and communities that have high levels of linguistic isolation, there is a concern about the limited access to health education and health services. Lack of proficiency may place individuals at the loss of clear communication at times of environmental risk or emergencies such as with hazards and air pollution. In addition, households that are linguistically limited might experience greater racial discrimination, social isolation, and increased exposure to environmental pollution.”¹²
- No Access to Private Vehicle – Percentage of households with no vehicle. This is data from the ACS.
- No High School Diploma – Percentage of the population over 25 without a high school diploma, using data from the ACS. The justification for using this measure to illustrate the impact of low educational attainment states, “There are many aspects of low educational attainment that impact daily life and affect individual susceptibility to environmental pollution. For instance, low educational attainment may lead to stress, lack of social support, limited occupational opportunities, reduced access to nutritious food, and limited access to healthcare services which can contribute to vulnerability to environmental pollution.”¹³
- Population Age 65+ Living Alone – Percentage of the population who are over 65 and live alone; this data is also from the ACS.

⁹ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=70A.02>

¹⁰ <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Accountability-transparency/Government-coordination/Partnering-with-the-EPA>

¹¹ chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/311-011-EHD-Map-Tech-Report_0.pdf?uid=63bb61f324d16

¹² <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/WTNPortal#!q0=620>

¹³ <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/WTNPortal#!q0=1383>

- Population with a Disability – Percentage of the population who identify a disability in the ACS.

Washington has combined these five distinct health disparity indicators into one map that shows places in our study area where high percentages of these social, economic, and environmental factors may contribute to health disparities in a community. The mapping shows rankings, low to high, mimicking the percentages illustrated in the EJSscreen mapping, with the three darkest shades indicating areas exceeding 80% average or higher.

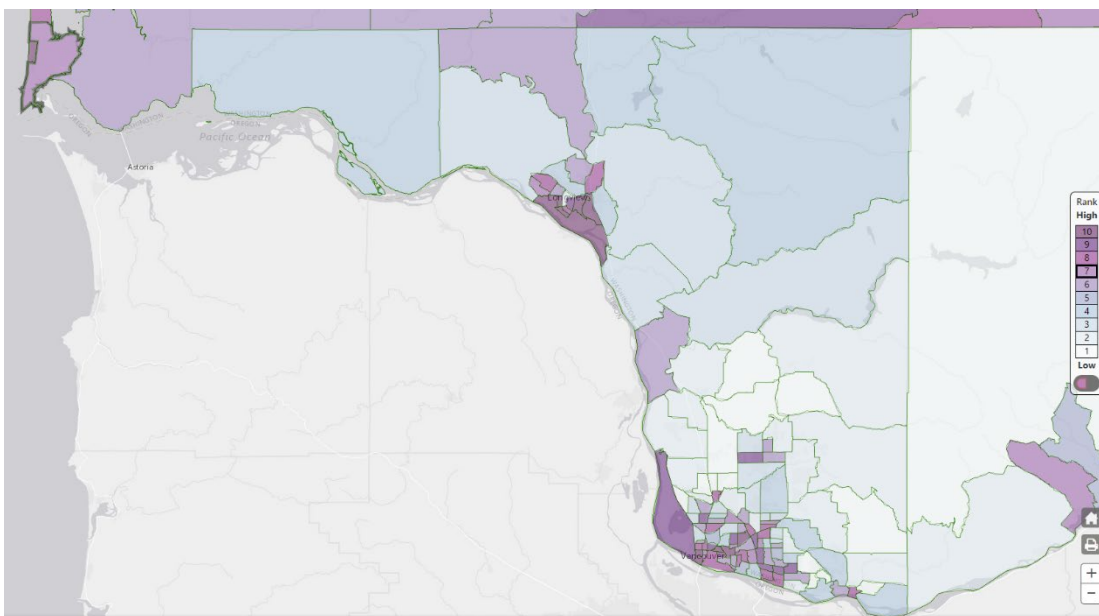


Figure 6 Washington DOH Health Disparity Mapping

Oregon Environmental Justice Communities

In Oregon HB 4077 created the Environmental Justice Council¹⁴, formerly known as the Environmental Justice Taskforce. HB 4077, adopted in 2021, expanded the definition of Environmental Justice communities to “broadly include communities of color, communities experiencing lower incomes, communities experiencing health inequities, tribal communities, rural communities, remote communities, coastal communities, communities with limited infrastructure and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes and adversely harmed by environmental and health hazards, including seniors, youth, and persons with disabilities.” This definition gives us a wide swath of communities to work in in the study area. Unfortunately mapping related to this state level initiative is not expected to be complete until 2025.

¹⁴ <https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Pages/environmental-justice-council.aspx>

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, known as Title I, are federal funds that are intended to assist students from low-income families. Schools participating in Title I offer targeted assistance to students from low-income families who are failing or at risk of failing to meet academic standards. If 40% or more of a school's population is from low-income families, then the school is eligible to operate a schoolwide program serving all students. The Estuary Partnership already tracks the Title I schools we serve with outdoor and in-classroom science education programming. The below map identifies schools in the study area that are Title I eligible schools.

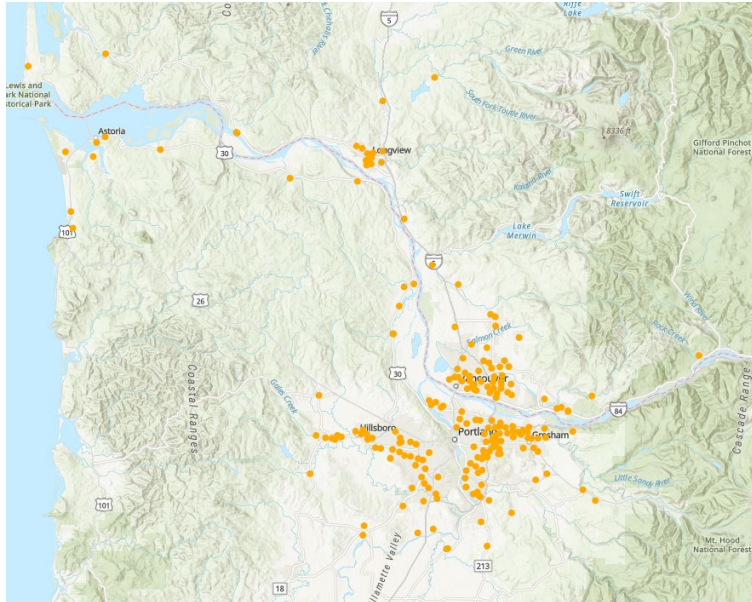


Figure 7 Title I Schools in Washington and Oregon

Tribal Lands

There is a small section of Tribal Trust Lands within the study area. This is a small, 0.3 square mile piece of land that is recognized as reservation or trust land that belongs to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe.

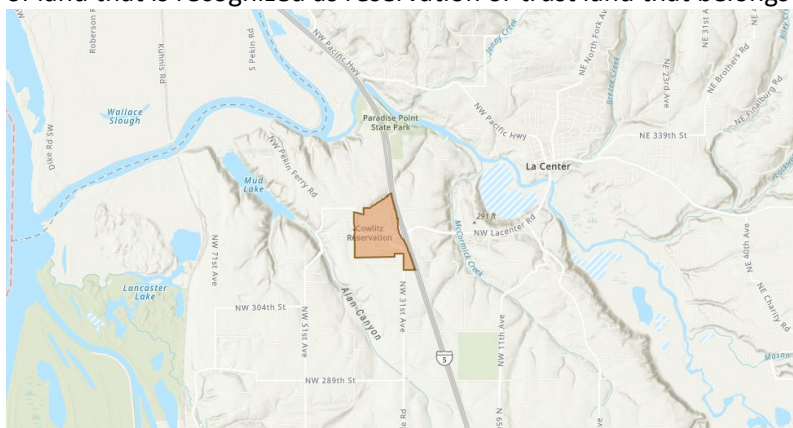


Figure 8 Tribal Lands in the study area

The Estuary Partnership Definition and Methodology:

The Estuary Partnership represents a large and diverse study area, geographically, socially, economically, and from a climate perspective. The study area starts at the Bonneville Dam, in the middle of the Columbia River Gorge, at the western edge of the Cascades. It flows through the large metropolitan areas of Portland and Vancouver with their diverse blend of people and economies, then continues downriver another 100 miles through more bluffs and hills, farmland, and small communities. Finally, it flows through a changeable lower estuary in the Astoria, Ilwaco, Youngs Bay and Baker Bay area. The communities in this study area range from small towns of less than a hundred people to a metropolitan region of over 2.5 million.

Defining disadvantaged communities within the study area requires a set of indicators that mirror the diversity and scale of the communities within the region as well as the range of social, environmental, climate change, and economic burdens that face the people that live here. Therefore, the Estuary Partnership will utilize a combination of the EJScreen Supplemental Demographic Index, the CEQ CEJST indicators, Washington's health disparities methodology, Tribal areas, and Title I Schools. The indicators we will use within the study area are:

- A community is within a census tract that meets or exceeds the 80th percentile for all these indicators, averaged:
 - Percent low-income;
 - Percent limited English speaking;
 - Percent less than high school education;
 - Percent unemployed;
 - Low life expectancy.
 - No Access to Private vehicle;
 - Population Age 65+ Living Alone;
 - Population with a Disability.
- A community is within a census tract in which any one of these burdens are met:
 - Climate Change – if a community is at or above the 90th percentile for:
 - Expected agriculture loss rate, or
 - Expected building loss rate, or
 - Expected population loss rate, or
 - Projected flood risk, or
 - Projected wildfire risk.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
 - Energy – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at the 90th percentile for energy cost or PM2.5 in the air.
 - AND are at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
 - Health – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for asthma OR diabetes OR heart disease OR low life expectancy.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
 - Housing – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - Experienced historic underinvestment OR is at or above the 90th percentile for housing cost OR lack of green space OR lack of indoor plumbing OR lead paint.

- AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Legacy pollution – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - Has at least one abandoned mine land OR Formerly Used Defense Sites OR are at or above the 90th percentile for proximity to hazardous waste facilities OR proximity to Superfund sites (National Priorities List (NPL)) OR proximity to Risk Management Plan (RMP) facilities.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Transportation – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for diesel particulate matter exposure OR transportation barriers OR traffic proximity and volume.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Water and wastewater – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for underground storage tanks and releases OR wastewater discharge.
 - AND is at or above the 65th percentile for low income.
- Workforce development – if a community is within a census tract that:
 - IS at or above the 90th percentile for linguistic isolation OR low median income OR poverty OR unemployment.
 - AND fewer than 10% of people ages 25 or older have a high school education (i.e., graduated with a high school diploma).
- Title I Schools – Eligible to participate in the Title I Schools Program.
- Tribal areas

The map below identifies the schools in Washington and Oregon that are eligible for Title I participation.

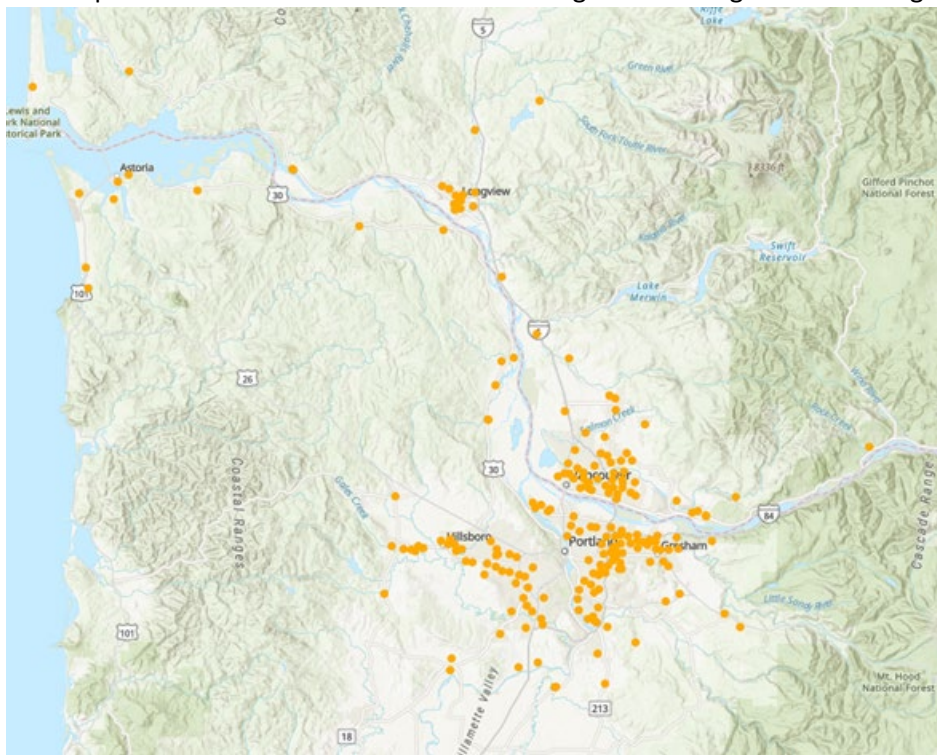


Figure 9 Title I Eligible Schools in WA and OR

The mapping below illustrates the Estuary Partnership’s study area, outlined in black. Within the study area are areas shaded in magenta. The shaded areas represent census blocks that are identified by one or more of the metrics listed above as overburdened or disadvantaged communities. The study area is outlined in a black hashed and yellow line. The map can be accessed at <https://lcep.maps.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=f8b09652feda4b119d50716a8c66f4fb>

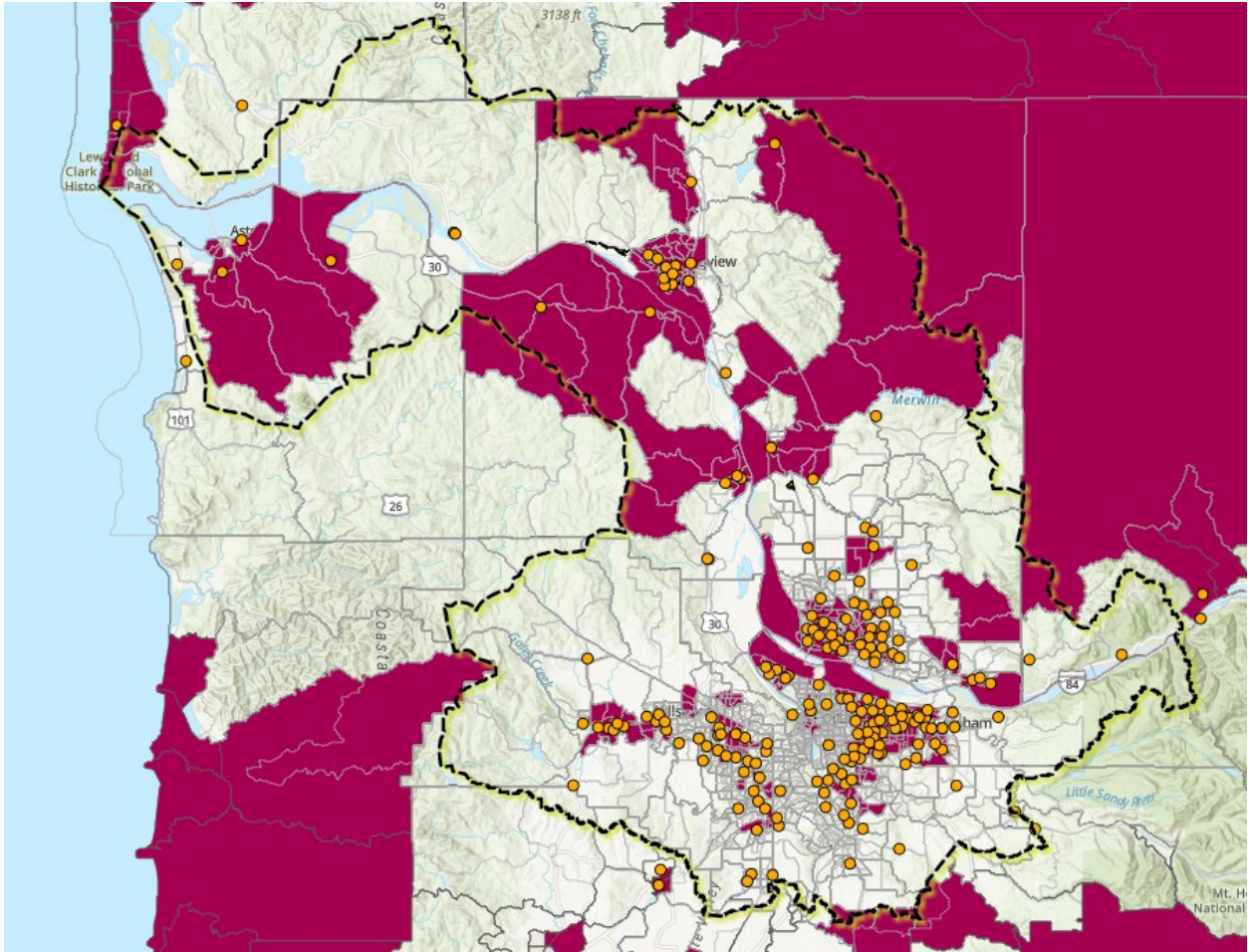


Figure 10 LCEP Study Area with proposed criteria.

Baseline Analysis of Disadvantaged Communities

EPA has provided a completed baseline analysis using EJScreen for all NEPs. That baseline analysis for the Estuary Partnership is below:

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership Baseline Analysis - EPA

Year	# of Habitat Projects in Disadvantaged Communities	Total Habitat Projects	% of Habitat Projects in Disadvantaged Communities	Section 320 Funds Invested in Disadvantaged Communities through Habitat Projects (\$)	Total Section 320 Funds Used in Habitat Projects (\$)	% of Section 320 Funds Invested in Disadvantaged Communities through Habitat Projects	Habitat Project Costs Invested in Disadvantaged Communities (\$)	Total Habitat Project Costs (\$)	% of Habitat Project Costs Invested in Disadvantaged Communities
2017	0	11	0.00%	0	0	-	0	5,236,926	0.00%
2018	1	10	10.00%	0	0	-	0	2,120,150	0.00%
2019	0	12	0.00%	0	0	-	0	13,022,000	0.00%
2020	0	9	0.00%	0	0	-	0	2,392,000	0.00%
2021	0	8	0.00%	0	0	-	0	30,350,000	0.00%
Total	1	50	2.00%	0	0	-	0	53,121,076	0.00%

Numeric Targets (Justice 40)

The Estuary Partnership completes programming in a wide range of program areas including habitat restoration, stormwater and green infrastructure, environmental education, research and monitoring, on-water programs, and community education. The BIL required that NEPs set a numeric target for activities supporting disadvantaged communities that contribute to achieving a target of at least 40% of benefits and investments to such communities for the national program over the lifespan of total NEP BIL. NEPs were encouraged to be ambitious and realistic.

Estuary Partnership Numeric Target

The Estuary Partnership is setting a numeric target of 40% of EPA BIL funding dollars to go towards mapped disadvantaged communities in the study area. The strengths our program brings to this effort as well as the challenges of ensuring not only the benefits of our BIL projects, but the monetary investment is focused within mapped disadvantaged communities are listed below.

Strengths –

- Communities benefit from habitat restoration projects even if the project is outside of a specific mapped overburdened/disadvantaged community. A 2013 study (Max Nielson-Pincus, 2013), found that 80 cents of every restoration dollar spent in a county stays in that county, and 90 cents stays in state. The study also showed that every \$1 million of public investment in clean water and habitat restoration creates about 15-24 local jobs.
- By the nature of the work, habitat restoration normally happens where people do not live. But much of our habitat restoration work happens in the urbanized areas in the eastern end of our study area including the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan areas and the western gorge. Restoration work creates safe, natural areas for people to connect with the outdoors. For example; the major restoration project at Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge happened outside of any mapped disadvantaged communities, but well within the boundaries of the Portland-Vancouver urban area and within just a few miles of several mapped disadvantaged communities. The Steigerwald Reconnection Project increased outdoor recreation opportunities for the 100,000+ visitors that come to the refuge annually, including those who reach the refuge via a public transit stop at its front gate or via the riverfront walking and biking path.
- The Estuary Partnership uses a holistic approach to program delivery. That approach brings community members to plant native trees and shrubs at our largescale habitat restoration project sites and brings school children from nearby communities to those sites for field trips and outdoor experiences. One project site will typically host multiple years of classroom field trips, potentially serving as an outdoor classroom for hundreds of students.
- Environmental education programming at the Estuary Partnership achieves exceptional reach throughout the region. In the last three years, the Education Team has provided environmental education programming to 59 different schools in Oregon and Washington. During the 2022-23 school year the program has worked with students in 35 school districts—33% of which are Title I eligible—resulting in science education, field trips, and hands on learning for 720 students.
- The Estuary Partnership’s commitment to learning and integrating Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) has introduced the opportunity for our habitat restoration sites to be available for Indigenous peoples to utilize our sites for traditional food gathering practices. While there are few federally recognized tribal lands in our study area, there are both nearby recognized

Tribes like the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and unrecognized Tribes like the Chinook Indian Nation who use the lands and waters of the lower Columbia River for fishing, gathering, and other purposes. For example, peoples from the Chinook Nation and Cowlitz Indian Tribe both traveled to the Steigerwald Lake site to harvest wapato and collect wapato seed. The Chinook Nation also regularly paddle their large canoe on the lower Columbia River, including most years, at least once in collaboration with the Estuary Partnership's Big Canoes.

- Stormwater and green infrastructure projects tend to be of two scale; smaller projects that are relatively inexpensive and require less time to implement; and larger, complex, multi-year, more expensive projects that address large parking areas, street right of way, or other large areas of impervious surface.
- The Carbon Sequestration Project funded by BIL will be rooted in the collection of data in multiple areas and habitats within the study area. The first assessment site is in an EJ mapped area near Astoria, Oregon. While the assessment equipment is passive and provides no real monetary benefit to a community, there is induced investment from staff working on the project site and the potential benefits related to assessment and eventual conservation of wetland habitats within specific EJ communities.
- The on-water programs and Lower Columbia River Water Trail are well-known and popular programs. Summer-time paddling programs provide exceptional opportunities to partner with a wide range of community groups and introduce community members to the river. Through more than 30 paddles per year, our on-water programs typically serve more than 300 youth and adults – almost all of them coming from partnerships and collaboration with community groups representing diverse and low-income populations.

Challenges –

- Many of the mapped disadvantaged communities include significant amounts of impervious surface – industrial, urbanized areas where restoration/conservation is very expensive and impractical. Additionally, these locations are not identified as high value areas for salmon and steelhead recovery because of the relatively low ecological benefit, compared to an area that is surrounded by still relatively intact, functioning native habitats or low intensive agriculture.
- Geographic proximity does not necessarily correlate to community benefit.
- Locating project sites within overburdened communities, depending upon project type, can be challenging.
- A significant portion of the funding intended for our largest BIL funded project will be invested in equipment.
- Quantifying the benefits to a community may be difficult.
- Limiting participation to citizens of specific geographic areas can be difficult, as can documenting and verifying residency for data collection.

Key Activities

In accordance with the EPA Justice40 Plan, the Estuary Partnership will implement a range of activities with BIL and BIL leveraged funding. Those key activities include:

Habitat Restoration

Habitat Restoration is an action area within the Estuary Partnership's CCMP. All habitat restoration activities that utilize or leverage BIL funding will meet the goals of the following CCMP Actions:

- ACTION 2: Protect, conserve, and enhance priority habitats, particularly wetlands, on the mainstem of the lower Columbia River and in the estuary.
- ACTION 4: Establish and maintain Columbia River flows to meet ecological needs of the lower Columbia River and estuary.
- ACTION 5: Avoid the introduction of non-native invasive species.
- ACTION 6: Manage human-caused changes in the river morphology and sediment distribution within the Columbia River channel and estuary to protect native and desired species.

Habitat Restoration projects supported by BIL will benefit communities in a variety of ways including improving water quality and fish habitat, increasing recreational opportunities, reducing flood risk, and improving community resilience. Additionally, each of our habitat restoration projects also incorporate components of environmental education, community engagement, and stewardship.

Stormwater and Green Infrastructure

Stormwater and green infrastructure projects help meet the goals of the CCMP and are addressed within the following Land Use Practice Actions:

- ACTION 7: Develop floodplain management and shoreland protection programs.
- ACTION 8: Reduce and improve the water quality of stormwater runoff and other non-point source pollution.

There are a variety of stormwater and green infrastructure projects that will be supported by BIL with benefits realized by communities in a variety of ways. Direct investment in disadvantaged communities could provide additional economic value, while benefits would normally include improvements to water quality, reductions in flooding by slowing and reducing stormwater discharge, improvements in groundwater recharge which may improve water supply, decreases in urban heat islands, and reductions in public infrastructure costs.

Education and Stewardship

BIL will support a variety of environmental education programs and projects including outdoor science education with school-aged children, community engagement and stewardship, riparian restoration, on-water programming, and water trail projects. These activities are included in our CCMP under the Education and Stewardship Actions:

- ACTION 13: Provide information about the lower Columbia River and estuary that focuses on water quality, endangered species, habitat loss and restoration, biological diversity, and climate change to a range of users.
- ACTION 14: Create and implement education and volunteer opportunities for citizens of all ages to engage in activities that promote stewardship of the lower Columbia River and estuary.

- ACTION 15: Identify and improve public access to the river.

Education and stewardship activities will bring direct investment to disadvantaged communities. These activities will also result in a wide range of potential benefits to communities including improved academic achievement, increased commitments to environmental stewardship, increased connection and community involvement, improved public access, improved and increased recreational activities, and decreased invasive species.

On-Water Education and Water Trail Activities

BIL will provide funding and leverage for additional funding to support a variety of on-water education programs and activities associated with the Columbia Water Trail. The Estuary Partnership has a robust, summer-time paddling program that provides paddles for communities along the Columbia, particularly BIPOC and overburdened communities along the industrial sections of the river and those impacted by the Portland Harbor Super Fund site. BIL funds may also be used to fund or leverage infrastructure improvements along the lower river including new or improved non-motorized vessel launch sites, enhanced Water Trail wayfinding, and continued improvements to the trail and mapping.

- ACTION 13: Provide information about the lower Columbia River and estuary that focuses on water quality, endangered species, habitat loss and restoration, biological diversity, and climate change to a range of users.
- ACTION 14: Create and implement education and volunteer opportunities for citizens of all ages to engage in activities that promote stewardship of the lower Columbia River and estuary.
- ACTION 15: Identify and improve public access to the river.

Research and Monitoring

BIL will fund critical research and monitoring work in the estuary. Monitoring and research addresses goals in the CCMP related to Habitat Restoration, Land Use Practices, Water Quality and Contaminant Reduction, and Regional Coordination and Synchronicity, and is included in these CCMP Actions:

- ACTION 1: Inventory habitat types and attributes in the lower Columbia River and estuary and prioritize those that need protection and conservation; identify habitats and environmentally sensitive lands that should not be altered.
- ACTION 3: Monitor status and trends of ecosystem conditions.
- ACTION 9: Ensure that development is ecologically sensitive and reduces carbon emissions.
- ACTION 16: Facilitate and assist federal, tribal, state, and local governments' protection of the lower Columbia River and estuary.

Benefits from the implementation of research and monitoring projects supported by BIL include direct investment in disadvantaged communities, increased opportunities for community education and engagement, improved water quality, and improved information for communities and decision makers.

Public Engagement

Disadvantaged communities often do not have the same access to resources, information, and opportunity to engage in natural resource protection related activities. The Estuary Partnership seeks to create an informed, engaged public that makes choices and takes actions that increase protection and restoration of estuaries and their watersheds. The Estuary Partnership will continue to seek opportunities to promote environmental literacy, awareness, and stewardship through expanded

education and engagement opportunities for the public. The Estuary Partnership will also continue to engage regularly with a wide range of community partners, research and restoration partners, Tribes, local governments, and community members. These points of engagement will provide ongoing feedback on actual benefits received, investment opportunities, and programming.

Tracking Benefits

The Estuary Partnership will track investments and benefits across all BIL projects. Investments include the amount of funding directed at any one project including any leveraged funds and funding sources.

Benefits will include:

- Number of actions taken to prevent, reduce, or promote resilience to flooding.
- Number of green stormwater infrastructure measures implemented.
- Number of recreational activities/opportunities created, expanded, or improved.
- Number of individuals provided with education or community engagement opportunities.
- Additional benefits that may be connected to specific projects.

Additional benefits may be identified as future BIL funded projects are implemented. Those additional benefits will be included in the annual BIL workplans.

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The Estuary Partnership is committed to timely, responsive, and consistent stakeholder engagement. We recognize that our engagement, historically, has been very project-driven, we are striving to shift our engagement to be more community-driven. Updates to this Engagement Plan will be included in annual BIL Workplans and may be informed by regular stakeholder engagement, feedback, and the Estuary Partnership’s communications planning.

Unique Partners/Stakeholders and Timing - List of program-specific stakeholder groups and partners targeted for engagement.

Table 1 Partner, Stakeholder Engagement Table

Group / Partner / Community Name	Geographic Locale <i>[Local, State, Tribal, National]</i>	Type of Engagement Anticipated [Info distribution, public meetings, consultations, project design or implementation, etc.]	Rationale for Engagement <i>[key issue(s) addressed, etc.]</i>	Timing/ Regularity of engagement
LCEP Board of Directors and Executive Committee	Study Area	Info distribution, oversight, meetings, workshops	Policy and Oversight, CCMP Implementation Oversight	4x year (full board) 4-6x year (Exec. Committee)
LCEP DEI Steering Team	Study Area	Info distribution, meetings, workshops, project design, implementation	DEI and Environmental Justice policy and program development	12-16x year
Science Work Group	Study Area	Info distribution, meetings, workshops	Development of science policy and subject matter expertise	4x year
Confluence “Next Steps” Group	Study Area/Regional	Project design, implementation, information sharing	Development of programs and projects to increase engagement, particularly related to Indigenous peoples and TEK.	12x year
US EPA Region 10	National/Regional	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Policy and program development, DEI and Environmental Justice development, grant and workplan development and oversight	12x year
US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)	National/Regional	Information, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	3x year
United States Geologic Survey (USGS)	National/Regional/ Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research	2x year

University of Washington (U of W)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	12x year
NOAA	National/Regional	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	12x year
US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	National/Regional	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	12-16x year
Cowlitz Indian Tribe	Tribe - Regional, Study Area	Information Distribution, Consultations, Project Design, and Implementation	Information sharing, project specific engagement, monitoring, and research	4 x a year
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)	Statewide/Study area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	3-4x year
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)	Statewide/Study area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	3-4x year
Washington Department of Ecology	Statewide/Study area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	3-4x year
Washington Sea Grant	SW Washington/lower river	Public Meetings, information distribution, program/project development, implementation	Community-led discussions on SLR and climate change impacts in the lower river	10-12x year
Bonneville Power Administration	Regional/Study Area	Information Distribution, Consultations, Project Design, and Implementation	Information sharing, project specific engagement, monitoring, and research	12-24x year
Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB)	Regional/Study area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	3-4x year
Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Working Group	Regional/Study Area	Info distribution, meetings, workshops, implementation	Information sharing, program/project development focused on water quality and toxics in Columbia Basin	4x year
Columbia Basin Collaborative – Tributary & Mainstem Habitat Working Group	Regional	Information distribution, implementation	Information sharing, program/project development focused on water quality and toxics in Columbia Basin – four state working group.	4-6x year

Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce (CREST)	Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	3-4x year
Lower Columbia Solutions Group	Regional	Public meetings, information distribution	Information sharing, community and agency engagement focused on sedimentation in lower river	3x year
Lower Columbia Nature Network	Washington	Information distribution	Partnership development, program design, information sharing to support environmental education	12x year
Clean Water Coalition	Regional/Study Area	Public meetings, information distribution	Development of programs and projects to increase engagement particularly related to Indigenous communities and water quality	12x year
Portland Harbor Superfund Site Collaborative Group	Portland Harbor	Public meetings, information distribution	Information sharing, community and agency engagement focused on communities disproportionately impacted by the Portland Harbor Superfund site.	6-8x year
Columbia County Commissioners	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Water Quality, Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	2-4x year
Clark County Commissioners	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Water Quality, Environmental Education and Community Engagement, Project specific engagement	2-4x year
Columbia County Public Health Department	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Water Quality, Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	6-8x year
City of Scappoose, Oregon	NW Oregon local government	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Water Quality, Information sharing	2-4x year
City of St.	NW Oregon Local	Public Meetings,	Water Quality, Information	18-22x year

Helens, Oregon	Government	Information Distribution, Project Design	sharing, partner in water quality monitoring projects	
City of Vancouver, WA	SW Washington Local Government	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Water Quality, Environmental Education and Community Engagement, Project specific engagement	2-4x year
Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	6-8x year
Oregon Metro	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	1-4x year
Columbia Land Trust (CLT)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, Project Specific Engagement	4-6x year
Estuary Regional Technical Group (ERTG)	Regional/Study Area	Information Distribution, Consultations, Project Design and Implementation	Information sharing, project specific engagement, monitoring and research	2-4 x a year
Lower Columbia Watershed Council	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	2-4x year
Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	2-4x year
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)	Statewide/Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	2-4x year
Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU)	Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	12-24x year
Oregon State University (Blue Carbon Working Group)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	2-4x year

Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research	2x year
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL)	National/Regional/Study Area	Information Distribution, Consultations, Project Design and Implementation	Information sharing, project specific engagement, monitoring and research	2-4 x a year
Portland State University (PSU)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement, GIS, Partners in intern program implementation	2-4x year
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)	Statewide/Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	4-6x year
Scappoose Bay Watershed Council	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Water quality, Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	6-8x year
The Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (CRITFC)	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research, project specific engagement	2-4x year
The Nature Conservancy	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research	2x year
Tillamook National Estuary Partnership	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, monitoring and research	6-10x year
STEM/STEAM Groups	Study Area/Regional, county or ESD focus	Info distribution, consultation, project design	Partnership development, program design, information sharing to support environmental education	12-16x year
East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement	4-6x year

West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District	Regional/Study Area	Public Meetings, Information Distribution, Project Design	Information sharing, project specific engagement, collaborator on TECK projects	4-6x year
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