



Environmental Justice Grants Program

Identifying Issues – Building Capacity – Generating Solutions

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Program Overview
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History of the EJ Grants Program

EJ Grants Program began in 1994

- ❑ President Clinton issued Executive Order 12898 (Feb '94) focusing federal actions on addressing EJ

This first EJ Small Grants opportunity featured \$500,000 of total funding awarded to 71 organizations nationwide

- ❑ Individual awards totaled between \$5,000 - \$10,000 each

However, in '95, total funding jumped to \$3 million awarded to 175 organizations

- ❑ Individual awards totaled between \$15,000 - \$20,000 each
- ❑ Individual award totals have continued to rise ever since
- ❑ However, total available funding nationwide has decreased in recent years



Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning – Baltimore '2013



Uranium contamination and creating an action plan to access and develop alternative clean water sources in Navajo Nation – '2014



Objectives of the EJ Grants Program

- **(Obj.1) Get the Ball Rolling in the Community**
 - Support underserved communities through the initial steps of understanding, addressing, and developing solutions to local issues
 - Familiarize smaller organizations with the federal grants process
- **(Obj.2) Get Support to the People Most in Need**
 - Award funds to organizations that have direct connections with underserved communities, so our funds get as close as possible to the people most in need
- **(Obj.3) Sustain Project Progress and Momentum**
 - Facilitate partnership-building and identify additional resources to help communities continue and build on their EJ projects long after the project period



Grant Program Structure

➤ **Multiple EJ grant offerings:**

- 1) EJ Small Grants Program (EJSG)
- 2) EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving Program (EJCPS)
- 3) State Environmental Justice Cooperative Agreement Program (SEJCA)

➤ **2014 – 2019**

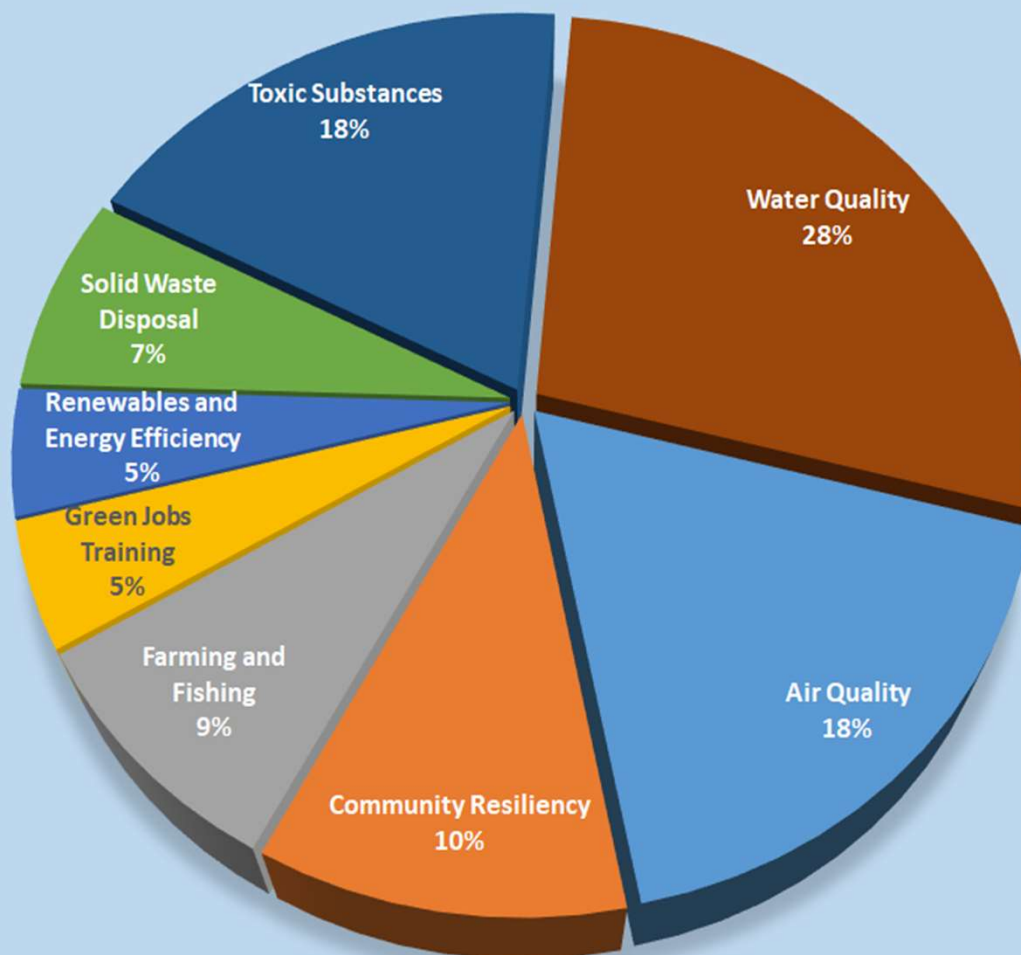
- Budget limitations only allowed one offering per year

➤ **In 2020, additional grant dollars allowed funding for all three offerings**



- Since 1994, \$34+ million awarded to over 1500 communities since 1994
- \$7+ million awarded to 151 communities between 2013 - 2018

FOCUS OF EJ GRANT PROJECTS (2013 – 2018)





Accomplishments of 2017 – 2019 EJ grants (44 communities)

- More than **90%** of the grantee organizations received their first EJ grant this decade.
- **12,350 community residents trained, educated, participated & engaged on EJ grant activities addressing disproportionate issues specific to their communities**
- **300 workshops, trainings, demonstrations & community forum activities conducted**
- **Grantees developed 50 new partnerships with local stakeholder groups - local governments, universities and other local non-profits.**
- **Over 3,000 trees planted, restored, and/or maintained in high need areas thru green jobs training programs & stormwater management projects**
- **Over 2,000 water & subsistence fish samples taken to address local water contamination**



EJ Small Grants (2019 - 2020)

- 62 Projects selected nationwide
- \$30,000 per project
- One-year project period
- 17 projects addressing Disaster Resiliency /
Emergency Preparedness



EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving (2020)

- 18 Projects selected nationwide
- \$120,000 per project
- Two-year project period



State EJ Grant Program (2020)

- 10 Projects selected nationwide
- \$200,000 per project
- Two-year project period
- COVID-19 Priority: 9 projects



EJ Grant Project Success Stories

Sitka Tribe of AK (Microplastics Sampling)

- 2017 EJ Small Grant project
- Project focused on collecting mussels and clams and sampling for the presence of microplastics and microfibers.

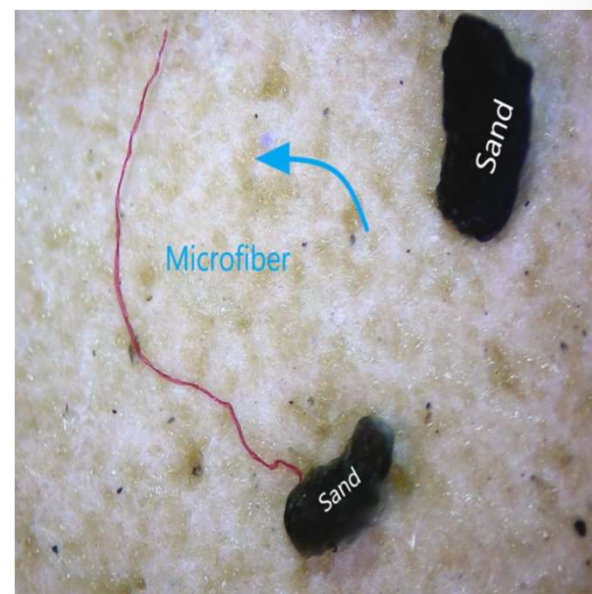


Collecting butter clams



Project Details:

- High school students collected 116 specimens. Tribal staff and University of Alaska analyzed samples
- Presence of plastics found in over 80% of all samples



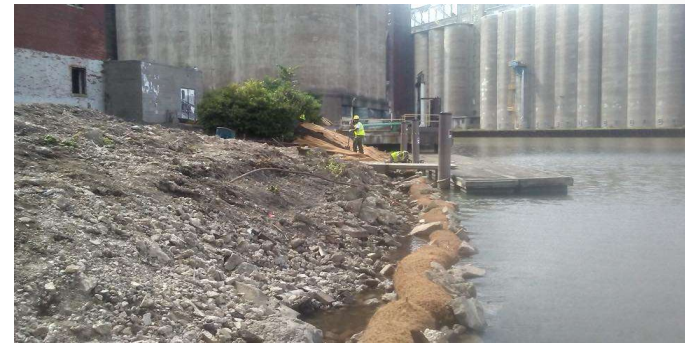
Microplastics found in samples



People United for Sustainable Housing (2016 – 2018)

- Location: Buffalo, NY
- Green Job Training EJCPS Project
- In 15 days, the trainees:
 - Planted 2,500 plug riparian grasses and 600 shrubs
 - Added 600 square yards of erosion-control covering, 200 cubic yards of compost and topsoil, and 40 cubic yards of mulch
 - Installed 100 linear feet of logs and 18 erosion-control logs

BEFORE:





AFTER

CASA DE Maryland (2016 – 2018)

- Location: Langley Park, MD
- Healthy Homes and Landlord Regulations EJCPS Project
- CASA worked to establish a broad multi-stakeholder coalition dedicated to advancing **healthy housing** and improving environmental conditions; while also educating and engaging residents to avoid environmental health hazards and work with management and the County to resolve complaints



Partners and tenants gather at CASA's Multicultural Center before beginning a community walk through Langley Park.

Project Accomplishments/Results



(Above) Representatives from CASA meet with the Prince George's County's Police Department to invite them to join the Langley Park Housing Matters Campaign

(Below) CASA Housing matters Town Hall Meeting



- ❑ Conducted baseline assessment of 170 apartment units:
 - 73% of units are infested with rodents
 - 30% of units have mold in the kitchen and bathroom
 - 9% of units do not have functional heaters
 - 63% of units have holes in the walls and chipped paint
- ❑ Developed and published Health Homes Handbook
 - 1,000 copies in Spanish and 500 in English
- ❑ Completed 60-page Housing Matters Recommendations Report aimed at informing local officials:
 - Met with 5 of the 9 members of the Prince George's County Council to discuss the recommendations in the report.
- ❑ 325 residents educated on safe pesticides in their home



EPA Roles & Responsibilities

➤ EPA Project Officer

- #1 point of contact for grantee
- Provide technical assistance and guidance to grantee
- Responsible for:
 - Workplan evaluation, monitoring, product approval, progress report review & approval, site visits, facilitating workplan changes, sustainability check-ins
- Broad-based community support for the project

➤ Office of Environmental Justice (Washington, DC)

- Provide support, information on resources, and guidance to EPA Project Officers
- Collect and review approved Progress Reports to include accomplishments and results in annual EJ reports, budget justifications, EJ Grantee Spotlights, and online EJ Grants maps
- Facilitate Regional EJ Grantee Workshops



Engagement with EPA Project Officer

- The CPS awards are considered “Cooperative Agreements”, not regular “grants”
 - Cooperative Agreement = Substantial EPA Involvement
 - 1) Review of products and deliverables, 2) Monthly check-in calls, and 3) Prior approval for project changes/amendments
 - Think: **COLLABORATION!!!**
- Your EPA Project Officer (PO) is your main EPA point-of-contact for the project
 - Your PO is a resource for technical expertise and administrative guidance
 - Staying highly-engaged with your PO has several benefits:
 - Looking out for other funding resources & potential partners
 - Building strategies to make necessary connections
 - Predicting and mitigating project challenges
 - Collaboration with other POs and OEJ to pool experiences and lessons learned



Reporting

- **Semi-Annual Progress Reports and Final Report**
 - Progress Reports due 30 days after each 6-month reporting period
 - 4 total progress reports due over the 2-year project period (unless your project period needs to be extended)
 - Reporting templates provided by your EPA Project Officer

- **Reporting template requests information about the following:**
 - Outputs & Outcomes to date
 - New/Developing Partnerships
 - Progress to date
 - Sustainability and Success
 - Pictures

Semiannual Progress Report – EJ CPS Cooperative Agreement Program

Recipient Name _____ EPA Grant # _____

Project Title _____ Project Officer _____

Project Year: One ☐ Two ☐ Reporting Period: From _____ to _____

Total Funds expended: \$ _____ Date Report submitted: _____

Instructions: This form is for EJ CPS Cooperative Agreement recipients to report their progress. Recipients should send these reports to their regional grant Project Officer. Reports are due 30 days after each six-month reporting period (e.g. If your Project Period began on October 1st, then your first reporting period is from October 1st – March 31st with your first report due on April 30th). Please answer all questions below as thoroughly as possible.

+	<p>1) <u>Project Summary</u> What are the objectives of your project? What is your project trying to accomplish? (i.e. what are the health/environmental issues affecting the community, what are demographic characteristics, how will your project address the issues and impact the affected community, how is the affected community part of the decision-making process).</p>										
	<p>2) <u>Project Progress</u> Is your project on schedule? What percentage of project work has been completed to date? Which partners were involved in the accomplishments achieved during the reporting period?</p>										
	<p>3) <u>Project Accomplishments and Results by Task/Project Activity</u> (Table format is encouraged. Feel free to attach your reporting table/logic model as a separate page if the sample table below does not provide enough space)</p> <p>Provide updates for each task/activity under your project workplan. What accomplishments have been achieved since the start of the project? (e.g. Milestones reached, Activities completed Outputs/Outcomes). Include numbers (e.g. trained 20 residents on healthy homes; distributed 50 radon education booklets at health fair, etc). See sample reporting logic model below to get started:</p>										
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;"><u>Workplan Task / Project Activity</u> (example)</th> <th style="width: 15%;"><u>Inputs</u> (what is invested)</th> <th style="width: 15%;"><u>Outputs</u> (what is produced)</th> <th style="width: 25%;"><u>Outcomes</u> (the results or effects)</th> <th style="width: 20%;"><u>Completed?</u> Yes / No / in-process</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Hold a series of Environmental Awareness Training Workshops</td> <td>3 project staff 10 volunteers ~ \$1,000 in-kind from partner organization</td> <td>3 training workshops 50 attendees each 150 attendees received carbon monoxide detectors</td> <td>Enhanced ~150 attendees' knowledge of environmental hazards and decreased their risk of carbon monoxide poisoning</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Yes</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<u>Workplan Task / Project Activity</u> (example)	<u>Inputs</u> (what is invested)	<u>Outputs</u> (what is produced)	<u>Outcomes</u> (the results or effects)	<u>Completed?</u> Yes / No / in-process	Hold a series of Environmental Awareness Training Workshops	3 project staff 10 volunteers ~ \$1,000 in-kind from partner organization	3 training workshops 50 attendees each 150 attendees received carbon monoxide detectors	Enhanced ~150 attendees' knowledge of environmental hazards and decreased their risk of carbon monoxide poisoning	Yes
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Task/Activity #2	Inputs for Task/Activity #2	Outputs for Task/Activity #2	Outcomes for Task/Activity #2	Status of Task/Activity #2
Task/Activity #3	Inputs for Task/Activity #3	Outputs for Task/Activity #3	Outcomes for Task/Activity #3	Status of Task/Activity #3
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4) New Partnerships (partnerships not disclosed in your original grant application)
Have you developed any **new** partnerships related to your project during the reporting period? If so, please describe these partnerships (organization name, project activities/resources the partner is responsible for, vision for partnership going forward).

5) Project Sustainability and Success
How are you and the community defining “success” for your project? What steps have you and the community planned and/or achieved to date to ensure that progress continues and the results of your project are utilized to achieve the community’s vision for an environmentally healthy community?

6) Challenges / Difficulties
Any problems or difficulties encountered during the reporting period? How have they been addressed and/or resolved?

7) Personnel Changes / Staff Turnover
Any major changes in project personnel?

Semiannual Progress Report – EJ CPS Cooperative Agreement Program

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 Project Year: One ☐ Two ☐ Reporting Period: From _____ to _____
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8) Workplan Changes

Do you need to make a change to the workplan and why? (EPA Project Officer approval is required)

9) Fiscal Information

How much money has been spent on this project to date? How much remaining? Is there enough funding to complete this project on time?

Initial grant amount	\$00000.00
Funds drawn down	\$00000.00
Funds remaining	\$00000.00

10) Project Photos

Please submit pictures capturing images of key project activities and highlights with your progress report. Feel free to attach the photos on separate pages or in separate emails to your EPA Project Officer. **Please submit the hi-resolution version of the photos**, as the hi-res photos can be uploaded easily by EPA staff into our online EJ Grantee Spotlights and Story-maps.



Utilizing the Reporting Template for your benefit

The template facilitates effective reporting and tracking of project progress and results

- The template requires **specificity** in the details you provide
- Get in the habit of drilling down to specific outputs and details lends to greater quality results and effective reporting of those results

Leverage the metrics and detail you provide to EPA for your organization's:

- press releases, website and social media messaging, & radio interviews
- elevator pitches to potential partners/investors

Tracking and reporting effectively is time-consuming

- However, logic models afford you the ability to know exactly where you've been, what you're doing now, and where you want to go



Best Practices for EJ Grant Success

- Take time to build trust in the community
- Find common ground and be creative
- Determine and prioritize your most effective outreach methods and messaging
- Use the Semi-Annual Progress Reports you submit to EPA for your benefit too
- Develop new partnerships during the project period
- Be realistic (don't OVER-promise)
- Keep your EPA Project Officer informed



Sustainability

- **Generally, EJ grant projects really get going 6+ months out from the initial project period start date**
 - Initial months may be spent collecting data, finalizing roles, and strengthening partnerships and networks
- **Once your project gets rolling, start the process of thinking and planning for sustainability. How?**
 - Continue developing partnerships AND track those relationships using your progress reports and logic models
 - Track your project challenges and learned solutions:
- **Apply your Best Practices**
 - You are the experts of your projects and your communities
 - Utilize techniques and methods that have worked in your community and for your project
 - Continue to try new things to find out what works
- **Requirement - Post-Project Period Follow-up & Engagement**
 - For up to one year after your project closes (2021), you are required to periodically update your PO on current work related to your project and/or that addresses environmental justice issues



2021 EJ Grant Opportunities

- Two EJ grant solicitations (EJ Small Grants and Collaborative awards)
- Target Release Date: Early 2021
- Eligible entities:
 - Community-based organizations (non-profits)
 - Tribes
- Projected funding available:
 - 60 small grants nationwide at \$50K each
 - 20 Collaborative grants nationwide at \$160K each
 - Projected priorities: COVID-19 and Disasters

NOTE: All projections and target dates are subject to change



Closing Remarks

- Sustainability
 - Building partnerships and increasing capacity are fundamental to the EJ grants program

- Short-term Grant Program Goals:
 - Three building blocks for each EJ grantee/community:
 1. Identify Issues
 2. Build Capacity
 3. Generate Solutions
 - Help grantees leverage recent project success and project momentum to access larger funding sources, make new alliances, and sustain (or increase) the level of effort dedicated to community concerns

- Long-term Grant Program Goals:
 - Empower underserved communities (and their partners) to substantially impact and effectively **resolve** the disproportionate environmental and public health issues affecting them



Contact Information & Resources

- Jacob Burney (EJ Grants Program Manager)
- Burney.jacob@epa.gov
- 202-564-2907

EJ Grants website:

- <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-grants-and-resources>