



EJ IS THE LAW IN  
OREGON

The Environmental Justice  
Task Force And ORS

182.538

# Welcome to the Oregon Environmental Justice Task Force

**All Oregonians  
have a voice in  
environmental  
policies that affect  
where they live,  
work, recreate and  
worship.**



# EJ in Oregon

First, let's examine What is Environmental Justice? And How Oregonians can participate in environmental decisions that affect them?

Next, we'll examine the legislative framework for the EJ Taskforce, and what the Oregon EJTF has done to implement EJ in Oregon.

# What does Environmental Justice Mean in Oregon?

The Legislature created the EJ Taskforce to help protect Oregonians from disproportionate environmental impacts on minority and low-income populations.

- The Oregon EJ Taskforce defines Environmental Justice as

**“equal protection from environmental and health hazards, and meaningful public participation in decisions that affect the environment in which people live, work, learn, practice spirituality and play.”**

- "Environmental justice communities" include minority and low-income communities, tribal communities, and other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes.

STATE OF OREGON  
ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE  
TASK FORCE

*Environmental Justice: Best Practices for Oregon's  
Natural Resource Agencies*

Identifying Environmental Justice Issues and Engaging in Capacity  
Building for Environmental Justice Communities

*Bringing Government Closer to Community*  
January 2016

# How to Participate

When state agencies make decisions that affect our environment it is critical that low-income and minority populations are not disproportionately affected.

The EJTF, together with state natural resource agencies have developed a handbook for ensuring EJ communities can participate in environmental justice decisions by state government that affect them. This Handbook guides Outreach to EJ communities.

# EJTF Meetings and Listening Sessions around Oregon

EJTF has held meetings and listening sessions around Oregon to give EJ communities the opportunity to make themselves heard.



# Introduction to ORS

182.538:

## It's The Law

SB 420 created the Environmental Justice Task Force, and gave it ongoing duties (without a budget). The remainder of this presentation will describe how the Task Force works, and introduce you to its significant activities in ensuring environmental justice for all Oregonians.



2017 ORS  
182.538A  
Environmental  
Justice Task  
Force

There is established the Environmental Justice Task Force consisting of 12 members appointed by the Governor.

Of the 12 members, the Governor shall appoint one member of the task force from each of the following commissions:

The Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs;

The Commission on Black Affairs;

The Commission on Hispanic Affairs; and

The Commission on Indian Services.

And,



The members shall be persons who . . .  
represent minority communities, low-  
income communities, environmental  
interests, industry groups, and  
geographically diverse areas of the  
state.

2017 ORS  
182.542A  
Duties of  
task force

“The task force shall submit an annual report to the Governor setting forth its view of the progress of natural resource agencies toward achieving the goals established pursuant to section 3 of this 2007 Act and identifying any other environmental issues that the task force determines need attention.”

See reports and meetings online:  
[here.](#)

# Advising the Governor

The Environmental Justice Task Force shall:

(1) Advise the Governor on environmental justice issues

EJTF writes letters to the Governor raising EJ issues that emerge from our meetings, travels, listening sessions, and other contacts with agencies and communities.

- Agricultural worker issues,
- Field burning issues in the Valley
- Cleaner Air Oregon issues
- Liquefied Natural Gas issues in southern and coastal Oregon
- Water quality issues from dairy farms in eastern Oregon



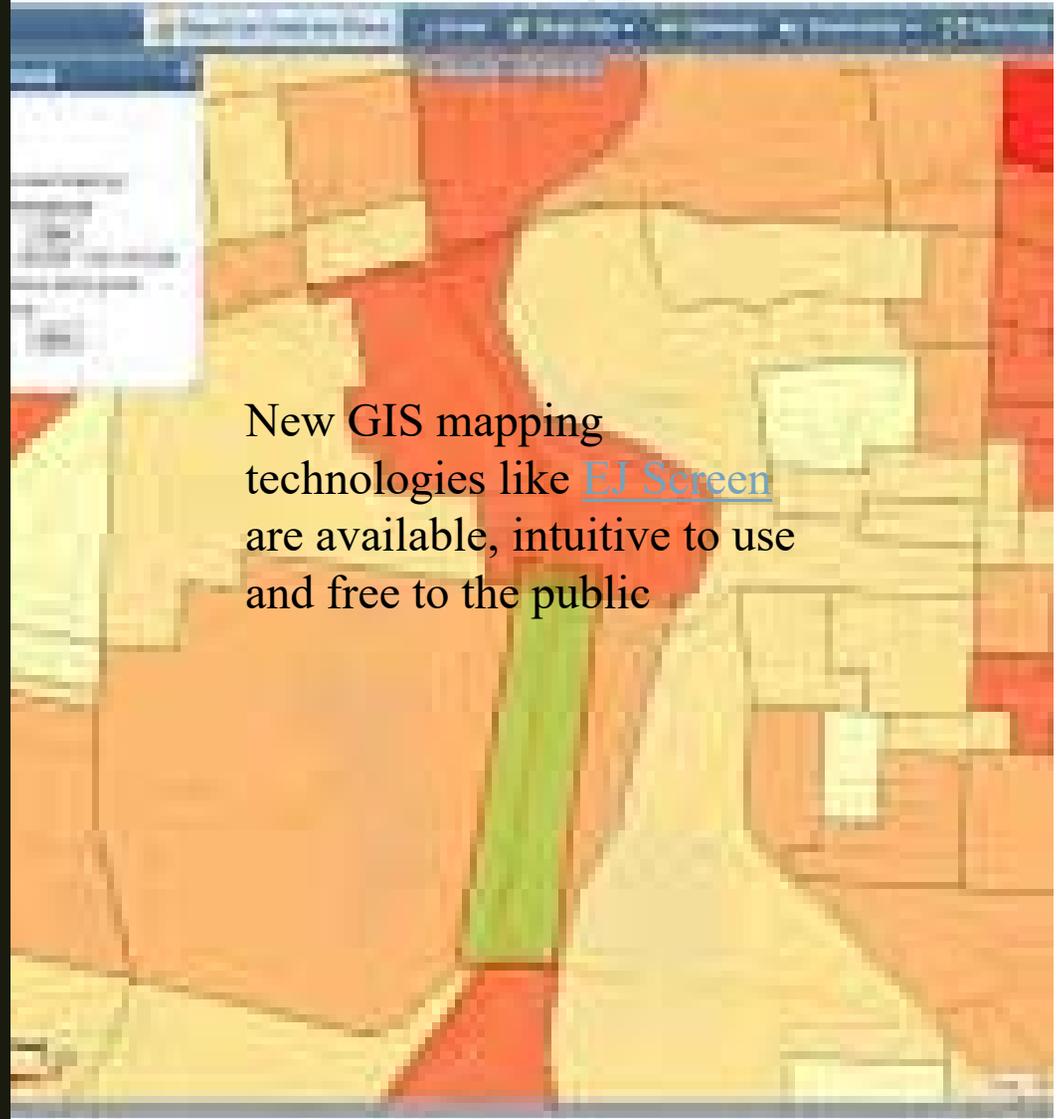
# Advising Agencies

(2) Advise natural resource agencies on environmental justice issues, including community concerns and public participation processes;

ID EJ  
communities

(3) Identify, in cooperation with natural resource agencies, minority and low-income communities that may be affected by environmental decisions made by the agencies;

# Minority Data



New GIS mapping technologies like [EJ Screen](#) are available, intuitive to use and free to the public



# Meet with EJ Communities

(4) Meet with environmental justice communities and make recommendations to the Governor regarding concerns raised by these communities



DEFINE EJ  
ISSUES  
WITHIN  
THE STATE



(5) Define  
environmental  
justice issues in  
the state

# Agency Duties

Section Two, ¶ 9 directs agencies to:

“Natural resource agencies are directed to assist the task force in the performance of its duties and, to the extent permitted by laws relating to confidentiality, to furnish such information and advice as the members of the task force consider necessary to perform their duties.”





- the State Department of Agriculture,
- the Water Resources Department,
- the Department of Environmental Quality,
- the State Department of Fish and Wildlife,
- the State Forestry Department,
- the Department of State Lands,
- the Department of Education,

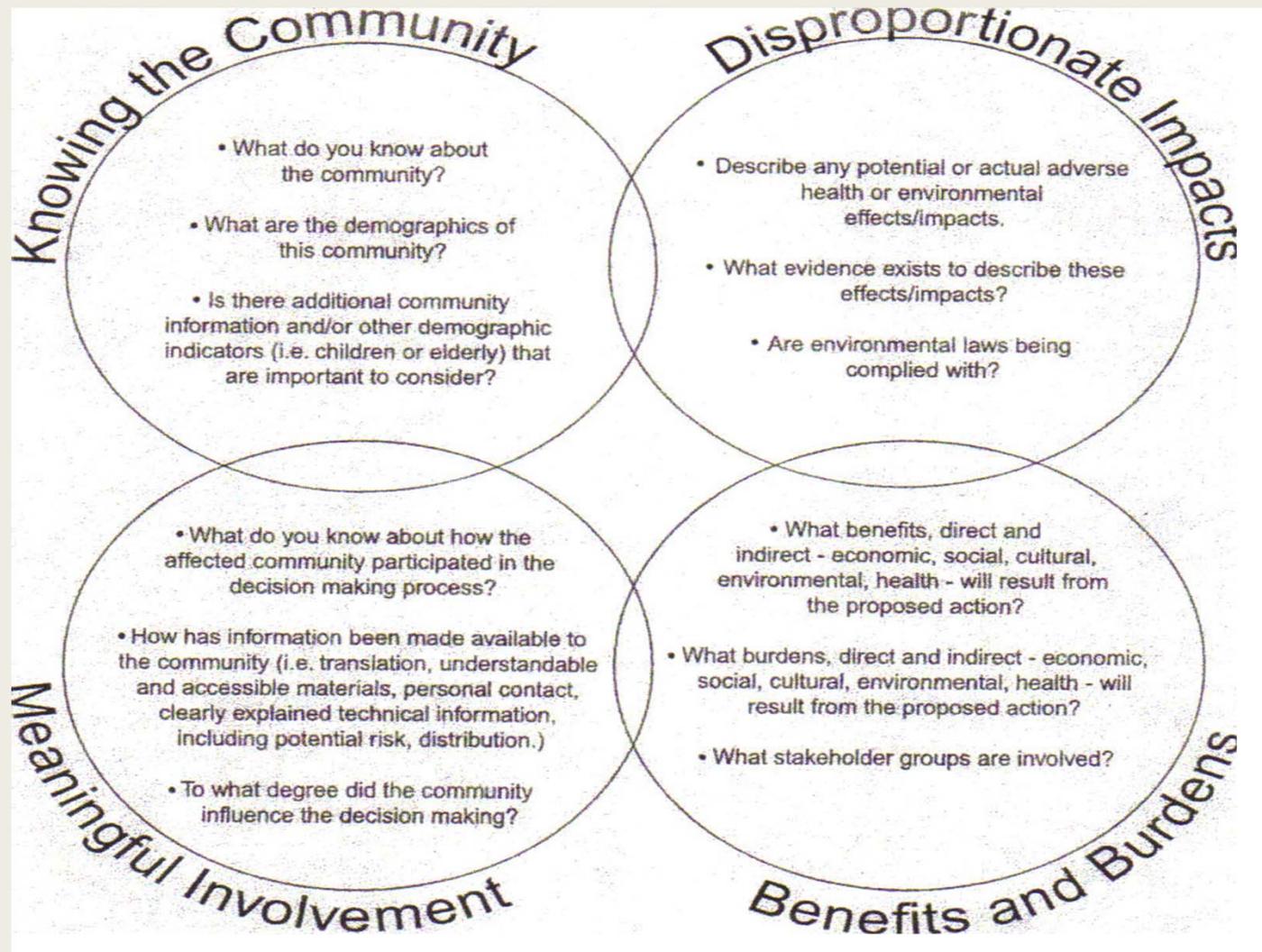
- the State Department of Geology and Mineral Industries,
- the Department of Land Conservation and Development,
- the State Marine Board,
- the Public Utility Commission,
- the Department of Transportation,
- the State Fire Marshal ,
- and
- the Department of Human Services

# Agency Duties to Incorporate Environmental Justice

Section Four: Each natural resource agency shall:

(1) In making a determination whether and how to act, consider the effects of the action on environmental justice issues.

# EJ Analysis



# EJ Participation

(2) Hold hearings at times and in locations that are convenient for people in the communities that will be affected by the decisions stemming from the hearings.



(3) Engage in public outreach activities in the communities that will be affected by decisions of the agency.

# Citizen Advocates

- (4) Create a citizen advocate position that is responsible for:
  - (a) Encouraging public participation;
  - (b) Ensuring that the agency considers environmental justice issues; and
  - (c) Informing the agency of the effect of its decisions on communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes.



# Directors Reporting Duties

Section Five: In addition to the Agency duties in Section Four, all directors of natural resource agencies, and other agency directors as the Governor may designate, shall report annually to the Environmental Justice Task Force and to the Governor.

# Agency Directors' Annual Reports

These reports must address four specific areas:

(1) Address environmental justice issues;

(2) Increase public participation of individuals and communities affected by agencies' decisions;

(3) Determine the effect of the agencies' decisions on traditionally underrepresented communities; and

(4) Improve plans to further the progress of environmental justice in Oregon.



# Find Out More

- Robert William Collin, Environmental Justice in Oregon: It's The Law, online at <http://elawreview.org/articles/volume-38/issue-38-2/environmental-justice-in-oregon-its-the-law/>
- Oregon Environmental Justice Task Force website:  
[https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/environmental\\_environmental\\_justice/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/environmental_environmental_justice/Pages/default.aspx)