

Fiscal Year 2015 Environmental Justice

Annual Implementation Progress Report of the US Department of Labor

Making a Visible Difference in Overburdened Communities

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Environmental Justice (EJ) and Executive Order (EO) 12898 direct each Federal agency to provide a concise report on progress during the previous year in carrying out the agency's EJ Strategy.

I. INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

The Department of Labor (DOL or Labor) is working to make a visible difference in overburdened, underserved, and economically distressed communities, including tribes. Environmental Justice in this context is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, income, or education level, in the development, implementation, and enforcement of employment-related statutes, regulations, programs, and policies. Under President Obama, Federal agencies have made significant progress towards fulfilling the promise of Environmental Justice. Starting with a cabinet-level meeting and the first- ever White House Forum on Environmental Justice, Federal agencies reinvigorated the Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG) established under EO 12898, signed by President Clinton. Seventeen cabinet members and White House offices signed the EJ MOU in 2011.

Throughout 2012, led by the Environmental Protection Agency and the White House Council on Environmental Quality, Federal agencies issued final agency EJ strategies, implementation plans, and/or progress reports. The EJ IWG further identified the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and goods movement as priority issues, and initiated efforts to address them. In addition, the EJ IWG collaborated with other Federal and regional partners to minimize and mitigate disproportionate negative impacts while fostering environmental benefits, public health benefits, and economic benefits for overburdened communities. These strategies represent a significant step forward in the Administration's commitment to integrating EJ into Federal decision-making.

In 2013, the President also initiated a Climate Action Plan which calls upon Federal agencies to "continue to identify innovative ways to help our most vulnerable communities prepare for and recover from impacts of climate

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change” through their Annual Implementation Progress Reports.

II. IMPLEMENTING ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

The DOL continues to pursue EJ as a part of our efforts to protect the health, safety, equity, and security of workers, including low-income, minority, and Native American workers. Labor’s Environmental Justice Strategy is an important part of our vision of shared prosperity for all America’s workers. This vision includes ensuring that workplaces are safe and healthy, helping workers who are in low-wage jobs or out of the labor market find a path into middle class jobs, and helping middle class households remain in the middle class.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE STRATEGY

This Annual Implementation Progress Report documents some of the specific EJ related programs or projects of DOL agencies in fiscal year 2015. The following agencies of DOL have performance measures for Environmental Justice: the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the Civil Rights Center (CRC), the Employment and Training Administration (ETA), the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs (OWCP), the Wage and Hour Division (WHD), and the Women’s Bureau (WB).

III. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

DOL fosters and promotes the welfare of the job seekers, wage earners, and retirees of the United States by improving their working conditions, advancing their opportunities for profitable employment, and protecting their retirement, health care, and other benefits. Toward this end, DOL, through its component agencies, administers and enforces Federal laws and regulations that cover the workplace for more than 10 million employers and 125 million workers all for the purpose of expanding access to opportunity for America’s workers. Below are some of the specific EJ related programs or projects of DOL agencies in fiscal year 2015.

The BLS collected several sets of data that together helped identify disparities in the workplace safety and health environments faced by workers of different earnings, race, and ethnicity. The BLS Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) provides annual, national information about non-fatal workplace injuries and illnesses, including by

race, ethnicity, industry, and occupation. The BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) supplies similar data on fatal work-related injuries and includes fatality information according to country of birth. Both the SOII and CFOI report the number of workplace injury and illness cases experienced by different groups of workers, as well as the rate of occurrence of these cases per hundred, ten-thousand or one-hundred-thousand workers. In addition to information on worker characteristics, both the SOII and CFOI contain data about case circumstances, including the nature of the case (e.g., fracture), the body part affected, the event (e.g., fall), and source (e.g., floor) and, for non-fatal cases, the median number of days away from work for recuperation. The latter is a measure of the severity of a non-fatal workplace injury or illness. These case circumstances can be used to identify race and ethnicity disparities in the severity and occurrence of types of workplace injuries and illness.

Neither of the BLS workplace injury and illness data sources supplies information on job risks by the earnings levels of workers. However, other BLS sources, including the Current Population Survey (CPS) and Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program, tabulate earnings by occupation that can be matched to the workplace injury and illness data. Together, these data can indicate the riskiness of various occupations by earnings level.

BLS publishes a report annually, [Labor Force Characteristics by Race and Ethnicity](#), that describes the labor force characteristics and earnings patterns among the largest race and ethnicity groups living in the US—Whites, Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics—and provides detailed data through a set of supporting tables. The report also includes a limited amount of data for American Indians and Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and Other Pacific Islanders, people of Two or More Races, detailed Asian groups, and detailed Hispanic ethnicity. These data address environmental justice goals by providing important information about how hazards in the workplace affect workers of differing earning levels, race and ethnicity.

The President's memorandum accompanying EO 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," states that "each Federal agency shall ensure that all programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance that affect human health or the environment do not directly, or through contractual or other arrangements, use criteria, methods, or practices that discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national origin." The statutes through which DOL effectuates that mandate are Title VI of the Civil

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Rights Act of 1964 and Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, both of which prohibit discrimination on the cited bases. These statutory provisions are administered and enforced by DOL's CRC.

In CRC's view, environmental justice complaints principally are those that raise discrimination issues in the context of programs and activities designed to protect workers from workplace safety and health hazards. CRC's main role in supporting the environmental justice initiative is to make sure that these programs provide equal opportunity regardless of race, color or national origin, including the provision of meaningful access for Limited English Proficient (LEP) people. Through its published guidance, CRC has explained how to assess the needs of the relevant LEP population, balance those needs against the nature and importance of a given program, and decide what steps must be taken to ensure meaningful access to that program for LEP persons. Equal Opportunity Officers, who are employees at the state and local levels of the nation's workforce development system, are charged with ensuring nondiscrimination and equal opportunity in covered programs.

The Title VI committee of the Interagency Working Group (convened by the Department of Justice) acts as a resource to help agencies connect their civil rights enforcement responsibilities with their efforts to achieve environmental justice. CRC participates on the Title VI committee and continues to work with our partners to identify opportunities for interagency collaboration, including contributing to the upcoming National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program.

One of the ways DOL expands access to opportunity is to help people obtain the skills they need and find jobs to help them get into the middle class. In 2014, the Congress passed and the President signed into law a bipartisan bill, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA). The majority of the Act became effective on July 1, 2015. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. WIOA supersedes titles I and II of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), and amends the Wagner-Peyser Act and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

With the passage of WIOA – and the renewed emphasis on career pathways and sector strategies – ETA's key role in supporting the Department's EJ Strategy is to ensure that minority, tribal, and low-income individuals, who have multiple barriers to employment, obtain access to the training needed to secure good, safe jobs. ETA's

“Competency Model Clearinghouse” presents over two dozen models for various industries/occupations, including Energy: Generation, Transmission and Distribution. This model includes an emphasis on equipment, practices, and procedures which promote a healthy, safe, and secure work environment while addressing various environmentally focused “critical work functions.”

For example, ETA seeks to compliment the EPA’s efforts by providing training and other supportive services to individuals participating in Brownfields programs who also qualify for WIOA, employment and training program. In its 2015 funding cycle for grant-making, EPA selected the Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board (Massachusetts) and Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (Wisconsin) for Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training grants. Additionally, ETA’s, Division of Indian and Native American Programs coordinates with EPA’s Tribal Environmental offices at the regional level to coordinate services between ETA’s Native American employment and training program and EPA’s environmental job training and cleanup projects under the Brownfields grants. As independent, sovereign nations, tribes are responsible for setting standards, making environmental policy, and managing environmental programs for its people.

ETA also posts relevant notices regarding “environmental justice” and “environmental grants-in-aid” from the Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other Federal agencies on www.doleta.gov/usworkforce. Maps are prepared for local Workforce Investment Boards to reflect the location of Environmental Job Training grants and EJ grants to encourage local coordination of resources.

Job Corps, ETA's residential job training program for at-risk youth, serves more than 60,000 young people per year. The majority of participants are economically disadvantaged youth who dropped out of high school. The mission of Job Corps is to teach participants the relevant skills needed to become employable and independent and help prepare them for success in life by securing meaningful jobs or opportunities for further education. Job Corps offers a variety of career training opportunities in various occupations and industries, including health care, automotive, advanced manufacturing, culinary arts, and the building trades. Job Corps has instituted a number of measures in recent years to "green" its job training programs as well as its facilities. Job Corps now offers employers a group of highly employable young people who are at the forefront of "green" industry practices.

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ETA's YouthBuild program funds competitive awards to organizations that include a variety of community and faith-based organizations, housing authorities, workforce investment boards, community colleges, and school systems. The YouthBuild program targets out-of-school youth and provides an alternative education pathway that provides youth with a high school diploma or GED credential and promotes advancement to post-secondary education or employment. YouthBuild participants include youth who have been adjudicated as youth offenders, are in or aging out of foster care, are disabled, have one or both parents incarcerated, are a minority youth, or are low income. As part of the YouthBuild program, young people not only receive academic instruction but also receive occupational skills training while building affordable housing for their communities. This community involvement strengthens participants' commitment to their communities and ensures that the program's positive impact endures long after individuals graduate. YouthBuild programs can support students to prepare for environmental leadership and to secure industry-recognized credentials with labor market value. The majority of YouthBuild programs have incorporated green building into their construction training. As part of this training, participants learn about environmental issues that affect their communities and how they can provide leadership in this area. Many of their community service learning projects are environmentally focused.

ETA is also representing DOL in the interagency Economy, Energy and Environment (E-3) Initiative, with the Environmental Protection Agency, Small Business Administration, and the Departments of Commerce, Energy, and Agriculture. The E-3 Initiative is designed to spark regional E-3 projects around the country to help manufacturers become more efficient, competitive, and sustainable, including through connections to trained and skilled workers in the "green" economy.

MSHA protections help ensure the fair treatment of workers. Among its recent activities, MSHA published a final rule in fiscal year 2015 on Proximity Detection Systems for Continuous Mining Machines in Underground Coal Mines. This rule will greatly improve safety protections for underground coal miners working in the vicinity of mobile machinery. MSHA also made comprehensive revisions to the "Guide to Miners' Rights and Responsibilities" under the Mine Act. Additionally MSHA provided \$8.4 million in grants to 47 states and the Navajo Nation to provide mine safety and health courses to miners.

OSHA awarded \$10.5 million in FY 2015's Susan Harwood Training Grant Program to 80 nonprofit organizations on a competitive basis. The focus of the program is to provide training and education for workers and employers on the recognition, avoidance, and prevention of safety and

health hazards in their workplaces, and to inform workers of their rights and employers of their responsibilities.

Every year, dozens of workers die due to working in the heat and thousands become ill. Heat illness can affect anyone, regardless of age or physical condition. Some of the occupations most affected by heat-related illnesses are construction, agriculture, building grounds maintenance and cleaning, transportation and utility work, and support activities for oil and gas operations. Every one of these deaths and illnesses is preventable. That is why OSHA is in the fifth year of the Campaign to Prevent Heat Illness in Workers. Since 2011, OSHA has launched an annual nationwide heat illness prevention campaign to provide outreach and resources to workers and employers to prevent these tragedies. We have reached over 11 million workers and employees and distributed over 800,000 print resources in over 4,150 national and local informational and training sessions.

OSHA also improved and expanded their smart phone apps to help protect workers in fiscal year 2015. The apps are intended to provide users with specific heat risk levels and precautions to take based on their location. It also provides information about the temperature throughout the day to help employers and workers plan for extreme weather.

In OWCP EJ issues show up in several different areas. For example, many of the uranium miners, millers and ore transporters that are eligible for Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act benefits are from the Navajo Nation. OWCP conducts quarterly outreach targeting this community in New Mexico and Arizona in efforts to ensure that they are aware of the benefits and to provide status updates for existing claims and contracts with an interpreter for these events.

Overall, the Black Lung program has experienced a 20 percent increase in new claim filings since 2012. For example, two large Appalachian coal companies recently declared bankruptcy, eliminating thousands of jobs. Historically, whenever a coal mine closes, the coal miners file a claim with DOL for Black Lung benefits. In response, the Black Lung program has provided ETA job training program contact information to all of its District Offices. District Directors were instructed to discuss the possibility of vocational training with unemployed miners seeking Black Lung benefits and more detailed program instruction is forthcoming to further assist the District Directors as they advise and counsel unemployed coal miners. OWCP is committed to connecting coal miners in need of help with DOL grant dollars.

In March of 2015, OWCP, NIOSH, HRSA and MSHA created the Miner's Health Collaborative designed to share data and other information to identify commonalities and intersections among agency missions in order to synergistically expand the reach and enhance the quality of service delivery to the agencies' common constituency: coal miners and their families. Near-term Collaborative activities and objectives are: conducting outreach to expand the pool of doctors who perform OWCP's diagnostic examinations to determine a miner's level of Black Lung disease and disability; improving the quality and timeliness of these examinations; and exploring ways to potentially identify mines or regions that may exhibit trends with regard to disease incidence.

As with CRC, OWCP supports the EJ initiative by improving opportunity, including the provision of meaningful access for Limited English Proficient people. In March, OWCP published on its website a new set of Spanish FAQs about the Longshore Act, its extensions, and how to obtain benefits under the program. OWCP also included a section that provides guidance on how to communicate with the appropriate office. OWCP then expanded its initial claim acknowledgement letter to include a Spanish section that refers Spanish-speaking stakeholders to the appropriate website; added a new Spanish Claimant Portal; and translated its existing Vocational Rehabilitation FAQs to Spanish. (The portal and FAQs can be found by going to the Longshore homepage.)

A big part of what DOL does is to try to protect workers, including minority, tribal and low-income populations, ensuring not only their physical safety but also helping to ensure a fair day's pay for a fair day's work and keeping with the IWG's desire to minimize and mitigate disproportionate negative impacts while fostering environmental benefits, public health benefits, and economic benefits for overburdened communities. For example, WHD recently announced a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to update the regulations defining which white collar workers are eligible to receive pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

IV. STRATEGY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

BLS

Collect data that can help identify disparities in the safety and health workplace environments faced by workers of different races and ethnicities.

CRC

Enforce civil rights laws in programs that receive certain types of Federal financial assistance so that these programs provide equal opportunity for members of minority and tribal populations, and that the programs provide meaningful access for people with limited English proficiency.

ETA

Ensure that minority, tribal, and low-income individuals, who have multiple barriers to employment, obtain access to the training needed to secure good, safe jobs.

MSHA

Through inspections and the promulgation of regulations, protect and significantly improve the lives of miners, including tribal, low-income, and minority miners, from health and safety hazards associated with mining.

OSHA

Promote programs that improve working conditions in industries and occupations that have large numbers of minority and low-income workers as well as fund grant projects to provide training to workers in occupations populated by minority and low-income workers.

OWCP

Assist eligible workers or their dependents receive compensation if injuries due to environmental hazards occur.

WHD

Use both enforcement and public education efforts to ensure that workers are paid the minimum wage as well as reduce misclassification through a WHD initiative. The recently published rule implementing Executive Order 13658 establishes a minimum wage for contractors. WHD is also updating the regulations defining which white collar workers are eligible to receive pay for hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

WB

Through outreach (using methods such as publications, teleconference calls, roundtables and webinars) show women the benefits of in-demand and emerging jobs.

V. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

DOL responds to the requirement of the President's Climate Action Plan call for Federal agencies to "continue to identify innovative ways to help our most vulnerable communities *prepare for* and *recover from* impacts of climate change."

DOL agency mission requirements were paramount in conducting the high-level analysis of the vulnerability to climate change. The agency's three highest-risk critical vulnerabilities/assets were found to be personnel, utilities (including information technology, telecommunications (data and voice), power, and water) infrastructure, and buildings (for Job Corps).

Across these three major asset categories, DOL agencies most frequently identified severe weather events and extreme temperatures as the key climate stressors, followed by drought and temperature changes, and then sea level rise. Common climate change vulnerabilities fell into four broad categories: 1) workers health and access to workplace impacts; 2) infrastructure including information technology, telecommunications, transportation, utility and connectivity disruption among personnel and workers resulting from weather events; 3) fiscal resources diversion away from completing agency mission to funding climate change adaptive accommodations, e.g., additional travel, personnel and technical assistance, and lack of fiscal resources for completing mission in the face of climate change events; and 4) buildings on the Job Corps Center campuses across the Nation affected by climate change. DOL agency workforces accomplish the missions of their agencies and the nearly 200 Federal laws and regulations through a variety of means, including inspecting work sites.

For example, MSHA administers the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 to enforce compliance with mandatory safety and health standards in the nation's mines. MSHA's mission is to prevent death, disease, and injury from mining and promote safe and healthful workplaces for the Nation's miners. Statutorily, MSHA is required to conduct complete inspections of all underground mines four times per year, and all active surface mines twice per year. Consequently, each day mining inspectors travel many miles to inspect the nation's mines to safeguard worker

health and safety. Mines may be many miles apart and inspectors are subject to the impact of climate change to accomplish required inspections, e.g., extreme weather.

Similarly, Labor's other six worker protection and enforcement agencies inspectors examine work sites every day. Approximately half of the DOL vehicle fleet is used by these worker protection agencies, which exposes the workers, work and vehicles to the effects of climate change, e.g., extreme weather.

DOL's Job Corps delivers comprehensive job skills training and education to eligible youth, most of whom live, train, and study on the 125 residential campuses comprising nearly 2400 buildings located in 48 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia. The other half of the DOL vehicle fleet is used on Job Corps campuses for student transportation and for staff to conduct key functions of the program's mission. For example, fleet vehicles transport students to work-based learning sites, community colleges, recreational activities, public and private transportation (bus lines, airports), and are used to evacuate students during emergency events. These students and the workers who run the programs are subject to climate change impacts.

Greenhouse gas emissions contribute to climate change and extreme climatic events. To proactively reduce Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions, the Department of Labor is reducing facility energy intensity, installing and using renewable energy, reducing fleet vehicle petroleum use, increasing fleet alternative fuel vehicle (AFV) use, optimizing vehicles' use, right-sizing its fleet, and increasing low emission and high fuel economy vehicle use. Significantly, DOL's Scope 1&2 emissions, as evaluated through annual reporting, have dropped 19 percent from the 2006 baseline even given the colder temperatures in fiscal year 2014 that required more energy consumption to heat DOL buildings.

Recently the Department also increased its percentage of buildings over 5,000 square feet meeting the Federal Guiding Principles for High Performance Buildings to 5.2 percent, up from 1.4 percent in fiscal year 2012. The New Hampshire and Wind River Job Corps Centers now completed, and the Ottumwa, Iowa, and Milwaukee Centers—were designed in accordance with the Guiding Principles. Ottumwa Job Corps Center and Milwaukee Job Corps Center received substantial rebates for energy efficient construction. For existing Job Corps Centers, the Centers of Environmental Excellence (CEE) program was developed to help centers reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet the sustainability goals at the lowest possible cost, and by promoting activities beyond physical facility upgrades. This is a whole-center

approach that includes changing the behaviors of building occupants to be mindful of energy and water usage, incorporate green practices and policies, and significantly involve students and staff. Once a center has completed the deliverables required for the CEE program, it is evaluated by a panel before being certified as a “Center of Environmental Excellence.” As part of the CEE program, Alaska, Penobscot, Cleveland, and Flint Genesee Job Corps Centers have been verified to meet and are operating in accordance with the Guiding Principles.

DOL’s and Job Corps’ sustainability efforts are boosted through these technologies by installing these solutions on Job Corps Centers nationwide. Job Corps produces renewable energy with wind turbines at the Pine Ridge, Angell, Cassadaga, and Hawaii/Maui Job Corps Centers, Muhlenberg, Joliet, Shreveport, Pittsburgh, Earle C. Clements, and Northlands Job Corps Centers. Solar photovoltaic production occurs at the Muhlenberg, Oneonta, Pittsburgh, Ramey, Westover, Edison, and Woodland Job Corps Centers, and solar hot water is produced at the Miami Job Corps Center. The Loring and Albuquerque Job Corps Centers produce domestic hot water using biomass. Job Corps also funded the following renewable energy projects: biomass boilers at the Boxelder Job Corps Center and a wind turbine at the Weber Basin Job Corps

DOL efforts to install renewable energy on Job Corps campuses, some of which is sold to the national grid, are intended to reduce the carbon emissions that are contributing to climate change and also to help to make these geographic localities more resilient to withstand power outages due to climate change. Through these efforts, and others, the department met the former EO 13514 requirement to increase the use of renewable energy, and is already prepared to meet the higher requirements of the new EO 13693—Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade. Further, DOL has already exceeded the EPA Act 2005 requirement that agencies increase renewable energy use such that at least 7.5 percent of the agency’s total electricity consumption is accounted for by Renewable Energy Credits for FY 2013 and beyond. In fiscal year 2014, DOL’s renewable energy use as a percentage of total electricity consumption already clocked in at 11.5 percent.

Job Corps’ unique strength lies in its role as a community member and Federal partner positioned to provide trained young adults who volunteer to provide assistance. Over the years, Job Corps students have been involved in fire-fighting and other disaster management efforts all across the country. Job Corps’ federally operated centers (Civilian Conservation Centers), operated by the USDA Forest Service, work closely with DOL to establish health, safety, and emergency planning and responses. Job Corps works with other Federal agencies

in emergencies many of which result from extreme weather.

DOL has considered the need to improve climate adaptation resilience, including the costs and benefits of such improvement. DOL's capital equipment investment in information technology infrastructure and the move to the cloud increases resilience in the ability of DOL personnel to telework and therefore accomplish mission despite climate change impacts. DOL has relocated and consolidated existing facilities, e.g., data centers. This move provides resilience for the DOL IT infrastructure and for telework. As to suppliers and supply chain, agency leasing and building upgrades, DOL, like all Federal agencies, looks to the General Service Administration to address climate change adaptation matters in these areas.

DOL will look at any barriers that discourage investments or actions to increase resilience. DOL will continue to look at how its component agencies' funding programs affect State, local and tribal communities' climate change risk, e.g., grantees through the employment and training agencies. Further, DOL will continue to update policies related to the National Environmental Policy Act. DOL is proud of its unique contribution to the opportunity for America's workers to work in a safe environment.

VI. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION

In fiscal year 2015, the Environmental Justice Interagency Working Group (EJ IWG) devoted time to building an infrastructure for federal agencies to directly address the environmental, social, economic, and public health burdens in minority, low-income, indigenous and tribal communities. The 2011 Charter was revised to include a governance structure and a requirement for Agency Senior leadership to meet twice a year to discuss agency collaborative efforts and commitments that will help achieve environmental justice. The EJ IWG's governance structure includes the following standing (i.e., permanent) committees:

- Public Participation
- Regional Interagency Working Groups
- Strategy and Implementation Progress Reports
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

VII. ADDITIONAL FOCUS AREAS

In addition, during current and future fiscal years 2016 – 2018, the EJ IWG will

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maintain committees to address the following five focus areas:

- Native Americans/Indigenous Peoples
- Rural Communities
- Impacts from Climate Change
- Impacts from Commercial Transportation (Goods Movement)
- National Environmental Policy Act

These committees consist of senior level Agency staff and are responsible for working together with state and local governments, tribes, and local communities to improve the health of communities and protect the environment across this country.

VIII. WORK OF THE EJ IWG

The following is a snapshot of the EJ IWG's efforts to advance EJ in fiscal year 2015:

Collaboration and Interagency Governance Structure

- Developed the draft fiscal years [2016-2018 EJ IWG Action Agenda Framework](#) and disseminated for public comment. (As a result of one of the public comments, the EJ IWG has changed the name of the document to "EJ IWG fiscal years 2016-2018 Framework for Collaboration.") The Framework builds on decades of EJ work to focus the collective efforts of the Federal agencies to improve the quality of life and support economic opportunity in overburdened and under-resourced communities.
- Completed significant National Environmental Policy Act work products: Draft Report on Promising Practices for EJ Methodologies in NEPA Reviews and a companion training module based on the promising practices. The Draft Report provides a framework for meaningful engagement, developing and selecting alternatives and identifying minority and low-income populations.
- Launched the Educate, Motivate and Innovate (EMI) Climate Justice Youth Leadership Initiative. The EMI Initiative showcases innovative climate justice projects and their impacts that are being done across the country by students attending Minority Serving Institutions.
- Developed the structure for a Goods Movement Resource Compendium. The Compendium will outline Agency legal authorities, roles and responsibilities and serve as a resource for communities addressing goods movement concerns.
- Strengthened collaboration with communities by forming Regional Interagency Workgroups and featuring innovative community-based interagency collaborative projects at monthly EJ IWG meetings.

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- Increased coordination and cooperation among federal agencies to promote holistic community-based solutions to EJ issues and ensure that the public has meaningful opportunities for participation in the decision-making process.

Outreach

- Increased outreach to the public by holding three webinars seeking public comment on the draft fiscal years 2016-2018 EJ IWG Action Agenda Framework which attracted over 350 participants.
- Advanced collaboration on Climate Justice topics by featuring a series of leading Climate Justice advocates at the March 2015 National Environmental Justice Conference and Training Program.
- Strengthened the delivery of technical assistance to small, underserved communities through the College/Underserved Community Partnership Program (CUPP).

For a full range of the EJ IWG activities, please visit the [EJ IWG website](#).