

# Environmental Justice in Natural Resources: A State Priority

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# OR Environmental Justice Taskforce

- ▶ The Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) encourages state agencies to give all people knowledge and access to improve decisions that affect environment and the health of all Oregonians.
- ▶ Senate Bill 420 directed natural resource agencies to appoint a state agency staff person to serve as a “citizen advocate” to encourage public participation, ensure the agency considers environmental justice issues, inform the agency of the effects of its decisions on traditionally underrepresented communities, and improve plans to further the progress of environmental justice in Oregon.
  - ▶ Agencies directed to engage: Agriculture, Education, Environmental Quality, Fire Marshall, Fish and Wildlife, Forestry, Geology and Mineral Industries, Health Authority, Land Conservation and Development, Marine Board, Public Utility Commission, State Lands, Transportation, and Water Resources

# OR Environmental Justice Taskforce

- ▶ The Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF) was created by the Legislature to help protect Oregonians from disproportionate environmental impacts on minority and low-income populations.
  - ▶ 12 members appointed by the Governor
  - ▶ Members are well-informed on the principles of environmental justice
  - ▶ Representative of people of color, low-income communities, environmental interests, industry groups and geographically diverse areas of the state
  - ▶ 4 members are from the Advocacy Commissions - Asian Affairs, Hispanic Affairs, Black Affairs and Indian Services
- ▶ Ways this manifests into action:
  - ▶ Development of Best Practices Handbook for agencies
  - ▶ Quarterly meetings with “citizen advocates”
  - ▶ Robust discussion of environmental justice issues that arise from the community

# Executive Order 20-04

- ▶ Take the boldest actions available to lower GHG emissions and address climate change under current state laws
- ▶ The executive order updates the existing state carbon emissions goals to reflect the current science, setting a standard of 45% reduction from 1990 levels by 2035, and an 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050. The order also outlines a variety of means to reach the new goals, including:
  - ▶ Sector-specific caps on climate pollution
  - ▶ More than double the Clean Fuels Program
  - ▶ Higher energy efficiency for buildings and appliances
  - ▶ Accelerate usability of electric vehicles
  - ▶ Emissions-conscious transportation spending
  - ▶ Accelerate transition to clean energy within utility sector
  - ▶ Makes climate action a top priority for agency decision-making

# Governor Brown's Racial Justice Council (RJC)

The Racial Justice Council's charge is to:

- ▶ Direct the collection of data from across sectors of society to support smart, data-driven policy decisions
- ▶ Provide principles and recommendations that center racial justice to the Governor to inform the '21-23 Governor's Recommended Budget and Tax Expenditures Report
- ▶ Creating a Racial Justice Action Plan for six specific areas:
  - o Criminal Justice Reform and Police Accountability
  - o Housing and Homelessness
  - o Economic Opportunity
  - o Health Equity
  - o Environmental Justice
  - o Education

# Environmental Equity Committee (EEC) - Subcommittee under RJC

The state can and should center racial equity in its work to ensure everyone receives the myriad of benefits from our natural environment.

**Solutions:** Working with BIPOC community input, agencies should propose updates to programs, policies, budgets and strategic plans that centers racial equity and removes unequal treatment of people of color with respect to the state's environment and natural resources.

1. **Environmental Justice Priority:** State natural resource agencies should take a fresh look at their programs, policies, and principles within an environmental justice framework.
2. **Access to the Outdoors Priority:** State agencies should realign and reorient existing programs to improve access to the outdoors for the benefit of underserved populations.

\*\*\*Other initiatives may also being developed and prioritized\*\*\*

# Committee Members

- ▶ Queta Gonzalez, Center for Diversity & the Environment
- ▶ Chad Brown, Soul River, Inc.
- ▶ Mercy Shammah, Wild Diversity
- ▶ Zavi Borja, Latino Outdoors
- ▶ West Livaudais, OHSU
- ▶ Clara Soh, Oregon Wild board member
- ▶ Nancy Bales, Oregon Community Foundation
- ▶ Shantae Johnson, Mudbone Grown
- ▶ Sristi Kamal, Defenders of Wildlife
- ▶ Nicole Johnson, 1000 Friends
- ▶ Carina Miller, Columbia Gorge Commission member, OR Senate 30 candidate, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Tribal Council member
- ▶ Liza Jane McAlister, 4<sup>th</sup> gen. rancher, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board member
- ▶ Wendy Veliz, PGE
- ▶ Courtney Rae, BARK
- ▶ Lindsay Warness, Woodgrain Millwork
- ▶ Bob Komoto, retired onion producer, Ontario community leader
- ▶ Janet Komoto, Ontario community leader
- ▶ Direlle Calica, Changing Currents, PSU Institute for Tribal Government, Affiliated Tribes of NW Indians
- ▶ Jill Fuglister, Meyer Memorial Trust
- ▶ Tiffany Johnson, land use attorney
- ▶ Tony DeFalco, Verde
- ▶ Desiree Williams Rajee, equitable planning and sustainability consultant
- ▶ Quinn Read, Environmental Justice Taskforce member, Center for Biological Diversity
- ▶ Dianna Nunez, Oregon Environmental Council
- ▶ Kit Batten, Unite Oregon
- ▶ Taren Evans, Coalition of Communities of Color
- ▶ Dr. Lisa Gaines, Institute for Natural Resources, Oregon Sustainability Board
- ▶ Ana Molina, Beyond Toxics
- ▶ Dr. Alai Reyes-Santos, Professor of Ethnic Studies University of Oregon
- ▶ Keyondra McQuarters, Black Girls Bike
- ▶ Khahn Pham, OR House 46 candidate, APANO
- ▶ Donny Adair, African American Hunting Assoc., LLC
- ▶ Huy Ong, OPAL
- ▶ Bryan Harper, 5<sup>th</sup> gen. hazelnut farmer, Board of Agriculture member

# Preliminary Committee Charter

Oregon's environment and natural resources help make this state special. Its economic value is significant and only exceeded by the intrinsic value of the natural environment to sustaining all life. However, these benefits are not evenly distributed among certain populations. Communities of color, Black, tribal and indigenous, low-income and rural neighborhoods often bear the burdens of environmental degradation while being left out in economically benefiting from the natural environment. The state can and should center racial equity in its work to ensure everyone receives the myriad of benefits from our natural environment.

With BIPOC community input, updates to programs, policies, budgets and strategic plans should be proposed to environment and natural resources state agencies to center racial equity and removes unequal treatment of people of color. Priority areas include environmental justice and access to the outdoors

# *SB 286: Relating to environmental justice*

01

Increases authority and capacity of the Environmental Justice Task Force

02

Creating better accountability measures from state agencies, including continuing the Interagency Workgroup

03

Creates environmental vulnerability assessment tool, housed under OR-DEQ

# *HB 2171: Relating to outdoor recreation*

01

Strengthens the  
Oregon  
Conservation and  
Recreation Fund

02

Advances the  
work of existing  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation

03

Enacts  
recommendations  
from the  
Governor's  
Taskforce on the  
Outdoors

## *SB 289*: Amended concept from Environmental Equity Committee – “Safety in the Outdoors”

# 01

Setting standards within state agencies to withhold privileges related to recreation activities if a person commits a bias crime or incident

# 02

Creating accountability by suspending, revoking, or denying permits or licenses related to outdoor recreation

# 03

Restorative justice measures for the convicted person to engage in community service or anti-bias education

# Environmental and Natural Resource Equity Budget Investments

- ❖ Creation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion positions in the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and the Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation (OPRD), with a total investment of **\$1.4 million**
- ❖ Investment of **\$3 million** into environmental justice with the creation of an Office of Environmental Justice with *\$2 million and an additional \$1 million* for a cumulative impact analysis across natural resource agencies
- ❖ Establishing a place-based community centered program to address water needs of BIPOC communities, Tribal and Indigenous communities in the WRD with **\$1.5 million**
- ❖ Uplifting climate adaptation and climate mitigation work under DLCD with **\$1.6 million**
- ❖ Establishing grant funding program with staff for **\$500,000** to support and fund community-led recreation programs and enhance safe and comfortable outdoor life for BIPOC populations, administered by the Office of Outdoor Recreation within OPRD (HB5025)

# Environmental and Natural Resource Equity Budget Investments

- ❖ Addressing food insecurity and food access by supporting small and BIPOC farmers with **\$1 million** and **\$400,000** for a Domestic Markets position administered by ODA
- ❖ Transportation and electric vehicle infrastructure to enable rural communities to be part of the clean energy future administered by DEQ and DLCDC for **\$1.3 million**
- ❖ Consultation on how environmental justice analysis measures in land use decisions can be elevated through the state within the DLCDC for **\$750,000**
- ❖ Investments **\$2 million** for DLCDC to continue and elevate development of affordable housing across the state of Oregon in alignment with HB2001 and HB2003

# Executive Order 20-04: Climate Justice

- ▶ Participation in Interagency Workgroup on Climate Impacts to Impacted Communities
- ▶ Convene an interagency workgroup to develop strategies to guide state climate actions
  - ▶ Participants: DEQ, DLCDD, ODA, ODF, ODFW, ODOE, ODOT, OHA, OWEB, OWRD, PUC, Parks & Recreation, EJTF, Global Warming Commission, and Sustainability Board
  - ▶ Determine how state agencies can be accountability to frontline communities
  - ▶ What top priorities are for environmental justice communities
  - ▶ State collaboration across sectors to put equity at the center and develop climate policy that benefits environmental justice communities
- ▶ The goal is to develop a climate justice strategy by creating an inventory of programs, policies, planning and public participation processes, and enforcement practices, and provide potential improvements in research and data collection relating to the health and environmental exposure of vulnerable populations.
- ▶ Coordination with other agency initiatives - Climate Adaptation Framework and the Climate Equity Blueprint

# Thank you!

## Questions?

- ▶ Contact information: Jason Miner, [Jason.miner@oregon.gov](mailto:Jason.miner@oregon.gov)
- ▶ EJTF Website:  
[https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/environment/environmental\\_justice/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/environment/environmental_justice/Pages/default.aspx)
- ▶ Executive Order PDF:  
[https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/executive\\_orders/eo\\_20-04.pdf](https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/executive_orders/eo_20-04.pdf)
- ▶ Governor's Racial Justice Council:  
<https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policy/racial-justice-council>