



# Stewardship and Environmental Justice

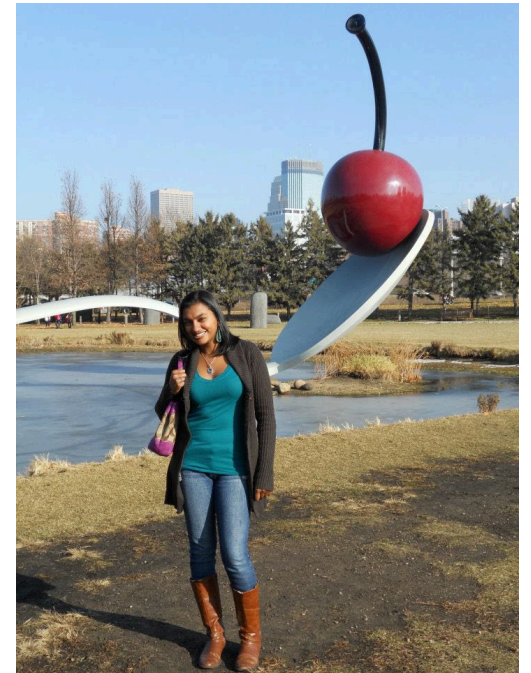
**Christina Motilall, MPA/MSES**

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Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

**Indiana Water Summit: August 22, 2024**

# About Christina Motilall

- Grew up in Minnesota
  - Attended the School of Environmental Studies
  - Experiences with Environmental Justice (EJ)
- B.A. from Drake University in Des Moines, IA
- Attended the O’Neill School at IU
  - MPA: Environmental Policy and Natural Resource Management
  - MSES: Environmental Chemistry, Toxicology, and Risk Assessment
  - GIS Fellow and Monroe County Planning Department
- Energy and Environment Fellow at Non-profit
- Environmental Scientist at Consulting Firm



# Why Stewardship?

“The careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care”

Two parts of this I focus on...

**Careful**

**Entrusted**

# What is Environmental Justice (EJ)?

- “Environmental justice” means the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of income, race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability, in agency decision-making and other Federal activities that affect human health and the environment so that people:
  - are fully protected from disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects (including risks) and hazards, including those related to climate change, the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the legacy of racism or other structural or systemic barriers; and
  - have equitable access to a healthy, sustainable, and resilient environment in which to live, play, work, learn, grow, worship, and engage in cultural and subsistence practices.

[President Biden’s Executive Order 14096 “Executive Order on Revitalizing Our Nation’s Commitment to Environmental Justice for All”](#)

# What is Environmental Justice (EJ)?

“Federal activity” means any agency rulemaking, guidance, policy, **program**, **practice**, or **action** that affects or has the potential to affect human health and the environment, including an agency action related to climate change. Federal activities may include agency actions related to: assuring compliance with applicable laws; licensing, permitting, and the reissuance of licenses and permits; awarding, conditioning, or oversight of Federal funds; and managing Federal resources and facilities.

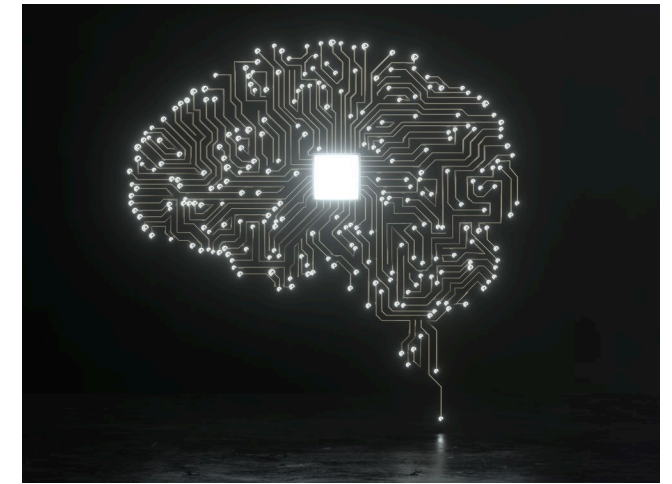
[President Biden’s Executive Order 14096 “Executive Order on Revitalizing Our Nation’s Commitment to Environmental Justice for All”](#)

## EJ and You

- Program

- Practice

- Action



What does this mean for  
you and your organization?

# Realities of Environmental Justice in Water

- An estimated 2.2 million people in the US lack basic running water and indoor plumbing in their homes. Many more live in communities with inadequate and aging water and wastewater infrastructure.
- So many Americans experience climate stress as water stress – from flooding in coastal and inland communities to drought across the South and West to unpredictability that impacts everyone from water utilities to farmers to ecosystems.
- There are still 6 to 10 million lead services lines in cities and towns across the country, many of which are in communities of color and low-income neighborhoods.

# Why EJ Matters

- Stewardship
  - Careful
  - Entrusted
- Planning for Success
- Equity
  - Paradigm Shift



working for  
environmental  
**justice**  
[www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice](http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice)



## Why EJ Matters

# Because It Has To

Environmental justice cannot be just a slogan; we need meaningful action, especially for historically underserved communities.

– Debra Shore, EPA Region 5 Regional Administrator

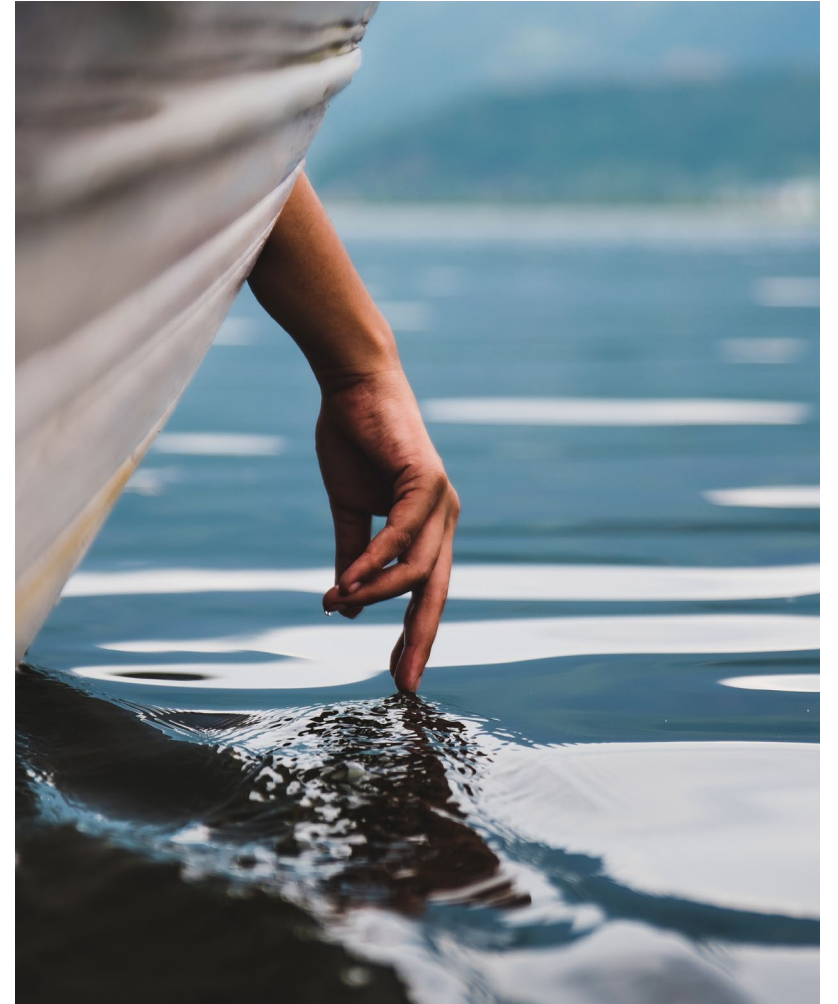
# Lessons Learned Working in EJ

- This is a reality, not a theory
  - Not everyone gets to clock out
- Meaningful Involvement
  - Listening is fundamental
  - Partnerships are crucial
- One size does not fit all
- Language Matters



# Lessons Learned Working in EJ

- Stewards, not Saviors
- No Overnight Miracles
- Trust is Earned, and Easily Lost
- We all Make Mistakes
- Not Everyone Will be Onboard
- Patience is Key
- Intention Matters



# EJ at EPA

- [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\)](#) - \$100 Million
  - \$50 million for EJ, \$4.7 of that for Drinking Water
- [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#) – Over \$60 billion
  - \$50 billion for Water Infrastructure
- [Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\)](#) - \$41.5 billion
  - \$3 billion for the [Environmental and Climate Justice Grants Program](#)
- [Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights](#)
  - Community Engagement
  - Grants Program ([EJCPS](#), [EJG2G](#), [EJ TCTACs](#), [EJTCEGM](#), **CCG\***)
- [Justice40 Initiative](#)
  - 40% of the benefits of certain federal investments must flow to disadvantaged communities.

# Community Change Grants Program

EPA received \$3 billion through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to fund environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities.

- \$2.8 billion for grants including \$2 billion for the Community Change Grants Program (CCGP).
- \$200 million for technical assistance related to the grants.
- Grants cannot exceed three years (no extensions).
- All grants must be awarded by September 30, 2026.

**Open Until  
November 21, 2024**



# Water and EJ at EPA

- BIL - \$50 billion for Water Infrastructure
  - Deliver resources to remove lead pipes, in line with President Biden's goal of removing 100% of lead service lines
- [WaterTA](#)
  - Provides hands-on support for communities
- [Creating Resilient Water Utilities, or "CRWU" initiative](#)
  - Technical assistance program
- [Drinking Water State Revolving Fund \(DWSRF\)](#)
  - Created in 1996 for states
  - Lead Pipe Replacement Programs (\$3 billion from BIL)
- [First-ever nationwide, legally enforceable drinking water standards to protect communities from PFAS](#)

# Water and EJ in Indiana

- [Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement of 1987](#)
  - Investment from BIL for Calumet River Cleanup
- [EPA Selection of Alliance for the Great Lakes](#)
  - Selected under new Great Lakes Environmental Justice Grant Program
- [Urban Waters Partnership](#)
  - NW IN Partnership - includes more than 70 local, state, and federal partners
- [IDEM Indiana Disadvantaged Communities Map](#)

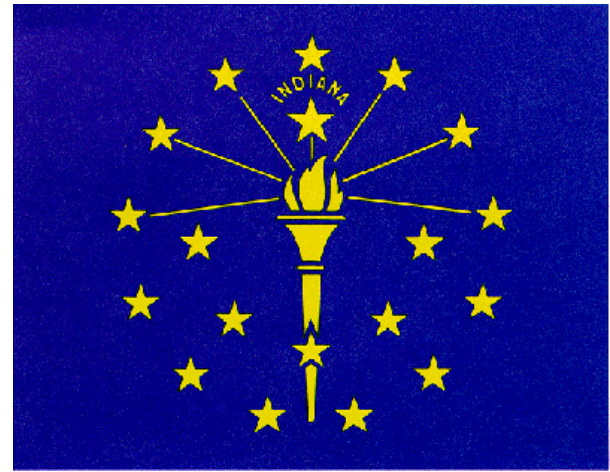
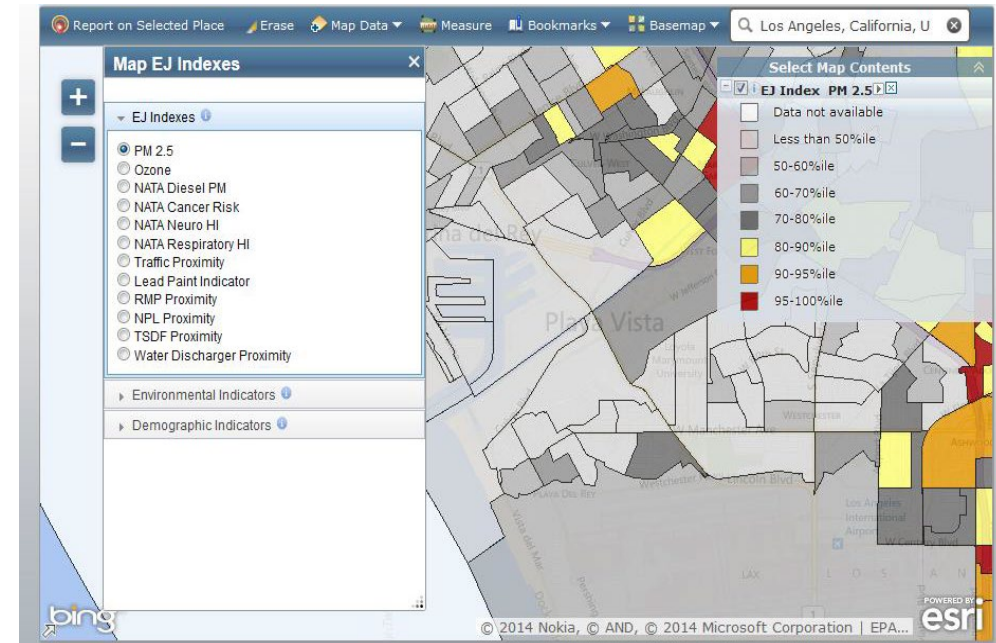


Photo Credit: IN.gov

**Much more to be done, by all of us**

# Tools to Help Guide You on EJ

- [EJScreen](#)
  - Drinking Water Non-Compliance Indicator
- [WaterTA](#)
- [EPA's Meaningful Involvement Policy](#)
- [EPA Environmental Justice Webpage](#)
- [Environmental Justice Clearinghouse](#)
- [Water Finance Clearinghouse](#)
- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's \(NOAA\) U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](#)
  - Great Lakes
  - Midwest





# EJ and You



CARE



TRUST



PARTNERSHIP



DEDICATION



PATIENCE

## And so much more



Contact Info: [motilall.christina@epa.gov](mailto:motilall.christina@epa.gov)

# Thank You!

For up-to-date information about Environmental Justice funding opportunities, events, and webinars, subscribe to EPA's Environmental Justice listserv by sending a blank email to: [join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov](mailto:join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov). Follow us on Twitter: [@EPAEnvJustice](https://twitter.com/EPAEnvJustice)