

Information: State of Oregon Environmental Justice Task Force

1. Introduction.

The State of Oregon has an Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF). By utilizing and strengthening this existing, state-level environmental justice infrastructure, the cap & invest program can support transparent, equitable and accountable program decision-making.

2. Environmental Justice Task Force Details.

- a. *Enabling Legislation.* 2007 Senate Bill 420, introduced by Senator Avel Gordly, established the EJTF. Additional framework was set by ORS 182.535-182.550.
- b. *Charge.* Per Senate Bill 420, Section 3, the Environmental Justice Task Force shall:
 - (1) Advise the Governor on environmental justice issues;
 - (2) Advise natural resource agencies on environmental justice issues, including community concerns and public participation processes;
 - (3) Identify, in cooperation with natural resource agencies, minority and low-income communities that may be affected by environmental decisions made by the agencies;
 - (4) Meet with environmental justice communities and make recommendations to the Governor regarding concerns raised by these communities; and
 - (5) Define environmental justice issues in the state
- c. *Covered Agencies.* All “Natural Resource Agencies” (per ORS 182.535): Department of Environmental Quality; Department of Agriculture, Water Resources Department, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Forestry Department, Department of State Lands, Department of Education, Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Department of Land Conservation and Development, State Marine Board, Public Utility Commission, Department of Transportation, State Fire Marshal, Oregon Health Authority
- d. *Resources/Staffing.* The Task Force is supported by the Governor's Natural Resource Office, including administrative support for minutes, website maintenance and updates, and for coordinating locations and the creation of agenda for the meetings. In the past two years, the Governor's Office has also provided funding for two meetings across the state (with two meetings in Portland/Salem corridor). While this support has allowed the EJTF to meet its minimum requirements under public meetings laws and its minimum requirement of four meetings annually, the EJTF has struggled to meet the spirit of the statute that created it and has limited ability to engage Oregonians across the geographic diversity of the state.
- e. *Membership.* Senate Bill 420 set EJTF membership at 12, including one member from each of the following commissions:
 - (1) The Commission on Asian Affairs;
 - (2) The Commission on Black Affairs;
 - (3) The Commission on Hispanic Affairs; and
 - (4) The Commission on Indian Services.