ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENTS.

- Goals for an EJ assessment.
- Approach.
- Project examples.
- Key takeaways.

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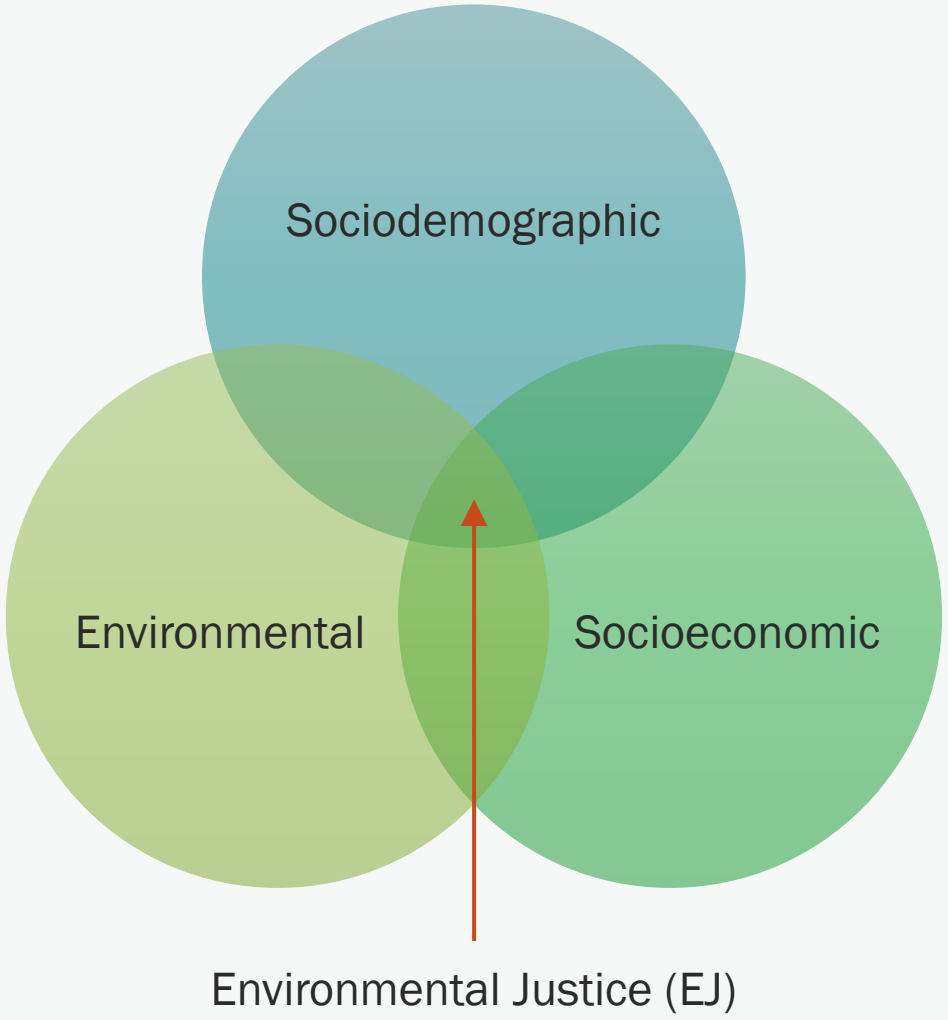
GOALS FOR AN EJ ASSESSMENT.

- Identify specific actions and strategies that will benefit all interested parties
- Evaluate socioeconomic, sociodemographic, and environmental factors associated with project/facility
- Recognize community needs

- EJ assessments can support:
  - Funding opportunities
  - Development decisions
  - Permit applications



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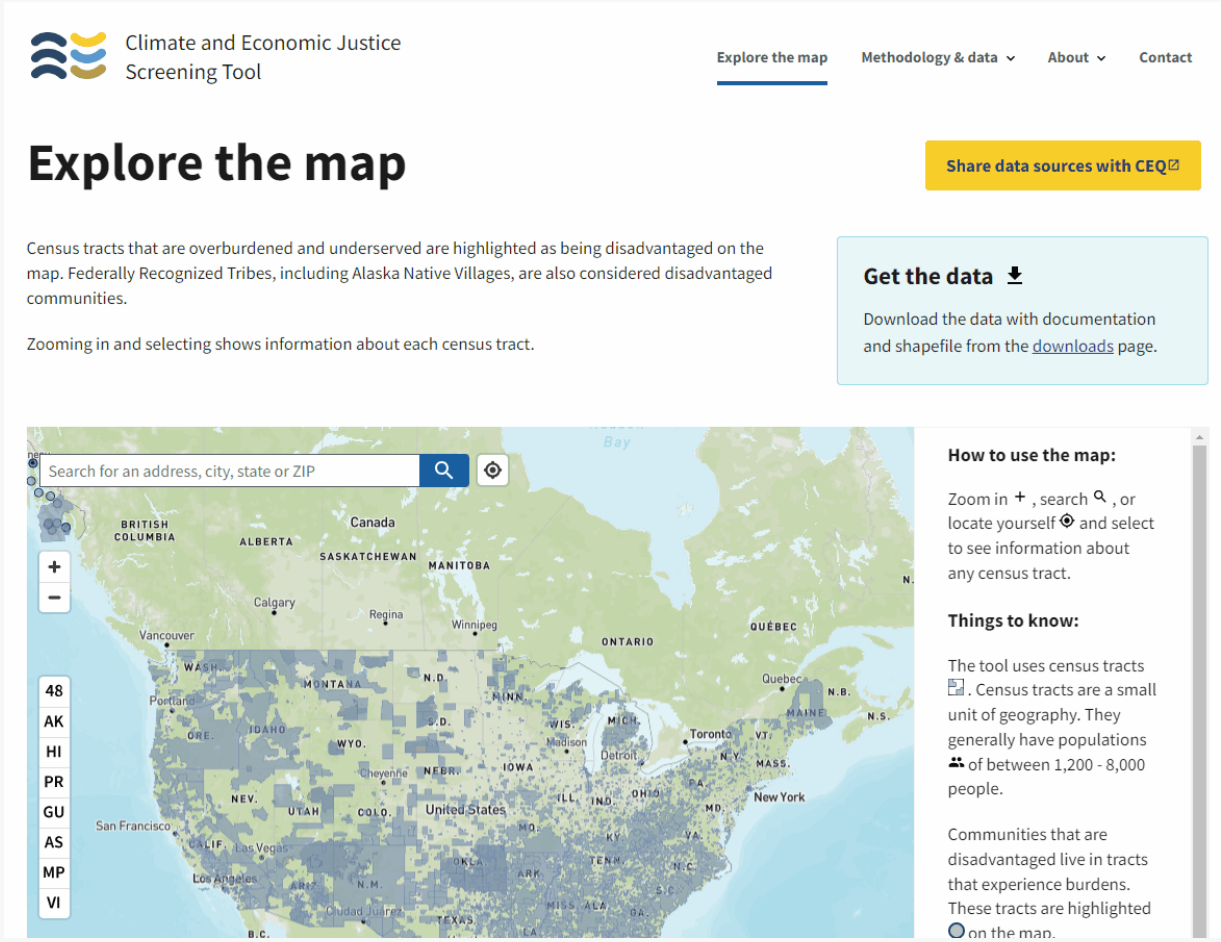
APPROACH.

- Identify the study area
  - Block group(s)
  - 1-mile buffer
- Compile and review environmental, socioeconomic, and sociodemographic data
  - EJScreen
  - Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)
  - EJ Index (EJI)
  - U.S. Census and American Community Survey (ACS)
  - Local data sources!
    - State, county, city, neighborhood



Source: Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (Version 1.0)

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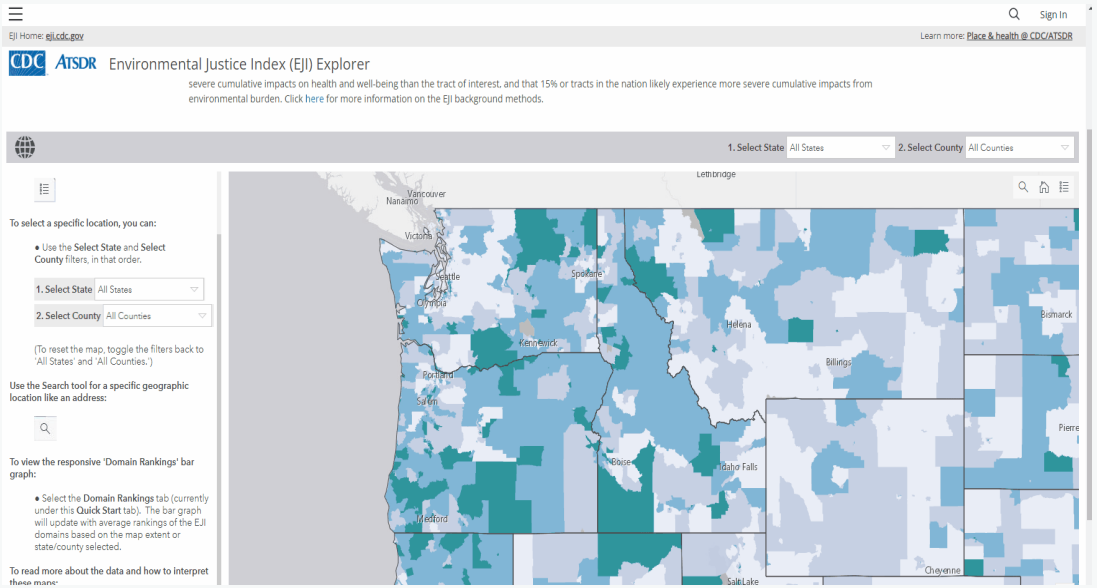
APPROACH.

- Evaluate data in the context of project or facility
  - How will community members experience the project or facility?
  - Are community members already experiencing a disproportional burden of environmental harm and risk?
  - Are there any other community concerns?

- EJ Assessment Goals:
  - Inform project decisions related to siting, permitting, design, construction, and operations
  - Inform communications and community engagement plans



Source: Center for Disease Control – Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease: Environmental Justice Index (August 24, 2023 Data)

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PROJECT EXAMPLE.

Selected Pollution and Sources Indicators	Index	Site Block Group		Project Area Block Groups		City	
		%ile in State	%ile in U.S.	%ile in State	%ile in U.S.	%ile in State	%ile in U.S.
Particulate Matter 2.5	EJ	96	85	87	73	81	69
	Supplemental	98	93	93	84	83	75
Diesel Particulate Matter	EJ	98	90	83	76	75	71
	Supplemental	99	97	91	89	77	79
Air Toxics Cancer Risk	EJ	96	93	86	87	57	63
	Supplemental	98	97	92	93	57	70
Air Toxics Respiratory HI	EJ	97	92	86	84	78	80
	Supplemental	98	98	93	92	81	86
Toxic Releases to Air	EJ	95	86	84	73	74	65
	Supplemental	99	93	99	84	99	69
Traffic Proximity	EJ	88	77	71	62	73	63
	Supplemental	91	87	78	75	74	71

Selected Pollution and Sources Indicators

Notes:
Values greater than or equal to the 80th percentile are highlighted.
Data Source: EJScreen – EPA Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (Version 2.2)

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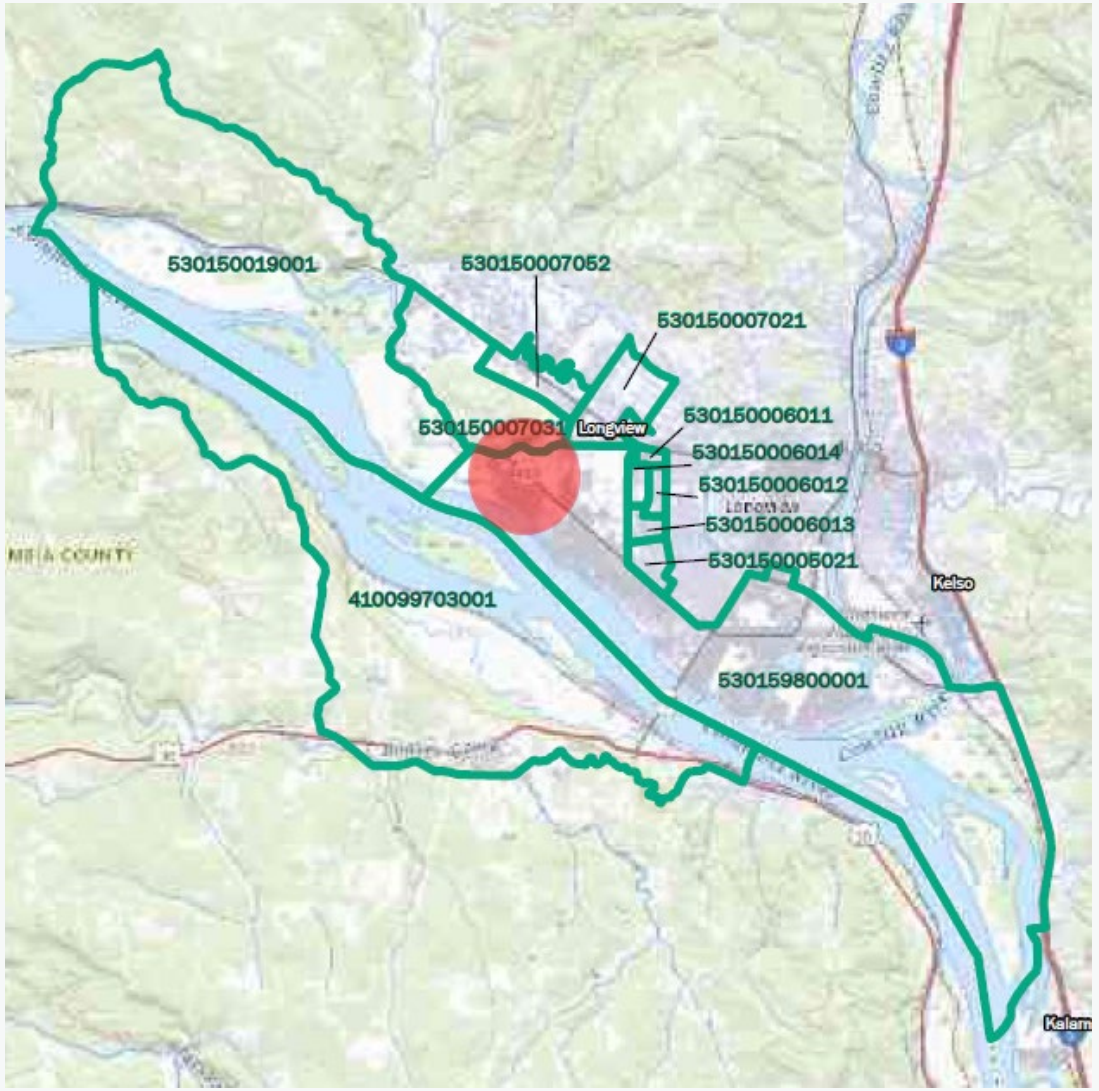
PROJECT EXAMPLE.

- The importance of defining the study area…



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KEY TAKE AWAYS.

- EJ data: many screening tools, most present only national data
  - WA Health Disparities Map is an exception
  - Review local information; e.g., Oregon DEQ Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) database, historical aerial photos
- The data is complex!
  - Using multiple tools will help paint the full picture
  - Evaluating the data outside the tools (e.g., downloading data, creating maps) is critical
- Take the time to fully evaluate and identify the study area
- Performing an EJ Assessment can benefit all parties:
  - Identify potential project hurdles and mitigation strategies
  - Inform community engagement strategies and communications plans

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QUESTIONS?

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