

Environmental Justice Questionnaire for IDNR

When answering the questions below please note if your answers are agency or program specific

1. Do you consider environmental implications when working on an issue in your agency? For example, air, noise, and/or water pollution; soil contamination; nuisance odors; greenhouse gases; etc. If yes, please explain. Yes,
 - Excess nutrients, agricultural pollution, including tile drainage, herbicides, insecticides, sediment from erosion, livestock waste and livestock erosion
 - Greater storm intensity can result in longer duration flooding, higher water turbidity and greater erosion.
 - Increased temperatures can have an effect on the timing and efficiency of fish sampling
 - Permitting and enforcement matters
 - Prescribed burning which has implications for air quality. Smoke sensitive areas are addressed in the burn plan
 - Best Management Practices to protect soil and water quality are required in Forest Stewardship plan that we develop or approve
 - The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission (INPC) relates to the quality of the environment, its fundamental to their mission
 - Department works with EPA and other DNR divisions on water and soil contamination issues. Noise pollution is also regulated on watercraft
 - Current IT green initiatives around power, ink/toner, paper, printer devices
 - Limit the amount of grass mowing to reduce air/noise pollution
 - Recycling program for trash, used tires, used oil
 - Office of Land Management practice sustainable farming methods on agricultural leases.
 - Land Management staff are trained and tested in the proper use of pesticides and its impact on the environment
 - Comprehensive Environmental Review Process (CERP) are mindful of smoke management in our prescribed burn plan
 - Impacts on humans are considered when we conduct prescribed fires. We consider wind direction for smoke management purposes and plan to keep smoke (air pollution) to minimum and we monitor herbicide application to waterways.
 - Conducted soil contamination and water pollution concerns for our projects by sampling nearby soils and having chemical testing completed and compared to EPA Taco Tier 1 Standards
 - The Division of Ecosystems and Environment advises state agencies and local governments of the effects of their actions on endangered and threatened species and Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Sites. These reviews cover the full scope of

human activities and their effects on the environment, but with a focus on state-listed endangered species and specific protected natural areas.

2. How do you determine or define the extent of environmental impacts on the community?

Please provide examples.

- Fish flesh samples are collected for human consumption advisories due to pesticide contamination.
- Purposes of permitting and enforcement are determined and defined by statutes and administrative rules
- Communicated by citizens
- It is a difficult community problem whether it be high speed rail, sewage treatment, natural habitat
- Samples taken on the scene
- INPC evaluates everything in terms of the impact on the resources that justified protecting the site. This includes groundwater, surface water, sound, light and air quality issues. The INPC use consultants as appropriate
- Office of Law Enforcement consults with other State and Federal agencies to determine the impact and the consequences for the offending individuals or corporation
- During prescribed fire management, to define smoke management impact areas on adjacent neighborhoods, we use up-to-date weather monitoring, maps, experience, training, prescribed burn plans and communication with local fire departments and sometimes neighbors themselves
- We meet all permitting requirements including Section 401 and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

3. Do you have an environmental justice mandate for your agency? Yes/No. If yes, please explain.

- Office of Law Enforcement must investigate complaints or other information we have about environmental justice issues

4. Do you assess the impact of projects on low-income and minority communities? If so, how?

- The Department's permitting programs assess project impacts on all communities which would include low-income and minority communities

- For the INPC, no specific mandate is given, however all projects are voluntary by the landowner. To the extent that minorities participate in INPC programs, their desires are considered. All decisions are made during public meetings that encourage public participation
 - Schoolyard Habitat Action Grant Program for developing wildlife habitat on the school grounds or other public place
 - Earth Day in the Parks program allows students to participate in natural resources stewardship activities at state parks. The impacts of these programs tend to be positive, encouraging youth of all communities to participate in outdoor activities
 - The Department assesses the impacts. Often, because our projects are located in flood plain areas, low-income and minority communities are often the largest benefactor in our dam removal and flood control projects.
5. Does your agency have programs that address the issues of handicapped and/or elderly populations?
- Disability Hunting Program
 - The Department addresses issues arising under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
 - No cost or discounted license for elderly
 - Provide vehicle devices for wheelchairs for hunters
6. Identify staff positions that work with low-income; minority; elderly and/or handicapped populations and communities.
- Natural Resource Specialists
 - Nature Resource Advanced Specialists
 - Site Superintendents
 - Natural Resources Coordinator
 - Natural Areas Protection Specialist
 - Site Technicians
 - Conservation Workers
 - Urban Fishing Program Coordinator
 - Natural Resources Managers
 - Natural Resource Education Program Manager

7. Does your agency have a community involvement/community engagement plan? If yes, explain the plan and specify whether it is general or project specific.
- The Urban Fishing Program teaches environmental education classes for block clubs, senior citizens centers and anyone with a group of 15-25
 - No Child left indoors
 - Education trunk programs
 - The Departments Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan – Identifies priorities for the use of local grant program funds
 - Open Space Lands Acquisition & Development (OSLAD) and Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Priorities include Special Populations, i.e., underserved populations and high need populations
8. How does your agency accommodate communities that are non-native English speakers? For example, providing an interpreter at a community meeting, translating documents, etc.
- Some of our Sites have employees that are Spanish Speaking
 - Hunting and Trapping Digest is printed in Spanish
9. Does your agency partner with community interest groups, if so who are they?
- Lake Shelbyville Muskie Club
 - Lake Shelbyville Alliance
 - Illinois Muskie Tournament Trail
 - Lake Mattoon Alliance
 - Southeast Environmental Task Force
 - Calumet Stewardship Initiative
 - Alliance for Wolf Lake Initiative
 - Southeast Sportsman's Club
 - Chicago Wilderness
 - Mighty Acorns
 - CIMBY (Calumet is My Back Yard)
 - Pheasants Forever
 - Ducks Unlimited
 - IL Audubon
 - Illinois Mine Rescue Association
 - Fishin Buddies
 - Friends of the Park
 - Chicago Wilderness

- Chicago Park District
- Boys and Girls Club
- Friends of Trails
- Save the Prairie Society

10. The Mud-to Garden project is an example of how state agencies can work together to address an environmental justice concern. Can you give an example of an opportunity where your agency could partner with one or more agencies on the EJ Commission to address an environmental justice concern?

- Acquiring and restoring open space that does not meet our typical criteria of “high quality natural areas” must become a priority for the agency. Use of such spaces to expand habitat, reduce fly dumping & dust emissions, and expand flood plain areas to reduce damage to residential and commercial properties during high water conditions should drive our actions. These kinds of improvements make a real difference in the quality of life for all residents. Restoration of “brown fields” and marginal properties can do more to expand green corridors and provide connections to high quality areas so that animal populations can move throughout the regions.
- The INPC continues to work with landowners in rural and economically disadvantaged such as Pembroke Township, Kankakee County to protect land
- The agency’s could work together to support and implement the Environmental Literacy for Illinois Strategic Plan.
<http://dnr.state.il.us/EL4IL/Draft%20Final%202.pdf>
- DNR could increase participation of senior citizens as volunteers. It could also target programming to senior citizens to increase their visitation in State parks
- The Agency is working on the Millennium Reserve to protect the Calumet Region in Cook County