



National Association of Flood and Stormwater Management Agencies

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NAFSMA Policy on Environmental Justice

Approved by the NAFSMA Leadership on November 30, 2022

NAFSMA strongly supports local, regional, and other national organizations striving to build resilient and healthy community environments. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines environmental justice as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.” NAFSMA supports this definition of environmental justice and recognizes it as an important component of equity.

Disenfranchised, marginalized, and disadvantaged communities are disproportionately exposed to flood related damage and environmental contaminants. This is attributed to the cost of land in hazardous areas, and racially discriminatory practices like redlining, where people of color were only allowed to live in flood prone or environmentally hazardous areas. Flooding is difficult for everyone, but it is particularly challenging for low-income families and other historically underrepresented communities that experience more barriers and have fewer resources to support their safe evacuation and recovery.

NAFSMA appreciates that for our communities to thrive, equity and environmental justice must be advanced at all levels of public agencies’ practices and decisions.

To advance environmental justice in flood risk reduction, floodplain management and stormwater, NAFSMA will:

- Advocate for federal policies that promote and do not hinder equity and environmental justice.
- Encourage federal agencies to collaborate amongst each other on their environmental justice tools, policies, project delivery, and initiatives so that local and regional public works agencies have clear direction on how to promote environmental justice in their communities to meet federal program and policy frameworks.
- Leverage environmental justice policies and procedures that have been successfully implemented at the local and regional government with federal agencies to advance meaningful outcomes.
- Facilitate collaboration and peer support about best practices and strategies that are making a difference in our communities.
- Promote the triple bottom line (financial, social, and environmental), while working to make decision making balanced and beneficial to the entire nation. To ensure progress on environmental justice is advanced, NAFSMA advocates that triple bottom line decision making is codified in federal agency policy such as USACE’s Principals, Requirements, and Guidelines.

NAFSMA joins our partners working at the local, regional, and national levels to address environmental justice and commits to working with appropriate federal agencies as they advance their individual environmental justice initiatives, such as Justice 40 at the federal level.

For more information on NAFSMA’s environmental justice and activities please contact Executive Director Susan Gilson at sgilson@nafsma.org or Director of Government Affairs and Member Programs Sunny Simpkins at sunnys@nafsma.org.