

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Floodplain Management Services and  
Planning Assistance to States Outreach  
Plan: Providing Technical Assistance to  
Underserved Communities

3 March 2023



## 1. Introduction

Executive Order (EO) 14008, Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (January 27, 2021), directs agencies to (1) address the disproportionately high and adverse health, environmental, climate-related, and cumulative burdens on disadvantaged communities, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, and (2) deliver the benefits of their investments to underserved communities. To meet these objectives, EO 14008 includes the Justice40 Initiative with the goal to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, clean water, and other investments to underserved communities. In March 2022, the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) (ASA(CW)) established an environmental justice policy in the memorandum titled "Implementation of Environmental Justice and the Justice40 Initiative" that identified Floodplain Management Services (FPMS) and Planning Assistance to States (PAS) as priority areas for engaging and providing technical assistance to underserved communities. In August 2022, FPMS and PAS were formally included as Covered Programs under Justice40. FPMS and PAS provide planning level technical assistance to meet the needs of communities across the nation. Within both programs, there is an opportunity to conduct outreach and provide technical assistance to underserved communities.

Additionally, EO 14008 mandated the development of performance measures for an annual Environment Justice (EJ) Scorecard by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). The EJ Scorecard provides a baseline assessment of the Federal government's progress and accomplishments on environmental justice in response to Executive Order 14008. At present, metrics include, but are not limited to, the number of employees working on EJ, internal staff trainings on EJ, project modifications to account for EJ, and number of public processes and partnerships to advance EJ. CEQ has indicated that the EJ Scorecard will evolve over time, with the goal of creating a robust and comprehensive assessment of the Federal Government's efforts to secure environmental justice for all.

The following Outreach Plan was developed to provide a framework for implementation of Justice40 and the implementation guidance established by ASA(CW). This Outreach Plan stems from and complements the broader USACE Interim Environmental Justice Strategic Plan: Community Outreach and Engagement (December 2022) and includes metrics to aid in tracking progress towards advancing environmental justice. Under the Justice40 initiative, the FPMS and PAS programs will strive to provide 40% of investments in climate and critical clean water and waste infrastructure in benefit of underserved communities.

## 2. Purpose

Outreach and engagement are critical to providing assistance to underserved communities. The [USACE Interim Environmental Justice Strategic Plan](#) (Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan) provides the overarching objectives and framework to transform outreach and engagement at all levels and across the entire USACE Civil Works organization. The following Outreach Plan tiers from the Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan with objectives and metrics specific to the FPMS and PAS programs as covered Justice40 programs and serves as a guiding document for districts to develop and implement the technical assistance portions of their District Environmental Justice Strategic Plan (District EJ Strategic Plan). FPMS and PAS are to be included in District EJ Strategic Plans as key tools for providing assistance to underserved

communities. The intent of this plan is to position teams to promote inclusivity and encourage participation by all communities as potential partners under the USACE technical assistance programs. This outreach plan aligns with other ongoing communication efforts which include efforts by ASA(CW), USACE leadership, Divisions, and Districts.

### 3. Program Background

#### Floodplain Management Services (FPMS) Program

Authorized by Section 206 of the Flood Control Act of 1960, as amended (33 U.S. Code Section (U.S.C.) 709a), FPMS allows USACE to provide information on flood hazards to local interests, state agencies, and other federal agencies to guide development of the floodplains of the rivers of the US as well as the impact of coastal storms. USACE is authorized to compile and disseminate information on floods and flood damages, including identification of areas subject to inundation by floods of various magnitudes and frequencies, and general criteria for guidance of federal and nonfederal interests and agencies in the use of floodplain areas; and to provide advice to other federal agencies and local interests for their use in planning to ameliorate the flood hazard. The FPMS program addresses the needs of people who live and work in floodplains to know about flood hazards, and the actions they can take to reduce property damage and prevent the loss of life caused by flooding, with consideration of environmental impacts. The program’s objective is to provide USACE technical assistance nationally to foster public understanding of the options for dealing with flood hazards and to promote prudent use and management of the nation’s floodplains. The FPMS program provides a full range of technical services and planning guidance that is needed to support effective floodplain management. This includes the full range of information, technical services, and planning guidance and assistance on floods and floodplain issues within the broad umbrella of floodplain management. Technical services and planning guidance are provided to state, regional, Tribal, and local governments without charge, while services for federal agencies and private persons are provided on a cost-recovery or fee basis. USACE may also accept voluntarily contributed funds to expand the scope of services requested.

Some FPMS Activities & Products
Floodplain delineation
Flood hazard evaluation
Hurricane evacuation
Flood warning / preparedness
Comprehensive floodplain management
Flood risk reduction
Urbanization impacts
Storm water management
Flood proofing
Inventory of flood-prone structures
Workshops
Guides and Pamphlets / Risk Communication
Tabletop exercises
Emergency Action Plan / Floodplain Management Plan Assistance
Natural and nature-based solutions
Assessment tools and processes

## Planning Assistance to States (PAS)

The Planning Assistance to States (PAS) Program is authorized by Section 22 of the Water Resources Development Act of 1974, as amended (42 U.S.C. 1962d-16).

Under this program, USACE is authorized to provide technical assistance and comprehensive planning expertise in water and related land resources management in partnership with states, public entities within states, Territories and Native American Tribes and not-for-profit entities. There are two types of assistance that can be provided to a non-Federal sponsor under PAS: comprehensive plans and technical assistance.

Comprehensive plans may cover the development, utilization, and conservation of the water and related resources of drainage basins, watersheds, or ecosystems located within the boundaries of such state, interest, or entity, including plans to comprehensively address water resource challenges. Technical assistance may include provision and integration of hydrologic, economic, and environmental data and analysis.

Example PAS Projects
Floodplain delineation
Flood hazard evaluation
Comprehensive floodplain management
Storm water management
Flood risk reduction
Stream and Wetland Assessments
Coastal assessments
Watershed planning
Water Supply
Water Quality
Environmental Restoration
Fish and Wildlife

PAS projects are cost-shared 50/50, where the non-federal sponsor provides 50% of project costs to USACE, except for under a Comprehensive Plan project where the 50% cost-share requirement may be provided as cash or in-kind services. There is a cost-share waiver for Tribes and Territories, where the first \$665,000 of project costs are at full federal expense and costs above this amount are cost-shared. This amount is adjusted annually for inflation.

## 4. Engagement and Outreach Objectives

The Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan identifies seven priority objectives for comprehensive community outreach and engagement across the nation. In meeting those objectives, the FPMS and PAS programs are to be included as two tools to conduct outreach and engagement and ultimately provide technical assistance.

Objective 5 of the Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan is to “improve awareness, access, and participation for USACE Civil Works technical assistance programs while maximizing assistance that benefits underserved communities”; this objective is specific to FPMS and PAS. To meet Objective 5, four sub-objectives specific to FPMS and PAS outreach and engagement have been developed that complement the overall objectives of the Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan. Each of the four sub-objectives, referred to as Technical Assistant Objectives (TA-objectives), include metrics that will be measured on a regular

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*“Objective 5: Improving awareness, access, and participation for USACE Civil Works technical assistance programs while maximizing assistance that benefits underserved and disadvantaged communities.”*

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basis, as noted below, for tracking progress and identifying opportunities to further enhance outreach and engagement. These metrics support current reporting requirements of the EJ Scorecard.

The specific engagement and outreach TA-objectives for the FPMS and PAS programs include:

**TA-Objective 1: Build internal capacity within Districts for effectively communicating with underserved communities.**

In order to perform effective outreach, internal capacity must be developed through providing staff with appropriate training, materials, and tools to both present the range of assistance the Corps can offer and increase the awareness, skills, and abilities of district employees regarding environmental justice. This TA-Objective complements Objective 3 of the Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan: “developing and optimizing USACE resources to broaden internal expertise through the continual refinement and supplication of tools, training, and products centered on environmental justice.”

As FPMS and PAS teams conduct outreach as a component of their responsibilities within these programs, it is important for their knowledge about technical assistance as well as their experiences with outreach to be shared with the district EJ Coordinator and respective teammates for inclusion in the District EJ Strategic Plans. In addition, as FPMS and PAS teams will continue to conduct outreach and increase focus on engaging with underserved communities, appropriate EJ training and skill development is necessary. Collaboration and public participation experts within USACE, including subject matter experts (SMEs) in the Collaboration and Public Participation Center of Expertise (CPCX), will assist in developing strategies and mechanisms for conducting outreach. These specialists will identify additional training opportunities that will help build and strengthen the communication skill set in the USACE staff who will be responsible for reaching out to underserved communities.

*Metric 1: Technical Assistance Program staff for FPMS and PAS at Districts have the opportunity for at least one training per year on conducting outreach in support of underserved communities. Training may be offered through a variety of means from the HQ team, CPCX, Division, or internal training at the District either in-person or virtual. Districts will report the number of people within the Technical Assistance Program staff and if they have received one or more trainings on conducting outreach each year.*

*Metric 2: District outreach and communication team members are trained to accurately communicate about FPMS and PAS. Training may be offered through a variety of means from the HQ team, Division, or internal training at the District. Webinars and slide decks from previous FPMS and PAS trainings will be posted on the FRM Portal and Planning Toolbox to aid in meeting this metric. Districts will report the number of internal trainings held for outreach staff and the number of outreach and communication team members trained to communicate about FPMS and PAS each year.*

*Metric 3: Technical Assistance outreach materials and tools are developed by the FPMS and PAS district teams for outreach and communication team members to use collectively. Outreach materials and tools includes, but is not limited to, fact sheets, brochures, and external district*

*websites. To aid in meeting this metric, FPMS and PAS materials are available on the Flood Risk Management (FRM) portal; the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will continue to develop materials and tools for district use along with the CPCX. Districts will report a list of outreach materials and tools developed or updated specifically for their FPMS and PAS programs each year.*

The metrics included in this TA Objective will support the Institutionalizing EJ category of the EJ Scorecard which includes, but is not limited to, reporting on number of employees working on EJ, internal training, and development of tools and resources for environmental justice. Districts will keep track of internal staff trainings on environmental justice, to include Tribal consultation training and number of new or updates tools or resources for environmental justice is recommended. It is key to first ensure internal capacity is built to position the team for effective outreach. Keeping track of these metrics on a regular basis will aid in demonstrating how USACE is institutionalizing EJ.

**TA-Objective 2: Coordinate with external partners to develop coordinated outreach efforts and identify underserved communities.**

USACE works with numerous partners at various levels of government and outside government through FPMS and PAS. These partners are key to aid in identification of where technical assistance may be needed and prioritized. To highlight the importance of coordinating with these partners, this TA-Objective complements Objective 2 of the Interim USACE Strategic EJ Plan: “Forming strong partnerships within and outside of the government to strengthen underserved and disadvantaged community participation in USACE programs and activities.”

Engagement with these partners may vary between different programs and partners. Many of these partners may engage on a project-specific basis, which would require regular engagement and communication to ensure the best technical assistance to meet the identified need is developed. Other engagement may occur on a more programmatic level and include focus on providing an understanding of what the USACE technical assistance programs have to offer. These engagement opportunities may be associated with other events, such as regularly scheduled meetings or conferences, or may occur in response to a specific need or opportunity.

Engaging state partners will be necessary to help identify underserved communities. Through interagency, state-led Silver Jackets teams, USACE has existing relationships with state agency representatives in each state, the District of Columbia, and several U.S. territories which can be leveraged. These relationships often include state National Flood Insurance Program Coordinators and/or State Hazard Mitigation Officers, among other state agency representatives. Interagency Silver Jackets team partnerships will also be leveraged to coordinate outreach efforts with other

**USACE Partners to Support Outreach Efforts**

- State government officials
- Local government officials
- Regional government officials
- Tribal Nation officials
- Territorial government officials
- Federal agencies (e.g. FEMA, EPA, NOAA, CEQ)
- Nongovernmental organizations (e.g. Association of State Floodplain Managers, National Association of Flood and Stormwater Managers, American Rivers, The Nature Conservancy, American Flood Coalition)

federal partners to more efficiently reach underserved communities with relevant information without overwhelming community partners. Given the limited resources (both financial and personnel) available within underserved communities, efficiencies and coordination in outreach efforts, both within USACE and with other federal partners, should help enable more successful provision of assistance to underserved communities.

The National Silver Jackets team, which is a national-level interagency group consisting of federal agencies typically participating on state-led Silver Jackets teams, will also be leveraged to coordinate across federal agencies involved in efforts to support underserved communities. Common understanding across the federal agencies engaging with underserved communities will help ensure more efficient and effective support and assistance can be provided, since not all underserved communities will have needs that can be met by any one specific agency. General knowledge and understanding among federal agencies will allow agency representatives to connect underserved communities with the most appropriate federal agency(ies) based on understanding of the need. Additional mechanisms for engaging with state partners will also be explored, including connecting with nongovernmental partners who have state agency relationships.

Table A provides a roadmap for coordination and engagement activities with external partners that will assist in identifying and implementing outreach with underserved communities.

**Table A: Coordination Efforts with External Partners**

Group/ Partner Name	Geographic Scale	Type of Engagement Anticipated	Rationale for Engagement
<b>State partners</b>	State	Virtual and/or In-Person meetings	State partners have closer connections to local, tribal, and other partners who may be underserved.
<b>Interagency federal partners</b>	National	Virtual and/or In-Person meetings	Many federal agencies have resources available to support underserved communities that could work in concert with or independent of USACE technical assistance programs, depending on the need.
<b>Nongovernmental partners</b>	National, Local	Virtual and/or In-Person meetings	Nongovernmental partners often have specific relationships with underserved communities directly, or with other potential partners who could assist in supporting the needs of these communities.
<b>Tribal Nations</b>	Regional, Local	In-Person meetings	Tribal Nations may directly benefit from FPMS and the PAS cost-share waiver.
<b>Territories</b>	Territory	Virtual and/or In-Person meetings	There are a number of U.S. Territories that can benefit from FPMS and the PAS cost-share waiver.
<b>Local Communities</b>	Local	Variety of engagement mechanisms	Underserved communities may not have existing relationships with USACE or awareness of USACE technical assistance programs that could provide benefits.

***Metric 1:** FPMS and PAS PgMs participate in at least 50% of the annual Silver Jackets state team meetings to provide information on technical assistance opportunities. Districts will report the percentage and number of Silver Jackets meetings the FPMS and PAS PgMs participated in each year.*



*Metric 2: District FPMS and PAS PgMs conduct a minimum of three outreach efforts at various events (reoccurring agency meetings, workshops, site visits, conference, etc.) to engage external partners about technical assistance available to underserved communities. Districts will report the number and type of outreach efforts conducted each year.*

The metrics included in this TA Objective will support the Delivering Investments and Institutionalizing EJ categories of the EJ Scorecard. The Delivering Investments category includes tracking number of outreach events to improve access to Federal EJ programs. The Institutionalizing EJ category includes, but is not limited to, highlighting interagency EJ work with other non-Federal organizations and Federal agencies to advance EJ. Districts will keep track of number of Silver Jackets meetings that FPMS and PAS staff participate in as well as number of outreach events. Leveraging existing partnerships and forums is a key place to start for conducting outreach and identifying communities that can benefit from technical assistance. Keeping track of these metrics on a regular basis will aid in demonstrating how USACE is institutionalizing and delivering investments towards EJ.

**TA-Objective 3: Gain a better understanding of the specific needs of underserved communities.**

Through the efforts outlined above in TA-objectives 1 and 2, FPMS and PAS teams are armed with information to conduct targeted outreach to engage underserved communities. Working with our partners, communities can be identified and strategies can be developed to engage with underserved communities to establish relationships. When meeting with communities, it is important to listen to their needs and offer opportunities where FPMS and PAS, as well as other USACE programs, can provide assistance. Prior to engaging with a community, the team must ensure their approach is appropriate and ask the following questions:

- Are materials provided in the appropriate language? Is a translator needed?
- Is there a local governance structure or board to contact or is a county or state agency more appropriate to work through to provide assistance?
- Are district Tribal liaisons included in coordination to share opportunities to partner with Tribal Nations through FPMS and PAS programs?

The CPCX Guide for Preparing District Environmental Justice Strategic Plans (January 2023) and the USACE Communication Planning Workbook Annotated for Environmental Justice Outreach (January 2023) provide helpful information and planning process for outreach to underserved communities. The CPCX Guide includes information on preparing for and conducting effective and meaningful engagements and also describes tools for identifying new and priority relationships through available EJ tools. The Communication Planning Workbook includes various exercises to develop effective outreach tailored to the target audience.

Engagements may be conducted through a variety of means as appropriate for effective discussions, and can include webinar events, in-person events (i.e., tableside discussions, site visits), and other mechanisms as identified by other partners or the community. Initial coordination with underserved communities should focus on gaining knowledge and understanding of the community and their needs.

*Metric 1: District FPMS and PAS staff will work with their District EJ Coordinator and Tribal Liaisons to identify appropriate means to engage with underserved communities in their region. Prior to engagements, coordinate with partners and community points of contact to ensure meetings and discussions are organized effectively for community participation and transfer of knowledge. Communication Plans are developed or updated for each engagement, as appropriate for effective outreach. Districts will report number of internal EJ coordination meetings and communication plans developed/updated for each engagement with an underserved community, with a goal of at least five per year.*

*Metric 2: District FPMS and PAS PgMs, or appropriate staff as identified in the District Strategic Plans, meet with underserved communities to understand their technical assistance needs and share opportunities for USACE to provide assistance. Districts will report on number of meetings with underserved communities to discuss technical assistance, with a goal of five meetings per year.*

The metrics included in this TA Objective will support the Delivering Investments categories of the EJ Scorecard. The Delivering Investments category includes tracking number of outreach events to improve access to Federal EJ programs. District teams should work to understand the community and their needs in order to ensure effective and appropriate engagement. The Communication Plan workbook aids in preparing for engagements and can be adapted as needed. Meeting with communities and listening to their needs will allow for teams to appropriately match the appropriate USACE program to provide assistance. Keeping track of these metrics on a regular basis will aid in demonstrating how USACE is delivering investments towards EJ.

**TA-Objective 4: Evaluate lessons learned from ongoing outreach and engagement opportunities and adapt outreach strategy and approach(es) appropriately.**

As outreach and engagements with partners and underserved communities progresses, teams should maintain a register of successful engagements and lessons learned. Understanding mechanisms for approaching communities, types of meeting styles that have been effective for coordination, and techniques to understand community needs is key to continued and enhanced partnership with underserved and underserved communities. While each community may have different structure and needs, lessons can be learned and shared from every engagement. USACE will continue to adapt and innovate as these lessons are shared to meet the needs of underserved communities.

*Metric 1: The Technical Assistance (FPMS and PAS) portions of the District EJ Strategic Plans will be reviewed annually and updated appropriately as new information becomes available and as new regulations, policy, and guidance are released. Districts will report that they have conducted their annual review and updates, as needed, of the Technical Assistance portions their District EJ Strategic Plan each year.*

## 5. A Unified Strategy Promoting Effective Outreach with Underserved Communities

The Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan requires the development of a District EJ Strategic Plan for comprehensive outreach and engagement with underserved communities. The objectives laid forth in this FPMS and PAS Strategic Plan should be imbedded in District EJ Strategic Plans and metrics tracked accordingly by FPMS and PAS teams. USACE must ensure that for any engagement, all programs and authorities are represented to comprehensively provide the community with the assistance needed to address their water resource challenges. Within the District EJ Strategic Plans, the TA Objectives fit within the main categories of Building Internal and External Capacity and Outreach Strategy: Prepare and Conduct Inclusive Outreach and Engagement as outlined in the CPCX Guide for Preparing District Strategic Plans. FPMS and PAS teams are key players in conducting EJ outreach and should be included on District EJ working teams where appropriate.

The Interim USACE EJ Strategic Plan identifies roles and responsibilities of the District, Division, Headquarters, and USACE leadership. Roles and Responsibilities for this FPMS and PAS Outreach Plan are identified in the table below.

### Internal Alignment and Coordination

Program or Practice Area	Lead	Roles and Responsibilities
USACE FRM Business Line	<b>Lisa Kiefel</b>	Provides oversight and direction of the national FRM program portfolio, specifically advocates for the incorporation of the TA Programs into the national EJ Outreach Strategy
HQ EJ Program Manager	<b>Jerica Richardson</b>	Provides oversight and management of the EJ program, Coordinates with horizontally and vertically with EJ working groups and EJ Coordinators
FPMS	<b>Stephanie Bray Jennifer Dunn Kaely Megaro</b>	Update Outreach Strategy and oversee the development and implementation of FPMS outreach actions, Coordinate with other program leads, Track metrics, Report progress to FRM BLM
PAS	<b>Sharon Sartor</b>	Update Outreach Strategy and oversee the development and implementation of PAS outreach actions, Coordinate with other program leads, Track metrics, Report progress to FRM BLM
Silver Jackets	<b>Katherine Rowden, Lacey Thomason</b>	Oversee the development and implementation of Silver Jackets outreach actions, Coordinate with other program leads, Track metrics
MSC reps	<b>Division EJ Coordinators, NFRMP Coordinators &amp; FPMS/PAS PgMs</b>	Support Districts with community outreach, Aid in regional outreach as appropriate, Provide HQ counterparts with updates on action status
Districts	<b>District EJ Coordinators, Tribal Liaisons, Silver Jackets Coordinators &amp; FMPS/PAS PgMs</b>	Build internal and external capacity for EJ outreach, Conduct outreach, Contribute to District EJ teams and District EJ Strategic Plans, Provide MSC counterparts with updates on action status, Continue to adapt District EJ Strategic Plans and outreach strategies with lessons learned and subsequent guidance

\*As of 3 MAR 2023

### Program Support for EJ Outreach

The HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will continue to work to provide materials, tools, and guidance to support the vertical team in implementing EJ objectives. Technical assistance materials are available on the [Flood Risk Management \(FRM\) Portal](#) and the [Planning Community Toolbox](#). Such materials include program fact sheets, program presentation materials, and a comprehensive FRM partnering approaches table. The CPCX also hosts an [EJ Outreach Materials sharepoint](#) that includes helpful tools, templates, and trainings related to EJ. The HQ team is working on a public-facing website as a resource for external partners to learn about technical assistance and also identify local division or district contacts.

Together with the CPCX, the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will identify training opportunities for Division and District teams to enhance knowledge in engaging and working with underserved communities. For example, in partnership with the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado Boulder, the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs developed a 1.5-day training course, available to District FPMS, PAS, and Silver Jackets team members, focused on building the necessary skillsets to successfully communicate with socially vulnerable populations. In 2022, the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs also hosted a virtual workshop for Division and District FPMS and PAS teams to share program updates, success stories, and lessons learned as well as provide training on EJ. Future training opportunities may be in-person, virtual, or self-led. The CPCX Guide includes a list of training opportunities.

On an annual basis, the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will issue a survey to Divisions and Districts to collect information on lessons learned, successful engagements, as well as any gaps that may need to be addressed through further guidance, development of tools, or training. The results of the surveys will be used to share successes and lessons learned with the USACE FPMS and PAS teams to aid others in improving or enhancing their EJ outreach. The results will also be used to identify the need for additional guidance, tools, or trainings that the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will work to provide, as appropriate.

Using the feedback provided through the annual survey and with any subsequent guidance or policy, the HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will review and update this document annually. Updates will be coordinated with the HQ EJ Program Manager and appropriate HQ functional offices to ensure consistent direction. The HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs will continue to work closely through the Divisions on any related updates.

## 6. FPMS and PAS Investment

In order to conduct outreach and develop relationships with underserved communities, Districts need access to financial and personnel resources, as well as expertise in communication. Both FPMS and PAS have provided financial resources through increased funding available to Districts to conduct outreach, with the intent to support more targeted outreach toward underserved communities. [Several other USACE programs and authorities](#) also have funding available that can support broad outreach efforts.

Financial and personnel resources go hand-in-hand to some degree, such that access to adequate funding helps ensure adequate personnel will be available to support District outreach efforts. However, as districts vary in size, organization, and regional priorities, there are several circumstances where staff available to conduct outreach is limited. Technical Assistance Program staff will be supported by those

USACE specialists and disciplines versed in communications and engagement, such as Public Involvement Specialists and EJ SMEs, based on guidance and direction provided by HQ leadership. It is critical that staff that conduct outreach are well versed on Corps programs, to include but not limited to FPMS and PAS, to effectively match assistance with the potential partner's needs.

### Justice 40 Investment

In implementing the Justice40 initiative, the ASA(CW) guidance (March 2022) directs that USACE will use investments as the metric to measure benefits. FPMS and PAS will strive to invest 40% of funding towards outreach and assistance to benefit underserved communities. This investment includes all efforts to prepare for and conduct outreach and engagements to identify and engage with underserved communities; as every engagement should include discussion of how USACE can provide technical assistance to underserved communities, all funding expended on outreach will be counted.

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*“...essentially providing that 40% of USACE investments in climate and critical clean water and waste infrastructure must benefit disadvantaged communities. USACE will strive to achieve the 40% goal under Justice40 Initiative for specific programs, such as Planning Assistance to States, Floodplain Management Services and the Tribal Partnership Program...”*

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Currently, the process to identify underserved communities to track benefits for Justice40 requires use of the [Council on Environmental Quality \(CEQ\) Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST) to assess all census tracts within a project's estimated area of benefits. The CEJST defines underserved communities based on a combination of socio-demographic parameters and environmental parameters within eight different categories of environmental risk. A community is considered underserved in one or more of eight environmental risk categories if it exceeds both certain social thresholds and the environmental thresholds of those categories. A USACE project counts as providing benefits to underserved communities under Justice40 if the CEJST identifies any census tract within its estimated area of benefits as underserved in either of these two categories (and only under either of these two categories): Climate Change and Critical Clean Water & Wastewater Infrastructure. To determine the project's estimated area of benefits, select a latitude-longitude point within the project's area and identify the HUC-8 area; this HUC-8 area will serve as the estimated area of benefits. Teams can use the appropriate level of HUC for their project area. Using the appropriate HUC area, use CEJST to determine whether any census tracts within the estimated area of benefits are considered underserved within the Climate Change or the Critical Clean Water & Wastewater Infrastructure categories.

As new PAS and FPMS projects are identified, those that provide technical assistance directly to or within the scope of the project to underserved communities will be prioritized for funding. Teams will use CEJST and any other tools identified subsequent guidance to verify inclusion of underserved communities and note such communities in project requests to the Division and HQ FPMS and PAS PgMs.

USACE is committed to engaging and providing technical assistance to underserved communities. FPMS and PAS are excellent programs to introduce communities to the variety of assistance that USACE can provide and allow provision of timely assistance to communities in need. USACE will continue to adapt and evolve with ensure FPMS and PAS are accessible to underserved communities in need of assistance.