

HEAL Act Update (WRAC)

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July 10, 2023

What is the HEAL Act?

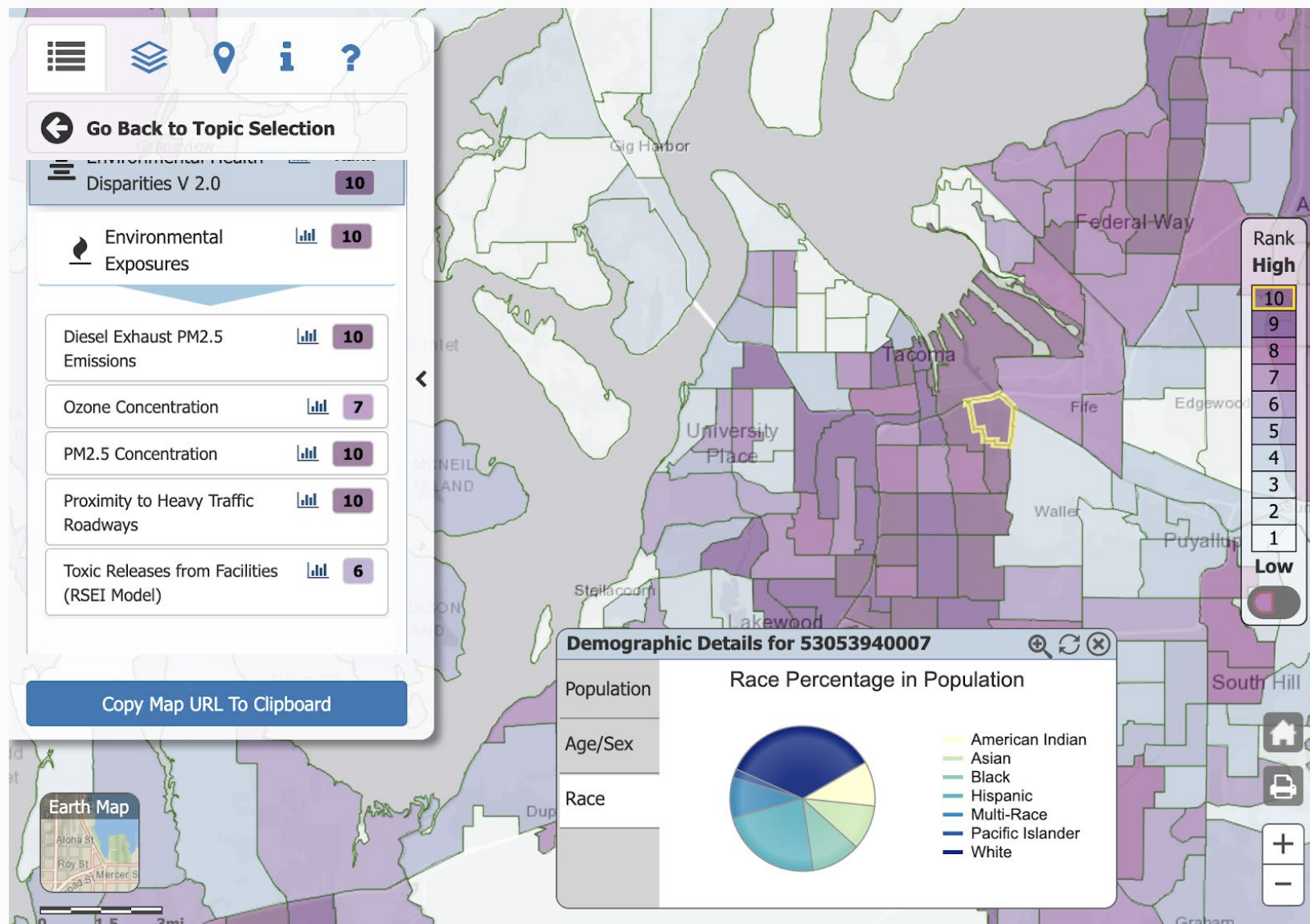
- The Healthy Environment for All Act, or the HEAL Act, passed in 2021.
- It instructs agencies to consider, plan for, and address environmental justice issues in a wide scope of agency activities

Why was the HEAL Act passed?

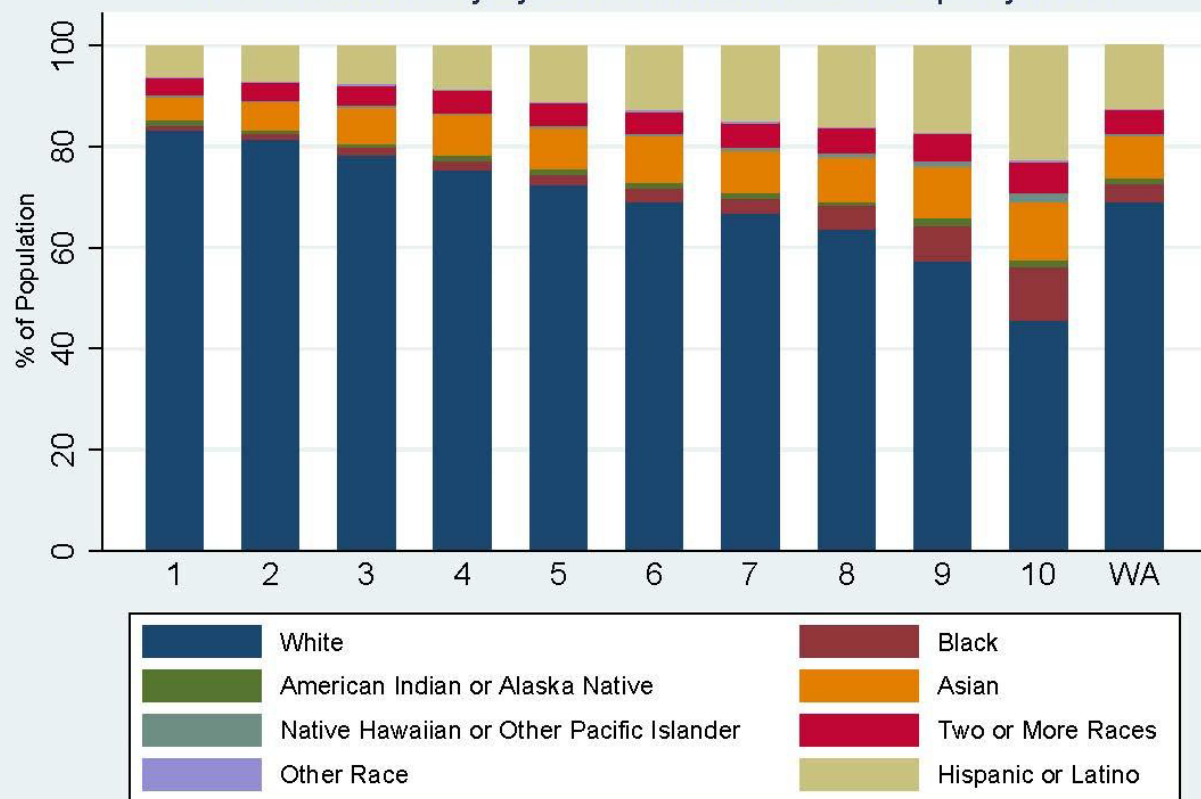
- The intent of the law is to reduce environmental and health disparities in Washington.
- Historically and today, people disproportionately exposed to environmental harms include communities of color, low income, Tribal lands, indigenous communities.
 - Environmental harms include things like exposure to pollution, any kind of adverse environmental effect, loss of ecosystem functions, climate change
- These exposures lead to higher risk of adverse health outcomes.

Disproportionate Burdens

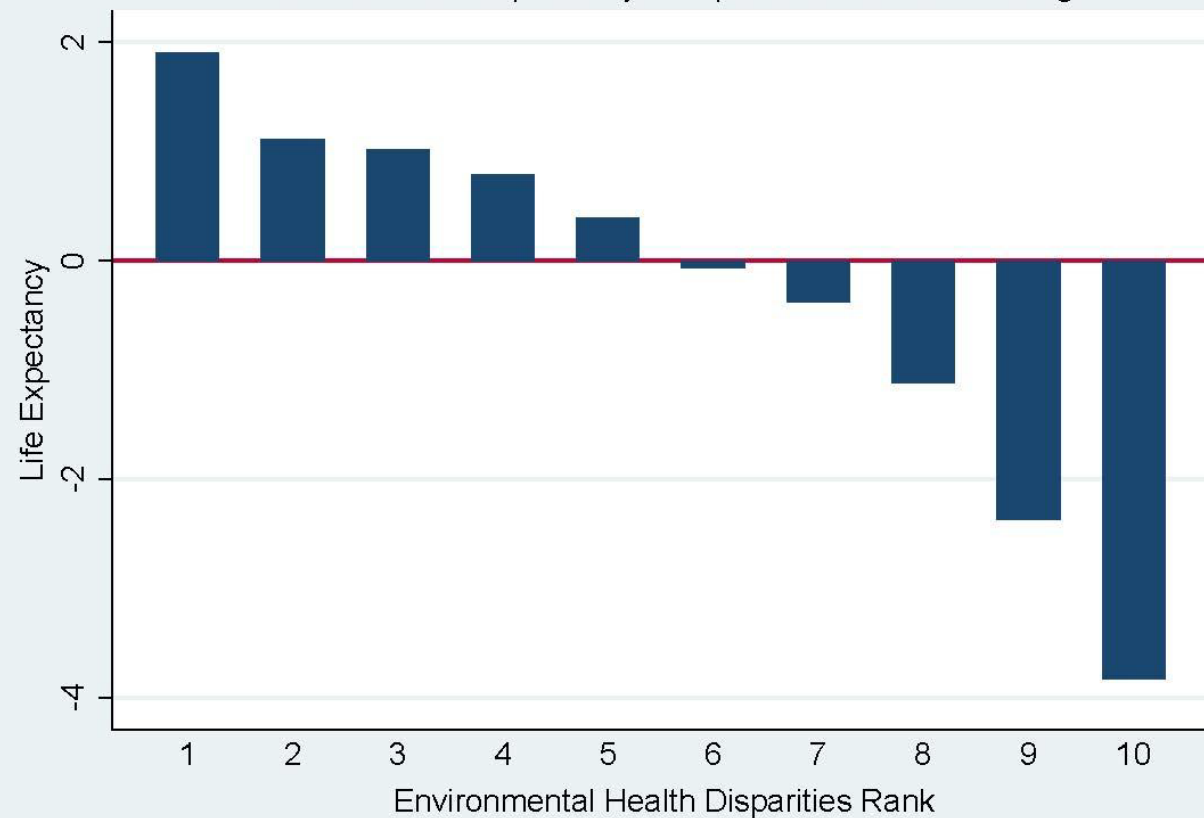
(Environmental Health Disparities Map)



Race and Ethnicity by Environmental Health Disparity Rank



Difference in Life Expectancy Compared to the State Average



Agencies Required to Implement HEAL

Ecology

Transportation

Commerce

Puget Sound Partnership

Health

Natural Resources

Agriculture

Broader Collaboration

Environmental Justice Council

Community Groups

Tribal Consultation

Agencies Opting In

Attorney General's Office

Joined in a "Listen & Learn" Capacity

Recreation and Conservation Office

Fish and Wildlife

State Board of Health

The Pollution Liability Insurance Agency

County Road Administration

Major HEAL Obligations



Adopt community
engagement &
tribal consultation
plans



Incorporate EJ into
agency strategic
plans



Incorporate EJ into
budget & funding
decisions



Conduct EJ
assessments of
Significant Agency
Actions



Develop EJ
metrics for
tracking &
reporting

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Major HEAL Obligations



A. Adopt community engagement & tribal consultation plans



B. Incorporate EJ into agency strategic plans



C. Incorporate EJ into budget & funding decisions



D. Conduct EJ assessments of Significant Agency Actions



E. Develop EJ metrics for tracking & reporting on C-D



Ecology must focus our budgetary spending on **creating benefits** for OBC/VP

- Establish a goal of directing **40 percent** of grants and expenditures that create environmental benefits to OBCVP
- Create opportunities for OBC/VP to **meaningfully participate** in our budget decision processes
- Articulate environmental justice financial **goals and performance metrics**



We're explicitly asked to think about things like:

- Community grants to monitor pollution;
- Grants focused on building capacity and providing training for community scientists and other staff;
- Making technical assistance available for communities that may be new to receiving agency grant funding; and
- Education and work readiness youth programs focused to develop career paths and leadership skills for youth
- Creative ways of distributing resources!

Major HEAL Obligations



A. Adopt community engagement & tribal consultation plans



B. Incorporate EJ into agency strategic plans



C. Incorporate EJ into budget & funding decisions



D. Conduct EJ assessments of Significant Agency Actions



E. Develop EJ metrics for tracking & reporting on C-D



Beginning July 1st, 2023, we will conduct environmental justice assessments on:

1. New rulemaking
2. New grant or loan program
3. A new capital project, grant, or loan (at least \$12,000,000)
4. Request legislation

**Additional significant agency actions will be identified for 2025*



Our environmental justice assessments will include:

- Early notification at the initiation stage
 - OFM, webpage, listserv
- Identifying impacted Tribes & offering consultation
- Identifying overburdened communities and vulnerable populations
- Community engagement
- Identifying environmental benefits & harms
- Identifying options to eliminate, reduce or mitigate harms
- Identifying ways to equitable distribute benefits
- Communicating findings clearly and publicly
 - OFM, webpage, listserv

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Thank you!

Learn more at [HEAL - Washington State Department of Ecology](#)

Reach out!

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