

MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY (MPCA)

AIR PERMITTING ENGAGEMENT WORKSHOP

SUMMARY REPORT



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1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Oregon DEQ

Hli Xyooj

Hmong American Partnership

Say Yang

Center for Earth Energy and Democracy

Core Team Members - **bolded**

MPCA Leads – **marked with an asterisk***

This report was prepared by **Hummingbird Firm** (EPA contractor) for the **MPCA, with support from individuals from MPCA, EPA, and Kearns & West.** Other members of the core and planning teams also provided input during workshop debrief meetings.



2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is a state agency responsible for monitoring environmental quality and enforcing environmental regulations. As elevated in its *strategic plan*, MPCA aims to “identify and enhance opportunities for all Minnesotans to provide meaningful input into the MPCA environmental decision making.”

Accordingly, in **October 2017**, MPCA’s Air Permit Section, with support from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), conducted permit commenting trainings in St. Paul and Minneapolis, as well as virtually. In **May 2019**, this effort continued with a set of focus groups and interviews with community members and facility representatives. These activities set the groundwork for MPCA’s Air Permitting Engagement Workshop in **September 2020**. The overall goals of the workshop were to create an event where participants of all backgrounds could come together and learn about the tools and perspectives that make for effective and authentic engagement and to create a space to foster a real-time collaborative conversation.

The three-day virtual workshop was held from September 21st through September 23rd. The workshop consisted of eleven sessions (listed below) and drew over 300 participants from all over the country.

- ▶ **Plenary Session: Why Engage?**
- ▶ **How to Engage to Foster Goodwill & Authentic Relationships with Impacted Communities**
- ▶ **Networking, Partnerships, and Funding Opportunities**
- ▶ **Establishing and Deepening Partnerships with Facilities and Communities**
- ▶ **Introduction to EJSCREEN**
- ▶ **Cultural Value of Natural Resources**
- ▶ **In-Language Engagement & Engaging with People from Oral Cultures**
- ▶ **Permitting 101**
- ▶ **Impacts of Policies on Indigenous Practices**
- ▶ **Environmental Law**
- ▶ **Risk Assessment & Communication**

There was considerable positive feedback from the workshop, as well as lessons learned. Based on the feedback and insight from what was learned throughout the planning process and the workshop, the following were put forth as suggested next steps:

- ▶ **Conduct environmental justice training.**
- ▶ **Do more community outreach and relationship building with the community.**
- ▶ **Truly listen to what the community wants and focus on addressing those things specifically.**
- ▶ **Assign resources that highlight the racial implications of the work that the agency does, such as how land use is linked to racial issues.**
- ▶ **Conduct anti-racism training throughout the agency.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) is a state agency responsible for monitoring environmental quality and enforcing environmental regulations. MPCA’s mission is to “protect and improve the environment and human health” with a commitment to continuous improvement. The agency has taken intentional steps to build relationships and more effectively engage with communities, tribes, and facilities.

MPCA’s air quality permitting program has existed since the mid 1970’s. The current air permitting program, which is housed under one division, with compliance and enforcement, dates back to 1994 and implements combined permitting for construction and operation. This program develops permits that comply with state and federal rules and standards, but does not have an air toxics rule that is more stringent than federal rules.

In October 2017, MPCA’s Air Permit Section, with support from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), conducted permit commenting trainings in St. Paul and Minneapolis, as well as via WebEx and video-conferencing at the Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College. The trainings were open to community residents, business representatives, and representatives from local and tribal governments. The aim was to usher in more robust and inclusive outreach, informing participants about the state’s air permitting process to allow them to effectively comment on permits of concern. The trainings supported a strategy outlined within [MPCA’s strategic plan](#) to “identify and enhance opportunities for all Minnesotans to provide meaningful input into the MPCA environmental decision making.” In **May 2019**, this effort continued with a set of focus groups and interviews with community members and facility representatives.

The Summary Report of the MPCA Air Permit Commenting Training found that there was a strong desire for face-to-face engagement, both among facilities and communities, and that there were perceived and real barriers to engagement. Despite Minnesota’s efforts to carry out voluntary community engagement, there are barriers related to productive communication between facilities and communities. Minnesota and EPA often get caught in the middle. Recognizing such barriers, EPA used feedback from interviews with community members, facility representatives, and regulatory agencies to develop a Roadmap that laid out a path leading to more effective engagement. This Roadmap, presented in EPA’s report, “Clearing the Air: A Roadmap to Better Community

Engagement During Air Quality Permitting”, was “designed as a supplement to existing, and more comprehensive, guides to community engagement and environmental justice practices.” The Roadmap provides suggestions and steps that states can take to address current barriers to community engagement.

Now in alignment with Steps 2 and 3 of this Roadmap, the MPCA conducted its Air Permitting Engagement Workshop in **September 2020**. This report summarizes the efforts to plan and host the workshop, and sheds light on next steps.



Six Steps to Better Public Involvement in Air Quality Permitting

4.0 PLANNING PROCESS

Planning for the workshop consisted of core team meetings and larger planning team meetings, as well as tasks and communication carried out in preparation for or in response to those meetings. Over the next several sections of the report, details of the planning process are presented, with insight into the many components that were joined together to make the workshop possible.

Core Team Meetings

Core team meetings were held every other Thursday using Microsoft Teams. Those who were not able to join via the Microsoft Teams app had the option of calling in. These meetings were attended by representatives from EPA, MPCA, Hummingbird Firm, and Kearns & West. Several others, not a part of the aforementioned entities, were invited to attend these meetings, as their knowledge and input were identified as being crucial to a well-thought out planning process.



These one and a half hour meetings were primarily used to prepare for the planning meetings. The meetings were also used to share updates and address concerns. Early on, goals for the overall workshop were established; they set the groundwork for the experience that was created for the workshop participants. These goals were:

- ▶ **being “results-oriented”**
- ▶ **creating a shared space that would elevate equity and inclusion**
- ▶ **building a shared sense of community**
- ▶ **keeping people engaged**
- ▶ **making sure everyone was heard**
- ▶ **creating an environment for people to be candid**
- ▶ **reducing the burden on participants to engage (providing honorariums and stipends where possible and appropriate)**
- ▶ **addressing the digital divide**

Topics and agenda items included in the meetings:

- ▶ **Reviewing and refining the timeline, corresponding action items and due dates**
- ▶ **Determining an organizational structure for Microsoft Teams (file structure management and project management) that would complement the planning efforts**
- ▶ **Identifying facility, community, tribal, and government representatives who might be interested in participating**
- ▶ **Considering workshop dates and structure**
- ▶ **Discussing training objectives and outcomes, and potential session topics**
- ▶ **Identifying session leads and speakers**
- ▶ **Brainstorming the types of tools to include in the toolkit**
- ▶ **Determining how to handle follow-up questions**

Further along in the planning process, the core team meetings incorporated check-ins where the session leads provided progress updates. As the workshop approached, translation and interpretation needs were considered. Other accommodations, such as the need for materials to be sent ahead of time due to limited internet access, also became an elevated priority. The team strategically incorporated these and other items of concern into the registration form.

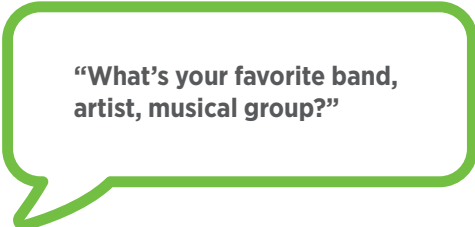
Based on the topics discussed at each meeting, the core team collectively outlined the agenda for the upcoming planning meeting and reaffirmed action items. Efficiencies were gained by using the core team meetings to narrow down options and take them to the larger planning team for voting and feedback.

Planning Meetings

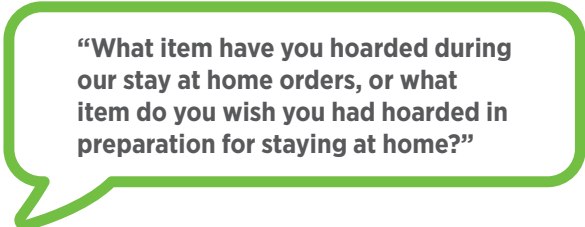
The planning meetings provided opportunities for deeper goal setting and visioning of the workshop. In order to keep the conversations focused and centered on the overall goals, the core objective was included at the top of every agenda:

“Participants will have a richer understanding of what makes for effective community/facility engagement; increased confidence in their ability to engage with less anxiety; and have a deeper understanding of the specific steps and skills they will need to deploy at each stage of the process. We hope to build an online resource toolkit with lessons learned, tips sheets, good neighbor agreements, etc. that will be accessible to all workshop participants. The planning team has discussed making the toolkit available to other states upon request. The EPA contractor will build a “toolbox” that the planning group will review before the workshop.”

The planning meetings were carried out in a spirit of engagement. Not only did the planning meetings bring people over many different backgrounds, perspectives, and needs to the table, but they also incorporated aspects that allowed for participants to connect with each other in a more informal and personal manner. In this light, each planning meeting started out with an icebreaker to build community. Examples of icebreakers included the following:



“What’s your favorite band, artist, musical group?”



“What item have you hoarded during our stay at home orders, or what item do you wish you had hoarded in preparation for staying at home?”

Other questions were posed during the meetings that were designed to provide more guidance in planning for the workshop. One such question was: “What are you hoping to get from this training?”. Responses and common themes to that question are illustrated in the word cloud below, with red indicating community voice, blue representing government responses, and yellow being tribal government. Responses and feedback on these types of questions helped the planning team ensure that what people got out of the training was realized and incorporated throughout the sessions. The group also explored answers to the questions: “What are some of the things that are keeping the facilities and communities from approaching each other?” and “What do you need to build rapport?”.



Some of the topics covered during the planning team meetings include: workshop timing, structure, and format; session topics; session co-leads and speakers; resources to include in the toolkit. The conversations during these meetings led to final decisions and more tangible progress in planning for the workshop. Having a large planning team allowed for a wide range of perspectives and ways of thinking. This greatly contributed to the success of the workshop.

#PCACollaborates

In order to determine the needs of community members and facilities, the planning meetings were used to brainstorm ideas that helped frame the early thinking on session topics. The list below reflects ideas about what information and resources would be beneficial to participants.

- ▶ **Fact sheets**
- ▶ **Timelines of the air permitting process**
- ▶ **Examples of what a permit looks like and how to read a permit**
- ▶ **Information on advisory committees**
- ▶ **Maps on MPCA’s website letting people know who is applying for a permit**
- ▶ **Understanding on the responsibilities of facilities, and the roles of MPCA and EPA**
- ▶ **Insight into training tools such as EJSCREEN (to let community members know about nearby facilities and to let facilities know about surrounding communities)**

“It’s all coming together!”

The June 12th planning meeting marked a period of significant progress. Feedback from meetings and an MPCA-created survey on workshop topics, presenters, and timing shed light on factors that would shape the timing and format of the workshop.

Timing

Based on the feedback, the core team picked date options that did not conflict with holidays or overlap with ricing season. Two time periods were presented to the planning team for voting: August 10 -16 and September 21-27. The overwhelming majority voted on the latter option.

Format

The core team also used input from the survey to develop a draft workshop format. The draft was proposed to the planning team. Their input and feedback resulted in the final format:

- ▶ **Three-day workshop**
- ▶ **Morning (9:00 AM to 11:00 AM) and evening sessions (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM)**
- ▶ **Plenary session on day one that aligns with the workshop goals**

Lunchtime sessions were added later to accommodate the number of sessions. Additionally, a welcome by the MPCA’s Commissioner was added to the schedule.



Laura Bishop
Commissioner - Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Sessions and Speakers

By the June 12th meeting, the team also developed a working list of session topics and began identifying speakers. By the July 10th meeting, leads and speakers were confirmed, with several changes made later on in the process.

Guidance on Technology and Engagement

During the July 24th meeting, Kearns & West provided an overview of the virtual engagement platform, Adobe Connect, and demonstrated the tools that could be used by session leads and speakers. They reviewed the following features: video, screenshare, chat, Q/A pods, polling, word clouds, and whiteboards. During this same meeting, Hummingbird Firm provided tips for creating engaging sessions.

Other agenda items for planning meetings included:

- ▶ **session planning check-ins**
- ▶ **marketing materials (i.e., save the date flyers)**
- ▶ **outreach, registration, and number of attendees**

The final planning meeting before the workshop was used to address last minute issues and provide assurances.

5.0 OTHER PLANNING COMPONENTS

▶ **Surveys**

Surveys were used to allow for time outside of meetings to gather input. As discussed earlier, one survey was used to get input on potential speakers, timeline and time of training, training topics, and structure/format of training. Another survey was used to identify support needs for each session.

▶ **Support Calls**

The support needs survey was followed by support calls for each session. The support calls with Hummingbird Firm and Kearns & West addressed needs such as how to use the technology, and ways to engage.

▶ **Dry Runs**

Session leads and presenters were asked to attend dry runs. The meetings also served as a time to collect materials, including headshots, bios, contact information, PowerPoint presentations, infographics, and other resources for the toolkit. The dry runs were primarily used to walk through the Adobe Connect platform and get used to its functionality.

▶ **Translation and Interpretation Services**

While there were discussions on translation and interpretation services during core team meetings and planning team meetings, the topic was one that required more time and attention. Several people from the core and planning teams met to make decisions for these services. In these discussions, certain questions came up, such as:

- ▶ Do we have a list identifying participants that need translation and interpretation services?
- ▶ Have we done enough to invite people, including reaching out in their own language?
- ▶ Are people who don't speak English as a first language already astute in the topic of permitting?
- ▶ Have those needing translation and interpretation services already been engaged with the facilities?

The answer to many of these questions was 'No'. MPCA, with the help of the Governor's Office and community partners, identified seven languages for which translation and interpretation would be helpful. But, since the language needs were not clearly requested by those who would use them, MPCA and EPA did not have enough of a business case for the services. The team ran into challenges, including technology barriers and budget constraints that further shaped the final decision, which was to not do simultaneous interpretation but to have real-time closed captioning. In lieu of simultaneous interpretation and translation of all materials, the team decided that interpretation and translation for the presentations and materials would be done post-production, as needed. In order to gauge this need, there was a question on the registration form that asked if interpretation and translation services would be needed in the future for the material or session recordings.

▶ **Session Planning**

Leads and speakers coordinated amongst themselves to plan each session. These meetings included discussions on materials that needed to be made (including presentations, videos, pictures), engagement ideas, structure of the session, order of the session speakers, and items to include for the toolkit.

Aside from the surveys, planning took a lot of coordination outside of the regularly scheduled meetings. All of these planning components worked together to deliver the workshop to over 300 people.

6.0 ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

On September 21st, 2020, the MPCA Air Permitting Engagement Workshop kicked off at 8:45 AM (CT) with a video welcome from MPCA Commissioner, Laura Bishop. The video welcome was followed with a live welcome from Helen Waquiu, MPCA's first Director of Public Engagement and Tribal Liaison. This welcome set the stage for the plenary session which followed immediately after, as well as for the other sessions that were planned for the three-day workshop.

The list of sessions is shown below. To accommodate different availability of attendees, there were sessions in the morning, during lunchtime, and in the evening. Descriptions of each session and detailed schedule can be found in Appendix A.

Day 1

- ▶ **Welcome & introduction**
- ▶ **Plenary Session: Why Engage?**
- ▶ **How to Engage to Foster Goodwill & Authentic Relationships with Impacted Communities**
- ▶ **Networking, Partnerships, and Funding Opportunities**
- ▶ **Establishing and Deepening Partnerships with Facilities and Communities**

Day 2

- ▶ **Introduction to EJSCREEN**
- ▶ **Cultural Value of Natural Resources**
- ▶ **In-Language Engagement & Engaging with People from Oral Cultures**

Day 3

- ▶ **Permitting 101**
- ▶ **Impacts of Policies on Indigenous Practices**
- ▶ **Environmental Law**
- ▶ **Risk Assessment & Communication**

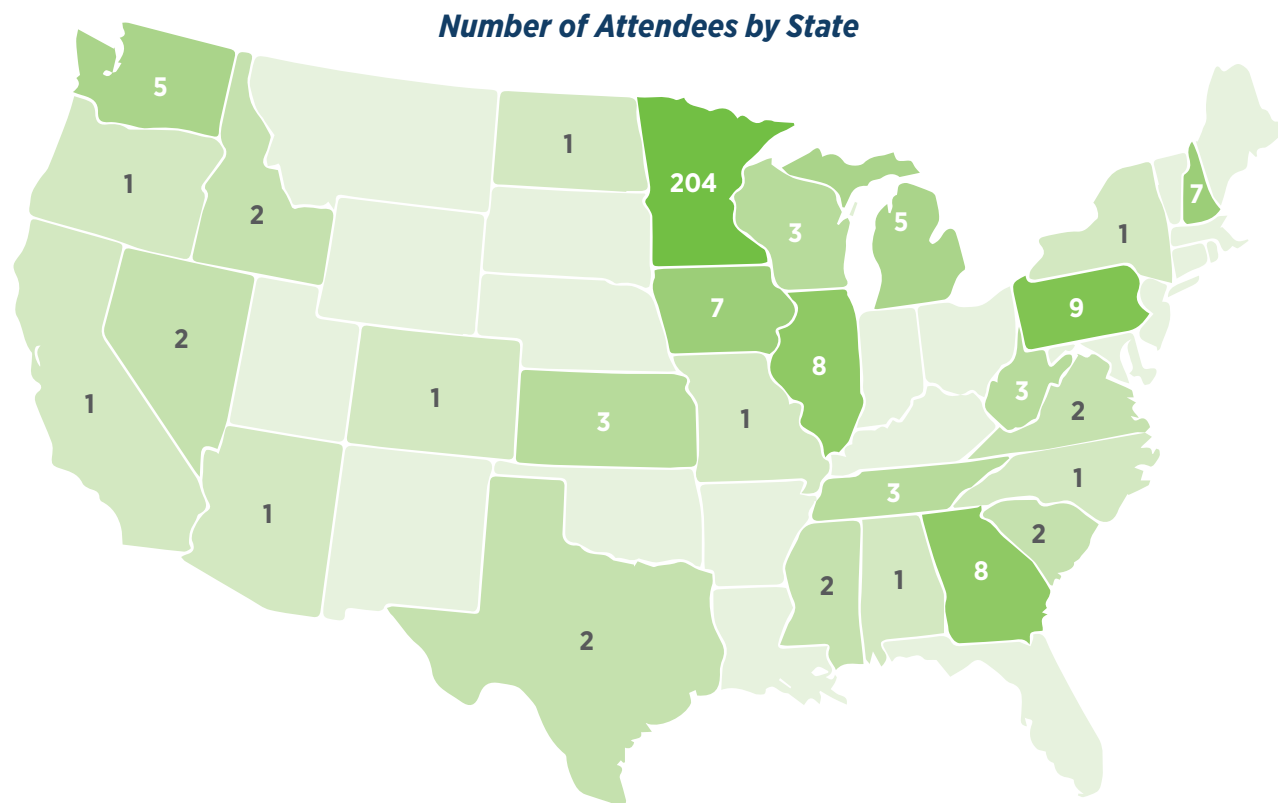
While all of the sessions included aspects to engage participants, each session was different; not just in the content, but in how the content was delivered. The sessions included a mix of PowerPoint presentations, videos, storytelling, panels, question and answer sessions, polls, chats, open discussion, word clouds, and real-time demonstrations. This reflected the diversity of the speakers. Moderators and speakers, alike, included representatives from government agencies, community members, individuals from community organizations, consultants, facility representatives, tribal government representatives, and tribal community members. Learn more about these speakers through their bios in Appendix B.

The number of attendees for sessions ranged from 77 to 204. Just like the planning team, the mix of participants was very diverse, with representation across many different affiliations. The affiliations are shown in the table below:

Table 1: Affiliations

 <p>Academic Institutions</p>	 <p>Advisory Commissions</p>	 <p>Art Community</p>
 <p>Community</p>	 <p>Community And Non-Profit Organizations</p>	 <p>Environmental Organizations</p>
 <p>Environmental, Public Health, and Engineering Consulting Firms</p>	 <p>Facilities</p>	 <p>Foundations</p>
 <p>Government (Tribal, Local, State, Regional, And Federal)</p>	 <p>Trade Associations</p>	 <p>Tribes</p>

There was also geographical diversity. Of the 328 attendees, at least 87 were from locations other than Minnesota (29 states plus Washington, D.C.). The number of attendees by state is shown in the map below. There were 37 additional attendees, not accounted for below, for which a state was not indicated.



The following images are screen grabs from several sessions. These images show presentation slides, speakers' videos, and some of Adobe Connect's other engagement features, including the Q&A, Chat, and Poll pods.


Webcam	1 Plenary_WhyEngage_Presentation
Q & A	

Benefits of Engagement

- Receive **accurate/current information** from the communities to improve decision-making.
- Provide an opportunity to come up with **pollution prevention suggestions** before permit is filed.
- Allows community **concerns to be heard** which can help **build trust**.
- Help facilities **become aware of potential issues** before scheduled maintenance checks (i.e. equipment malfunctions).
- Understanding community concerns can **better agency decision-making** moving forward.
- Community engagement is **commitment to good governance and business**.
- When you engage, you **involve those who have a right to be involved** in the decision making processes that will affect them and their families.
- Successful community engagement can yield **positive economic benefits** to many businesses.
- Individuals in the communities can share their stories with organizations/businesses to **create effective and beneficial work solutions/processes**.

September 21, 2020 | Plenary: Why Engage?

Webcam (1)
2 HowToEngage_Presentation



MaKara Rumley

HowToEngage_Icebreaker

Share your community engagement nightmare stories in the space below


Answers (11)

The lobbyists for the cement and asphalt companies scare our city with legal actions


Non-enn related: we held an event called human library to connect people, and 2 community members showed up...rest were the organizers of the events

Host seems to have their minds made up but are have

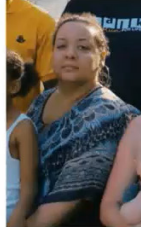
Welcome to How to Engage to Foster Goodwill & Authentic Relationships with Impacted Communities




Jake Reint



Melissa Collier



Roxanne O'Brien




Networking_Chat (Everyone)
Webcam (5)

agency that people think are protecting their public health and safety. We are a nonprofit and I vow to use this connection to implement a plan that will correct this. I am super grateful...but very worried that the dangerous emissions will continue while the company and its lobbyists threaten the city and the agency with litigation instead of testing their emissions to know what they are making us nauseous to be exposed to. This has been going on for years and the ownership changed, the violations take years to bring minimal penalties of \$27,000.

ELIZABETH MOONEY: One more thing- we actually asked the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency to come to Kenmore to test the emissions. We "lost" the request and were told to go to their website to apply for a grant. Yet, the agency itself is in charge of the violation from March 2019 and didn't act upon their saying the company should cease operation or apply for new Notice of Construction. They didn't do so until June 2020 and we suspect the company only did so after we, PERK, went to our Congresswoman DelBene's office to ask for help.

ELIZABETH MOONEY: There is an option of writing an appeal to the Pollution Control Hearings Board on our own, but we would need help from a grant to pay a lawyer.

Dan Donkers is typing...




Kathy Triantafyllou




Owen Seltz



Kari Cantarero



William Droessler




Jalonne White-Newsome

MN_Fenceline

SEJ_SCREEN_PRESENTATION

WEBCAM - 1



SHERYL STOHS

SEJ_SCREEN_CHAT

Everyone +

Christian Braneon
Thanks Cassandra!

Cassandra Meyer 2
Happy to help :)



Type here

EJ_WORDCLOUD

EJ_Wordcloud.pdf

Lessons Learned at the Fence-line

- Overcoming limitations
- Ground Truthing: Community/Business
- EJ Impact – Compelling Need
- Data and Science
- Environmental Laws as Protection
- Readiness and Opportunity

24

MN_Fenceline

7CULTURAL VALUE OF NATURAL RESOURCES_PRESENTATION

WEBCAM

No video feed available

7CULTURAL_CHAT

Everyone +

wonder why there aren't more that work for the DNR or the minnesota environmental agency? Why aren't indigenous people making more decisions when it comes to the environment since it's your land and it's been acknowledged as such?


Gary Kwong
Have any Anishinabe been employed by the MPCA outside of positions to relate to Anishinabe or Sioux cultures?

Audua Pugh
His response is muddled


Gary Kwong is typing...

Type here


Welcome to Cultural Value of Natural Resources



Wayne Dupuis



Bob Shimek



MN_Fenceline

8ENGAGING_CHAT

WEBCAM - 2

Everyone +

Gary Kwong
Does an good interpreter also take into account the level of education or systems understanding of the primary audience - especially at a group meeting.

Rafael Silberblatt
@la shella - you might try the phone line for audio if you're having difficulties with computer audio: dial 1-866-299-3188; passcode 919-541-5497

la shella sims
thanks for the tip. trying it now, seems better.

Cassandra Meyer 3
For subject matter that is diverse, do you have suggestions on how to foster better cultural grasp of technical concepts? This is a unique challenge.

Cassandra Meyer 3
diverse - meaning diverse as in technical, legal, etc...like we have in a permit.

Type here

Hli Xyooj

Ryan Perez

Webcam (1)

Cassandra Meyer

9Permitting_Presentation

Welcome to Permitting 101

Kirsten Baker

Chuck Buckler

Joy Wiecks

9Permitting_Poll1

What is your affiliation?

Government	51%	(49)
Community member	18%	(17)
Facility		

9Permitting_Poll2

What is your experience with the air permitting process?

I have never seen an air permit	16%	(15)
I have seen an		

MINNESOTA POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCY

7.0 WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

Based on statistics and feedback from surveys and emails, the workshop proved to be engaging and informative. There was also consistent participation, with people from earlier sessions returning.

From the perspectives of those on the planning team, some additional engagement aspects that seemed to have worked well were having people, other than the speakers, behind the scenes answering questions. This helped to keep the responses to questions and comments flowing. Also having scrolling chat pods and presenters reading the comments and questions in the chat helped to provide a conversational tone. To create continuity, speakers and moderators used previous sessions as a connection point. For example, Alvin Chun, who presented in the last session on Risk Assessment and Communication, attended all of the sessions and incorporated key points from those sessions into his presentation.

Post Session Surveys

While some attendees did not participate in the post session surveys, there were enough responses to glean helpful information. Nearly 50 people responded to the survey for the Day 1 morning sessions “Plenary Session: Why Engage” and “How to Engage...”.

The participation in the post session surveys waned, but still provided insight. Considering the responses to the last question, Overall, how satisfied are you with this webinar session?, the combined responses for all sessions showed 50% very satisfied, 45% satisfied, 4% dissatisfied, and 1% very dissatisfied.

#PCAData-driven

In addition to the specific survey questions, participants responded to more open-ended questions: (1) Please provide any additional comments about this webinar and (2) Please provide any suggestions for future, valuable webinars. Below are select responses to those survey questions:

“IT WAS VERY GOOD AND VERY informative”

“Thank you, Melissa for all your time and efforts in fighting on behalf of human health and the environment. We understand the time and sacrifices made to fight the good fight...”

“It would have been helpful had presenters stayed within their allotted time.”

“Experienced and knowledgeable speakers which I hope the audience could fully appreciate”

“Great perspectives from different speakers.”

“Try to keep politics out of these topics when not necessary.”

“Great variety on types of funding available and providing information on first steps to begin the process.”

“moderate the comments, those that are unrelated are distracting and have dominated the chat conversation”

“Hard to hear some of the speakers”

“Loved inclusion of arts”

“Great session”

“Have us learn by doing since many of us need that. Thank you! It was a wonderful wealth of information!!!”

“I am not at all familiar with working with EJ Screen, but now will attempt to learn”

“This is exactly the kind of seminar we need to be having. It was excellent, and everyone needs to hear what they have to say!”

“Technology was not my friend”

“have a ‘common’ PCA acronym list as part of the pre-session materials.”

“In particular, the comment about the grandfathered facility and old facilities rarely requiring new source review hit the nail on the head for us.”

“Success stories and challenging stories on using the EJ screening tool and story maps - get a community perspective/panel”

“Educating people about treaties and how they apply to water, land and air rights and permits. (both from the perspective of Native people and the government so there can be a dialogue regarding permits)”

“Offer case studies on how some communities have won.”

“communication 101 for engineers and scientists with public”

Phone Calls and Email Feedback

In the weeks following the workshop, there were phone and email conversations amongst workshop planners and participants. Below are three examples showing the impact of the workshop on participants:

- 1.** An MPCA staff member had been working with a consultant on a permit, for which MPCA had been piloting voluntary engagement and risk assessment efforts. In initial conversations, the consultant questioned why pursuing environmental justice is important, why facilities and consultants should care about engagement, why industrial emissions need to be further reduced when there are larger sources of air pollution in Minnesota. After attending all but one of the workshop sessions, he said that he gained much more perspective on the burdens that communities face, and the barriers that exist to being involved in the permitting process (e.g., lacking technical knowledge and time, limited English fluency, need for compensation). He also said he learned a lot about the historical and current trauma that tribal communities go through in terms of environmental impacts, and he recognizes the conflicting priorities between business and communities, and even how permit engineers have to juggle timely permit issuance with taking time to do authentic engagement.

- 2.** An MPCA staff member had a call from a mining manager who manages air quality issues. They expressed that they were very impressed with the content and delivery. There were a number of items that they found very helpful, including new knowledge, to use and build upon. They were interested in seeing future workshop sessions focus on facility tools and models.

- 3.** An EPA representative spoke with a participant from Region 10. They expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to attend the workshop sessions and to have someone acknowledge their concerns in the chat, as well as follow up. The participant reported that they are trying to use what they learned to change their actions, include all parties concerned, and ask for emissions testing from the stack and testing equipment.

#PCAOutcomes

8.0 LESSONS LEARNED

Putting together this workshop was both challenging and rewarding. The planning team brought people together in a virtual space, in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, during a time of political tension, and in the thick of worldwide protests spurred by police brutality. Of all police brutality cases, Minnesota's was front and center. The first planning meeting after the killing of George Floyd (Friday, May 29, 2020) understandably weighed heavily on the group. A moment of silence and a vote on whether to postpone the meeting was necessary and thoughtful, but it did not remove the weight of the situation. It cemented the need to do this work. It also highlighted that there is so much more work to do, especially as it pertains to environmental justice, cultural competency, and racism. The team approached this task with a sense of humility and an expectation to learn while charting new waters.

#PCALearns

After the workshop, both the pre-planning and planning teams had debriefing meetings to compile a list of lessons learned. Below is a summary of lessons learned.

1. Words and phrases have loaded meanings and may be perceived differently.

Words and phrases such as “best practices”, “trusted liaison”, and “community leaders” raised red flags for some people on the planning team. “Trusted liaison”, for example, suggests that the community has approved of that person. This led the team to consider alternative terms and make adjustments accordingly.

2. There were technology issues that presented obstacles to participants in both the planning of the workshops (using MS Teams) and the workshop sessions.

- ▶ Several members of the planning team had issues connecting to and/or accessing MS Teams that hindered their ability to participate in planning the workshop. In some cases, this was due to their agencies' MS Teams license or IT security protocols; in other instances, this may have been a result of personal computer issues. As a result, many of the more advanced features of MS Teams (that might have helped in project management, session planning and limiting version control issues) were not utilized fully by the team. Assuming that future workshop planning efforts continue to utilize MS Teams, it is critical that the session leads (at a minimum) are comfortable uploading, downloading, accessing, linking to and editing files on the shared drive.

- ▶ The planning team elected to use Adobe Connect as the platform for the workshop due to its higher perceived production value and its data tracking capabilities. However, this decision did not come without some tradeoffs:
 - Unlike some of the other webinar platforms (e.g., Zoom), Adobe Connect does not have built-in telephone audio which meant that it was necessary to pair it with an external telephone line (GlobalMeet). Unfortunately, it was not possible to change the default GlobalMeet phone line settings to listen-only mode. As a result, the hosts had to manually mute each participant who called in by phone which led to frequent interruptions and background noise and diverted the hosts' attention from other activities. Assuming that GlobalMeet does not address this issue, the planning team should consider using a different telephone line (e.g., One Connect) for future workshops. Note: the choice of which third-party telephone service provider to use may also impact the ability to use breakout rooms for small group discussion.
 - Several presenters elected to play videos as part of their presentations. Unfortunately, videos are not audible over the telephone line in Adobe Connect. At the same time, there was insufficient bandwidth to play the videos without frequent interruption for buffering and it was not possible to view the videos on some web platforms. There was an attempt to mitigate these issues by providing a link to download the video so that participants could view it on their own computers, and auto-buffering is purported to be a part of Adobe Connect's recent update. Nevertheless, future workshop presenters should consider whether sharing a video is really necessary given that participants who have joined by telephone-only will still experience dead air while the video is playing.

- ▶ As previously noted, participants' ability to view content varied depending on whether they used the desktop app or a web browser (and which web browser they used) and whether they joined by computer audio or the telephone line. This made it extremely difficult to test all potential combinations beforehand and to troubleshoot issues in real time. For future workshops, consider providing presenters, moderators and participants with a recommendation for the best way to join Adobe Connect before the workshop starts (i.e., as part of the tech guides and/or welcome emails) and again at the start of each session.

- ▶ The hybrid registration process utilized for this workshop (whereby participants' responses to a Google registration form were ported into Adobe Connect's registration system to generate personalized registration links automatically sent via email) was time-consuming and made adding last-minute registrants difficult. Assuming future workshops are similarly complex (in terms of multiple sessions spread across multiple session blocks, spread across multiple days) and share similar driving interests (in terms of data tracking, security, user experience, etc.) then a more efficient, effective process may not be possible – in which case, it will be critical to budget sufficient time and resources for these tasks.
 - While there were drawbacks to the virtual platform in the areas of collaboration, networking, and technology, there were also benefits from removing some barriers to participation, and broadening the reach of the workshop both geographically and demographically.

3. There are some engagement-related adjustments that can be made to improve the overall workshop experience.

The global pandemic presented challenges that tested the team’s ability to create a collaborative workshop environment using a virtual setting. The virtual platform did not allow for the same type of collaboration and networking among participants that could have been achieved with a face-to-face event. Nonetheless, there are factors, some related to technology, that when addressed can allow for a smoother run of show and a more engaging workshop. The items below can be considered to improve future virtual workshop experiences.

- ▶ Work through hardware, software, and connectivity hurdles thoroughly and be flexible to recognize when a different technology path is needed. Smooth video and uniform use of presenter cameras would have allowed for a more consistent and more personable experience. With diverse regional representation and most speakers joining from home, there were broadband reliability issues and a few presenters that did not have access to a camera or internet. There were also inconsistencies between the practice environment and the presentation environment that made video sharing unclear to speakers. It is worthwhile to note, however, that a piece of feedback received suggested to “drop the webcam” because it was distracting from what was being said.
- ▶ Have two dry runs - one to focus on technology, and the other to practice the presentation and transitions.
- ▶ Use audio cues and keep the moderator on screen until the next speaker is ready, in order to provide for more seamless handoffs.
- ▶ For the presentation slides, either use PDF versions or reformat the PowerPoint presentations on the local computer that the presentation will be shared from. There were several presentations with formatting issues, such as overlapping text, as fonts and styles changed from one computer to another.
- ▶ For stories and scenarios, have presenters consider playing them out theatrically - don’t just say it, do it!

4. Once the session topics have been decided, identify speakers and get them on board with planning the session.

In the planning process for this workshop, session leads, in many cases, planned sessions before getting the speakers to the table. That proved to be challenging, as speakers’ input can significantly shape or reshape the session structure and content.

5. The planning experience elevated the need to be tighter on deadlines.

Some speakers sent in presentations, either for the first time or updated versions, as well as headshots and bios, the day before as well as once the workshop started. This made execution of the workshop more challenging. In attempt to avoid this in the future, the planning team should:

- ▶ Be clear and specific about speaker expectations and due dates upfront (bio, headshot, presentation, resources for toolkit, dry runs, and session planning meetings).
 - ▶ Use captive audiences to get requested items in on time. For example, have people do tasks during planning meetings (e.g., email or upload headshots and bios).
 - ▶ Utilize cutoff dates for materials being sent in. There is an art to enforcing deadlines when involvement and contribution is voluntary. Being clear and specific about expectations upfront (as mentioned above), will minimize issues surrounding receiving materials in a timely manner.
 - ▶ With these expectations, the planning team should also keep in mind that speakers will likely have a lot of other deadlines. Accordingly, there should be mechanisms in place to make the process for planning and submitting material as simple as possible. One example of this is providing more guidance to how to use and upload files to Microsoft Teams. There was appreciation expressed about the reminders that were sent as well as the assistance on putting together materials.
-

6. At the crux of the core planning team, you need a smaller, committed group of leaders to ensure success.

These leaders are there to shepherd the planning and execution processes; deal with internal and external protocols and politics; manage the senior managers; send email reminders and instructions; follow up with and coordinate others; etc. For the planning and execution of this workshop, Cassandra Meyer and Owen Seltz were the heart of MPCA's efforts. If there is no Cassandra and Owen to lead the effort, it will fail.

7. Have a project manager (or a single lead) for each session.

Some sessions did not have a lead from MPCA or did not have a lead that could commit the time to help develop the session. For some sessions this put more weight on individuals volunteering their time. For other sessions, this led to other agency staff needing to step in to help plan late in the process. It was also helpful to have more than one person from MPCA coordinating sessions as support and backup.

8. Start the conversation on interpretation, translation, and signing much earlier.

If the goal is to truly get people who need these services involved, and to be equitable in engagement efforts, there should be groundwork done to bring people up to speed on the topic. Without this groundwork, interpretation, translation, and signing may not be effective. For example, some people may not be literate in their own languages, so translation would not allow for them to engage, at least not in a very meaningful way. Information would need to be provided verbally (i.e., radio, Facebook live, in person, etc.). Additionally, some words do not directly translate and concepts for words like "pollution" may need to be described. Therefore, there must be adequate time set aside to bring interpreters up to speed and prepare them to effectively participate in discussions and presentations on topics such as permitting.

9.0 NEXT STEPS

The last section of this report is dedicated to discussing what steps can be taken to move forward. In particular, this section brings to the forefront the question of: “Now that we know what we know, what changes will be made by agencies, communities, tribes, and facilities?”. In order to reach the goals of better engagement, and ultimately a healthier environment and population, there must be behavior change by those involved.



Immediately after the workshop, the core team will work to:

- ▶ **Create and share the complementary resource toolkit, far and wide.**
- ▶ **Post session recordings to MPCA’s website.**
- ▶ **Translate materials and interpret presentations, based on requests.**

There are additional items for the longer term that require resources and commitment. Those suggested next steps for MPCA are to:



Conduct environmental justice training. Those doing environmental justice-related work must fully understand what environmental justice is. Regular agency-wide trainings from experienced practitioners on environmental justice can help staff develop the capacity to identify, address, and ameliorate disproportionate human health and environmental impacts. A suggested resource was the book “From the Inside Out: The Fight for Environmental Justice within Government Agencies”, written by Jill Lindsey Harrison.



Do more community outreach and relationship building with the community. This includes providing sufficient resources to ensure authentic connections with communities. When it comes to tribes, for example, this means not only talking to elected officials and tribal hereditary chiefs, but also talking to the members of the tribe. One cannot just assume that when you talk to a tribal official, elected or otherwise, that they represent the views of the entire community. This is the same for any community.



In order to build these authentic relationships, **truly listen to what the community wants and focus on addressing those things specifically.** Now and in the past, agencies have used words like “beautification” to address environmental justice. Agencies must move away from that practice. Those who are concerned about their health do not just want to see a painted fence. In building relationships with communities, thought should also be given to involving the younger generation in the process. As an example, MPCA can work with local schools to develop project-based learning modules related to the permitting process. This allows for students to learn about air quality and permitting early on. But it also equips the students (younger generation) to explain concepts to their families and communities in culturally appropriate ways.



As an agency, **assign resources that highlight the racial implications of the work that the agency does,** such as how land use is linked to racist policies and practices. For example, the documentary, [*“Jim Crow of the North”*](#), connects the racial disparities in Minnesota to planning and highlights racist policies, namely restrictive 20th century real estate covenants. The University of Minnesota’s Mapping Prejudice project is a tool that allows users to visualize the often-hidden stories of race and privilege that are inherent in land use planning and the built environment. The [*“Why Treaties Matter”*](#) virtual exhibit hones in on the sovereignty of tribal nations and how they manage land, resources, and economies, and how they protect people.



Conduct anti-racism training throughout the agency. It is one thing to understand the racial history and present landscape of communities. It is another to work with communities of different races in attempts to improve those landscapes, and do so without furthering harm. In order to address the issues, the agency must develop anti-racist cultural competency about the communities they serve, and understand the systemically perpetuated disparities communities face, particularly Black, Indigenous, and communities of color. Agency staff need this foundational understanding to address environmental disparities and community concerns.

#PCALeads

While this list of next steps is not exhaustive, it directs MPCA along the path laid out on the Roadmap. As MPCA puts forth the effort to truly engage and address issues, it is hopeful that efforts from facilities, tribes, communities, and others will happen simultaneously.

10.0 APPENDICES

Appendix A: Agenda



Building Collaborative Partnerships:
Air Permitting Engagement Workshop
—
September 21 - 23

Schedule & Session Descriptions
Day 1 - Monday, September 21, 2020

Morning

8:45 AM—9:00 AM (CST) | Welcome & Introduction

Laura Bishop, MPCA Commissioner

Helen Waquiu, MPCA Director of Public Engagement & Tribal Liaison

9:00 AM—10:00 AM (CST) | Plenary Session: Why Engage?

There are valid reasons why agency, facility, tribal staff, and community members may hesitate to undertake community engagement efforts, particularly when they involve contentious permit issues. However, the benefits can be significant when engagement efforts are designed with intention and transparency. Effective community engagement can save the agency time and money over the long run, by encouraging stakeholders to engage with regulatory agencies and by providing accurate information to communities to improve their decision-making. Having the opportunity to listen to and hear community concerns, admit mistakes, and apologize if needed, can help build trust with communities and other partners. Understanding community concerns can also result in better agency decision-making and increase the agency's capacity to do more and create lasting relationships. Simply put, community engagement is a commitment to good governance. The panelists will share their lessons learned when community trust is broken and the importance of allotting the time and energy to prepare and implement effective community engagement. The panelists will also share tools, initiatives and strategies.

Holly Wilson (moderator), EPA

Roxanne O'Brien, Community Members for Environmental Justice

Jake Reint, Flint Hills

Melissa Collier, Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality

Helen Waquiu, MPCA

10:05 AM—11:05 AM (CST) | How to Engage to Foster Goodwill & Authentic Relationships with Impacted Communities

Effective community engagement cannot be accomplished with a one-size fits all checklist. Community engagement requires intentional relationship building, a two-way dialogue, and an openness on all sides. During this session, panelists will share step-by-step engagement processes that they have implemented successfully. You will walk away from this session with an understanding of the fundamental components of a community engagement effort, examples of model engagement that you can adapt for your own purposes, and a list of tips.

MaKara Rumley (moderator), Hummingbird Firm

Jake Reint, Flint Hills

Melissa Collier, Mississippi Dept. of Environmental Quality

Roxanne O'Brien, Community Members for Environmental Justice

Lunchtime

12:00 PM—1:30 PM (CST) | Networking, Partnerships, and Funding Opportunities

Making connections and building relationships can be just as important to secure funding as knowing the ins and outs of grant writing. Participants will learn how to find and apply for grants, with information on current grant availability, tips on how to find future grants, tricks for matching funds, and the dos and don'ts of applying. Attendees will also gain a deeper understanding of competitive vs. noncompetitive funding and how to navigate the world of alternative funding sources. They will also gain insight into how foundation funding works, what to have ready when funds become available, and how to build relationships that can open new opportunities to funding.

Owen Seltz (moderator), MPCA

Kathy Triantafillou, EPA Region 5

Kari Cantarero, MPCA

Jalonne White-Newsome, Kresge Foundation

Bill Droessler, Environmental Initiative

Evening

6:00 PM—8:00 PM (CST) | Establishing and Deepening Partnerships with Facilities and Communities

This session will zoom in on how businesses and community members have established and deepened partnerships with facilities and communities. The stories that are shared will provide insight into how to work with cultural organizations, struggles in engaging with the community from facility perspectives, and the benefits of engagement. By hearing from various speakers of differing backgrounds, participants will gain an understanding of limitations on both sides. These limitations and challenges include: constraints on time, money, and capacity; range of formal education; and language barriers and gaps in cultural competency. The real-world case studies and the resources provided will help participants build a playbook of where to best apply efforts, where to start, how to build relationships, and how to truly address issues.

Owen Seltz (moderator), MPCA

Gary Kwong, Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing

Aric Arneson, GAF Materials Corporation

Tommy Sar, Community Advocate

Rebecca Nolan, Marathon St. Paul Park Refinery

Shanai Matteson, Water Bar

Morning

9:00 AM—11:00 AM (CST) | Introduction to EJSCREEN

EJSCREEN is a mapping application that combines environmental and demographic data to highlight areas with potential environmental justice concerns. EJSCREEN can be useful to communities, local governments, and others in identifying areas with higher environmental burdens. This, in turn, allows for targeted outreach to these areas for participation in decision-making processes that impact their health and environment. EJSCREEN can also be used to support educational programs, grant writing, community awareness efforts, and other purposes. During this session, presenters will (1) provide an overview of EJSCREEN, (2) demonstrate some of its capabilities, (3) describe best practices and considerations for using EJ data to inform engagement design, and (4) provide real world examples. The demonstrations will enable the audience to understand and envision real life uses of the tool and available data. The real-world examples will make the audience better equipped to share this knowledge and apply it.

Christian Braneon, Hummingbird Firm
Sheryl Stohs, EPA Region 10
Angela Hawkins, MPCA

Evening

6:00 PM—7:00 PM (CST) | Cultural Value of Natural Resources

The session will discuss how indigenous communities see natural resources as an integral part of culture and traditional lifeways. In the presentations, speakers will discuss treaty rights, what it looks like to go beyond regulatory responsibilities, and considerations to benefit the long-term good for tribes and communities.

Shirley Nordrum (moderator), University of Minnesota Extension Office
Wayne Dupuis, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa
Bob Shimek, White Earth Elder

7:05 PM—8:05 PM (CST) | In-Language Engagement & Engaging with People from Oral Cultures

This session will foster an understanding of what considerations are needed when preparing permitting materials that are accessible and engaging for people from oral cultures. Speakers will highlight specific considerations, including communicating in different languages, reaching people with different learning styles, using a variety of methods of communication, and working with interpreters when hosting public meetings.

Helen Waquiu (Moderator), MPCA
Hli Xyooj, Hmong American Partnership
Ryan Perez, COPAL MN

Morning

9:00 AM—10:00 AM (CST) | Permitting 101

The session will, at a fundamental level, describe what a permit is and what it means to have a permit. Session presenters will provide a basic overview of the air permitting process, points of contact within the agency, and how to comment on air permits. Additionally, participants will gain an understanding of how responses to public comments are prepared by the regulatory agency and delivered to commenters, as well as the role facilities play in responding to comments. Participants will also learn how modeling is used as a cost-effective way to simulate permit requirements, and compare the potential impacts to health based ambient air quality standards.

Cassandra Meyer (moderator), MPCA

Kirsten Baker, MPCA

Chuck Buckler, EPA

Joy Wiecks, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

10:05 AM—11:05 AM (CST) | Impacts of Policies on Indigenous Practices

In this session, speakers will help participants understand the impacts that various laws and policies have had on indigenous practices. Speakers will also reflect on the mental health trauma inflicted on indigenous communities as it pertains to loss of culture and connection when ancestral lands are negatively impacted and the rights of tribes are violated. In addition to highlighting the issues, the speakers will shed light on how to minimize negative impacts on people and natural resources.

Cassandra Meyer (moderator), MPCA

Phil Defoe, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Cheyenne St. John, Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota

Deb Dirlam, Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota

Lunchtime

12:00 PM—1:00 PM (CST) | Environmental Law

Participants will learn about the rights of community members and resources for citizens. This includes the administrative right of appeals processes and challenges to permits, contested case hearings, ways to petition EPA to review a permit, appealing a permit after issuance, and requesting an administrative hearing. They will also learn about the nature of zoning and land use decision making on more local levels of government. Participants will have time to ask questions and engage in open dialogue with the presenters.

Jim Sullivan (moderator), MPCA

Paul Merwin, League of Minnesota Cities

Evan Mullholland - Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA)

Evening

6:00 PM—8:00 PM (CST) | Risk Assessment & Communication

This session will briefly expose participants to risk assessment and communication. They will learn what goes into conducting a risk assessment. Speakers will give an overview of how to communicate risk. The goal is for participants to know how to understand risk and what it takes to successfully communicate risk.

Jim Sullivan (moderator), MPCA

Dr. Kristie Ellickson, MPCA

Captain Alvin Chun, USPHS (ret.)

Appendix B: Speakers Bios



Plenary Session: Why Engage?

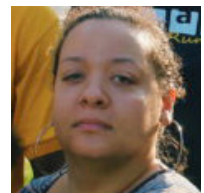
Holly P. Wilson, EPA Community Air Program Coordinator



Holly is a thought leader on plain language translation and engaging communities in the rulemaking process. She has worked for the U.S. EPA in the Office of Air and Radiation for over 20 years. Currently she serves as the Community Air Program Coordinator working with EPA Regional Coordinators to educate local communities across the nation on air quality concerns. She is often called upon to provide expertise and advice on how EPA's programs and regulatory actions/activities may impact community and environmental justice constituencies for OAR and other national program offices. Holly designs, develops and delivers technical training workshops and webinars to environmentally overburdened and economically distressed community members and Tribes. Additionally, she has produced numerous satellite broadcasts and videos on new and emerging air pollution control issues.

Roxxanne O'Brien, Resident and Community Organizer in North Minneapolis

Roxxanne is a mother of three children who has been fighting for environmental justice in her neighborhood for 9 years. She is trusted among her fellow long-time residents of North Minneapolis and has worked tirelessly to bring issues of industrial pollution on the northside to the forefront, before many established organizations were engaged. She is a key organizer around the elevation of Northern Metals facility for the past 9 years.



Jake Reint, Managing Director, Public Affairs, Flint Hills Resources/Koch Industries



Jake Reint oversees communications and public affairs for Flint Hills Resources, a subsidiary of Koch Industries and a leading oil refining, pipeline, biofuels and petrochemical company based in Wichita, Kansas with operations primarily in the Midwest and Texas. Reint also serves as the company's corporate spokesperson.

Reint has more than 20 years of experience as a communications and public affairs professional who specializes in strategic communications around major projects, crisis management, community engagement, media relations, and political and issues advocacy.

Reint started with Flint Hills Resources in 2008 as communications director for the company's Pine Bend Refinery in Minnesota. Prior to joining Flint Hills Resources, Reint was vice president of Midwest public affairs for Weber Shandwick -- a leading international public relations firm based in New York. During his 12 years with Weber Shandwick, Reint represented a variety of notable organizations, including Mayo Clinic, Microsoft, Polaris Industries, the Minnesota Vikings, Alliance Pipeline, Manitoba Hydro and the Prairie Island Indian Community.

Reint has dual degrees in communication and journalism from Augsburg College and the University of St. Thomas, respectively. He also has done graduate work at the University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs. Reint is a member of the board of directors of the Saint Paul Area Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Great River Passage Conservancy and serves on a number of local and national industry and business panels.

Melissa Collier, Director of Office of Community Engagement, MS Department of Environmental Quality

Melissa Collier currently serves as the Director of the Office of Community Engagement and the MDEQ Ombudsman at the MS Department of Environmental Quality in Jackson, MS. Her Office's mission is to ensure integration of environmental justice into state programs and operations and to provide environmental assistance to small business stationary sources, as well as educate on methods of pollution prevention. Mrs. Collier provides advice and guidance to MDEQ management and staff, as well as host of external stakeholders in an effort to address environmental justice concerns as they arise. She is responsible for the agency's Environmental Justice Program staff and implementation. Additionally, she provides guidance and advises on community involvement and environmental justice issues. Mrs. Collier has served in this position for 5 years. Melissa is a strong and steady advocate of community involvement, environmental justice as well as small business assistance. Melissa expertise has been noted on the national level. She is frequently called upon for insight from Region IV.



Melissa's career with MDEQ spans over 25 years. Melissa has worked in various positions and program areas, including working as an Environmental Engineer in the Office of Pollution Control where she wrote Title V permits and handled compliance and enforcement issues.

Melissa is currently the Mississippi State Lead for the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Education and Engagement Priority Issue Team. She has also served as a member of the Gulf Environmental Justice Interagency Workgroup, the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) Workgroup on Community Resiliency in Environmental Justice Industrial Waterfront Communities, the All States Environmental Justice Workgroup, and the EPA Region IV, Environmental Justice Coordinators Workgroup. Melissa is a Certified Public Manager, State of Mississippi, since 2004 and received her certification from the International Association of Public Participation's Certificate in Public Participation in 2012.

Helen Waquiu, MPCA Director of Public Engagement & Tribal Liaison



Helen Waquiu was appointed Director of Public Engagement & Tribal Liaison in June 2019. Helen is originally from Jemez and Acoma Pueblos in New Mexico and holds a B.S. in Environmental Economics & Policy from the University of California, Berkeley. Helen has worked at the agency for 6 years in various capacities including environmental specialist, research scientist, and as supervisor of the Environmental Data Quality Unit. In her roles, she's had oversight of quality assurance compliance and the agency's quality management plan, supervised air modeling/air quality forecasting, and led data-driven air monitoring projects. Helen co-leads the agency's internal Tribal Relations/Awareness Team bringing education and training on tribal relations to agency and other state staff. Prior to joining MPCA, Helen was an Environmental Specialist for the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians in Southern California.

How to Engage to Foster Goodwill & Authentic Relationships with Impacted Communities

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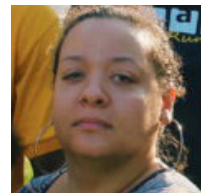
Melissa Collier currently serves as the Director of the Office of Community Engagement and the MDEQ Ombudsman at the MS Department of Environmental Quality in Jackson, MS. Her Office's mission is to ensure integration of environmental justice into state programs and operations and to provide environmental assistance to small business stationary sources, as well as educate on methods of pollution prevention. Mrs. Collier provides advice and guidance to MDEQ management and staff, as well as host of external stakeholders in an effort to address environmental justice concerns as they arise. She is responsible for the agency's Environmental Justice Program staff and implementation. Additionally, she provides guidance and advises on community involvement and environmental justice issues. Mrs. Collier has served in this position for 5 years. Melissa is a strong and steady advocate of community involvement, environmental justice as well as small business assistance. Melissa expertise has been noted on the national level. She is frequently called upon for insight from Region IV.

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Networking, Partnerships, and Funding Opportunities

Kathy Triantafillou, EPA Environmental Engineer



Kathy Triantafillou is an environmental engineer with US EPA, Region 5, Chicago with for over 20 years. During most of her career, she has served as an inspector and enforcement officer for the enforcement and compliance assurance branch, conducting investigations in support of EPA's mission. Most recently, she has taken the role of Region 5's Environmental Justice Coordinator where she is working towards supporting community needs and engagement efforts. Ms. Triantafillou has a B.S. degree in Chemical Engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology with a specialization in Biomedical Engineering.

Kari Cantarero, Environmental Assistance Specialist, MPCA

Kari Cantarero is an Environmental Assistance Specialist at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). In this position, she oversees the Small Business Grant program, which aims at helping small businesses and community organizations improve their systems while reducing their overall air emissions. Kari also manages the Small Business Environmental Improvement Loan program, which provides loans at zero-percent interest to small businesses for capital equipment purchases that help the company meet or exceed environmental regulations, and costs associated with the investigation and cleanup of contaminated sites.



Jalonne L. White-Newsome, Senior Program Officer, The Kresge Foundation



Dr. Jalonne (pronounced JUH-LAWN) L. White-Newsome is a senior program officer at The Kresge Foundation, responsible for the Environment Program's grant portfolio on Climate Resilient and Equitable Water Systems (CREWS). Jalonne is also a core team member of Kresge's Climate Change, Health and Equity Initiative, supporting grantmaking across the public health sector.

Before joining Kresge in 2016, Jalonne served as director of federal policy at West Harlem Environmental Action Inc. (WE ACT), where she led national campaigns to ensure that the concerns of low-income communities of color were integrated into federal policy, particularly on issues of clean air, climate change and health. She is an adjunct professor at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C. As a researcher on climate, health and equity, Jalonne was a lead author for the human health chapter of the Fourth National Climate Assessment. She provides leadership on various boards, including the National Academy of Sciences Board on Environmental Change and Society, Minerva Education and Development Foundation, Health Environmental Funder's Network Steering Committee and serves as an Associate Editor for Environmental Justice.

A native of Detroit, Jalonne earned a Ph.D. in environmental health sciences from the University of Michigan School of Public Health, a master's degree in environmental engineering from Southern Methodist University and a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Northwestern University. Jalonne has been recognized by Who's Who in America, The Environmental Management Association's Environmental Achievement Award, the Michigan League of Conservation Voters and is a 2017 PLACES Fellow alum with The Funders Network.

Bill Droessler, Program Development Officer, Environmental Initiative (EI)



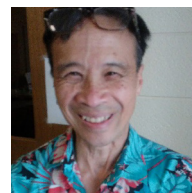
Bill Droessler is the Program Development Officer at Environmental Initiative (EI), a nonprofit organization that works with businesses, communities, and nonprofit and government leaders to develop collaborative solutions to environmental problems. For nearly 20 years, he has also been leading EI's Clean Air Minnesota (CAM), a nationally award-winning public-private-community partnership focusing on developing, administering, and funding voluntary emission-reduction projects across Minnesota and other states. One of CAM's primary goals is to improve air quality in communities and areas disproportionately affected by pollutants and emissions and historically over-burdened by poor air quality.

Much like Clean Air Minnesota's partners, Mr. Droessler brings experience and perspective from all sides of the issues. He has worked on environmental issues for major international corporations, state and federal agencies, and nonprofits. He holds a BA in Government and History from Beloit College and a law degree from the Environment and Energy Law Program at Chicago Kent - College of Law, Illinois Institute of Technology.

Establishing and Deepening Partnerships w/ Facilities and Communities

Gary Kwong, Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing

I am an American born Chinese (ABC), a PhD organic chemist, 75 years old, and grew up in MN having lived away in Arlington Heights IL and Racine WI for 8 years. I worked for 6 companies making organic polymers so I understand pollution. I have worked with school districts and education for 38 years. I have worked with 9 refugee serving agencies. I have been retired from 3M for 17 years. I had a subgroup of the 3M Visiting Wizards with about 75 almost all Black and 75 Whites over 10 years I trained on doing hands on chemistry in the St Paul schools. I went to Philmont Scout Ranch for 3 years with White, Black, Hmong, and Puerto Rican youth and we hiked 90-125 miles over 10 days as the only racially integrated unit with about 600 other youth from around the US.



Aric Arneson, GAF Materials Corporation

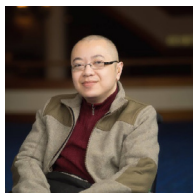


Aric Arneson is a husband, a father of two, and a lifelong resident of the Upper Midwest including WI, IA, MN, & IL with a 20+ year career in various manufacturing environments. The various manufacturing environments include food manufacturing, steel stamping and forming for food packaging, electronics and PCB manufacturing as well as roofing material manufacturing. He holds a Degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Iowa along with various industry certificates that include Lean Manufacturing, Six Sigma Leadership, and Quality Control & Statistical Process Control Management.

In addition to his formal career responsibilities Aric is the Community Relations Committee Chair for the North Minneapolis Harold Mezile YMCA, a Board Member of the Minneapolis McKinley Neighborhood Association, as well as a member of several ongoing Minneapolis and surrounding area formal Committees. He has worked diligently to pursue both an outreach and open line of communication to both community members as well as elected officials in the City of Minneapolis & State of Minnesota.

Part of his passion outside of his formal work is to support the local community through his engagement of youth-based efforts and community ties to local business and establishing a community network that builds upon itself. Directly focusing on local hiring, working with local businesses as well as supporting STEM based learning in the community High Schools for future industry needs has been his focus since engaging in efforts around in and around North Minneapolis.

Tommy Sar, Community Advocate



Tommy Sar is a Cambodian American with Congenital Muscular Dystrophy and is hard of hearing. With a strong passion for community service and advocacy for accessibility and social justice, Mr. Sar currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, the Minnesota Museum of American Arts 'IDEA committee, Arts Midwest's Professional Development Committee, and on the Metropolitan Council's Equity Advisory Committee. Mr. Sar was the Coordinator of Community Programming at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, Mr. Sar worked with individuals and organizations throughout the Twin Cities to engage them with the arts as a tool for self-expression, discovery, and activism. He also coordinated Ordway's Sally Awards, an annual awards program recognizing the remarkable contributions of individuals and organizations that impacts Minnesota's thriving arts community. Mr. Sar has presented and participated in discussion panels and talks for the Coalition of American Leaders, Southeast Asian Diaspora Project, Nexus Community Partners, Points of Light Volunteer Conference, Minnesota Access Alliance, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, and Arts Midwest Conference.

Rebecca Nolan, Marathon St. Paul Park Refinery

Environmental Supervisor at Marathon St. Paul Park Refinery with over 10 years of experience in the environmental field including various roles within refining, consulting, and environmental analytical work. Graduate of Loyola Marymount University with a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry and a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering. Rebecca is a recent transplant to the Twin Cities area from the West Coast and now lives in Prescott, Wisconsin. Throughout her career, Rebecca has had the opportunity to work with many community members, students, and agencies to provide education on the refining process, particularly with regard to the environmental controls and efforts in place. She has also served as a volunteer industrial fire fighter and oil spill responder for over 5 years. Since moving to the Midwest, she values spending time outdoors at local parks with family, including the 4-legged members, volunteering with a women's shelter, and playing in a volleyball league (albeit not very well).



Shanai Matteson, Water Bar & Public Studio

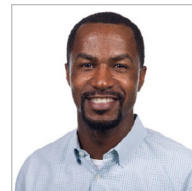


Shanai Matteson is a writer, public artist, and cultural organizer. She is one of the Collaborative Directors of Water Bar & Public Studio, and artist-led organization that serves water and climate resilience through public engagement partnerships across sector and in community. Shanai loves working with others on collaborative projects that are rooted in place, and which seek to grow a culture of reciprocity and care. She is most interested in work at the margins of established fields and practices, and believes that edges and intersections provide fertile ground for artists and others to learn and create together, in ways that enhance participation in public life and advance environmental justice goals.

Introduction to EJSCREEN

Christian Braneon, Hummingbird Firm

Dr. Christian V. Braneon is the Chief Technology Officer at Hummingbird where he provides technical expertise with a specialty in water and green infrastructure. Dr. Braneon uses his broad background to assist with plain language translation of technical documents and for the development of strategic communications in the architecture, engineering, and construction industries. He served as Co-Director of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) inaugural Environmental Justice Academy for community leaders during his tenure at USEPA.



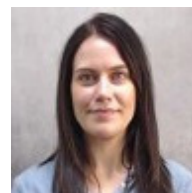
Sheryl Stohs, EPA Region 10



Dr. Sheryl Stohs came to US EPA in 2010, the second member of the Environmental Justice Core Team in the role as Environmental Protection Specialist. She serves as the Regional Environmental Justice Grants Coordinator and EJ Community Liaison. In this role, her EJ portfolio includes Project Officer, EJ lead for Community Driven Solutions project, EJ consultant/collaborator for superfund sites such as Portland Harbor in Oregon. Dr. Stohs is a member of the Regional Science Steering Council, and past Research lead for one of Region 10's Regional Sustainable Environmental Sciences Research Program projects involving science tools. She extends her collaboration and provides technical assistance with the Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards. Dr. Stohs furthered her service and professional development in a detail assignment with the Office of Research and Development. Her core interests are in developing multi-disciplinary strategies and utilizing citizen science tools in assessing environmental justice concerns, impacting the health of communities. Dr. Stohs has served with EPA speaking regionally and nationally on environmental justice and science issues. She is a graduate of Oregon State University where she received her Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Environmental Sciences. In her free time, she serves homeless Nest Mission as community choir director. Her professional background includes teaching in higher education, service with the State of Oregon, and Engineer for Southwestern Bell Corporation in Houston Texas.

Angela Hawkins, MPCA

Angela Hawkins is a senior research analyst at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in St. Paul, MN. Angela holds a Master of Science degree in Geology from the University of California Davis and two undergraduate degrees, one in Geology and the other in Spanish. Angela works in the Environmental Analysis and Outcomes Division where she provides assistance with greenhouse gas data coordination and environmental justice mapping efforts. Prior to working at the MPCA, Angela provided data science expertise at the Minnesota Department of Transportation and provided compliance and remediation support as an environmental scientist.



Cultural Value of Natural Resources

Wayne Dupuis, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



Wayne Dupuis is the Environmental Program Manager for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. He has served the Tribe for many years and in different capacities. In his current role, Wayne has overseen a number of projects that benefit the Reservation, these include: Reducing the carbon footprint through energy audits of all the buildings, 1 Megawatt solar PV Project, Class 1 Air designation for the Reservation, and various environmental impact statements for mining related projects affecting the Ceded Territories.

Bob Shimek, White Earth Elder

Born on the White Earth Indian Reservation, Robert Shimek has devoted his life to the protection and revitalization of the Anishinaabe people, land and life ways. He calls Minnesota and the entire upper Midwest home. Currently, Mr. Shimek serves as the Extension Educator for the White Earth Tribal and Community College on The White Earth Indian Reservation.



Robert's previous opportunities have included serving as a Cultural Educator at the Circle of Life Academy, Executive Director of the White Earth Land Recovery Project and as Field Organizer for the Indigenous Environmental Network. He also worked for six years as the Native American Chaplain for the state of Washington Department of Corrections. His work has led him to communities throughout North and Central America as well as northern Europe. For much of his life, he has served as a tireless treaty reserved rights advocate for Indigenous People in numerous places in North America. He holds no degrees from any colleges or universities.

Whether planting a garden, harvesting berries and wild rice, protecting wolves or teaching Anishinaabe games and harvesting techniques to Native Youth, Robert is steeped in traditional cultural knowledge and willing shares it with anyone eager to learn. Raised at Mud Lake on the White Earth Indian Reservation in northwestern Minnesota, Robert still makes his home there in the White Earth community. Robert is the proud father of three sons and one daughter.

In-language Engagement & Engaging with People from Oral Cultures

Hli Xyooj, Hmong American Partnership



Hli Xyooj is an advocate who practices community-based work by centering the voices and experiences of impacted community members. For almost ten years, Hli practiced this value as a Staff Attorney and the Hmong Community Outreach Coordinator at Farmers' Legal Action Group (FLAG). In her roles, she engaged with hundreds of farmers of color and zealously practiced law in Hmong on behalf of Hmong American farmers. Today, she continues centering community in her work as the Director of Program Strategies with Hmong American Partnership (HAP) and founder of Advancement of Hmong Americans (AHA).

Ryan Perez, COPAL MN

Ryan Perez is a Latinx community organizer at Communities Organizing Latinx Power and Action. Prior to organizing in Minneapolis and statewide, Ryan participated in student and campus activism, winning the Newman Civic Fellowship for his voter engagement work with the Campus Vote Project and his leadership in Students Demand Action. Ryan also brings experience from electoral campaigns and fundraising initiatives. The son of a Puerto Rican immigrant and the first in his family to go to college, Ryan emphasizes racial and economic justice in all his work. He believes vision must be met with movement, and he is working to elevate his community's movement capacity through environment and democracy programs.



Permitting 101

Kirsten Baker, MPCA



Kirsten Baker is an air permit engineer at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). She has been with MPCA working in air permitting for eight years. During that time her work has focused on reviewing and writing air permits. In addition, she has spent much of her time mentoring and training new air permit engineers at MPCA. Kirsten is now a supervisor in air permitting and continues to work with other engineers to manage air permitting projects. She has a B.S. in Materials Science and Engineering and a M.S. in Environmental Engineering from the University of Minnesota.

Chuck Buckler, EPA



Charles “Chuck” Buckler’s environmental background spans nearly 30 years with state and federal agency experience. For 20 years, Chuck was an air pollution meteorologist for the state of North Carolina providing regulatory air quality dispersion modeling support for National Ambient Air Quality (NAAQS) and Increment assessments for the Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) program, state air toxic analysis and coordinating with Federal Land Managers on Class I Increment and Air Quality Related Value visibility and deposition modeling requirements.

In 2013, Chuck transitioned to EPA from as an environmental protection specialist in the New Source Review Group. His duties included New Source Review (NSR) regulation, guidance and support material development, which included the development of policy guidance for national Significant Impact Levels (SILs) and ‘Ambient Air’ guidance. Finally, in 2019 moved to the Community and Tribal Program Group (CTPG) within EPA to assist tribes with NSR program and permit training and is the CTPG liaison in coordinating NSR related issues.

Chuck graduated from Northern Illinois University in 1984 with a B.S. in Meteorology and has 40 hours of graduate work in Public Administration from N.C State University.

Joy Wiecks, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Joy Wiecks works for the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa as the Air Coordinator. Her experience includes monitoring, permit review, grant writing, and review of regulatory proposals. Before working for the Band, Joy wrote air permit applications for a consulting firm.



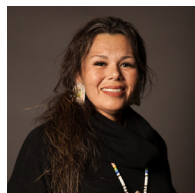
Impacts of Policies on Indigenous Practices

Phil Defoe, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



I was raised the first half of life on the Lac du Flambeau reservation in Northern Wisconsin and have worked and lived in the Fond du Lac community for the second half. I am an enrolled member of the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. I attended the University of Wisconsin Superior as a Biology Major with an emphasis in botany and a minor in American Indian Studies. My place of work is with the Fond du Lac Reservation Environmental Air Program and spent 10 years working in water quality before moving on to Air quality. My passion is to help my community and Ancestral lands heal from the abuse and oppression that has been forced upon them.

Cheyenne St. John, Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota



Cheyenne St. John, the oldest granddaughter of Ernest Wabasha, 6th generation Hereditary Chief of the Mdewakanton Dakota, was born and raised in Minneapolis by her parents, Theresa Wabasha of Lower Sioux Indian Community and Bennie St. John of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. She graduated from Fond du Lac Tribal College in 2002 with an associate of arts degree. Between 2003 and 2006, she attended the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque and participated in the museum studies program at Santa Fe's Institute of American Indian Arts; she is currently pursuing her MA in Anthropology from Mankato State Univ. In 2014 she began to manage the Lower Sioux Agency Historic Site. As of 2020, she is the director of the Cansayapi Cultural Department and the tribal historic preservation officer (THPO) for Lower Sioux Indian Community. Her hobbies include public service work with tribal and local community, traditional art practice, traveling to Wacipi, gardening, hiking, researching, and spending time with her teenage daughter.

Deb Dirlam, Lower Sioux Indian Community of Minnesota

Deb Dirlam is the Director of Environmental programs for the Lower Sioux Indian Community. She has worked for Lower Sioux in the Office of the Environment for the past 20 years. Prior to working with Lower Sioux, she worked for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service. Deb works on a variety of Environmental programs and projects on wide-range of topics such as water quality of surface and groundwater resources, GIS, prairie restoration, solid waste, ambient and indoor air quality, emergency planning, and climate adaptation. Deb has a M.S. in Geology from Texas Christian University (TCU), Fort Worth, TX and B.A. in Geology from Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN.



Environmental Law

Paul Merwin, League of Minnesota Cities



Paul Merwin attended the University of Minnesota Law School. He worked in the civil litigation and environmental protection divisions of the Minnesota Office of the Attorney General prior to coming to the League of Minnesota Cities, where he is a defense attorney with an emphasis in municipal land use. He has served as an adjunct professor for Hamline University School of Law, teaching Environmental Law.

Evan Mulholland, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Evan is a Supervising Staff Attorney at Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. He holds a B.A. in Philosophy from Brandeis University, a J.D. from Harvard Law School, and an LL.M. in Environmental Law from Vermont Law School. - Prior to moving to Minnesota in 2018, Evan was an Assistant Attorney General at the New Hampshire Department of Justice and served as Compliance Bureau Chief of the Air Resources Division at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.



Risk Assessment & Communication

Kristie Ellickson, MPCA



Dr. Kristie Ellickson joined the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in 2007 after completing her Ph.D. at Rutgers University and postdoctoral work at both Rutgers and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Prior to her academic pursuits she was a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in the country of Panama. As a graduate student and post doc she conducted research on trace metal speciation and bioavailability in a variety of environmental matrices. Her work at the MPCA includes the incorporation of cumulative risk and impact assessment principles into regulatory risk, the review of human health risk assessments for large permitted facilities and is looking for ways to include cumulative risk into disproportionate analyses and statewide policy.

Captain Alvin Chun, USPHS (ret.)

Alvin is a trainer and consultant in risk communication and public negotiations. He has dedicated over 30 years to government service with USEPA and US Public Health Service working with many industries, states and citizens. He has been teaching worldwide since 1989 for audiences including government, industry, military, community groups, Tribes and academia. He has also consulted on a variety of controversial issues including Air Toxics, Toxic Waste Cleanup Sites, Military Bases, Pesticide Contamination, Environmental Justice, 911 Attack, and Mad Cow Disease. Alvin is a native of California and was educated as an engineer.



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