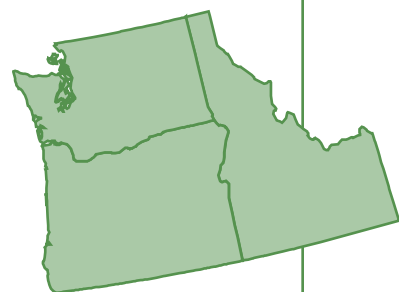
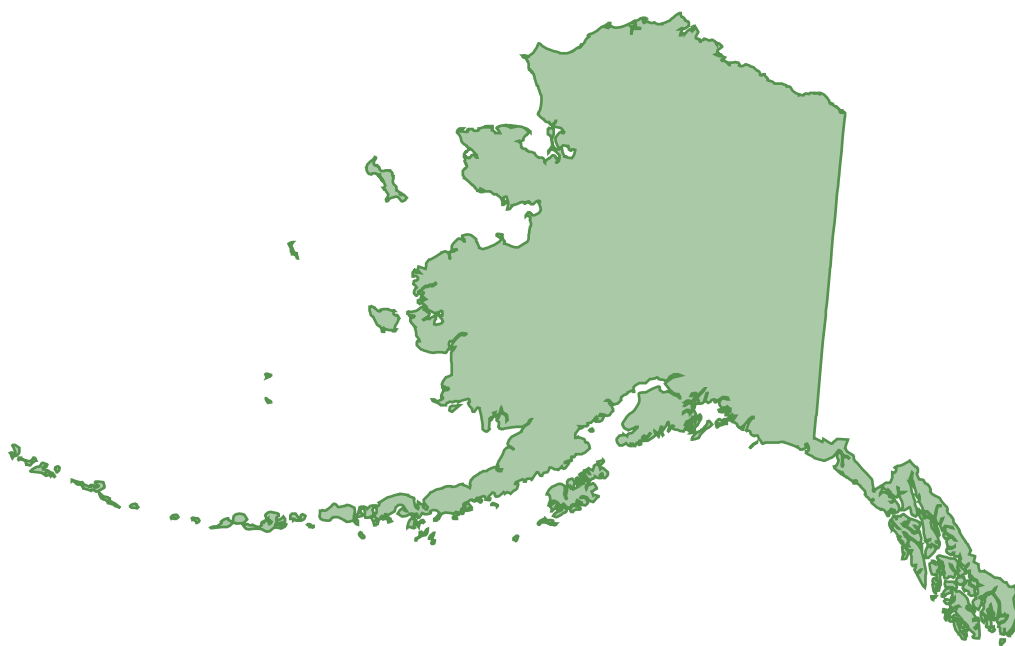




FY15 - FY18 Region 10 Strategic Plan July 2015





The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10 serves Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and 271 federally-recognized tribes.

Photos submitted by EPA Region 10 employees.

Introduction

In order to accomplish EPA's mission of protecting human health and the environment, we in Region 10 have set objectives modeled on the agency's four cross-agency strategies:

- ▲ Working Towards a Sustainable Future
- ▲ Working to Make a Visible Difference in Communities
- ▲ Launching a New Era of State, Tribal, Local and International Partnerships
- ▲ Embracing EPA as a High-Performing Organization

This high-level, forward-looking plan identifies a small set of regional objectives that demonstrate how we will support EPA's cross-agency strategies from fiscal years (FY) 2015 through 2018. The plan provides a clear link between the work of Region 10 and EPA's cross-agency strategies.

It is not intended to be all-encompassing of Region 10's work – in fact, beyond the objectives identified in this plan, the region contributes directly and indirectly to all four cross-agency strategies, as well as the agency's strategic goals. We want to highlight this important body of work and encourage regional staff to post their stories of success on the regional blog. Your stories demonstrate the ways in which Region 10's work reaches across programs and cross-agency strategies. I am confident that together we can accomplish our mission of protecting human health and the environment.



Dennis J. McLerran
Regional Administrator
EPA Region 10

Core Values

SCIENCE | TRANSPARENCY | RULE OF LAW

Region 10 upholds the agency's three core values of science, transparency and the rule of law. The importance of sound science and scientific integrity is a cornerstone of the Agency's mission and the work performed in Region 10. We rely on excellent scientific work to inform us of environmental conditions and help shape our decisions. Collaboration and establishing strong working relationships, whether within our organization or externally, are hallmarks of Region 10's approach to conducting scientific research, assessment, and program support. Our decisions will reflect fair, efficient, consistent, enforcement of environmental laws.

We are fully committed to openness and transparency in all activities, and continue to support robust community engagement for a wide range of projects and stakeholders. Transparency is critical to the effectiveness of our mission, and our investments in our operations reflect our efforts to be open and transparent. We affirm our commitment to transparency and accountability under the law and strive to ensure that decisions are clearly publicized and explained.

Cross-Agency Strategies and Objectives

CROSS-AGENCY STRATEGY 1: WORKING TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Regional Objective 1.1: Ask the Sustainability Question

Region 10 will evaluate its programs, workplans, and decisions through a sustainability lens. The goal is to have sustainability routinely considered in all of our programmatic, financial, and operational decisions through a strategic look of the potential social, environmental and economic impacts.

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 1.1

Outcome Measures: The frequency with which we are considering sustainability prior to a decision being made, the breadth of employees who know how to have this conversation, our ability to track and evaluate progress.

Actions:

1. All units will have an annual conversation about how they are integrating sustainability into their work.
2. All executives and managers will ask staff during decision-making discussions – “How does this achieve more sustainable outcomes?”
3. Each office will target at least one project/program area per year to conduct an in-depth evaluation of opportunities for increasing sustainability in their program delivery.



Greening America's Capitals Program (2014) – Before and After Design of Green Infrastructure in Olympia, WA



Regional Objective 1.2: Showcase Sustainability Efforts

Region 10 will have three to five flagship programs/initiatives (between FY15 – FY18) that showcase a sustainable/systems approach to environmental protection and involve two or more of our offices (e.g., the Federal Green Challenge, the Puget Sound). Sustainability is overtly evaluated as part of the planning and decision-making process.

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 1.2

Outcome Measures: The number of offices involved, environmental, economic, and social results.

Actions:

1. The Region will conduct an annual assessment of our priority sustainability projects including an evaluation of needs to be successful.
2. Project updates will be shared through the In the Loop newsletter and quarterly brown bags.
3. The Region will host an annual Sustainability Day to showcase efforts and to provide focused information and education to support the projects.
4. Each office will track their projects and provide biannual updates to the Sustainability Advisor.



Concentric Circles of Sustainability

CROSS-AGENCY STRATEGY 2: WORKING TO MAKE A VISIBLE DIFFERENCE IN COMMUNITIES

Regional Objective 2.1: Making a Difference in Communities

We continue to provide assistance to communities in a coordinated, impactful way. Key regional programs and partner agencies work together to support our communities with strategic and effective use of sufficient funding, technical assistance, and other resources. The goal is to help communities address environmental and public health challenges while supporting local economic development and community empowerment.

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 2.1

1. Utilize a strategic approach for identifying and supporting communities that will best benefit from our time and attention, such as communities that are overburdened and underserved, those adapting to climate change, or those participating in the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. For example, we will use information from EJ Screen and awareness from community involvement efforts to inform decision-making and prioritization;
2. We provide courses, identify best practices, and bring in trainers for regional staff, which will enhance community involvement skills and foster a community-aware culture within the region. One example includes the Region 10 Community College;
3. We develop a mechanism to formally share information about communities we work with, and to identify who, where, and when staff are working in communities;
4. Taking advantage of and supporting the Agency's focus on communities through the national Cross-Agency Strategy Action Plans for 2015 and 2016, we will work within the agency and with external partners to bring more resources to five underserved and overburdened communities and participating in and utilizing the national Community Resource Network.



Soil Kitchen in West Eugene, OR

Regional Objective 2.2: Making the Difference Visible

We will aim to inform communities about resources and support through strategic and priority-driven high profile communications efforts. To do so, we will develop a Region-wide visibility plan that includes specific actions that engage with our partners to target key audiences on how our collective work benefits them. We develop and use a broad suite of communications tools to get our messages to targeted audiences (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, video, Rotary clubs and schools events, organized speakers bureau, invitation to community organizations, etc.).

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 2.2

1. We implement existing EJ outreach guidance by identifying and targeting media- and community-organizations that provide outreach specifically to underserved and overburdened communities in our press releases and other announcements.
2. Regional staff are empowered to craft and deliver messages that effectively and appropriately communicate to their unique audience in a culturally sensitive, community needs driven manner.
 - Identify the difference EPA is making
 - Identify the audience (public, partners, etc.)
 - Use the tools best suited to tell the story
 - Use plain language to communicate with the public
 - Use maps, diagrams, photographs, video, charts, and other visual elements to more effectively and clearly inform the public
3. Develop and present environmental information to schools and educators.
4. High profile communications efforts are strategic and priority driven. Senior staff and managers will support communication efforts (listening sessions, meetings, ribbon cutting, public statements) strategically, on high impact efforts that incorporate cross-agency goals and strategies.
5. Programs will routinely share (via brown-bag, all-hands, webinars, blog posts, etc.) the work they are performing in communities, sharing failures as well as successes, and lessons learned, within the region.
6. Amplify success stories – share with our partners and community groups the success other communities are having in bringing resources and improving their health and environment (see <http://blog.epa.gov/ej/2014/08/a-dream-realized/>).



Arctic onshore wetlands and the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System

CROSS-AGENCY STRATEGY 3: LAUNCHING A NEW ERA OF STATE, TRIBAL, LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Regional Objective 3.1: Align EPA R10 priorities with the President's National Strategy for the Arctic Region

In parallel with the 2015-2017 U.S. Chairmanship of the Arctic Council, Region 10 will implement the Regional Arctic Strategy to be responsive to emerging national and international priorities through focused coordination and collaboration across offices, and in partnership with Federal, State, local, and tribal governments. Region 10 will leverage its unique Alaska presence to develop, recommend, coordinate and align interagency efforts, and prioritize and track implementation of agency actions consistent with the President's National Strategy for the Arctic Region (NSAR), its Implementation Plan, and the Executive Order on Enhancing Coordination of National Efforts in the Arctic. These efforts will inform Arctic policy decision-making to better protect the people, ecosystems and resources of the Arctic at a time of dramatic environmental, social, and economic changes.

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 3.1:

Priority areas of emphasis that will result in tangible and measurable outcomes consistent with national goals are:

1. Inform high-level EPA decision makers and Arctic E.O. Executive Steering Committee member (EPA Deputy Administrator) on local issues by integrating and synthesizing federal, state, local and tribal perspectives related to NSAR Implementation Plan action items. We will support efforts to define EPA's responsibilities in the Arctic and assist with meeting agency commitments. We will provide value-added comprehensive regional perspectives and recommendations on evolving national priorities, including but not limited to, climate change, ocean acidification, and tribal trust responsibilities.
2. Enhance partnerships and collaboration with stakeholders in Alaska, including the State, local governments, tribal governments, and Alaska native corporations and organizations. To reflect a clear Region 10 decision making process for all agency activities in the Arctic, we will institutionalize and share the best practices for: (a) tribal consultations, (b) native corporation consultation, (c) federal and state agencies coordination, (d) public engagement, and (e) regional efforts to appropriately and respectfully integrate Traditional Knowledge.
3. Meet the challenges of timely permitting, compliance reviews, and spill response planning for the Arctic Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) oil and gas activities while working collaboratively with the Interagency Working Group (EO13580) partners, State of Alaska, and Tribal



*Barrow, AK Coastal
Community Sod Homes*

partners. We will strive to balance competing interests and viewpoints through regulatory actions that protect the sensitive Arctic environment and conserve its valuable resources.

4. Facilitate and participate in a multi-agency/stakeholder effort for the Arctic North Slope/ National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska to integrate Clean Water Act 404 permitting activities with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process requirements and timelines. The goal of this work is to streamline the process for efficient and integrated federal actions while ensuring tribal interests and concerns are reflected in decision-making through acknowledgement and protection of traditional values and ecosystems.

Regional Objective 3.2: Engaging with Partners on Puget Sound National Estuary Program Decisions

EPA Region 10's Puget Sound Program has partnered with Puget Sound tribes and tribal consortia, state agencies, local government entities, federal agencies, boards and panels of the Puget Sound National Estuary Program (NEP) Management Conference, and other interested parties to modify the funding model EPA uses to distribute appropriated Puget Sound recovery funds to the Puget Sound Management Conference. The new funding model, through which Puget Sound funds will be allocated beginning in FY16, stresses the importance of supporting all partners and ensuring that the Puget Sound Action Agenda is the primary strategic pathway to recovery. The proposed associated decision-making processes will also strengthen the roles of Treaty Tribes and the Puget Sound Management Conference in establishing funding priorities and allocating funds. As the model is adopted and successfully implemented, by FY18 we will achieve stronger agreement between all partners on Puget Sound priorities, a corresponding alignment in funding decisions, and focused work to achieve better, and more measurable environmental results.



Kayaks on the Duwamish River, WA

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 3.2

1. EPA will provide funds to the Local Integrating Organizations (LIOs) in Puget Sound to develop local watershed recovery strategies and two-year work plans.
2. The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) will work with the LIOs to ensure all LIO strategies follow the same structure, use consistent terms, develop scientifically sound projects, and address the priority problems preventing Puget Sound recovery.
3. Develop additional “vital sign indicators” (<http://www.psp.wa.gov/vitalsigns/>) and strategies for focusing investments on the Puget Sound Action Agenda.
4. Involve all partners early on in decision-making processes through strategic and priority-driven communication efforts (meetings, discussions, listening sessions, briefings).
5. Periodically evaluate the funding model and associated processes. Disseminate this information widely for discussion and possible adaptive management actions.
6. Accelerate achievement of desired environmental outcomes such as the restoration of nearshore and upstream riparian salmon habitat areas, protecting and improving water quality for more shellfish growing areas, and work to increase restoration of eelgrass (a critical marine habitat feature).
7. Ensure the recently completed Record of Decision to clean up sediments in the Lower Duwamish Waterway is coordinated as appropriate with the broader efforts to clean up the Green-Duwamish River Watershed, such as the state’s efforts to control upland sources of pollution and to develop a Pollutant Loading Assessment for the entire watershed.



Pacific Salmon

CROSS-AGENCY STRATEGY 4: EMBRACING EPA AS A HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATION

Regional Objective 4.1: Actively Prioritize and Manage Workloads through Staffing Planning and Workforce Development

The Region will maintain and enhance our ability to conduct staffing planning and workforce development in order to actively prioritize and manage workloads in a constrained budget environment.

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 4.1

1. Strategic Position Management: Complete the FY15 strategic position management exercise in order to have staffing priorities identified to enable the region to address future vacancies and staff alignment opportunities strategically.
2. Focus Central Training and Development staff efforts and budget on administrative staff and Supervisory Core Competency Training and Development Needs. This will involve:
 - Identifying top priority skills, knowledge and competencies.
 - Assessing regional training and development needs.
 - Promoting the use of Individual Development Plans (IDPs) to identify how and when gaps in knowledge and skills will be filled.
 - Analyzing assessments and identifying courses or other learning activities based on the most wide-spread needs of supervisors and administrative staff.



Mt. Washington at Black Butte Ranch, OR

Regional Objective 4.2: Modernize Region 10's Administration of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Records Management Functions

Modernize Region 10's administration of Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Records Management functions

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 4.2

1. Implement formation of a centralized Region 10 FOIA team and accompanying procedures, according to Region 10's FOIA process and defined roles.
2. Establish and track metrics for the FOIA process identified by the FOIA Lean project team.
3. Provide training on the latest FOIA requirements, and the results of the FOIA Lean, to each office within Region 10. This should increase compliance, while improving performance.
4. Establish a workgroup to determine investment model for records management in order to institute regular and effective records management.

Regional Objective 4.3: Make Business Practices More Efficient through Lean and Process Improvement

Continue to make business practices more efficient by completing implementation of current Lean projects, undertaking new high-priority Lean projects (e.g. Grants, Records Management, others), and enhance understanding and application of Lean principles and processes.

Ensuring Success for Regional Objective 4.3

1. Implement Lean process improvements for managing controlled correspondence (Correspondence Management System (CMS)) and responses to FOIA requests.
2. Institutionalize Lean by having each of the four Lean practitioners conduct one outreach event each year and lead one Lean process improvement project each year with an emphasis on projects undertaken at the unit level.
3. Leverage existing tracking efforts, such as Management Metrics, to ensure project goals are being achieved.
4. Provide a one-day Rapid Office Kaizen (ROK) training to all interested Region 10 staff, to be followed by a one-day Rapid Office Kaizen train-the-trainer for targeted staff. Both of these sessions should diffuse Lean knowledge throughout the region, while increasing Lean participation.



Water Quality Standards Lean Event

EPA's Mission

TO PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

EPA's Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Addressing Climate Change and Improving Air Quality

Goal 2: Protecting America's Waters

Goal 3: Cleaning Up Communities and Advancing Sustainable Development

Goal 4: Ensuring the Safety of Chemicals and Preventing Pollution

Goal 5: Protecting Human Health and the Environment by Enforcing Laws and Assuring Compliance

Region 10 Guiding Statements

Vision

A healthy, sustainable environment for all.

Mission

We will use science to make sound, principled decisions to:

- ▲ Protect and restore ecosystems. Ensure healthy airsheds and watersheds;
- ▲ Take action on climate change;
- ▲ Prevent pollution through source reduction and chemical safety;
- ▲ Cleanup contaminated sites; and
- ▲ Enforce federal environmental laws.



Hurricane Ridge, WA

We are accountable for achieving our mission. Our success as stewards of the public trust will be measured by meaningful and lasting environmental results.

Values

- ▲ Make a difference through people and teamwork. We support each other and the people we work with by working cooperatively and collaboratively. We build bridges between organizations within Region 10 and across the Agency.
- ▲ Promote transparency, communication and dialogue. We share information and expertise, listen to our customers, celebrate our successes and learn from our mistakes.
- ▲ Expect excellence. We set and meet high standards of quality, taking pride in the fact that we are public servants and hold the public trust.
- ▲ Be professional and respectful. We treat our colleagues at EPA, representatives of other governmental entities, stakeholders and the regulated community with professionalism and respect, addressing conflict constructively.
- ▲ Demonstrate honesty and integrity. We deal forthrightly with each other and the public. We meet our commitments.
- ▲ Take well-considered risks. We are willing to take risks, while making environmentally sound decisions, based on science, statutes and regulations.
- ▲ Apply principled decision-making. Our decisions will be based on principles of equity, fairness and applicable laws and regulations.



Seward, AK



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