



Environmental
Justice, Health,
Community
Resilience, &
Revitalization

September - November 2025

Quarter 1 Report

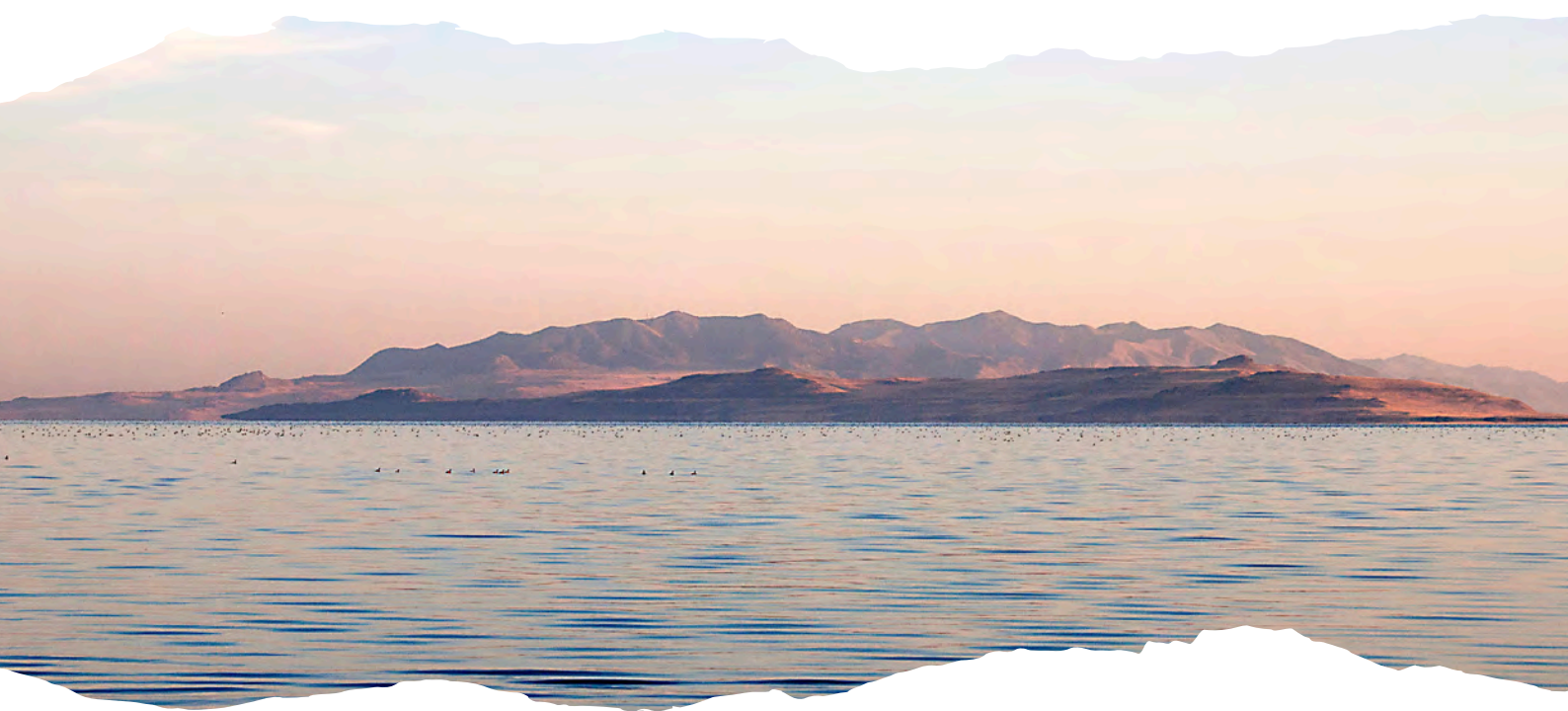
Fiscal Year 2026



www.nwf.org/our-work/environmental-justice

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Meet the Team



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Vice President of Environmental Justice



Jacob Carter
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Alaura Carter
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Community Partnerships Specialist



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Communications Coordinator



Executive Summary

Community Partnerships

This quarter, the EJHCR² team continued to strengthen relationships with frontline and community-based organizations across the nation. Staff participated in events such as the Creating a Climate for Change conference in South Carolina and led community workshops on environmental justice engagement and policy participation. These activities deepened collaboration, expanded regional networks, and supported capacity-building for communities advancing EJ priorities.

Communications

Communications efforts expanded reach and visibility, with a 20% increase in Instagram followers and three new blogs highlighting EJ issues and community resilience. The September newsletter reached nearly 500 readers, and the EJHCR² team launched a redesigned program website to improve access to resources.

Policy & Advocacy in Action

NWF submitted public comments to the EPA opposing proposed changes to the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program, emphasizing the importance of transparent emissions data for community health and climate action. We also supported several federal bills related to clean diesel, marine debris, and Great Lakes research, and continued monitoring legislation affecting mine cleanup and environmental permitting.

Internal Updates

This quarter our program welcomed our new Associate Vice President, Dr. Jacob Carter! Following a presentation by Dr. Adreinne Hollis and Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali at the NWF Board meeting, the team is developing a Story Map to document NWF's Environmental Justice history. Additionally, the EJ Action Planning process is evolving to build deeper alignment and synergy with the federation's Strategic Plan.

Community Partnerships

Prioritizing and uplifting marginalized communities through authentic and meaningful relationship



Creating a Climate for Change

This October, Alaura Carter from the Environmental Justice team attended the [Creating a Climate for Change](#) conference in Florence, South Carolina, hosted by [New Alpha Development Corporation](#), [Kingdom Living Temple](#), and the Whitney M. Slater Foundation. The convening brought together community leaders, practitioners, and advocates from across the Southeast to explore community-driven solutions to environmental and climate justice challenges through workshops, interactive panels, and collaborative discussions. The event provided valuable opportunities to build relationships with local organizations and community members advancing frontline work across the region. NWF Executive Vice President Mustafa Santiago Ali delivered a keynote address, and the NWF Environmental Justice team hosted a table to share resources and connect with conference participants.

Making the Public's Health a National Priority

Dr. Adrienne Hollis attended the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, accompanied by Dr. Jacob Carter, NWF's new Associate Vice President. Both Dr. Hollis and Dr. Carter are active APHA members. This year's convening focused on "Making the Public's Health a National Priority," bringing together public health leaders, researchers, and practitioners to explore emerging challenges and strengthen collective action to advance community health nationwide.

Physicians for Social Responsibility

Dr. Adrienne Hollis was elected to the Board of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), with her tenure beginning in 2026. PSR is a national physician-led organization dedicated to protecting public health from the threats of nuclear proliferation, climate change, and environmental toxins. Learn more about PSR here: <https://psr.org/>

Empowering Community Voices Workshop

Bec Jimenez-Ward facilitated a community workshop titled “Empowering Community Voices: Environmental Justice and Conservation Policy,” hosted by the [Laulima Nature Center](#). The session aimed to strengthen community participation in conservation and environmental justice legislation by helping attendees understand how to engage in policy processes, collaborate with organizations, and advocate for bills that impact their communities. Bec also outlined common barriers to participation and emphasized the importance of community involvement in shaping conservation outcomes. They provided practical tools and resources, including guidance on engaging in rulemaking, writing letters to the editor, and communicating with policymakers, to support participants in developing the skills and confidence needed for effective civic engagement.



CECC Roundtable: State of Environmental Justice

In October 2025, the Clean Economy Coalition of Color (CECC) convened a national roundtable to reflect on the state of environmental justice (EJ) today. Moderated by Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali and Dr. Adrienne Hollis, the discussion featured members of NWF’s Environmental Justice Advisory Council. Dr. Ali opened by grounding the conversation in the human purpose of EJ work, quoting Jane Goodall: “You cannot get through a single day without having an impact... you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.” This framing set the tone for an honest and energizing dialogue about both the obstacles ahead and the collective resolve needed to continue. Panelists reflected a shared understanding that while federal EJ supports have shifted, momentum remains strong at the state, local, and grassroots levels.

Key themes from the roundtable discussion included:

Community-Driven Solutions

- Panelists affirmed that frontline communities hold both the burden and the blueprint for change. As Dr. Na’Taki Osborne Jelks stated, communities have “the right to environmental self-determination... to call out what those solutions should be.” Examples included watershed restoration in Atlanta, community-led water affordability efforts in Detroit, and renewable energy workforce training in Indigenous communities.

Technology, Culture, and Imagination

- Speakers highlighted how GIS mapping, youth-led water testing, and solar training programs are expanding community capacity. Monica Lewis-Patrick emphasized the importance of pairing technical innovation with cultural

CECC Continued

- knowledge so that young people can become “the communicators and translators... building power together.”

Persistence and Partnership in Policy

- Despite political uncertainty, panelists urged organizations to remain committed. Dr. Osborne Jelks noted, “The power is in the solidarity... stay the course. If you abandon us now, we will remember.”

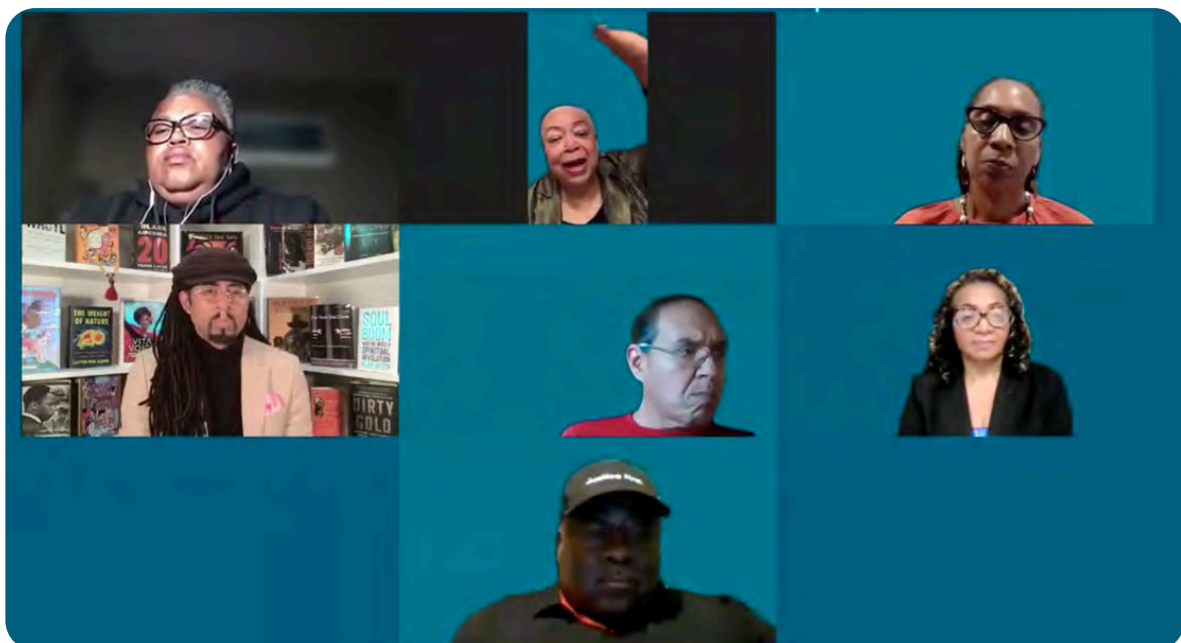
Rural and Tribal Leadership

- Reverend Leo Woodberry and John Red Cloud underscored both the challenges and the innovations in rural and tribal communities. Their work underscores the importance of community-based solutions in building energy sovereignty and climate resilience.

A Collective Path Forward

- The event closed with a reminder that EJ is a shared, intergenerational effort. As Dianne Dillon-Ridgley affirmed, “We’re poised on the edge of the future... and the act of imagining is the act of creation.”

Overall, the roundtable served as both a snapshot of the current EJ landscape and an inspiring call to collective action. Participants left with a renewed sense of purpose rooted in community power, cultural resilience, and decades of hard-won movement wisdom. Full recording of the event can be found on the [National Wildlife Federation’s Youtube channel](#).



Full panel of speakers from the October CECC roundtable.
From top left to bottom center: Monica Lewis Patrick, Dianne Dillon-Ridgley, Dr. Na'Taki Osborne Jelks, Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali, John Red Cloud, Dr. Adrienne Hollis, Reverend Leo Woodberry.

Policy & Advocacy

Engaging with decision-makers to support just, equitable, and community-driven solutions



Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP)

The National Wildlife Federation submitted a public comment to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) about its proposed reconsideration of the Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program (GHGRP)

“Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions contribute to climate change, and climate change harms public health and welfare. Understanding where emissions come from, in what quantities, and how emissions vary in type and scope over time is absolutely crucial to crafting common-sense policy that protects people and wildlife while promoting economic opportunity. Removing program obligations for the GHGRP, as the EPA proposes, is a myopic decision that will undermine American competitiveness and compromise the health of our most vulnerable communities. The GHGRP should remain intact.”

Hill Blasts

In October, NWF sent a Hill blast to Congress in support of three bills ahead of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee markup: **S.2878 — Great Lakes Fishery Research Reauthorization Act**, **S.3022 — Save Our Seas 2.0 Marine Debris Infrastructure Programs Reauthorization Act**, and **S.2235 — Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA)**. All three measures were approved by voice vote during the committee markup.

Legislation

NWF is tracking and engaging on several key bills. **S.2235 — Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA)** (endorsed) aims to reduce harmful diesel emissions in marginalized communities by supporting cleaner engine technologies. **S.2741 — Legacy Mine Cleanup** would permanently authorize an EPA office to coordinate abandoned mine cleanup; NWF is monitoring this bill but has not taken a position. **H.R.4776 — SPEED Act** proposes significant changes to NEPA permitting and has passed the House Natural Resources Committee; NWF is following its progress closely.

Communications

Strengthening Connections & Engaging Communities



Growing Our Reach

The Environmental Justice, Health, and Community Resilience and Revitalization (EJHCR²) team saw steady growth on Instagram this quarter, gaining 20 new followers — a roughly 20% increase since August. This growth reflects rising interest in the team’s work and outreach efforts, as well as ongoing engagement with posts highlighting environmental justice issues, community stories, and policy updates. The September newsletter reached nearly 500 recipients and showcased the work of youth organizers with *Climate First: Replacing Oil and Gas*. It also provided timely resources, including information on renewable energy credits and rapid response grant opportunities, helping subscribers stay informed and empowered to take action in their communities. Sign up to our quarterly newsletter and follow us on Instagram!

Sharing Stories That Inspire Action

The team published three blogs this quarter, offering insights into environmental justice challenges and community solutions:

EPA Should Put Communities First, Servers Second

Considers the potential risks of siting data centers on Superfund and Brownfield sites .

Event Recap: Climate Disasters, Stories of Resilience and Preparedness

Highlights community-led approaches to climate resilience.

Equal Voting Rights Are Necessary for Environmental Justice

Emphasizes the link between civic participation and environmental justice outcomes.

A Fresh Look for Our Website

The EJHCR² team launched a refreshed program website in collaboration with the Web Team. The updated site offers a more user-friendly experience, making it easier for visitors to explore the program, discover advocacy initiatives, and access resources that support community engagement and environmental justice efforts.

Internal Updates

The ins and outs of the EJHCR² team's work!



Welcoming our new Associate Vice President!

Join us in welcoming **Dr. Jacob Carter**, the new Associate Vice President of Environmental Justice, Health, and Community Resilience and Revitalization at the National Wildlife Federation! Jacob joins us from Ripple Effect Communications with an extensive science background and a commitment to environmental justice. Read some words from Jacob about his new position:

“I’m excited to join the National Wildlife Federation and help advance environmental justice at the grassroots and policy level,” [Jacob Carter said](#). “Across the country, communities are watching decades of progress threatened by short-sighted decisions. This is a moment to defend not just our environment, but the fact that every community deserves a voice in shaping a healthy, sustainable future. I am looking forward to being more involved in this critical work at the National Wildlife Federation.”



Dr. Jacob Carter

We’re thrilled to have him on our team!

Documenting NWF’s Environmental Justice History

In November, Dr. Adrienne Hollis and Dr. Mustafa Ali presented at NWF’s Board meeting in Denver, offering a powerful look at the organization’s environmental justice roots. During their preparation, it became clear that NWF’s EJ history had never been formally captured — an important gap for both learning and legacy. To address this, Dr. Hollis, Megnot Mulugeta, and Bec Jimenez-Ward from the EJHCR² team are creating a Story Map that brings this history to life. Once completed, it will be showcased and preserved as a foundational piece of institutional memory.

Evolving Our Environmental Justice Action Planning

As part of the ongoing effort to integrate Environmental Justice (EJ) throughout the National Wildlife Federation, the EJHCR² team is advancing the next phase of the EJ Action Planning process. The initial action planning efforts, developed in response to the 2022 Environmental Justice Assessment, were instrumental in helping NWF programs articulate how EJ principles connect to their work. These plans established foundational understanding, surfaced meaningful insights, and provided valuable direction for organizational learning. With EJ now firmly established as both a Pillar and a Transcendent Principle of NWF's Strategic Plan, this moment offers an opportunity to build on that strong foundation and ensure that the process aligns more intentionally with the organization's strategic direction.

The updated EJ Action Planning approach focuses on:

- Connecting action planning directly to the Strategic Plan's five EJ strategies
- Clarifying how and where EJ principles naturally intersect with programmatic work
- Encouraging greater visibility into the range of EJ-related efforts across the Federation
- Simplifying reporting while strengthening our ability to assess collective progress
- Supporting a more unified understanding of EJ's role within NWF's long-term goals

This evolution reflects lessons learned over the past two years and aims to enhance coherence, transparency, and alignment without discarding or diminishing the important work already completed. Existing Action Plans will continue to inform this next phase, ensuring continuity as the process becomes more streamlined and strategically grounded.

The EJHCR² team is preparing updated tools, timelines, and guidance, which will be coordinated with the fiscal calendar and the broader Strategic Plan reporting schedule. Additional updates will be shared as the process continues to take shape. By refining the EJ Action Planning process, NWF strengthens its ability to demonstrate progress, uplift meaningful work happening across the organization, and ensure that Environmental Justice remains a core element of the Federation's mission and practice.



Future Plans & Milestones

Where the EJHCR² program is headed next

Always Looking Ahead

The work is never over, and the EJHCR² program is continually striving to develop our program to better serve and uplift fenceline and frontline communities.

Below are a few of our upcoming projects and milestones.



NWF Environmental Justice History Story Map

Our team is developing a story map of the NWFs long standing history with EJ! Stay tuned!

Environmental Justice Action Planning

Keep an eye out for the updates to EJ Action Planning processes and procedures, to be release in Q2!

CECC Roundtables: Data Centers

Join us for our two part roundtable series on data centers. The next webinar will be on January 8th at 6pm EST, and will focus on community stories and impacts. We hope to see you there!

Interested in Collaborating?

Let's Connect!

Email us at EnvironmentalJustice@nwf.org

Visit us <https://www.nwf.org/Our-Work/Environmental-Justice>



Designed by Bec Jimenez-Ward, EJHCR² Senior Coordinator

