

CBO Memorandum

To: Chair and Members of the Environmental Justice Council
From: Hoang-Van Nguyen, Environmental Justice Council & Policy Coordinator
Date: April 4, 2024
Regarding: Agenda Item 6 – LUBGWMA CBO Panel

This document highlights high level concerns and asks from each of the organizations participating in the Environmental Justice Council LUBGWMA CBO panel on April 11, 2024.

Eastern Oregon Council for Independent Living, EOCIL

Concerns:

1. Agricultural and industrial employee health and safety concerns.
 - a. Potential of retaliation by employers for bringing up concerns.
2. Data and places where issues are happening.
3. Water delivery criteria: Issue on people not getting enough water.
4. Overall health and safety of communities in the Lower Umatilla Basin

Asks:

- a) More effective means for communities to keep track of water testing status and water deliveries. This could be helpful from a community perspective as well as for individuals.
- b) Community education documents to help them understand the impacts of contamination and health and safety concerns.

Douglas Latinas International, DLI

Concerns:

1. Agricultural and industrial employee health and safety concerns.
 - a. Potential of retaliation by employers for bringing up concerns.
5. Effects of higher levels of nitrates on pregnancy, newborn, future health, including preterm birth due to environmental issues.
6. Water delivery criteria: Issue on people not getting enough water.
2. Water treatment concerns including installation and substitution of water filters.
3. Language support, cultural competency of staff visiting Latino communities which delays receiving testing support and water delivery services. Community education documents to help them understand the impacts of contamination and health and safety concerns.

Asks: Issues on treatment and/or installation and substitution of filters

- a) Need for more Oregon state level studies on human beings to understand the health impacts of nitrate contamination to pregnancy, infants, young children, and breast-feeding mothers.
- b) More effective means for communities to keep track of water testing status and water deliveries. This could be helpful from a community perspective as well as for individuals.
- c) Community education documents to help them understand the impacts of contamination and health and safety concerns.

Oregon Rural Action, ORA

Concerns:

1. Lack of meaningful involvement of directly impacted community members in key decision making.
 - a. Community members need to be able to speak without fear of retaliation from their employers;
 - b. The State is not centering the voice of the directly impacted community in key decisions;
 - c. The economic and political interests of polluters continue to override the needs and interests of those directly impacted by groundwater contamination;
 - d. There is a serious lack of transparency around State data in the LUB.
2. OHA well testing data needs to be released immediately, including information about the general location of wells and contaminants;
 - a. DEQ needs to release the updated trend analysis, which has not been updated for more than a decade;
3. Directly impacted community interests align with requirements outlined by the EPA's minimum components of a timely and adequate plan to address immediate public health risks and groundwater contamination.
 - a. There is no coordinated state plan with measurable goals, outcomes, and timelines;
 - b. People are not aware of the health risks and do not know how to access free water testing and treatment;
 - c. Sources are not being held accountable and pollution has not been reduced;

Ask:

- a) Environmental Justice Council work to ensure that that state agencies center the voice of this environmental justice community in key decisions that affect their lives and the environment in the Lower Umatilla Basin.

Northwest Center for Alternative Pesticides, NCAP

Concerns

1. Agricultural and industrial employee health and safety concerns.
2. Issues with ground water contamination and health impacts.
3. Lack of pollution reduction.
4. Nitrate contamination environmental impacts.
5. Community health concerns.

Asks:

- a) More effective means for communities to keep track of water testing status and water deliveries. This could be helpful from a community perspective as well as for individuals.
- b) Community education documents to help them understand the impacts of contamination and health and safety concerns.

EUVALCREE

Concerns:

1. Water testing concerns.
 - a. Water sample collection.
 - b. Delay in receiving test results.
2. Insufficient water delivery for households.
 - a. What are the criteria for receiving water?
3. Long term lack of resources.
 - a. Long term solutions not addressed by state agencies and local governments.
 - b. Long term needs include well repairs or replacement.
 - i. What criteria will be used for repairs versus replacement?
 - ii. What type of financial support will there be for households who need it?

Asks:

- a. More effective means for communities to keep track of water testing status and water deliveries. This could be helpful from a community perspective as well as for individuals.
- b. Community education documents to help them understand the impacts of contamination and health and safety concerns.