

Resiliency and Climate Justice

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Definitions:

- **Environmental Justice** is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.
- “**Coastal Resilience** means building the ability of a community to “bounce back” after hazardous events such as hurricanes, coastal storms, and flooding – rather than simply reacting to impacts. ” – [National Ocean Service, NOAA](#)

How do we combine Coastal Resiliency with Environmental Justice?

- There is no “silver bullet” to make this work, but instead “silver buckshot”.
- Each community may have a different answer, but all involve **building trust** between the groups of low income and color, and the groups of wealth and power within that community.
- We need to work towards community engagement and risk assessment between these two groups of people because **ALL** are affected by the same ecosystem and climate change issues, but their personal ability to respond is very different.

What did we learn from Hurricane Florence and Matthew?

- FEMA is NOT the answer for everybody. Necessary paperwork and no temporary housing were very problematic, as well as delays for receipt of funding, especially from a Justice perspective. The same was true of private flood insurance.
- The “Good Guys” were Local Emergency Services, Volunteer Fire Departments, Churches, Utility Workers and other volunteers from other states who came in to cleanup.
- The Governor’s requests for Federal Disaster status allowed funding to flow into the state.

State level initiatives to build bridges and trust:

- Governor's new Environmental Justice Committee
- Climate Justice Summit at Haw River
<https://climatejusticealliance.org>
- Environmental Justice Network <https://ncejn.org/>
- Poor People's Campaign (Will Barber III is speaking for the environmental issues.) <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/>
- Survivors' Summit in Wilmington
<https://justflorencerecovery.org/summit/>
- Sierra Club EJ Committee <https://www.sierraclub.org/north-carolina/issues/equity>
- NC Interfaith Power and Light <https://ncipl.org/>
- Z. Smith-Reynolds Grants and other private funding

NC Council of Churches/NCIPL

- NC Interfaith Power and Light works through faith communities to identify and implement positive hope-filled responses to climate change as a moral imperative. Our work centers around Energy, Worship, and the Food-Faith-Climate Connection.
- We educate and advocate about the theological call to “Care for Creation” and to “Care for the Least Among Us”, through presentations, workshops, film screenings, media campaigns and religious events.
- NCIPL is the only NC-based state wide organization that works on addressing the ecological and justice issues of climate change as a faith based initiative. We frequently partner with other environmental groups like those on the previous slide.

Examples of Possible grants for Carteret County:

- ZSR: “Now more than ever, disparate parts of Eastern Carteret County need each other: to recover from Florence, to better prepare for rising waters, and to strengthen the economic and social well-being of our residents. We propose bringing together our communities to creatively solve the problem, “How do we develop a resilient economy in our region?” Possible \$400,000!
- Duke Energy Storm Resiliency Grants: For emergency communication equipment. Possibly \$50,000.

Final Words:

- When you are making Resiliency policy decisions, remember that it is very important to notice who is **NOT** in the room. Have you communicated with those folks and asked them what they think and feel?
- Do not just talk TO them and FOR them, but talk WITH them and THROUGH them.
- Utilize the Jemez Principles to promote Justice

Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing

<https://ecology.iww.org/node/834>

- 1. Be Inclusive**
- 2. Emphasis on Bottom**
- 3. Let People Speak for Themselves**
- 4. Work Together In Solidarity and Mutuality**
- 5. Build Just Relationships Among Ourselves**
- 6. Commitment to Self-Transformation**