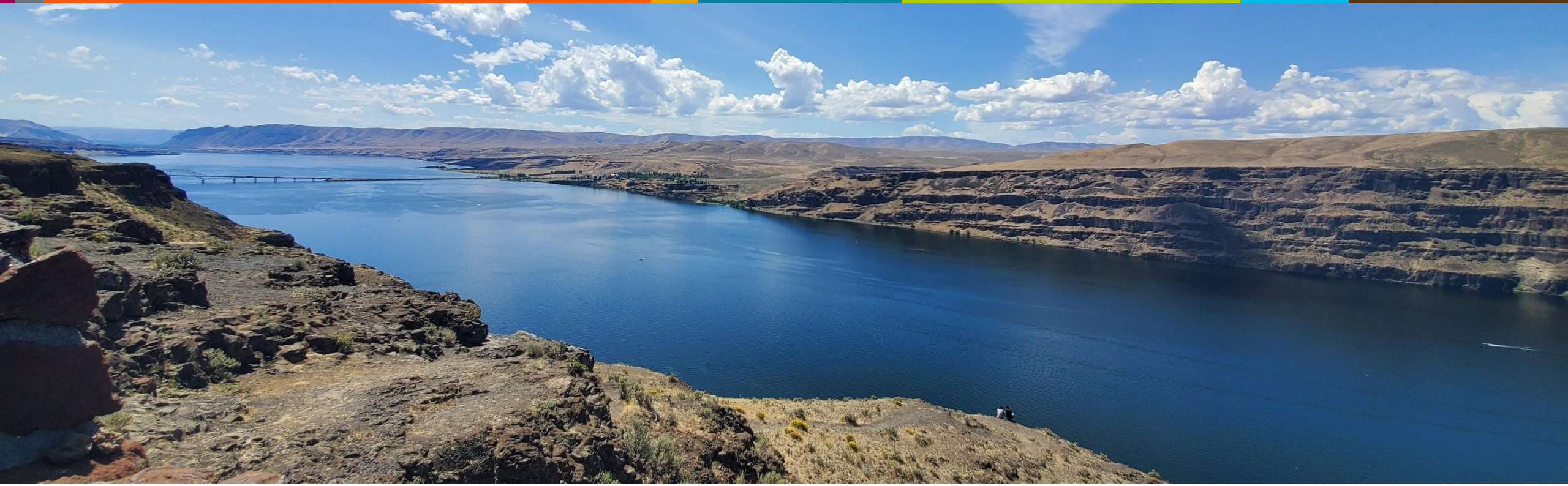

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Washington State Department of Commerce

Clean Energy Siting Council Environmental Justice Toolkit

June 2026 Workshops

Agenda

- Welcome
- Poll
- Background
- Toolkit purpose and intent
- Breakout sessions
- Next steps

Clean Energy Environmental Justice Toolkit

- The Clean Energy Siting Council has recommended improving engagement for the clean energy transition
- A toolkit will provide guidance and tools to help improve engagement on clean energy projects
- Goal: Support developers, communities, and Tribes by providing information about equitable engagement practices
- Building upon Department of Commerce's Environmental Justice Toolkit for Hydrogen Project Developers

Interagency Clean Energy Siting Coordinating Council (Council) Members

- Ecology (Co-lead)
- Commerce (Co-lead)
- Energy Facility Siting Evaluation Council (EFSEC)
- Environmental Justice Council Staff
- Governor's Office (GOV)
- Governor's Office for Regulatory Innovation & Assistance (ORIA)
- Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA)
- Washington Department of Agriculture (WSDA)
- Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP)
- Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)
- Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
- Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)

Council Purpose and Objectives

The council DOES...

- ✓ Coordinate between agencies for consistency and effectiveness
- ✓ Identify actions to improve clean energy siting and permitting
- ✓ Provide annual updates and recommendations on clean energy efforts to the Governor and legislature
- ✓ Increase awareness and participation in clean energy development with a focus on communities and Tribes

The council DOES NOT...

Make decisions on projects, siting, funding, individual agency actions, or statewide policy

Clean energy in Washington

- We are already experiencing the effects of climate change
- Transitioning to a clean energy economy reduces greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change and create jobs
- Washington requires utilities to transition to a pollution-free electricity supply by 2045
  - State Legislature has prioritized equity and environmental justice in the clean energy transition
- Equitable engagement must involve communities and Tribes early on so concerns can be addressed

What is environmental justice?

- Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income
- This goal will be achieved when:
  - Everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and
  - Everyone has equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

What is considered clean energy?

- Clean energy projects:
  - Battery energy storage
  - Biofuel and biomass energy generation
  - Clean energy product manufacturing
  - Electrical transmission
  - Geothermal energy
  - Green electrolytic or renewable hydrogen
  - Nuclear fusion and nuclear fission
  - Pumped hydro storage
  - Solar energy
  - Sustainable aviation fuel or alternative jet fuel
  - Tidal energy
  - Wind energy

Who is the toolkit for?

Preliminary outline

- The case for collaborating with communities and Tribes
- Environmental justice in WA
- Navigating Washington's regulatory landscape
- Guidance on coordinating development & engagement activities
- Community and Tribal best practices
- Community Benefits Plan guidance
- Case studies

Community Engagement Best Practices

1. Learn about the communities in and around the area being considered for development
2. Identify and coordinate with community leaders
3. Be transparent about the project development process
4. Create meaningful opportunities for engagement aligned with key decision-making milestones

Tribal Engagement Best Practices

1. Learn about the tribes in and around the area being considered for development
2. Identify and coordinate with Tribal representatives to plan Tribal engagement
3. Create opportunities for formal partnership
4. Collaborate with Tribes to identify least-conflict sites

Environmental Review and Permitting

- The State Environmental Policy Act provides information early about a project for everyone to consider
- Permitting sets requirements for protection for people and the environment
- A project typically requires multiple state and local permits

- Each process has requirements for engagement

Toolkit purpose

This toolkit does...

- ✓ Provide recommendations for how to best design and implement engagement and incorporate EJ into the development process
- ✓ Guide developers to understand local needs, concerns, and perspectives
- ✓ Provide communities and Tribes with resources to consider clean energy impacts and benefits

This toolkit does not...

- Establish requirements for engagement practices
- Provide a guarantee that toolkit use will result in a project moving forward
- Prescribe specific engagement methods to be used with every community or Tribe

Related work

- Council is developing recommendations
- Governor's Office of Indian Affairs (GOIA), Commerce, and Ecology are developing a clean energy Tribal consultation framework for transmission (Senate Bill 6355)
- Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians is leading a Responsible Energy Siting Project
- Commerce is developing framework for engagement of overburdened communities on transmission

Discussion questions

1. Have you ever participated in a community engagement process for clean energy (or any type of project)?
   a) What went well? What didn't?
   b) What made you feel heard?
2. How do you typically hear about engagement opportunities?
3. How would you want to share your input?
4. What are helpful ways to receive feedback?
5. What tools would be most useful for you in the toolkit?

Next steps

Process Start
January – April 2026

Phase 1 – Establish scope and timeline
May – July 2026

Phase 2 – Seek and implement feedback
July – September 2026

Phase 3 – Finalize Toolkit
Oct 2026 – Jan 2027

Community & Tribal workshops

May/June
Interested parties meetings

June
Informational workshops

August/Sept
Public workshops and Tribal forum

Jan/Feb 2027
Promote toolkit, share resources

30-day public comment period

Thank you!

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Clean Energy Siting Council Webpage

https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/clean-energy/council