

Equity Strategy

May 17, 2023

Overview and Summary

The New York–New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP) has developed this Equity Strategy for three purposes: Calculate Benefits and Progress Towards Justice 40 Goals; Inform Future Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Section 320 Workplans and Projects; and Provide a Basis for the 2025 Action Agenda / CCMP Revision. To do this, HEP will use a combination of four federal, state, and local demographic and geographic indicators to determine where disadvantaged communities are located: EPA’s Five Factor Demographic Index, State Definitions from New York and New Jersey, Higher Need Public Access and Stewardship Areas as defined in HEP’s 2017-2025 Action Agenda, and the Lower Passaic, Bronx, and Harlem River watersheds recognized as Federal Urban Waters Partnership Areas. Because of the importance of improving water quality and reaching HEP’s other goals and objectives in these places in the Hudson-Raritan Estuary, HEP has established a specific numeric target of ensuring that at least 50% of the investments from BIL funding flow to these disadvantaged communities. These investments correspond to multiple non-monetary benefits including improvements in HEP’s goals for improvements in water quality, habitat, public access, the environmental performance of maritime activities, community engagement and the adaptive capacity of communities to be resilient to climate change. HEP has identified equity strategy implications for each of its Action Agenda goals. As detailed in Section 10, HEP will track non-monetary benefits in several ways including number of projects, number of community stewardship partners, and number of people engaged in education and community engagement activities so as to ensure progress towards the challenges identified below.

3. HEP Governance and the Context and Purpose of the Equity Strategy

The New York–New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP) brings the benefits of the Clean Water Act to the people who live, work, and recreate on our shared waterways. Created in 1987 by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at the request of the governors of New York and New Jersey, HEP is an ongoing effort to develop and implement a consensus driven plan to protect, conserve and restore the estuary. HEP’s unique role of convening partners, producing and disseminating science and data, and advancing better management across many jurisdictional boundaries and interests is supported by core funding provided by the Clean Water Act and directed and supported by a collaborative structure including a governing Policy Committee (composed of the EPA Region 2 Director, state environmental commissioners, and other agency and community leadership); a working Management Committee (that reviews the core documents of HEP’s CCMP and represents key implementation partners); a number of technical work groups including a Science and Technical Advisory Committee; and a Citizens Advisory Committee (all of whom are represented on the Management and/or Policy Committees). EPA provides overall guidance and support to help ensure that HEP meets the goals of the National Estuary Program, as well as estuary-specific input through their ongoing participation in the collaborative. HEP is hosted and staffed by the non-profit Hudson River

Foundation. Since 2013, two seats on HEP's Management Committee have been reserved for representatives of Environmental Justice organizations.¹

HEP's 2017–2025 Action Agenda, one of the core documents that constitute HEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP), presents the collaborative's shared priorities and the commitment of HEP's partners to address them. It describes five generational goals, and the specific 17 objectives and the 40 actions that will continue the region's progress towards cleaner water, restored fish and wildlife habitat, improved public access, more efficient maritime activities, and robust community engagement. More information about HEP governance, the Action Agenda, and the other core documents that constitute our CCMP are available at <http://www.harborestuary.org/>.

Advancing equity is a cornerstone of the CCMP, in particular in terms of our ability to meet our public access and community engagement goals, it is a focus of specific objectives and priorities within the Action Agenda.

The New York–New Jersey Harbor Estuary is the biggest public resource in the nation's largest and most densely developed metropolitan area. But, as documented in HEP's CCMP, the parks, public spaces, and on-water access sites are not evenly distributed across the Estuary, especially when considered in the context of differing socioeconomic characteristics of the Estuary's waterfront populations. An assessment by HEP and the USDA Forest Service NYC Urban Field Station in 2016 found that, only about nine percent of the waterfront is accessible for the more than 500,000 residents in 12 higher need/disadvantaged areas around the estuary.² Accordingly, HEP's efforts to advance public access and improve stewardship have been targeted to these communities. This includes planning efforts, advancing community and professional science, and community stewardship grants undertaken as part of HEP's CCMP implementation.

As noted in the Action Agenda's Community Engagement Section, "Collaborative participation in resource management decisions can help address many of the thorny issues present in the Estuary...This is particularly important for environmental justice communities with significant barriers towards meaningful public participation with agency decision making." The Action Agenda has sought to address this in a variety of ways, including supporting research, planning, and public programs that have elevated community values and priorities in estuary management. But the primary focus has been through the work of the HEP-affiliated Urban Waters Federal Partnerships in the Bronx & Harlem and the Lower Passaic Rivers. The Ambassadors have forged connections between and among federal agencies, community-based organizations, and HEP. Partnership workplans and projects have served as a means of delivering HEP and other resources to enhance social and ecological outcomes to environmental justice communities along three critical waterways.

HEP and its host, the Hudson River Foundation (HRF), also adopted a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Roadmap in 2020 that has served to orient and guide specific initiatives to address bias in our work. Based on the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing, the roadmap has helped HEP and HRF

¹ See HEP's Operating Procedures here: <https://www.hudsonriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Operating-Procedures-for-HEP.pdf>

² Boicourt, Kate; Robert Pirani; Michelle Johnson; Erika Svendsen; and Lindsay Campbell. 2016. Connecting with Our Waterways: Public Access and Its Stewardship in the New York – New Jersey Harbor Estuary. New York – New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program, Hudson River Foundation. New York, NY. Accessed at https://www.hudsonriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PublicAccess-Draft_Print-Full_smallerfile.pdf

implement several key actions, including increasing the diversity of speakers and participants in our meetings and annual conference; financially supporting the participation of the EJ representatives on the HEP Management Committee and the leadership of the Citizens Advisory Committee; establishing a HEP Diversity Equity and Inclusion subcommittee focused on helping environmental organizations and educators to create welcoming public spaces and work environments by making a Safe Space Commitment; and focusing the student research fellowships towards minority serving institutions and increasing representation of Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) scholars.

Looking forward, the purposes of HEP's Equity Strategy are clear:

- **Calculate Benefits and Progress Towards Justice 40 Goals:** The mapping and numeric targets established in this strategy will help HEP gauge its success and report its progress to EPA and other partners.
- **Inform Future Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Section 320 Workplans and Projects:** The maps and activities identified in this plan will guide HEP's consideration of projects for workplans in the future. This will include using the maps as specific criteria for HEP Requests for Proposals (RFP) and grants.
- **Provide a Basis for 2025 Action Agenda / CCMP Revision:** HEP is beginning its CCMP revision process, with the goal of adopting a new Action Agenda in 2025. This Equity Strategy and the final definition and maps will inform that document.

4. Definition and Mapping of Disadvantaged Communities

For the purposes of this equity strategy, HEP will use the term "disadvantaged community" to be consistent with its guidance from EPA and language in the BIL. We mean for this term to be inclusive of other similar descriptions, especially those referenced by the sources used to map these areas. These other terms include overburdened communities, underserved, and higher-need areas (in reference to public access).³

HEP will use a combination of four demographic and geographic indicators to determine where disadvantaged communities are located that could benefit from HEP activities. Each of these indicators uses distinct criteria to identify disadvantaged communities. This method benefits from the prior work and extensive conversations held by EPA, the states of New York and New Jersey, and HEP's own outreach conducted during the creation of HEP's 2017-2025 Action Agenda.

By taking this expansive approach and using all these definitions, HEP will be able to consider disadvantaged communities identified from the federal, state, and local perspectives. It will allow HEP

³ In its guidance for the National Estuary Program EPA notes that "there are several related terms used to describe communities facing hardship or who have historically benefitted unevenly from federal funds, including disadvantaged, overburdened, underserved. Under Justice40 EPA is using the term "disadvantaged" for consistency with E.O. 14008 and other programmatic terminologies. EPA notes that this terminology is distinct from "environmental justice" community, which is defined as a community facing disproportionate environmental, public health, and other burdens that reduce quality of life. These terms should not be used interchangeably. Most environmental justice communities are also likely disadvantaged (depending on the criteria set for the latter's definition), but not all disadvantaged communities are environmental justice communities."

and our partners, including the states of New York and New Jersey, to identify how HEP activities will advance their own goals for serving these areas. It meets the input provided by members of the environmental justice community during our stakeholder engagement process.

The criteria established by the States of New York and New Jersey, as well as HEP's own 2016 assessment of Higher Need Public Access and Stewardship Areas, includes race as one factor in multi-factor indices. For example, New York State includes data on residency of "members of groups that have historically experienced discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity" as one of the 45 indicators incorporated in the State's definition.⁴ Utilizing these multi-factor indices will ensure that HEP's work reflects and serves state and other partner priorities, and recognizes the multiple ways that disadvantaged communities in the region have been identified by these partners (as shown by the summary table below).

The four distinct sets of indicators are:

1. EPA Five Factor Demographic Index: EPA has established a five-factor Supplemental Demographic Index for use when implementing Justice40 related efforts. The index, created using the EJScreen tool, highlights census tracts where the average for the following five factors is above the 80th Percentile:⁵

- Percent low-income;
- Percent limited English speaking;
- Percent less than high school education;
- Percent unemployed; and
- Low life expectancy.

HEP has buffered these areas by a quarter mile to ensure complete coverage and added important adjacent waterfront parks and other public spaces that serve these communities that would otherwise not have been included under other indicators.

Percent of entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed – 2%

Percent of Harbor Estuary – 10%

2. State Definitions: Both New Jersey and New York State have identified areas that can be considered disadvantaged:

- New Jersey's **Overburdened Communities:** Census block groups and adjacent areas defined by New Jersey's Environmental Justice Mapping, Assessment and Protection Tool compares 2020 Census data relative to statewide values for a variety of demographic and other data.⁶
- New York State's **Disadvantaged Communities:** Identified by the Climate Justice Working Group pursuant to the State's Climate Justice and Community Protection Act, the census tracts must

⁴ See <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/climate-justice-working-group/> and <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/disadvantaged-communities-criteria/>. Note also that NYSDEC has also created its own environmental justice map.

⁵ <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen/ej-and-supplemental-indexes-ejscreen#EJ>

⁶ See <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/communities/>.

rank relatively high in terms of criteria reflecting “Environmental and Climate Change Burdens and Risks” and/or “Population Characteristics and Health Vulnerabilities” in comparison with other tracts in two distinct geographies: New York City or the Rest of State.⁷

Percent of entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed – 11%

Percent of Harbor Estuary – 26%

3. HEP Higher Need Public Access and Stewardship Areas: To guide public access and community stewardship work under HEP’s 2017- 2025 Action Agenda, HEP and the USDA Forest Service identified 12 “Higher Need” waterfront reaches in the Harbor Estuary. These are based on an index of five key indicators: youth population (under the age of 14), population growth, communities of color, median household income, and the population within the study area lacking access to waterfront public space.⁸

Percent of entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed – N/A

Percent of Harbor Estuary – 6%

4. Federal Urban Waters Partnership Areas: A focus for HEP’s 2017- 2025 Action Agenda community engagement efforts are the watersheds and waterways of the Lower Passaic and the Bronx & Harlem River Urban Waters Federal Partnerships. This work centers on improving access to nature and water resource management for disadvantaged communities.⁹

Percent of entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed – 2%

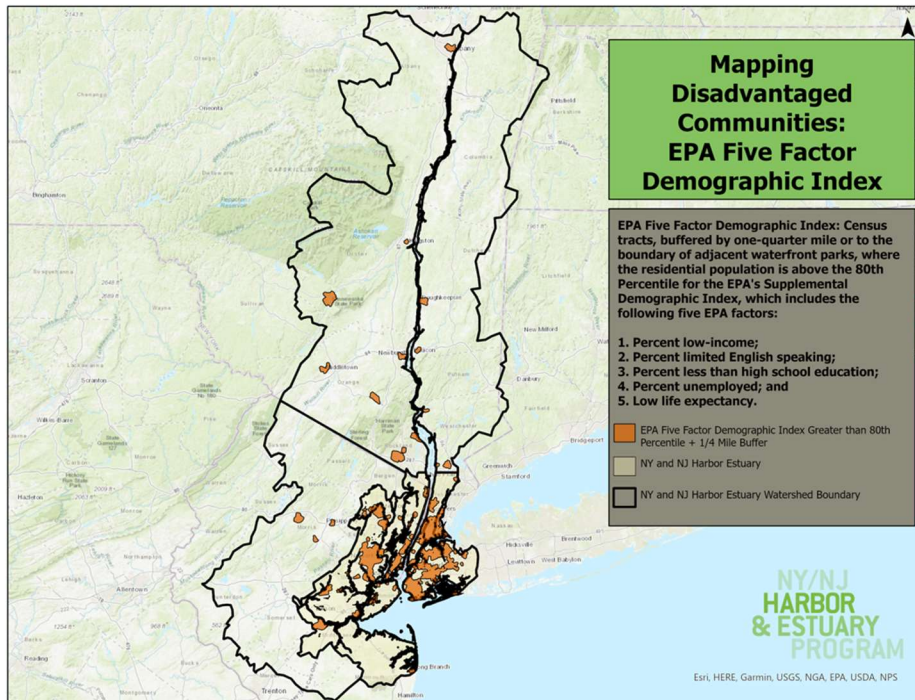
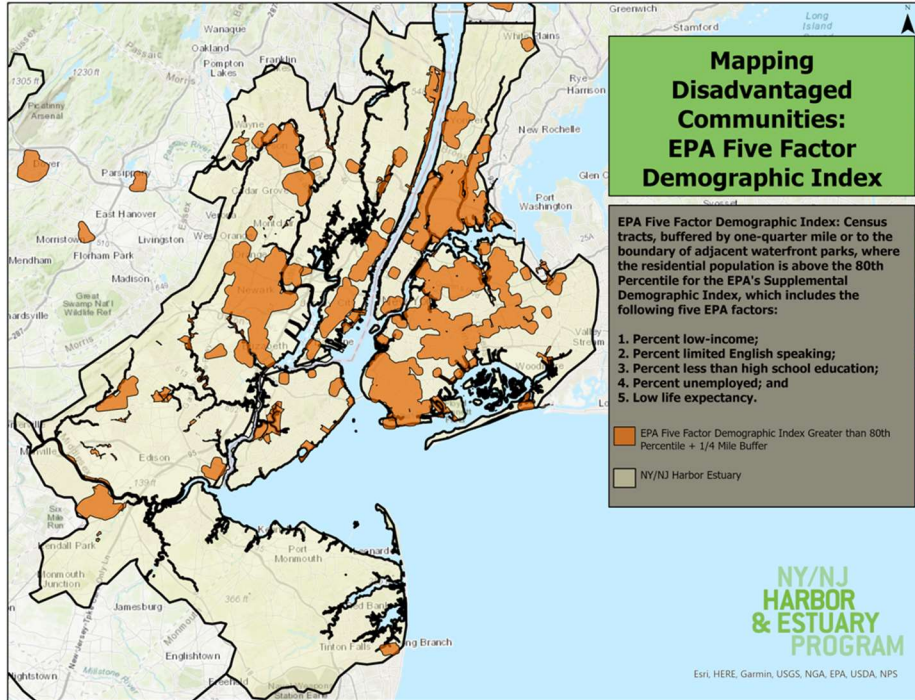
Percent of Harbor Estuary – 5%

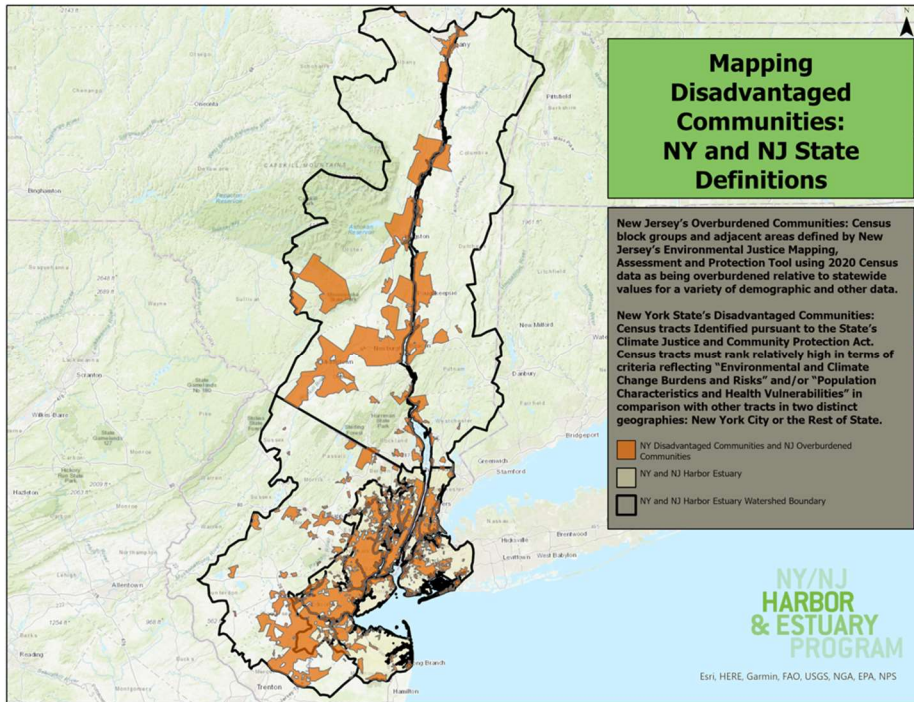
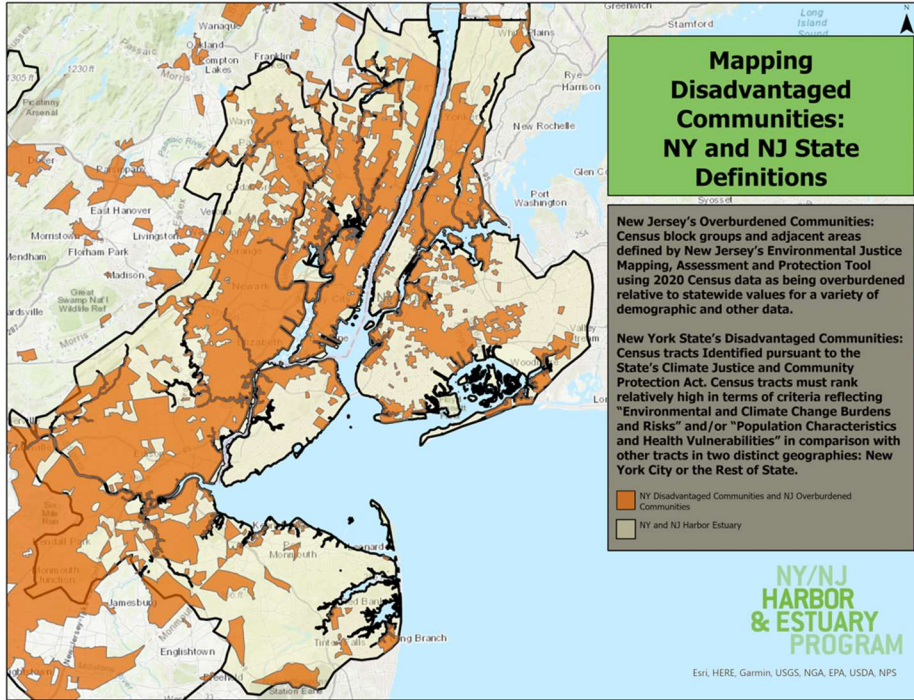
The four sets of indicators were used to create maps for the entire Hudson – Raritan Estuary Watershed as well as the smaller Harbor Estuary where HEP focuses its efforts. Four maps and summary statistics, presented below, address each of the four sets of indicators. As shown in the table, in total, about 12% of the entire Hudson-Raritan Estuary is considered disadvantaged under at least one of HEP’s four indicators; about 31% of the Harbor Estuary can be characterized in this way. To allow the public and partners to access maps of the four sets of indicators, individually or in combination, HEP has posted an interactive version online [here](#). Appendix A provides a list of local municipalities and New York City Community Boards where more than 80% of the local jurisdiction has been identified as disadvantaged by any of the four sets of indicators.

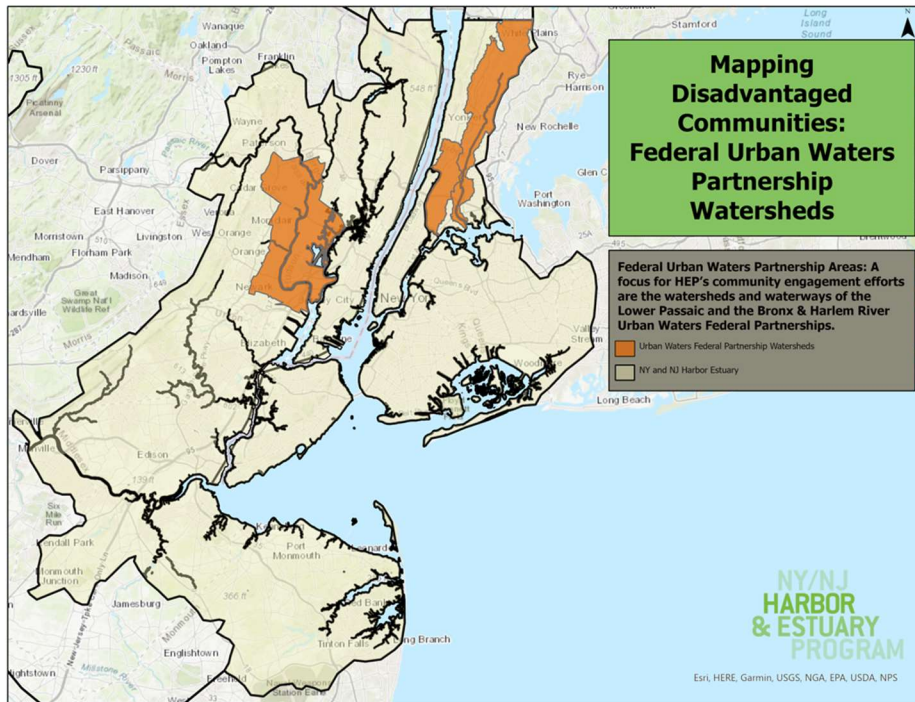
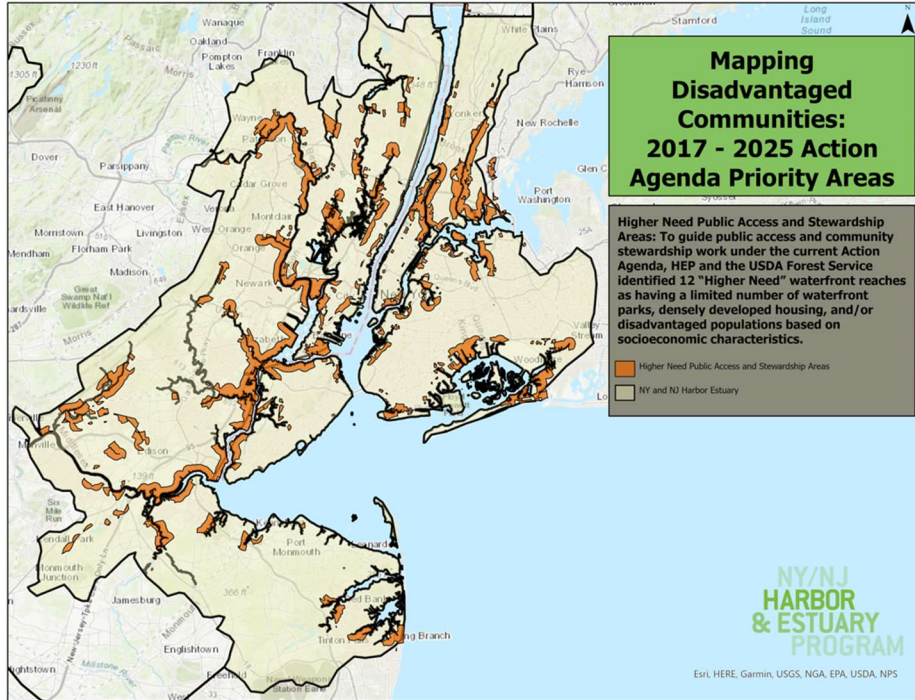
⁷ See <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/climate-justice-working-group/> and <https://climate.ny.gov/resources/disadvantaged-communities-criteria/>. Note also that NYSDEC has also created its own environmental justice map.

⁸ See https://www.hudsonriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/PublicAccess-Draft_Print-Full_smallerfile.pdf

⁹ See <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/urban-waters-federal-partnership>.







Summary Table: Area and Percent Identified as Disadvantaged by Four Sets of Indicators		
	Area (sq. miles)	%
Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed	14,191	
NY-NJ Harbor Estuary	2,107	
EPA Five Factor Demographic Index:		
Disadvantaged Areas Within entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed	269	2%
Disadvantaged Areas Within Harbor Estuary	207	10%
NY/NJ State Definitions:		
Disadvantaged Areas Within Entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed	1,574	11%
Disadvantaged Areas Within Harbor Estuary	557	26%
HEP Higher Need Public Access and Stewardship Areas:		
Disadvantaged Areas Within Harbor Estuary	134	6%
Federal Urban Waters Partnership Areas:		
Disadvantaged Areas Within Entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed	229	2%
Disadvantaged Areas Within Harbor Estuary	107	5%
Meeting Any One of the Four Demographic and Geographic Indicators		
Disadvantaged Areas Within Entire Hudson Raritan Estuary Watershed	1727	12%
Disadvantaged Areas Within Harbor Estuary	663	31%

5. Indigenous Tribes and Nations

There are no federal or state tribal lands in the Harbor Estuary Watershed. However, HEP will acknowledge and consider projects that are specifically intended to benefit indigenous tribes and nations, whether they are federally recognized, state-recognized, non-recognized and/or a geographically dispersed set of indigenous people that experience common conditions. For the Hudson – Raritan Estuary Watershed, these include the Ramapough Lenape Indian Nation (recognized by the State of New Jersey) as well as the other tribes and nations that have historic ties to the region.

6. Baseline Analysis

Prior to BIL, the NEP was not a covered program under Justice40. Therefore, there is no expectation for NEPs to meet a certain number or percentage of pre-BIL baseline investments in disadvantaged communities.

EPA has provided a nationally consistent baseline analysis that assesses the number and percent of recent pre-BIL funds and projects that benefit disadvantaged communities. This data serves as a guide for comparison with the investments and benefits that flow to disadvantaged communities through the influx of NEP BIL funds. EPA’s assessment relies on the funding dedicated to habitat conservation and enhancement projects by HEP and its partners as part of the NEPORT reporting system. Based on this assessment the percentage of project costs in disadvantaged communities is about 42%.

Year	# of Habitat Projects in Disadvantaged Communities	Total Habitat Projects	% of Habitat Projects in Disadvantaged Communities	Section 320 Funds Invested in Disadvantaged Communities through Habitat Projects (\$)	Total Section 320 Funds Used in Habitat Projects (\$)	% of Section 320 Funds Invested in Disadvantaged Communities through Habitat Projects	Habitat Project Costs Invested in Disadvantaged Communities (\$)	Total Habitat Project Costs (\$)	% of Habitat Project Costs Invested in Disadvantaged Communities
2017	1	21	4.76%	0	0	-	132,300,000	239,078,700	55.34%
2018	1	14	7.14%	0	0	-	1,200,000	15,929,191	7.53%
2019	0	18	0.00%	0	0	-	0	30,863,633	0.00%
2020	0	12	0.00%	0	0	-	0	28,787,102	0.00%
2021	1	11	9.09%	0	0	-	250,000	4,271,771	5.85%
Total	3	76	3.95%	0	0	0.00%	133,750,000	318,930,397	41.94%

7. Numeric Targets

HEP will contribute to the national program-wide goal - set by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Implementation Memo - of ensuring that at least 40% of the benefits and investments from BIL funding flow to disadvantaged communities.

Because of the importance of improving water quality and reaching HEP's other goals and objectives in these places in the Hudson-Raritan Estuary, HEP has established a specific individual estuary target of ensuring that 50% of the investments from BIL funding flow to disadvantaged communities. As detailed below, HEP will assess specific BIL projects as to whether the project is located in and/or primarily serving residents of an area identified under any of the four demographic and geographic indicators. Primarily serving is defined as projects in public parks and other public spaces immediately adjacent to disadvantaged residential communities or the quarter-mile buffer used for the EPA Five Factor Demographic Index. It can also include projects explicitly serving people living in a disadvantaged area, such as workforce training or environmental education programs. These will be justified on a case-by-case basis.

These investments correspond to multiple non-monetary benefits including improvements in water quality, habitat, public access, the environmental performance of maritime activities, community engagement and the adaptive capacity of communities to be resilient to climate change. As detailed in Section 10, HEP will track non-monetary benefits in several ways including number of projects, number of community stewardship partners, and number of people engaged in education and community engagement activities so as to ensure progress towards the challenges identified below. Specific numeric targets for these benefits will be considered in the future in the context of HEP's pending revision of the State of the Estuary and Action Agenda.

This target recognizes HEP's ambitions to center equity in our work. At the same time, the targets are realistic given the large number of disadvantaged communities in the Hudson-Raritan Estuary, especially the Harbor Estuary where HEP's efforts are focused, as well as HEP's past focus on such work.

8. Strengths and Challenges Toward Meeting Numeric Targets

HEP brings some strengths and is resolved to address the specific challenges involved in meeting this numeric target.

During the creation of its current Action Agenda and CCMP, and in the resulting annual workplans, HEP has sought to establish meaningful connections to community and other environmental justice leadership in our region. Our engagement through multiple local and regional forums, in particular the work of the HEP-affiliated Urban Waters Federal Partnerships in the Bronx & Harlem and the Lower Passaic Rivers, has helped build community partnerships, identify significant needs, and advance meaningful community initiatives aligned with the goals and objectives of HEP's current Action Agenda. In its FY 23 annual workplan, HEP committed to financially support the participation of community and environmental justice leaders' participation in its Citizens Advisory Committee and Management Committee. Key current activities are identified below in Section 7. HEP is currently developing its outreach strategy for a 2025 CCMP revision.

But to be clear, HEP recognizes that continuing to advance this work requires addressing significant and on-going challenges:

- Better understanding and tangible demonstrations of how HEP's work to improve estuary management can speak to and address community identified priorities.
- Greater capacity of community-based organizations to participate in estuary stewardship and management decisions.
- Improved ability of HEP's federal, state and local agency, utility partners, and independent scientists to meaningfully address community concerns and issues.

9. Key Activities

The five goals and current objectives of HEP's Action Agenda provide a framework for considering how HEP can meet the needs of disadvantaged communities and address the key challenges outlined above. Selected projects from HEP's current (FY 22/23, proposed (FY 24), and anticipated (FY 25 and 26) BIL Workplans provide some specific examples of how HEP is seeking to bring benefits to disadvantaged communities in the estuary and meet its numeric target. Please note that this is not all the projects included in HEP's BIL Long Term Strategic Plan Workplan; Only those that are expressly intended to benefit disadvantaged communities.



Water Quality

Action Agenda Goal: Reduce the sources of pollution so that the waters of the Estuary will meet the fishable/swimmable goal of the Clean Water Act, where attainable.

Equity Strategy Implications of Key Water Quality Objectives: HEP’s Harbor-Wide Water Quality Monitoring Report and support of other water quality monitoring and research provides understanding of current conditions in disadvantaged communities, relative to federal and state guidance and standards. Accelerating the creation, adoption and implementation of Long-Term Control Plans and MS4 Permits in the estuary can improve water quality and bring additional co-benefits to disadvantaged communities. Providing opportunities for local residents and students to participate in this work can build community understanding and provide educational and workforce opportunities. Climate change will pose significant additional challenges to meet this goal in frontline communities.

2017-2025 Actions Benefiting Disadvantaged Communities:

WQ-B-2: Provide funding and technical assistance to support green infrastructure design, community engagement, and/or workforce training in disadvantaged communities (also, **HA-A-2** – supporting workforce training to help address the cost of restoration).

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$250,000	\$100,000	*

WQ-B-4: Advance Means and Methods for Public Notification of combined sewer overflow (CSO) events.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
	\$25,000	*

WQ-C-1 and WQ-C-2: Pilot a monitoring plan in a shared waterbody to elevate discussions on consistent water quality standards.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$50,000	\$50,000	*

WQ-E-3: Provide grants to support engagement of disadvantaged communities in climate resiliency initiatives.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$409,600	\$150,000	*



Habitat and Ecological Health

Action Agenda Goal: Protect and restore the vital habitat, ecological function, and biodiversity that provide society with renewed and increased benefits.

Equity Strategy Implications of Key Habitat Objectives: Making progress towards restoring the Estuary’s target ecosystem characteristics is especially important in many disadvantaged communities, where access to nature is limited. At the same time, the urbanized conditions in these areas can pose a challenge to restoration practice and success. Providing opportunities for local residents and students to participate in this work can build community understanding and provide educational and workforce opportunities. Climate change will pose significant additional challenges to meet this goal in frontline communities.

2017-2025 Actions Benefiting Disadvantaged Communities:

H-A-1: Provide grants for enhancement of Comprehensive Restoration Plan sites serving disadvantaged communities (also, **H-D-1 & H-D-2** – Advancing understanding and incorporating climate change projections into restoration activities).

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$200,000	\$150,000	*

H-A-1: Increase investment in conservation and restoration projects. Support the NJ Sports and Exposition Authority in the management and protection of habitats of concern along the Hackensack River.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$75,000		

H-C-1: Collect and analyze shoreline monitoring data from natural and nature-based resiliency features.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$40,000	\$25,000	*



Public Access and Stewardship

Action Agenda Goal: Improve public access to the waters of the Estuary and the quality of experience at public spaces along the waterfront.

Equity Strategy Implications of Key Public Access Objectives: The Action Agenda explicitly identifies increasing public access and Improving stewardship and programming in disadvantaged communities as objectives. HEP’s work to build awareness of recreational opportunities could also be targeted to address disparities in the quantity and quality of public access.

2017-2025 Actions Benefiting Disadvantaged Communities:

PA-A-1: Assess and advance access opportunities and challenges for the Harlem River Greenway in the Bronx and the Lower Passaic River.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$150,000	\$50,000	*

PA-B-2: Provide small grants in support of community-based stewardship and educational programming.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
\$50,000	\$50,000	*



Port and Maritime

Port and Maritime Objective B: Help design and implement port and maritime improvement projects that are more environmentally friendly.

Equity Strategy Implications of Key Port and Maritime Objectives: HEP’s work to improve understanding and management implications of changing sediment contamination in the Estuary can help provide context for community organizations. Addressing many community concerns would likely require site-specific monitoring and additional scientific investigation.

2017-2025 Actions Benefiting Disadvantaged Communities:

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan <i>(Approved)</i>	FY 2024 Workplan <i>(Draft)</i>	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans <i>(Anticipated)</i>
		*



Community Engagement

Action Agenda Goal: Foster community understanding and involvement in decisions about the Estuary.

Equity Strategy Implications of Key Community Engagement Objectives: HEP’s work to enhance public understanding of the Harbor Estuary, increase and improve the quality of community science efforts, and support Urban Waters Federal Partnerships in the Lower Passaic and Bronx & Harlem River Watersheds are explicitly tied to equity concerns.

2017-2025 Actions Benefiting Disadvantaged Communities:

CE-B-1: Advance improvements to the Lower Passaic River Shoreline in support of the lower 8.3 mile Superfund cleanup.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan (Approved)	FY 2024 Workplan (Draft)	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans (Anticipated)
\$150,000		*

CE-B-1: Support the UWFP Ambassadors working in the Lower Passaic River and Bronx/Harlem communities and a research associate to assist in grant administration.

FY 2022 / 2023 Workplan (Approved)	FY 2024 Workplan (Draft)	FY 2025 & FY 2026 Workplans (Anticipated)
\$60,000	\$94,800	*

10. Tracking Investments and Benefits

HEP will track investments and benefits to disadvantaged communities primarily by noting the location of projects, grants, and staff activity relative to the geographic areas mapped under any of the four indicators used in this strategy.

Progress will be reported through the Tracking Table used by HEP to document progress towards its 2017 - 2025 Action Agenda and added to annual workplans and annual reports in addition to BIL-specific reporting required by EPA including mapping of these project locations. This will be shared with the Management Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee on an annual basis.

Investments in and benefits from projects, grants, and staff activity that are outside these areas but are clearly designed to primarily benefit residents of disadvantaged communities may also be included. This is primarily to capture projects, grants and staff activity in immediately adjacent parks and waterways outside of census boundaries but utilized by residents of a disadvantaged community. Primarily benefiting can also include targeted educational and workforce training programs serving residents of disadvantaged communities. Similarly, investments in projects that are specifically intended to benefit

indigenous tribes and nations will also be noted. The rationale for including any of such projects, grants and/or staff activity will be noted in the Tracking Table.

Investments in disadvantaged communities or deemed to be primarily serving residents of disadvantaged communities and/or indigenous tribes and nations, will be quantified by the total number of projects and total investment of funds for subawards, procurement contracts, and/ HEP personnel costs relative to total BIL funds received. HEP's goal is to allocate 50% of its available funds in this way. HEP will also document and quantify the dollar value of any leveraged funding and/or other resources that will be allocated towards the project.

For other projects that are implementing a CCMP priority not specific to a disadvantaged community, HEP will note whether the investment is benefiting another community or is broadly benefiting multiple communities throughout the estuary.

To track progress and help communicate the non-monetary benefits of these investments, HEP will identify the primary type of benefit and whether or not the project, grants, and/or staff activity are addressing our key challenges. The following table indicates the specific benefit, numeric or non-numeric measure, and purpose of this information. This information will be included in the Tracking Table. Specific numeric targets for these benefits will be considered in the future, most likely in the context of HEP's pending revision of the State of the Estuary and Action Agenda

Indicators of Non-monetary Benefits of BIL Investments		
Benefit	Measure(s)	Rationale/Purpose
Water Quality	# of projects; Specific outcomes/outputs	HEP's Action Agenda/ EPA's proposed BIL NEPORT
Habitat	# of projects; Specific outcomes/outputs including acres as appropriate	HEP's Action Agenda/ EPA's proposed BIL NEPORT
Public Access	# of projects; Specific outcomes/outputs including acres and people as appropriate	HEP's Action Agenda/ EPA's proposed BIL NEPORT
Port and Maritime	# of projects; Specific outcomes/outputs	HEP's Action Agenda/EPA's proposed BIL NEPORT (as appropriate)
Community Engagement	# of projects; Specific outcomes/outputs including organizations, events, and people as appropriate	HEP's Action Agenda/EPA's proposed BIL NEPORT
Adaptive Capacity of Communities	# of projects; Specific outcomes/outputs	EPA's proposed BIL NEPORT
Addresses a community identified priority	# of projects led by a community-based organization or responsive to a community plan	Equity Strategy challenge
Greater capacity of community-based organizations	# of grants provided to a community-based organization	HEP's Action Agenda/Equity Strategy challenge
Ability of HEP agency/academic partners to address community concerns	# of projects led by or otherwise significantly involving a community-based organization <i>and</i> agency/academic partner(s) including leveraging of partner funding	Equity Strategy challenge

11. Stakeholder Engagement

The preparation of this Equity Strategy and the specific BIL projects proposed for BIL workplans was informed by discussions and specific comments by members of HEP's Policy and Management Committee, Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and technical work groups. In addition to regular one-

on-one calls with HEP partners, HEP has reached out to request input from key stakeholders, including members of the UWFP Core Committees for the Lower Passaic and Bronx & Harlem Rivers, that are leaders in their communities and have specific understanding and expertise in environmental justice and other relevant issues.

HEP Stakeholder Engagement to Date in Support of Equity Strategy and BIL Workplan Development					
Group / Partner / Community Name	Geographic Locale <i>[Local, State, Tribal, National]</i>	Type of Engagement Conducted	Rationale for Engagement <i>[key issue(s) addressed, etc.]</i>	Timing of Past Engagement	Planned Future Engagement
HEP Policy and/or Management Committee	Regional	Presentation / Discussion	Overall BIL/Equity Strategy	Quarterly Meetings 2022-2023	Quarterly Meetings 2023-2026
HEP CAC	Regional	Presentation / Discussion	Overall BIL/Equity Strategy	Quarterly Meetings 2022-2023	Quarterly Meetings 2023-2026
Science and Technical Advisory Committee	Regional	Presentation / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Bi-Annual Meetings 2022 -2023	Bi-Annual Meetings 2023-2026
Lower Passaic River UWFP Core Committee	Local	Presentation / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Monthly Meetings 2022-2023	Monthly Meetings 2023- 2026
Bronx & Harlem River UWFP Core Committee	Local	Presentation / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Monthly Meetings 2022-2023	Monthly Meetings 2023-2026
Restoration Work Group	Regional	Presentation / Discussion	Overall BIL/Equity Strategy	Quarterly Meetings 2022 - 2023	Quarterly Meetings 2023-2026
Public Access Work Group	Regional	Presentation / Discussion	Overall BIL/Equity Strategy	Quarterly Meetings 2022 – 2023	Quarterly Meetings 2023-2026
Water Quality Work Group	Regional	Presentation / Discussion	Overall BIL/Equity Strategy	Quarterly Meetings 2022 - 2023	Quarterly Meetings 2023-2026
NYC Mayor’s Office of Climate and Environmental Justice	Regional	Interview / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD

NJ DEP Office of Environmental Justice	Regional	Interview / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
Communities First	National	Interview / Discussion	Equity Strategy	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
Rise to Resilience Coalition	Regional	Interview / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance	State	Interview / Discussion	Equity Strategy / BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
Rebuild by Design	Regional	Interview / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
New York City Environmental Justice Alliance	Regional	Interview / Discussion	Equity Strategy / BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
Ironbound Community Corporation	Regional	Interview / Discussion	Equity Strategy / BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
Columbia University / Resilient Coastal Communities Program	Regional	Interview / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD
Rutgers University / New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center	State	Interview / Discussion	BIL Project Priorities	Meeting 2022	Meeting Schedule and Format TBD

In terms of the implementation of this Equity Strategy, the maps, metrics, and activities identified in the Equity Strategy above will guide HEP’s consideration of projects for future BIL and Section 320 Workplans and projects in the future. This will include using the maps as a specific criterion for HEP RFP’s and grant making.

This implementation will involve regular input and approvals from partners from HEP’s Policy, Management and Citizens Advisory Committees; topical Work Groups and the Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) during our regular quarterly meetings. In addition, we will continue to seek

input from invited outside reviewers for HEP's BIL grant RFPs, state and local offices, community-based organizations, and other experts. In some cases, these representatives have joined HEP's standing committees and work groups.

As we finalize our FY 24 Workplans, and develop our FY 25 and FY 26 Workplans, HEP will revisit the equity strategy and make adjustments to reflect lessons learned to HEP's definition, investment targets, and tracking of non-monetary benefits. This will be done formally through our committee meetings in the Winter and Spring of each year.

This equity strategy also will be a cornerstone of the upcoming 2025 CCMP Revision. HEP's pending creation of new State of the Estuary and Action Agenda reports will provide a context for reexamining the Strategy. The value of the geographies that are being used to define disadvantaged communities, the metric proposed in the Equity Strategy, and HEP's success and lessons learned from its implementation, will inform both the outreach strategy and HEP priorities going forward. This may include revisiting our indicators of estuarine health, the analyses of trends included in the State of the Estuary, as well as a possible reframing of HEP's goals, objectives and proposed activities.

Appendix A: List of New Jersey and New York municipalities and New York City community districts that more than 80% of the local jurisdiction has been identified as disadvantaged by any one of the four factors (EPA Five Factor Demographic Index, New York and New Jersey State Definitions, HEP Higher Need Public Access and Stewardship Areas, and/or Federal Urban Waters Partnership Areas).

New Jersey Municipal Name	County	Full Area (sq. miles)	Disadvantaged Area (sq. miles)	% Disadvantaged Area
Alpine Borough	Bergen	6.40	5.86	91.6%
Belleville Township	Essex	3.37	3.37	100.0%
Bergenfield Borough	Bergen	2.91	2.47	85.1%
Bogota Borough	Bergen	0.80	0.75	94.4%
Carteret Borough	Middlesex	4.51	4.27	94.7%
City of Orange Township	Essex	2.22	2.21	99.9%
Clifton City	Passaic	11.43	11.39	99.7%
Dover Town	Morris	2.73	2.73	99.9%
Dunellen Borough	Middlesex	1.06	1.03	97.3%
East Newark Borough	Hudson	0.11	0.11	100.0%
East Orange City	Essex	3.93	3.93	99.9%
East Rutherford Borough	Bergen	4.05	4.04	99.8%
East Windsor Township	Mercer	15.66	13.18	84.2%
Edison Township	Middlesex	30.64	27.68	90.3%
Elizabeth City	Union	13.91	12.21	87.8%
Fairview Borough	Bergen	0.84	0.84	99.6%
Fort Lee Borough	Bergen	2.51	2.28	91.0%
Franklin Township	Somerset	46.87	43.50	92.8%
Garfield City	Bergen	2.19	2.17	99.1%
Green Brook Township	Somerset	4.41	3.72	84.3%
Guttenberg Town	Hudson	0.19	0.19	100.0%
Hackensack City	Bergen	4.34	4.17	96.0%
Haledon Borough	Passaic	1.22	1.22	99.9%
Harrison Town	Hudson	1.33	1.32	100.0%
Hillside Township	Union	2.78	2.76	99.3%
Irvington Township	Essex	2.91	2.91	99.9%
Jersey City	Hudson	15.86	13.36	84.2%
Kearny Town	Hudson	10.19	9.90	97.1%
Leonia Borough	Bergen	1.63	1.42	87.0%
Linden City	Union	11.07	10.78	97.4%
Little Ferry Borough	Bergen	1.67	1.44	86.2%
Lodi Borough	Bergen	2.29	1.97	86.0%
Lyndhurst Township	Bergen	4.97	4.96	99.8%
New Brunswick City	Middlesex	5.76	5.13	89.0%
Newark City	Essex	26.22	24.61	93.9%
North Arlington Borough	Bergen	2.53	2.53	100.0%
North Brunswick Township	Middlesex	12.28	12.26	99.8%
North Plainfield Borough	Somerset	2.82	2.79	99.1%
Nutley Township	Essex	3.42	3.42	99.9%
Palisades Park Borough	Bergen	1.28	1.24	96.5%

Passaic City	Passaic	3.24	3.24	100.0%
Paterson City	Passaic	8.69	8.52	98.0%
Perth Amboy City	Middlesex	5.17	4.60	88.9%
Piscataway Township	Middlesex	18.96	17.69	93.3%
Plainfield City	Union	5.97	5.82	97.5%
Plainsboro Township	Middlesex	12.11	10.96	90.5%
Prospect Park Borough	Passaic	0.47	0.47	99.4%
Ridgefield Borough	Bergen	2.85	2.48	86.9%
Ridgefield Park Village	Bergen	1.92	1.71	89.2%
Rochelle Park Township	Bergen	1.03	1.00	97.9%
Rockleigh Borough	Bergen	1.01	1.01	100.0%
Roselle Borough	Union	2.65	2.58	97.6%
Roselle Park Borough	Union	1.22	1.10	89.9%
Rutherford Borough	Bergen	2.89	2.89	100.0%
Shrewsbury Township	Monmouth	0.10	0.10	99.8%
South Brunswick Township	Middlesex	41.00	38.83	94.7%
Teterboro Borough	Bergen	1.12	1.12	100.0%
Union City	Hudson	1.29	1.29	100.0%
Union Township	Union	9.08	8.67	95.4%
Victory Gardens Borough	Morris	0.15	0.14	99.9%
Wallington Borough	Bergen	1.05	1.05	100.0%
Weehawken Township	Hudson	0.80	0.77	96.2%
West New York Town	Hudson	0.99	0.98	98.5%
Wharton Borough	Morris	2.13	2.13	99.9%

New York State Municipal Name	County	Full Area (sq. miles)	Disadvantaged Area (sq. miles)	% Disadvantaged Area
Athens	Greene	28.88	26.74	92.6%
Goshen	Orange	43.93	38.69	88.1%
Greenport	Columbia	20.43	18.88	92.4%
Hudson	Columbia	2.32	2.20	94.9%
Kingston	Ulster	7.46	7.42	99.5%
Lloyd	Ulster	33.38	31.61	94.7%
Middletown	Orange	5.14	4.71	91.5%
Minisink	Orange	23.11	23.08	99.8%
Montgomery	Orange	51.16	50.96	99.6%
New Windsor	Orange	36.66	35.13	95.8%
Newburgh	Orange	4.29	3.82	88.9%
Palm Tree	Orange	1.48	1.48	100.0%
Rensselaer	Rensselaer	3.42	3.05	89.0%
Ulster	Ulster	29.32	27.58	94.1%
Yonkers	Westchester	20.24	17.84	88.1%

NYC Community District Name	Community Board	Full Area (sq. miles)	Disadvantaged Area (sq. miles)	% Disadvantaged Area
Bedford Stuyvesant	Brooklyn CB 3	2.85	2.49	87.2%
Belmont/ East Tremont	Bronx CB 6	1.53	1.53	99.9%
Bensonhurst	Brooklyn CB 11	3.70	3.62	97.7%
Borough Park	Brooklyn CB 12	3.57	3.57	99.9%
Bronx Park/ Botanical Garden/ Bronx Zoo	-	1.13	1.13	99.9%
Brownsville	Brooklyn CB 16	1.86	1.86	99.9%
Bushwick	Brooklyn CB 4	2.03	2.03	99.8%
Central Harlem	Manhattan CB 10	1.40	1.40	99.9%
Coney Island	Brooklyn CB 13	3.16	2.99	94.7%
East Harlem	Manhattan CB 11	2.37	2.33	98.4%
East New York/Starrett City	Brooklyn CB 5	5.58	5.56	99.6%
Elmhurst/Corona	Queens CB 4	2.36	2.36	99.9%
Flatbush/Canarsie	Brooklyn CB 14	2.95	2.43	82.3%
Fordham/University Heights	Bronx CB 5	1.37	1.37	99.9%
Greenpoint/Williamsburg	Brooklyn CB 1	4.72	4.10	86.8%
Highbridge/Concourse	Bronx CB 4	1.99	1.99	99.9%
Hunts Point/Longwood	Bronx CB 2	2.22	2.13	96.0%
Jackson Heights	Queens CB 3	2.99	2.93	97.9%
Kingsbridge Hgts/Bedford	Bronx CB 7	1.91	1.91	99.9%
Lower East Side/Chinatown	Manhattan CB 3	1.68	1.52	90.4%
Morningside Heights/ Hamilton Heights	Manhattan CB 9	1.50	1.28	85.5%
Morrisania/Crotona	Bronx CB 3	1.61	1.61	99.9%
Mott Haven/Melrose	Bronx CB 1	2.17	2.16	99.9%
Parkchester/Soundview	Bronx CB 9	4.10	4.00	97.6%
Van Cortlandt Park	-	1.81	1.81	99.9%
Washington Heights/Inwood	Manhattan CB 12	2.80	2.39	85.6%
Woodside/Sunnyside	Queens CB 2	5.02	4.17	83.0%