

Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

November 12, 2024

Introduction & Ice Breaker (10 mins)

Meeting Structure and Procedures (5 mins)

- Agenda Overview
- Committee Purpose and Goals
- Ground rules
- Format and Logistics
- Topics discussed at the meetings are meant to spur discussion to explore ideas to advise the Agency on updates to the ILSFA program, with a goal of increasing program participation across Illinois.

Committee Structure (10 mins)

- Working on committee recommendations flow
- Committee engagement
- In-person meeting planning

Updates from last meeting (5 mins)

- Subcommittee Work
 - There was consensus that the group may not be large enough to justify separate subcommittee meetings and that breakout sessions during the primary large group meetings might be more effective.
- Meeting cadence
 - Discussed whether to maintain the quarterly meeting schedule or move to a monthly or bi-monthly schedule.
 - The preference of the group was to maintain quarterly meetings with an extension from 60-minutes to 90-minutes.

ILSFA Program Updates (15 mins)

- Pilots Updates
 - Bright Neighborhoods – including the AV RFP process
 - Home Repair
- Grassroots Education
- Subprogram Updates
 - Community Solar

Topic 1: Environmental Justice Communities: Prioritization in Project Selection (40 mins)

- See below for context on Topic 1

Closing (5 mins)

- What’s next?

Topic 1	Environmental Justice Communities: How Prioritized in Project Selection
Background	<p>ILSFA has a statutory goal that at least 25% of funds for each of the ILSFA sub-programs “be allocated to projects located in environmental justice communities.”</p> <p>Because “environmental justice (EJ) communities” were not defined in the legislation that established ILSFA , the Agency worked with the Program Administrator and consulted with stakeholders in developing a methodology to identify environmental justice communities (EJCs) in 2019; this analysis included a public workshop and an opportunity for written stakeholder comments. The final methodology utilizes a streamlined approach that takes the concept of a tool from California (CalEnviroScreen) and simplifies it for use in Illinois through using readily available data from a tool provided by the U.S EPA (the EJSCREEN). At the time the ILSFA methodology was developed in 2019, there were not many other EJ mapping tools or methodologies available to designate areas as EJCs.</p> <p>The EJ Community map on the ILSFA website is the end result of implementing this methodology and identifies EJCs for the purposes of the ILSFA program: https://www.illinoissfa.com/environmental-justice-communities-map/</p> <p>As per the 2024 Long Term Plan and previous Long Term Plans, the EJ Community map is scheduled to be updated every five years and was last updated in spring 2023. This schedule is because the underlying data set from EJSCREEN is only updated every five years.</p> <p>The ILSFA Project Selection Protocol is a process used to select solar projects if the total incentives of project applications exceed the available funding for each sub-program. There are two primary ways that solar projects located in EJCs are prioritized in the Project Selection Protocol. The</p>

	<p>first is simply that projects located in EJC's receive priority due to the 25% carve-out mentioned above. The second is that projects located in an area with a high Regional EJ score will receive additional points.</p> <p>Below are additional resources that provide more detailed background information on the identification of EJC's in the ILSFA program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Long Term Plan, section 8.12 (pages 300-307) • Environmental Justice Communities webpage on the ILSFA website • Environmental Justice Communities Map • Project Selection Protocol
<p>Issue/Topic for Discussion</p>	<p>After the last update of the EJ Community Map in spring 2023, several communities in central and southern Illinois that were previously identified as Environmental Justice communities were no longer identified as such. The changes in data and census boundaries resulted in additions and removals to the areas designated by the methodology. As a result, ILSFA projects in these communities may have a harder time receiving funding, due to the 25% carve-out for projects located in EJ communities in the funding available for each ILSFA sub-program and due to the Regional EJ Score used in the Project Selection Protocol.</p> <p>For example, the data suggests areas of Champaign and Vermillion Counties saw a sizeable decrease in particulate matter and cancer rates. The data further suggests that the areas of Madison, Marion, Peoria, and St. Clair Counties saw a considerable decrease in the percentage of the population with linguistic isolation.</p> <p>Since new tools, data sets, and methodologies are available to identify environmental burdens, the IPA and Elevate will evaluate other tools to improve the methodology which identifies and designates EJ communities for the ILSFA program. The IPA and Elevate plan to provide more information about proposed changes in Q1 2025 for stakeholder feedback.</p> <p>ILSFA is considering a proposal to replace the Regional EJ Score from the project selection process, which benefitted projects in Cook County and Northeast Illinois due to those region's prevalence of EJC's, with a prioritization score for projects sited in regions that have been underserved by ILSFA to date.</p> <p>The potential change to the Project Selection Protocol is to replace the use of Regional EJ Points with Geographic Diversity points. The goal is to promote a proportional distribution of solar projects and funding across the state. If the proposal is adopted, the Geographic Diversity points would give</p>

	<p>higher preference to regions that had a lower number of projects installed in the previous program year. This score is only used to assess points in Prioritization Stage 1 and Prioritization Stage 2 of project selection for Community Solar and Non-Profits and Public Facilities and would not be used in the selection of Residential (Small) or Residential (Large) projects.</p> <p>Discussion Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Are there other methodologies of considerations that could be used in the Project Selection Protocol to better prioritize projects in geographical areas that have been underserved by ILSFA in the past?2. What are your thoughts on the proposed shift from the Regional EJ Score to a Geographic Diversity score to ensure a more proportional distribution of solar projects across Illinois?
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