



COLORADO

Water Quality
Control Commission

Department of Public Health & Environment

Colorado Water Quality Control Commission Policy Resolution

Affirming Support for Environmental Justice

The Colorado Water Quality Control Commission hereby finds:

1. This commission serves a unique and important role in Colorado, having been charged by the Colorado General Assembly to foster the health, welfare, and safety of *all* inhabitants of the state of Colorado and to facilitate the enjoyment and use of the scenic and natural resources of the state. A key function of the commission includes setting health-based water quality criteria, standards, and/or limitations for Colorado's surface water, groundwater, and drinking water.
2. The U.S. EPA defines Environmental Justice as 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. This goal will be achieved when *everyone* enjoys:
 - a. the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
 - b. equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.
3. Those in high poverty communities and racial minorities are the most likely to bear disproportionate environmental and economic burdens from environmental and other public policy decisions.
4. Health inequities, which can be directly linked to environmental policy outcomes, are preventable differences in the burden of disease, injury, violence, and opportunities to achieve optimal health that are experienced by socially disadvantaged populations. Health inequities are directly related to the historical and current unequal distribution of social, political, economic, and environmental resources.
5. The protection of the quality of state waters and the prevention, abatement, and control of water pollution are matters of statewide concern, affecting *all* people in Colorado.



6. Working towards Environmental Justice and protecting Colorado's waterbodies and drinking water are *not* two separate goals, as they are fundamentally intertwined.

The Colorado Water Quality Control Commission Resolves:

1. To affirm the commission's support for the principles of Environmental Justice and intent to ensure that those principles are considered in all decision-making; and
2. To encourage the Water Quality Control Division, serving as staff to the commission, to apply a lens of Environmental Justice in all relevant areas of its work, and continually seek out opportunities to improve its practices to better align with the principles of Environmental Justice.

ADOPTED the 13 day of January, 2020



Kevin Greer, Chair
Water Quality Control Commission

