



# Incorporating Environmental Justice Considerations into TMDL Development

## 2024 National Training Workshop on Water Quality Assessment and Plans



# Topics for Discussion

- 1) How to incorporate EJ considerations into your TMDL program
- 2) How to incorporate EJ considerations into your TMDL outreach
- 3) How and why to incorporate EJ considerations into your TMDL documents



# Incorporating EJ Considerations in your TMDL Program

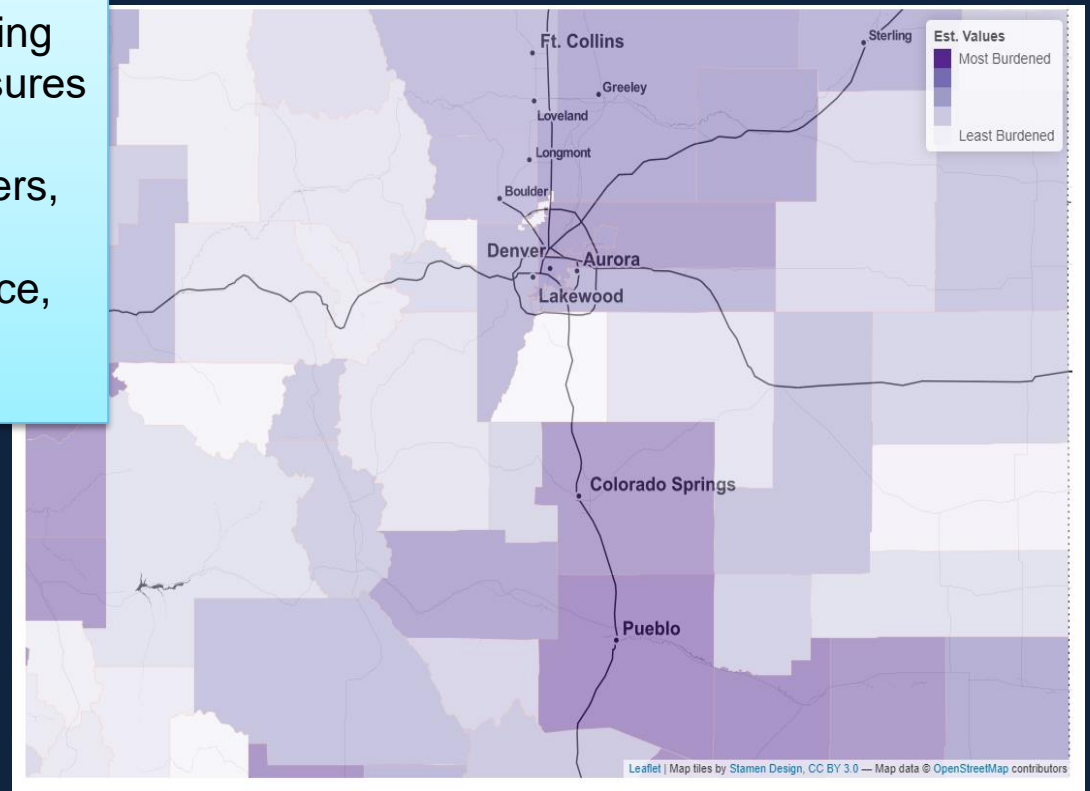
Two things that make a helpful starting point:

- A working definition your program can use for communities with EJ concerns
- A map that identifies these areas geographically



# Colorado EnviroScreen Mapping Tool Example of Cumulative Environmental Burden

The Colorado EnviroScreen Score for a community is a cumulative score that incorporates many risk factors, including the community's environmental exposures to air pollution, lead exposure risk, proximity to impaired streams and rivers, climate vulnerability, asthma hospitalization rates, cancer prevalence, life expectancy and many factors.

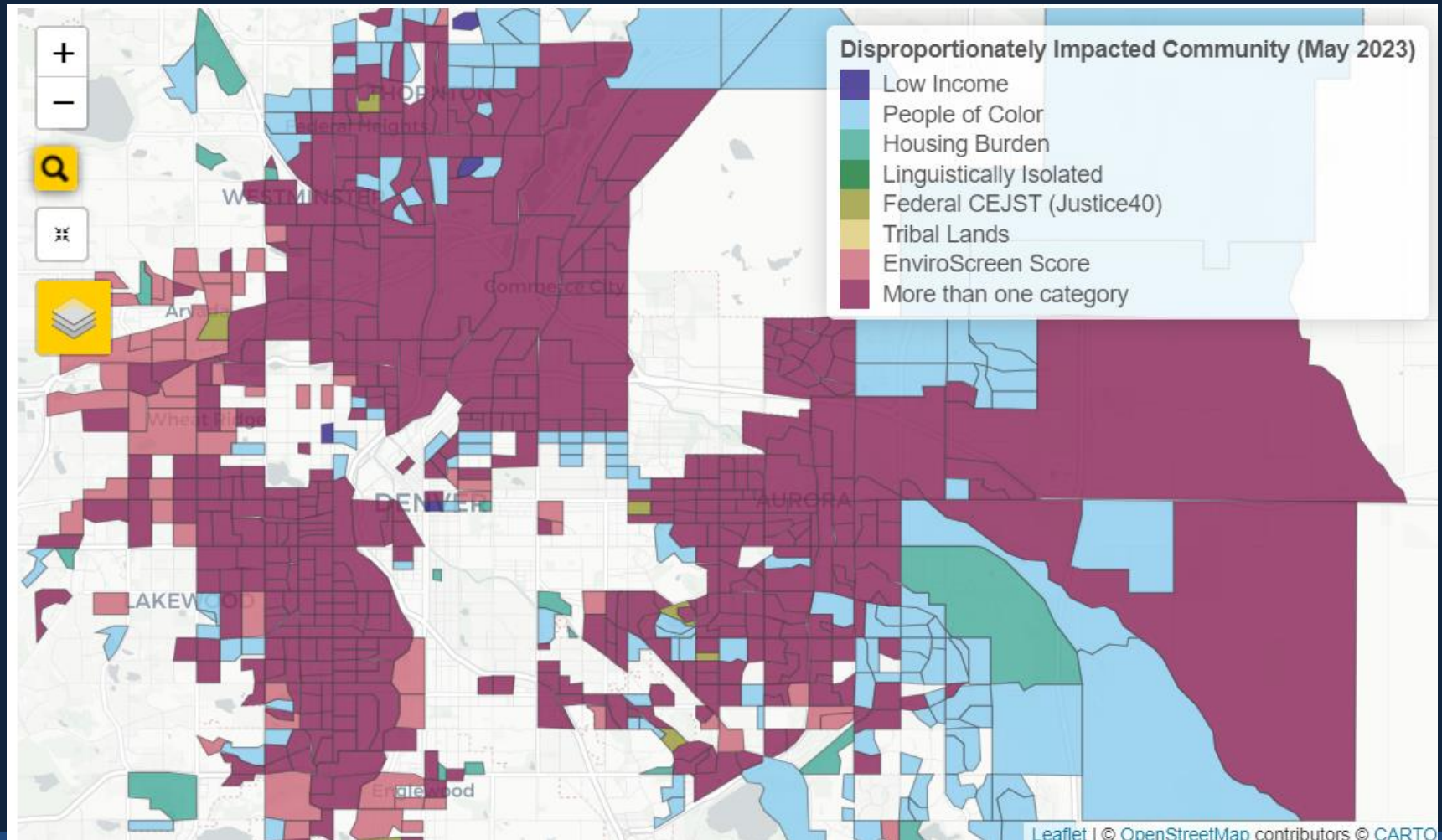


<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/enviroscreen>



# Colorado EnviroScreen Mapping Tool Example

## Disproportionately Impacted Communities in the Metro Denver area



# Incorporating EJ Considerations in your TMDL Program

For the geographic areas you identify, discuss with your program:

- What is the environmental history of these communities?
- What kinds of legacy contamination are present?
- How are these communities using their local waterways?
- What language(s) are spoken in these communities?
- How can program use TMDL resources to advance environmental justice in these watersheds?





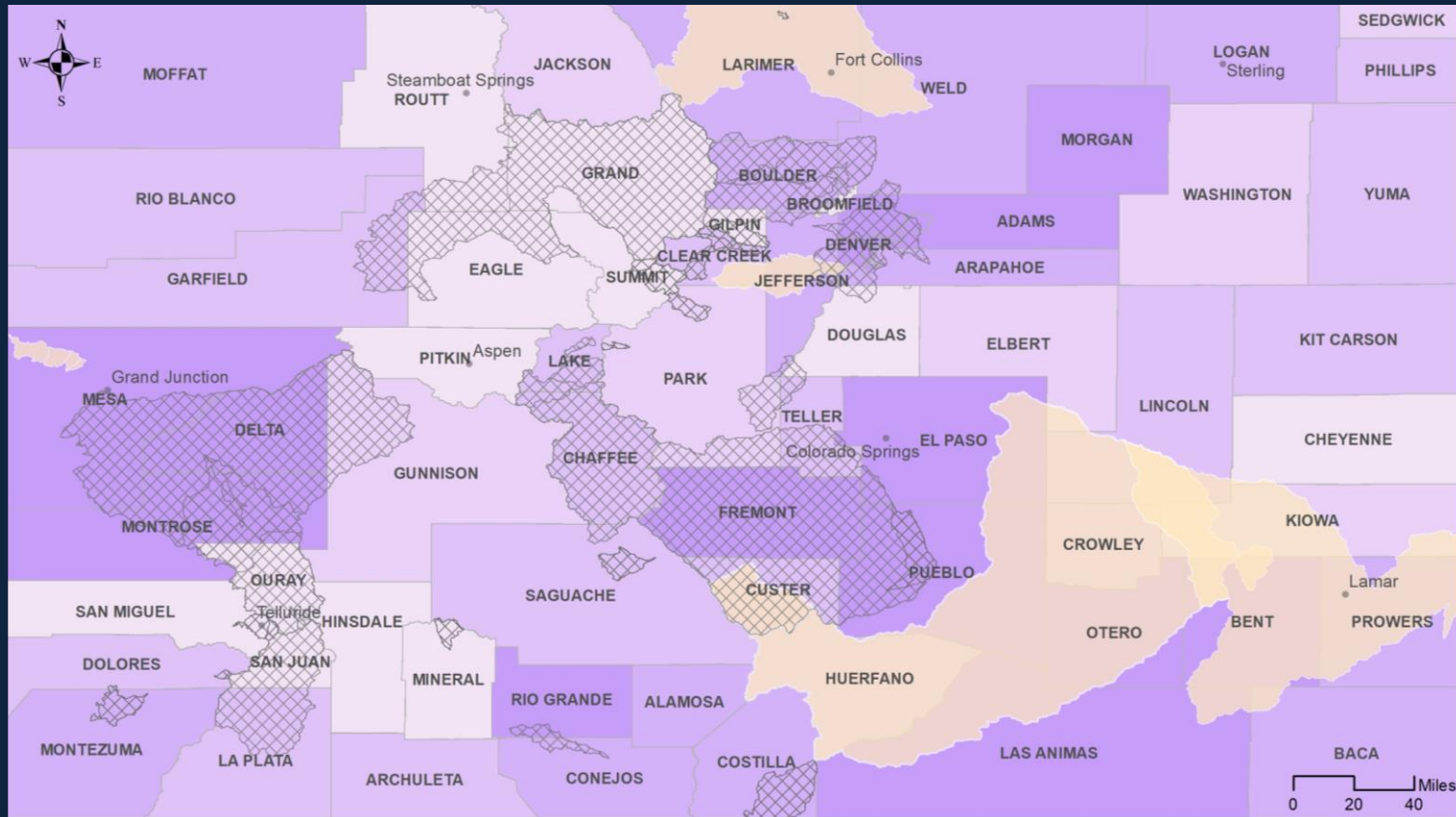
# Incorporating EJ Considerations in your TMDL Outreach

A few ideas that we are currently exploring in Colorado:

- Building new relationships with community-based organizations
- Partnering with staff in other programs who have relationships with local stakeholders (e.g. nonpoint source team)
- Increasing focus on TMDL implementation opportunities at stakeholder outreach meetings, esp. for nonpoint source load reductions
- Public-friendly fact sheets
- Language translation for TMDL website
- Different pace for TMDL development in Vision 2.0 to allow more time for outreach with local stakeholders



# Colorado TMDLs in Development



**EnviroScreen Scores**

10.5 - 19.5	38.3 - 51.6	TMDLs
19.6 - 27.6	51.7 - 86.1	Counties
27.7 - 38.2		TMDLs in Development

Authors: WAIS Workgroup  
Date: 3/5/2024



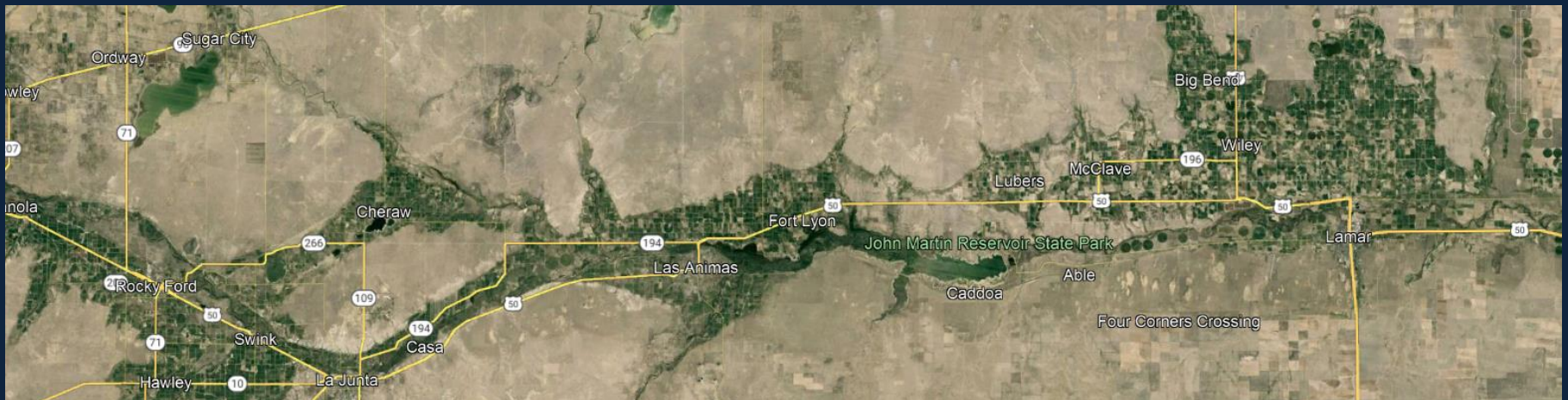
**COLORADO**  
Water Quality Control Division  
Department of Public Health & Environment





# Rural Watershed Example

- Colorado is working on one selenium TMDL and one Advanced Restoration Plan for selenium in the Arkansas River.
- Counties in southeast Colorado have highest (worse) cumulative environmental burden scores.
- Local economies rely on irrigated agriculture.
- Collaboration with 319 grant program staff is essential.
- Advanced Restoration Plans might facilitate partnerships.



# Incorporating EJ considerations into the TMDL document

Colorado is starting to include EJ considerations into the TMDL document in two sections:

- Watershed characterization - document geographic locations of EJ communities
- TMDL implementation - highlight considerations and opportunities





# Incorporating EJ considerations into the TMDL document

## Why?

- Colorado's 319 Program prioritizes grant funding for projects in watersheds with disproportionately impacted communities
- Recent MOU between CDPHE and Region 8 EPA prioritizes compliance and enforcement for watersheds with disproportionately impacted communities
- Including EJ considerations in TMDL document facilitates the inclusion of EJ considerations in a subsequent 9-element watershed plan



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