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EPA Announces Total of Nearly \$23M in Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants to Two Rural Projects in Kansas and Missouri

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- *Curators of the University of Missouri selected for \$20 million for work in Chariton County, Missouri*
- *Healthy Bourbon County Action Team selected for \$2.9 million for work in Bourbon, Crawford, Cowley, and Mitchell counties in Kansas*



LENEXA, KAN. (DEC. 13, 2024) – On Dec. 12, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it has selected 105 applications for the Community Change Grants Program (CCGP), totaling nearly \$1.6 billion in awards to advance local, on-the-ground projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity.

The funding announced represents the latest round of applications that have been selected on a rolling basis since the program launched in November 2023. Made possible by President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act, the CCGP is the single largest investment in environmental and climate justice in history.

EPA [previously announced](#) 21 selectees in July 2024. The announcement adds 84 new selectees, bringing the total number to 105. Two Region 7 organizations are among the selectees.

“On day one of his administration, President Biden promised to target investments to communities that for too long have been shut out of federal funding,” said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan. “Thanks to President Biden’s Inflation Reduction Act, EPA is delivering on that promise. These selections will create jobs, improve public health, and uplift community efforts in all corners of this country, regardless of geography or background.”

“These grants are more than financial support – they are truly investments in people and communities,” said EPA Region 7 Administrator Meg McCollister. “These historic Community Change Grants will have far-reaching and long-lasting health and environmental improvements.”

Among the wide range of public health and environmental benefits that the Community Change Grants will support, examples within EPA Region 7 include:

- ***Curators of the University of Missouri, \$20 million:*** In Missouri’s Chariton County, the city of Brunswick, located near the Missouri River, faces frequent flooding events. This project will enhance the community’s flood resilience by developing 10 rain gardens and three acres of water retention ponds. The selectee will also work with the community to plant 500 acres of pecan trees on cleared lands. The project will make vulnerable roadways more resilient by rebuilding them with sustainable asphalt mixtures and upgrading the road drainage design. The selectee will remodel the Old City Hall into a community resilience hub, which will fulfill vital roles as an emergency shelter, resource center, training facility, and historical preservation site. In addition, the project team will offer extension assistance to the local farming community to enhance crop productivity, land-use efficiency, and soil health.
- ***Healthy Bourbon County Action Team, \$2.9 million:*** This project is focused on Bourbon, Crawford, Cowley, and Mitchell counties in Kansas, each of which participated in the Communities Organizing to Promote Equity initiative, funded through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and administered through the University of Kansas Medical Center. As part of the program, each county formed a Local Health Equity Action Team (LHEAT) composed of community health workers, health care providers, representatives of nonprofit organizations, churches, government officials, and residents with lived experience. The project will build on this foundation to support the LHEATs’ work to engage local and state governments on key issues, including lead-based paint, air and water pollution, transportation access, and more.

See the [full listing](#) of the 105 selections receiving a CCGP grant. Learn more about the [CCGP](#).

Of the 105 total selections, 32 are for Target Investment Areas, totaling \$600 million. Target Investment Area funding is intended to ensure that CCGP funding is directed toward disadvantaged communities with unique circumstances, geography, and needs. This includes approximately \$150 million for Alaska Native communities and organizations.

Background

Applications to the Community Change Grants Program, administered through EPA’s Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights, closed on Nov. 21, 2024. The Agency received approximately 2,700 applications, totaling over \$40 billion in requested funds and over 2,495 requests for technical assistance.

The CCGP addresses the diverse and unique needs of disadvantaged communities by:

- Reducing and preventing air, water, and soil pollution.
- Building resilient infrastructure to extreme weather events.
- Bolstering workforce development.

EPA is on track to obligate the majority of selected Community Change Grants by January 2025.

Given the overwhelming number of applications still under review and the limited amount of remaining funds available, EPA’s work to evaluate the remaining applicants will need to continue beyond the end of the Biden-Harris administration. To ensure that all applications are given fair consideration, EPA will not make any additional selections until all these applications are evaluated according to the processes described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity issued in November 2023.

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