

PROJECT SUMMARY

Citizen and community science data can provide information that would otherwise not be available due to time, geographic, or resource constraints. For that reason, these data are increasingly used to supplement environmental data collected by EPA, states, and tribes. Citizen science has applications in most environmental areas. Regulators are beginning to use citizen science data to inform environmental protection.

PROJECT LEADS

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RESOURCES

Community science session at the EE2020 virtual webinar in October 2020: [Improving the Management and Use of Community Science Data: What Can We Learn From State and Tribal Programs?](#)

[Tribal Science White Paper](#)

Citizen Science Initiative

Improving the ways in which citizen science data are collected and used.

Challenge

While citizen science data can prove useful to regulators, the multitude and variety of these data pose a challenge with regard to consistent processes, methods, and data quality.

Benefits

- **Improve data infrastructure and tools** – Increase capacity to collect, store, and analyze citizen science data.
- **Elevate data standards and collection methods** – Improve upon existing standards in place for citizen scientists to collect data to move toward streamlined data and processes.
- **Promote data accessibility and transparency** – Collaborate with partners to effectively and efficiently share data.

Accomplishments

- **Continued coordination to finalize the EPA vision and principles for citizen science and the assessment/action plan for data management** – two recommendations from the EPA Inspector General's 2018 audit. The assessment focuses on data management requirements for EPA use of citizen science data, and an implementation plan will identify projects and activities to improve sharing and use of data, data formats, standards, and data testing/validation.
- **In coordination with EELC tribal members, developed tribal case studies** to showcase and better understand how tribes use citizen science in environmental protection and management. A final paper shares best practices for tribal citizen science and identifies ways that EPA, states, and other organizations can improve support for future tribal citizen science activities.
- **Compiled 15 case studies and best practices** that describe how citizen science is used as a tool in both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental programs by states, tribes, and local governments.
- **Conducted extensive outreach at various conferences, including:**
 - Community science session at the EE2020 virtual webinar in October 2020: [Improving the Management and Use of Community Science Data: What Can We Learn from State and Tribal Programs?](#)
 - Update on ongoing citizen science activities at the ECOS Fall 2020 meeting
- **Developed 12 technical case studies and a set of discussion papers** that will seed the agenda and discussion at an upcoming 2021 multi-stakeholder workshop.

Upcoming Milestones

- Data Management Multi-Stakeholder Workshop in November 2021 – a facilitated discussion with experts on citizen science data, as well as data users, to define a common roadmap to improve data management approaches.