Justice40 and Water Equity in Florida
A case study of climate risk and water infrastructure investment in frontline coastal communities

Critical Water Infrastructure (CWI), like stormwater, wastewater, and drinking water systems, is vulnerable to changing climate patterns and rising sea levels. Intense storms and flooding overwhelm water treatment facilities and storm drains, contaminating coastal waters and threatening public health. Across the U.S., CWI is aging and failing, unable to protect and sustain communities, particularly disadvantaged peoples serviced by underfunded infrastructure. Failing CWI also threatens our ocean and coastal waterways, as untreated storm and wastewater flow into water bodies and cause cascading environmental effects. Federal programs like the EPA Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs), which are covered by the Justice40 framework, are tasked with delivering resilience funding and benefits to disadvantaged communities, who are often most affected by climate change.

As a trusted convener of federal, state, and community partners, Ocean Conservancy conducted a case study of climate exposure, water quality impacts, and SRF allocations between disadvantaged and not-disadvantaged communities. The results of this study highlight disparities in exposure and funding both between Florida regions and within the areas studied. Although the EPA’s SRF programs were in the initial Justice40 designation in 2021, there is still work to be done to achieve the goals of the framework.

2,311,954 people across Jacksonville, Orlando, and Miami-Dade County are living in census tracts identified as “disadvantaged” by the White House.

Florida’s CWI rating from the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Full Report and Additional Resources


This case study combined geospatial analysis and qualitative interviews to understand community exposure to climate impacts, water quality risks, and funding disparities.
Making the case for SRF investment

Both Jacksonville and Miami-Dade County have substantial climate hazard exposure (blue shading), CWI failures (green and yellow circles), and tracts experiencing up to 8 disadvantages as identified by the White House (black hatching and red shading).

**GAPS IN FUNDING**

Most study areas have less funding going to disadvantaged census tracts when compared to non-disadvantaged tracts. Only Jacksonville allocates more funding to disadvantaged tracts and only for Drinking Water projects.

![Bar chart showing average dollars per person for Clean Water Projects and Drinking Water Projects in Jacksonville, Miami, and Orlando. Negative values indicate less funding for disadvantaged tracts compared to non-disadvantaged tracts.]

Visit [Ocean Conservancy.org](http://OceanConservancy.org) or contact us for the full report!

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