



# **Environmental Protection Network**

# EPN Speakers



- Mark Hague - EPN Board Chair
- Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta - EPN/EPA AA Board Member
- Peter Murchie - Senior Director for Policy and Public Affairs
- Annel Cabrera-Marus - Senior Director for Technical Assistance
- Steve Fantes - Civil Service Resilience Initiative Manager

# Topics/Agenda Overview



- Introduction - EPN Overview and History (Mark Hague)
- Updates on EPN programs/efforts
  - Technical Assistance for Communities (Annel Cabrera-Marus)
  - National Policy & SAVE EPA Campaign (Peter Murchie)
  - Civil Service Resilience Initiative (Steve Fantes)
- Closing (Jennifer Orme-Zavaleta)

# EPN's origin story, 2016-2021



- Built volunteer network of 550+ EPA alum
- Successfully blocked EPA budget cuts
- Submitted 70+ formal comments, testified 30+ times, fielded 1,500+ press inquiries
- Wrote comprehensive and critical transition papers
- Unique, effective, important

# Focus 2021-2024



- Grew to 650+ volunteers
- Regular meetings with EPA, truly moved the needle
- Submitted 100+ formal comments
- Launched pro bono TA program
- 200 volunteers/1600+ requests/\$750M+
- Continued to educate congress, resource to press and other NGOs



# 2025 and beyond, “trauma”



- Unprecedented, even for us
- Project 2025 roadmap
- Terminating grants
- Proposing draconian FY26 budget
- Policy Rollbacks
- RIFs and other attacks on civil service



*In a private speech delivered in 2023, Vought (now OMB Director) described his goal of defunding and debasing federal bureaucracies.*

# Our unique role in this moment



- We've been here before, and are now often leading
- Our values: science, the law, and transparency + public health
- Secret sauce(s)
  - 700+ volunteers
  - 23 full-time staff
  - Critical partnerships



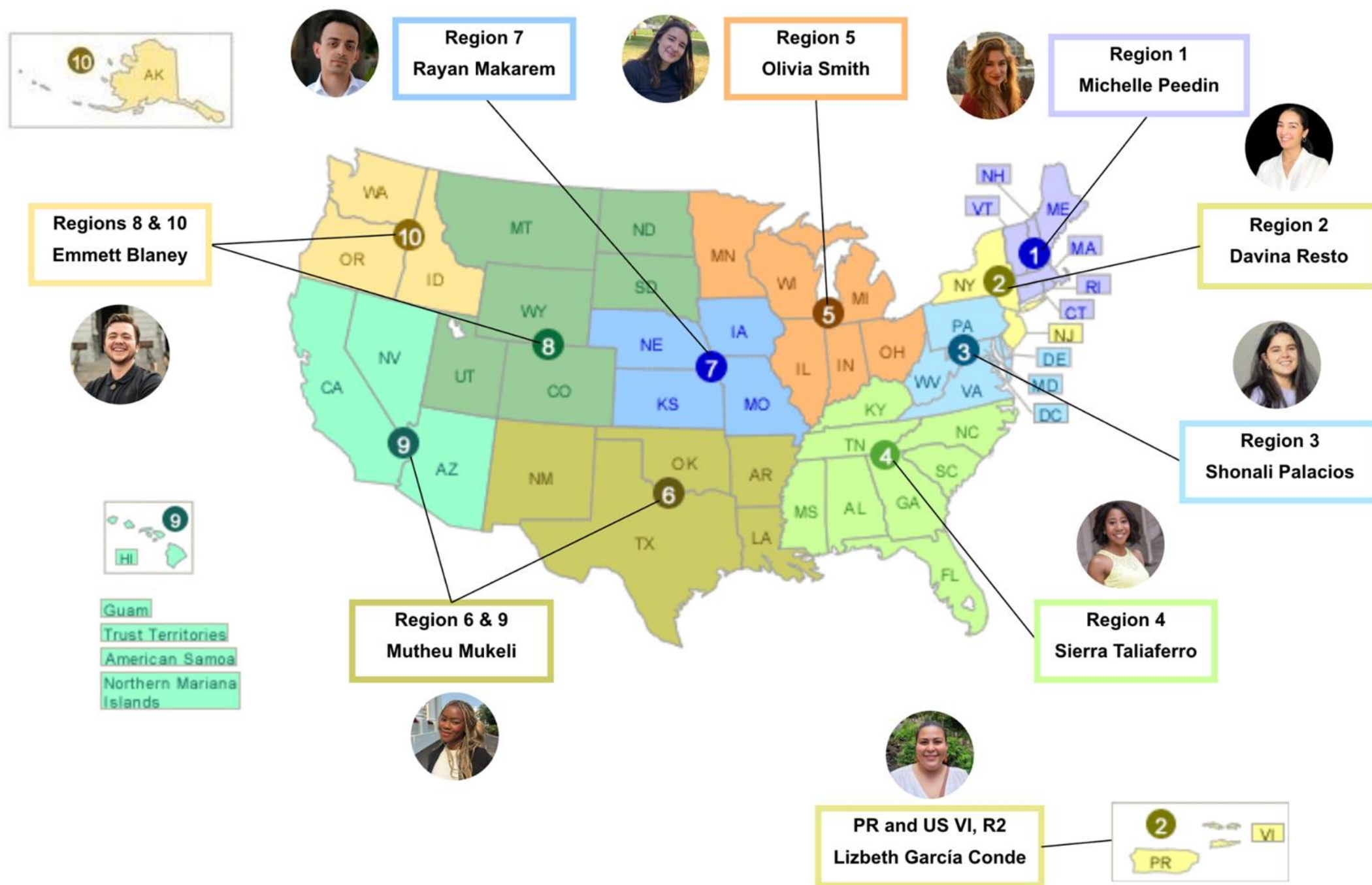
# Our current focus



- Pro bono technical assistance
- National policy work
- Save EPA Campaign
- Educate congress, resource for media and other NGOs
- Support civil service



# The Pro Bono Capacity-Building Technical Assistance Team



# Pro Bono Technical Assistance



- Connects our EPA alumni volunteers
- Frontline communities; NGOs; and State, local, and Tribal agencies
- Navigate bureaucracy, regulations, funding
- Achieve tangible public health benefits



# Case Study Highlight



- Environmental legal clinic in New York
- NYC Waters/CSO case
- Seeking a UAA analysis under the CWA, and potentially a CSO expert
- Letter for submission to the Department of Environmental Conservation and DEC
- Volunteer had 3 meetings and answered questions and reviewed their letter

# EPN Volunteers



# EPN Policy Workgroups



## Workgroup Goals:

- Provide guidance and institutional memory to EPA through written comments and testimony
- Be a technical resource to Congress and eNGOs
- Support EPA staff

## Many Aligned to Media Offices:

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Toxics         | Science            |
| Pesticides     | Enforcement        |
| Clean Water    | Mobile Sources     |
| Drinking Water | Stationary Sources |
| RCRA/Superfund |                    |

## Issue-Specific:

PFAS  
Lead  
Endangerment Finding  
Budget  
Scientific Integrity  
Economics

## Newer ones to address Immediate EPA needs:

OCFO/Mission Support, Legal, Civil Service Resiliency, Climate

# Save EPA Campaign



- Tell the story of the work EPA has done that is now under threat in a way that builds a larger coalition of support
- Continued work to educate Congress and other D.C. decisionmakers on the real life impact EPA's work has on their constituents.
- Strategically focus on regional education and storytelling (localize and personalize in key geographic areas around the country)



# CSRI - Initiatives for Collective Well-Being



**Support Groups:** Host healing circles, peer support groups, and resilience training specific to frontline environmental staff and alumni.

**Community Channels:** Manage Signal channels for alumni including those who've most recently left the agency – could be office/subject matter-specific.

**Webinars:** Host/partner on variety of webinars for civil servants (ex. jobs/trauma).

# CSRI - Support Environmental Health Career Pathways



**Mentorship:** Develop mentorship and sponsorship programs for early-career professionals including from frontline communities

**Job Board:** Manage an environmental role job board to advertise critical open positions within State/Local/NGO space

**Colleges/Universities:** Continue to build relationships with colleges/universities (HBCU/HSI/TCU/MSI) to recruit/promote

# CSRI - Support Localized Efforts to Organize & Rally



**Regional Networks:** Develop networks to provide in-person and virtual programming with staff and alumni and support regionalization/localization messaging.

**Essential Resources:** Develop essential resources and frameworks to support our partners, alumni, and volunteers in their efforts to organize peacefully.



# How You Can Make a Difference

**For more information contact Steve Fantes:**

[steven.fantes@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org](mailto:steven.fantes@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org)

**Fill out a volunteer inquiry form:**

<https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/contact/>

# Questions and Answers

