


# “Starting” an EJ / Non-discrimination Program in North Dakota

ECOS - EJ Workgroup Meeting -17 July 2023



Environmental Quality

Ann Fritz  
EJ / Non-discrimination  
Program Coordinator

A young girl with dark hair, wearing a green patterned dress and dark shoes, is running through a field of tall, green grass. Her hair is blowing in the wind, and she has a joyful expression. The background shows a clear blue sky with scattered white clouds and a few distant trees on the horizon.

***NDDEQ's Vision is a sustainable,  
high-quality environment for  
current and future generations.***

***NDDEQ Mission is to to conserve  
and protect the quality of North  
Dakota's air, land and water  
resources following science and  
the law.***

Rural Matters initiative: 3000 postcards mailed to 80 communities across North Dakota

They care for the land and animals because they love the land and animals.

Fresh air, less crime, smaller cities, less traffic, know your neighbors, fewer snobs, less politicians

Fresh air, four rigorous seasons, and room to roam watching nature and wildlife.

Fresh Clean Air, Clean Water and flowing Green Grasses Shaded by the Wonderful Trees.

Agriculture feeds the world. Our natural resources fuel the planet. Strong people tend the land.

**Help us share the importance of rural North Dakota!**

Tell us your personal view on the importance of rural North Dakota!

Your anonymous comment will be used within a Strengthen ND publication created to clearly show the significance of rural North Dakota. We want to widely share why rural North Dakota matters, and your view is important. **Please clearly print your comment of 15 words or less below and return the postcard via mail to us by March 31, 2021.**

North Dakota has the BEST sunrises, sunsets, and starry-nights. All the open prairie makes for an awesome front row seat to what the sky shares!

I like less people, not crowded. I can breathe!

Rural ND is the housekeeper of the land. These rural people take care of the land.

The quality of air and the openness of our countryside is beyond compare.

North Dakota is clean and green. Rural ND Clean and Green?

availability of resources  
fertile soil      Respect for God  
Independent thinking      Respect for the land.  
Rugged individualism

We have clean air good roads and great health care

# North Dakotans care about DEQ's Vision and Mission too

They care for the land and animals because they love the land and animals.

Fresh air, less crime, smaller cities, less traffic, trees

Fresh Clean Air, Clean Water

and flowing Green Grasses dotted by the Wonderful

**Importance of rural North Dakota!**  
Tell us your personal view on the importance of rural North Dakota!

Your and Strengthen the significance widely shared your view comment the post:

North Dakota has the BEST Sunrises, sunsets, and starry-nights. All the open prairie

I like less people, not crowded. I can breathe!

The Rural Matters initiative helped create a shared foundation and common ground for how DEQ began development of our environmental justice and non-discrimination programs

- How can we work together so everyone can enjoy the benefits of North Dakota's clean air, clean water and livable land?
- What do we need to do to ensure everyone can participate when decisions are made?

The quality of air and the openness of our countryside is beyond compare.

North Dakota is clean and green. Rural ND Clean and Green?

Suggested individualism

good roads and great health care

# Building NDDEQ's EJ/Non-discrimination Program

1. Assemble the team - DEQ EJ/T6 Advisory Group
2. Find common ground - Our shared mission!
3. Develop DEQ's EJ Mission and Objectives
4. Write Proposed DEQ EJ Framework - examine all DEQ programs
  - What are we doing now?
  - What can we do better?
  - What do we need to do differently?
5. Get our house in order (Title VI, policies, guidance, website, etc.)
6. Communication & Training staff & management
7. Spread the word & listen to the people!

YOU ARE HERE

Follow science and the law throughout the entire process

A cyclist wearing a white helmet and a red shirt is riding a mountain bike on a grassy hillside. The background shows rolling hills under a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

## **Challenges:**

- 1. Staffing - small agency, flat organizational structure. If one person is missing it can have a big impact.**
- 2. Communication - both internal and external**
- 3. “How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.” - establishing a new program takes time**
- 4. Jurisdiction / Authority**
- 5. What is EJ in an energy- and agriculture-based economy?**

Example internal presentation to communicate about EJ/T6 program:

# Why a new program?

## Compliance with federal or state statute

- ▶ Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964
- ▶ Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- ▶ Section 13 of Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972
- ▶ Title IX of Educational Amendments of 1972
- ▶ Age Discrimination Act of 1975
- ▶ ND Human Rights Act

## Referring to:

- ▶ Race, color and national origin
- ▶ Disability (vision, hearing, physical, mental)
- ▶ Sex
- ▶ Status with regards to marriage or receiving public assistance
- ▶ Religion

Example internal presentation communicating how a DEQ team member's job may (or may not) change as EJ/T6 is implemented throughout the agency:





## Communication to Staff: 10 aspects of a person's job



<https://empower.prosci.com/yesterday-tomorrow-exercise-fillable-worksheet>



base note: Memory data (except for data files) is not available as comparable to the US. It is only comparable to the territory level by using the "Compare to State" functionality. Likewise, some of the indicators may not be available for






   

Compare to US  Compare to State

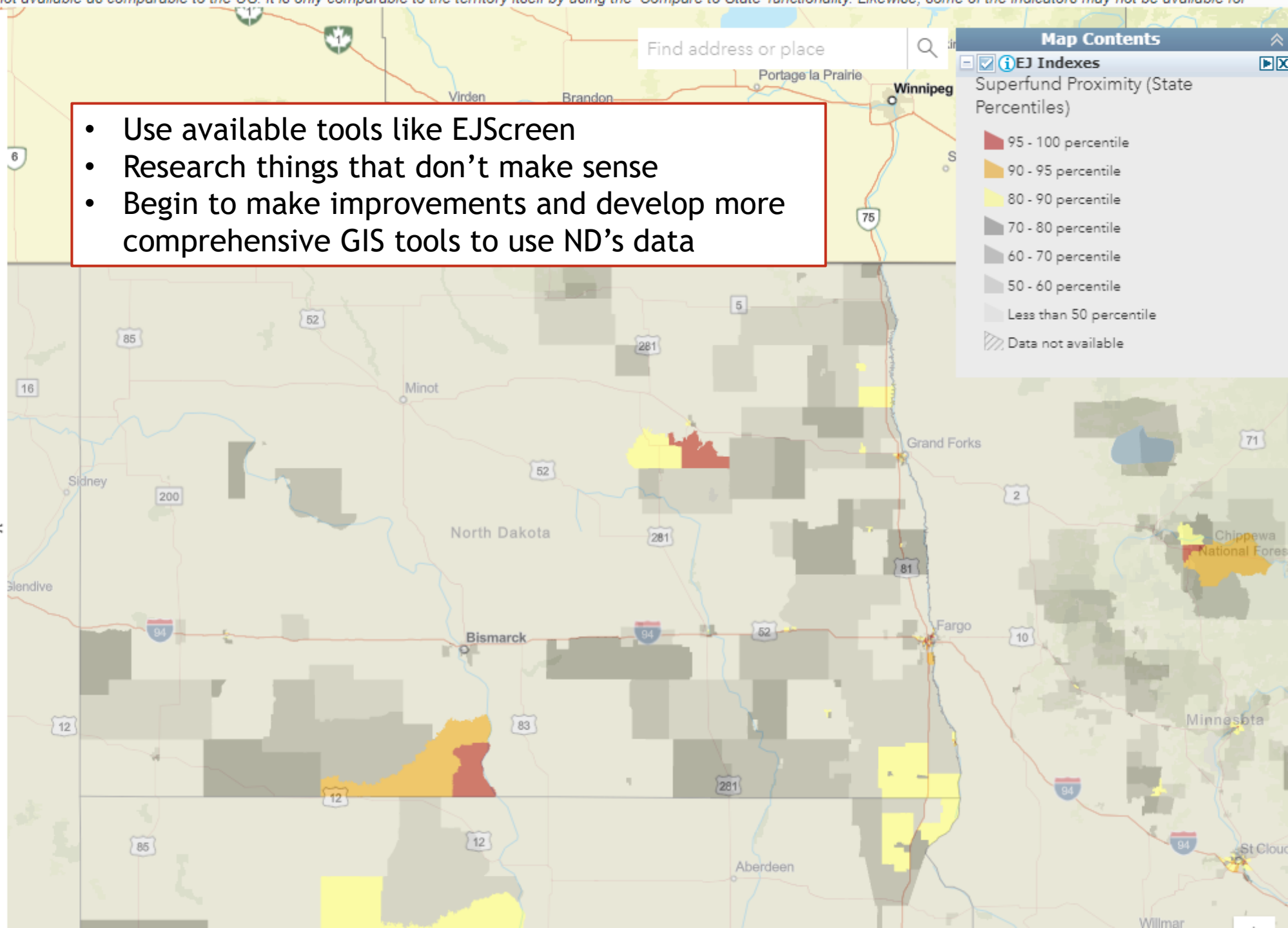
**Environmental Justice Indexes**

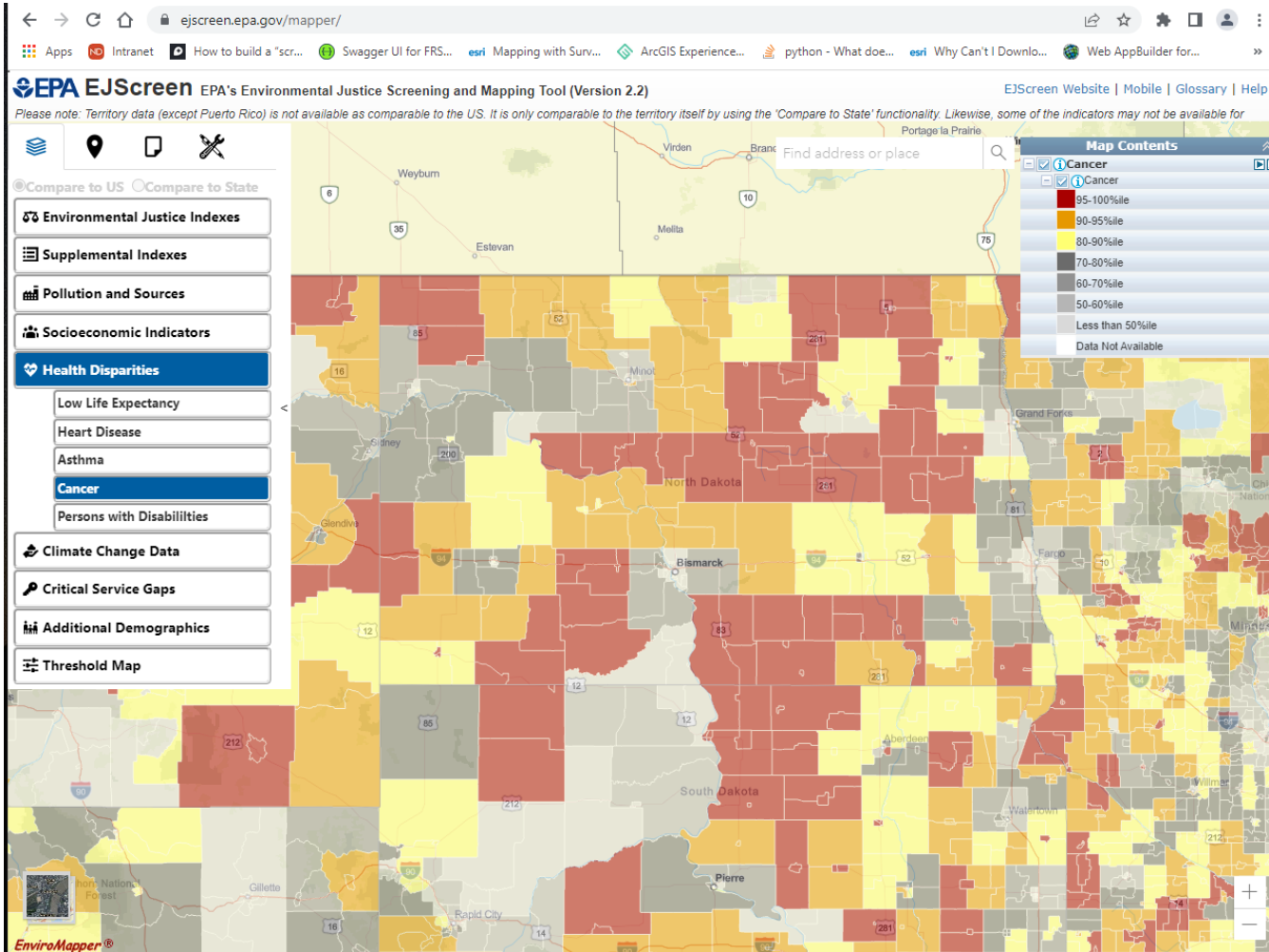
- Particulate Matter 2.5
- Ozone
- Diesel Particulate Matter
- Air Toxics Cancer Risk
- Air Toxics Respiratory HI
- Toxic Releases to Air
- Traffic Proximity
- Lead Paint
- Superfund Proximity**
- RMP Facility Proximity
- Hazardous Waste Proximity
- Underground Storage Tanks
- Wastewater Discharge

**Supplemental Indexes**

-  Pollution and Sources
-  Socioeconomic Indicators
-  Health Disparities
-  Climate Change Data
-  Critical Service Gaps

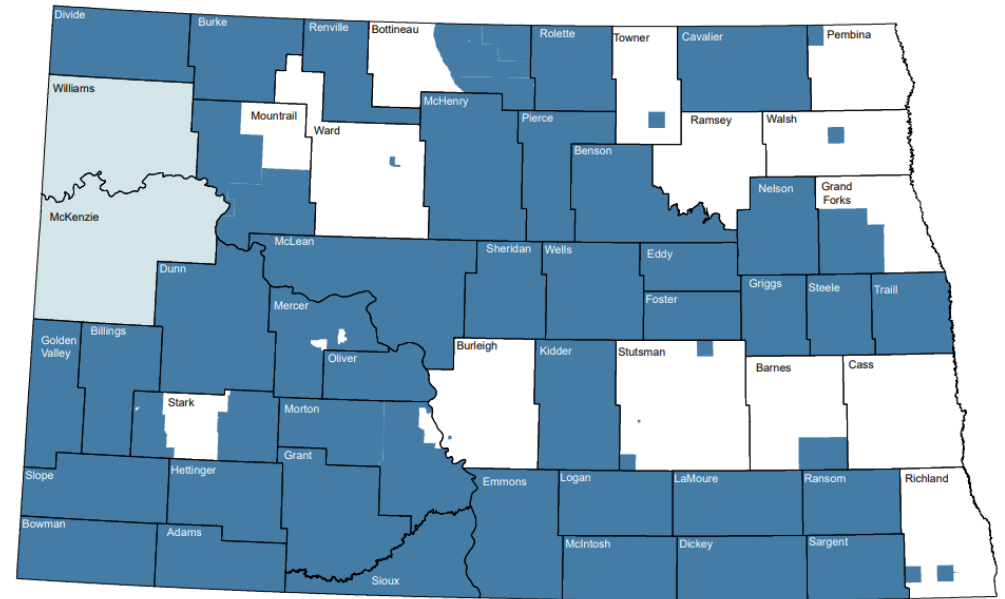
- Use available tools like EJScreen
- Research things that don't make sense
- Begin to make improvements and develop more comprehensive GIS tools to use ND's data





- EJ Concerns are often not DEQ's regulatory authority.
- Creates opportunities for increased collaboration with other agencies.

### North Dakota Medically Underserved Areas/Populations (MUAs/MUPs)



NORTH Dakota | Health & Human Services  
Be Legendary.

CR Center for Rural Health  
University of North Dakota  
School of Medicine & Health Sciences

■ Medically Underserved Area  
■ Medically Underserved Population

Source: data.HRSA.gov, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

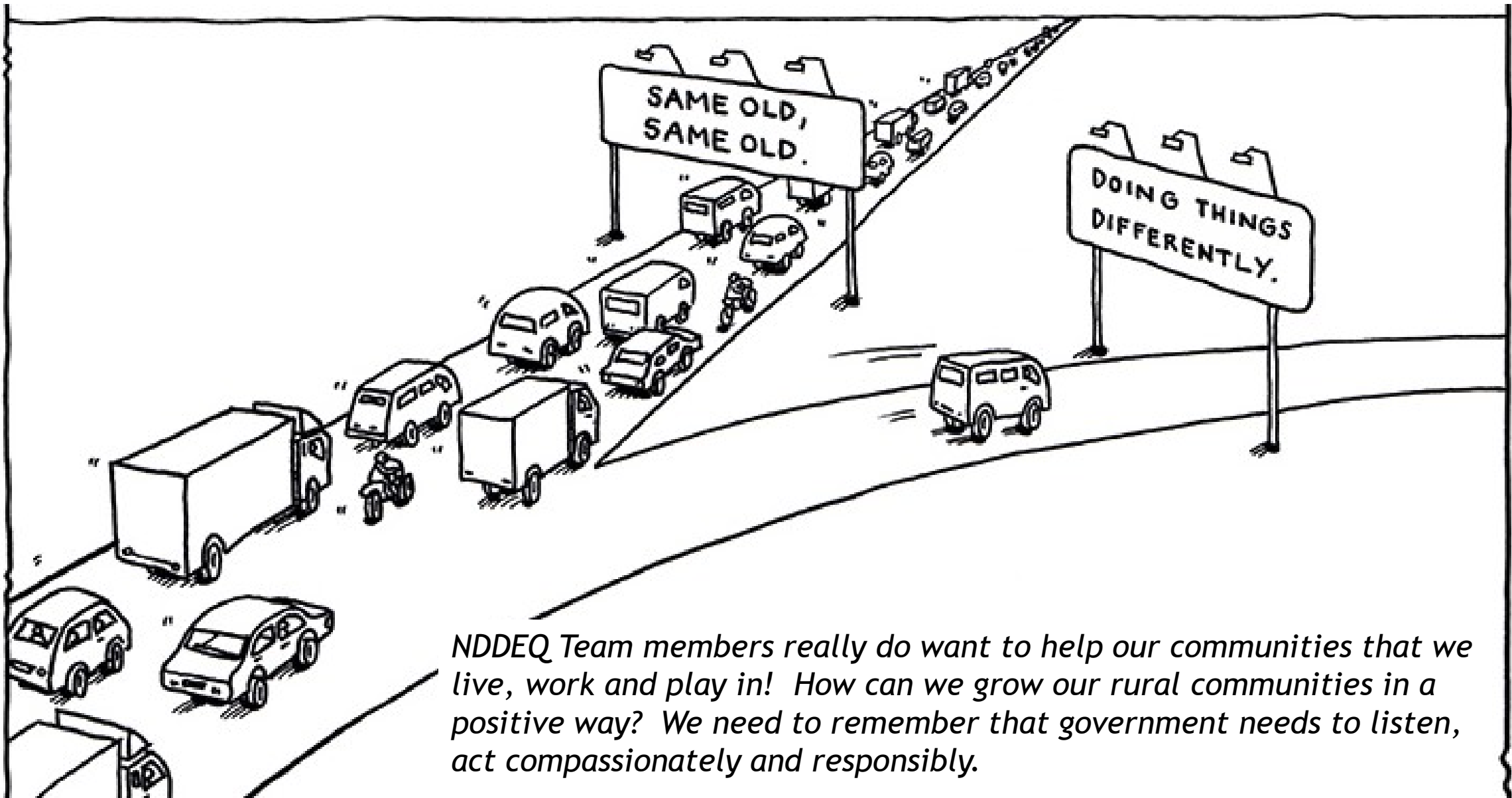
Created by the North Dakota Healthcare Workforce Group on 9/2022

“I think you all know that I've always felt the nine most terrifying words in the English language are: **I'm from the Government, and I'm here to help.**”

*President Ronald Reagan at the President's News Conference August 12, 1986*

*Comments were about the many problems facing farmers at that time from government-imposed embargos, inflation, and conflicting and haphazard policies related to agriculture during negotiation of a new Farm Bill. He goes on to say that until we “return farming to real farmers. ...**the Government must act compassionately and responsibly**”*





*NDDEQ Team members really do want to help our communities that we live, work and play in! How can we grow our rural communities in a positive way? We need to remember that government needs to listen, act compassionately and responsibly.*

NORTH  
**Dakota** | Environmental Quality  
Be Legendary.™

**Ann Fritz**

**Environmental Justice / Non-discrimination Program Coordinator**

**General: [deqEJ@nd.gov](mailto:deqEJ@nd.gov) | 701-328-5150**

**Direct: [afritz@nd.gov](mailto:afritz@nd.gov) | 701-328-5162**

**<https://deq.nd.gov/>**