Drinking Water State Revolving Fund

331-753 DWSRF Disadvantaged Community Guidance

331-753 • 8/30/2024

Disadvantaged Community Definition

This definition goes into effect September 1, 2024.

WAC 246-296-020(9), Disadvantaged Community (DAC) means a qualifying service area of a project serving residential connections within a public water system that is disproportionately impacted by economic, health, and environmental burdens. Potential qualifying areas will be assessed by indicators established in state guidance including population served, social vulnerability, environmental health disparities, and economic hardship. A service area of a project serving residential connections within a public water system owned and operated by a federally recognized tribe is considered a disadvantaged community.

DAC Criteria

We outline DAC criteria in our *DWSRF Construction Loan Guidelines* 331-196, Appendix B (PDF).

DAC criteria uses metrics from the Washington Tracking Network (WTN), including Environmental Health Disparities (EHD), Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), and percent of population living below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. For the EHD and SVI rankings, a Federal Funding Friendly (FFF) ranking was calculated and provided by WTN staff. Calculations were made using the same WTN-themed ranking methodology, but indicators related to race/ethnicity are omitted from the calculation to abide by federal funding allocation laws.

Public water systems applying for Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) funding qualify as serving a DAC when at least **one** of the following criteria are met.

- Public water system serves residential connections and is owned or operated by a federally recognized tribe.
- OR—where 50 percent or more of a project area serves census tract(s) that meet at least one of the following WTN Criteria:
    - FFF Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) Rank of 7+.
    - FFF Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) Rank of 7+.
    - More than 30 percent of the population is living below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

DAC Qualification

We determine the DWSRF project area at the time of your application. You are responsible for identifying where the project area is by demonstrating the pressure zones served by the project. You can submit this as a map, a GIS layer, list of census tracts, or list of addresses. We use this information to determine what census tracts are served by the project, and if the project qualifies as serving a DAC based on the criteria.

Potential DWSRF applicants and our staff consider whether a public water system may qualify as DAC using the criteria, but the final determination of a project is made once you submit the DWSRF application and we review it. Qualifying as DAC makes the PWS project eligible for additional subsidies through DWSRF but does not guarantee we will fund a project or that we will award loan principal forgiveness.

DWSRF Disadvantaged Community Map

Our Disadvantaged Community Map shows census tracts that are considered DAC by meeting one or more WTN Criteria (FFF EHD, FFF SVI, Percent Poverty). Use of this map should strictly be a guide for potential DAC qualification. Keep in mind that census tracts do not perfectly align with PWS service areas. It is common for a service area to serve multiple census tracts. Not all service areas are mapped. PWS owned and operated by federally recognized tribes are not mapped, as this data is not available.

Map Layers

County Boundary. This layer shows County boundary polygons of the 39 counties in Washington state created from Census 2010 data.

Tribally Owned/Operated Systems. This layer shows polygons of tribally owned and operated public water systems in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10. Data provided by the EPA.

Water System Points. Identifies all active and inactive Group A and Group B water systems in Washington. This data point is calculated as the center point of the mapped service area. When the service area is not mapped, the data point is calculated as the center point of multiple sources or location of the single source.

Water Service Areas. This layer shows polygons that delineate general areas served by Washington state public water systems. Not all service areas are mapped, and what is mapped may not be up to date. Click on the service area to see system information from Sentry Internet.
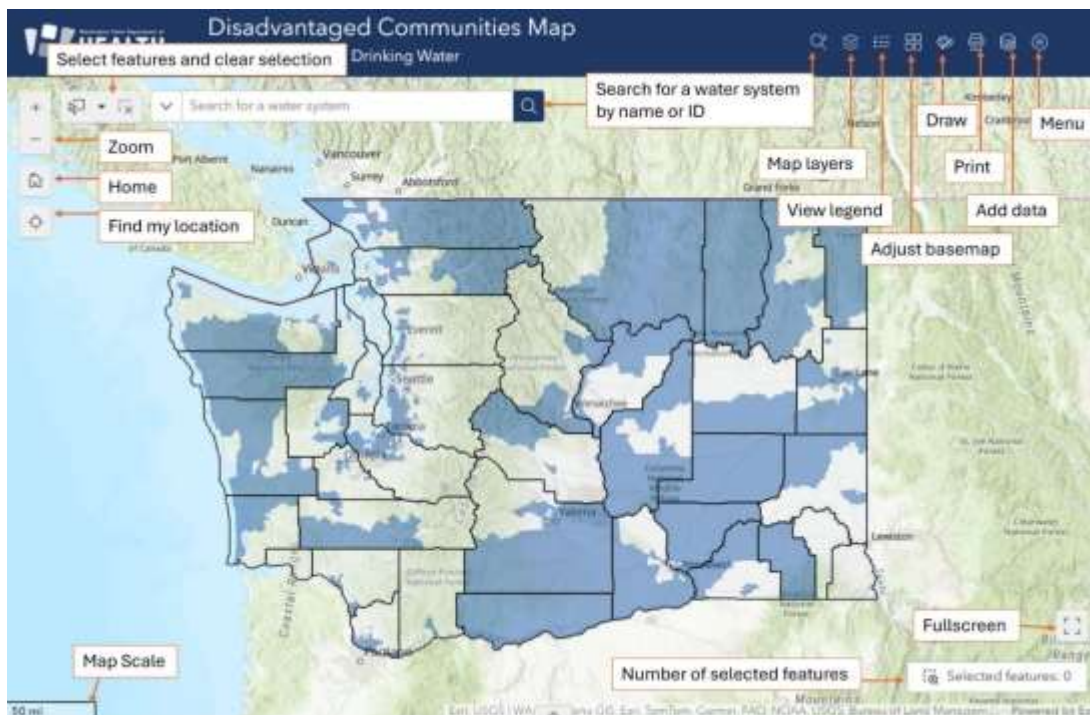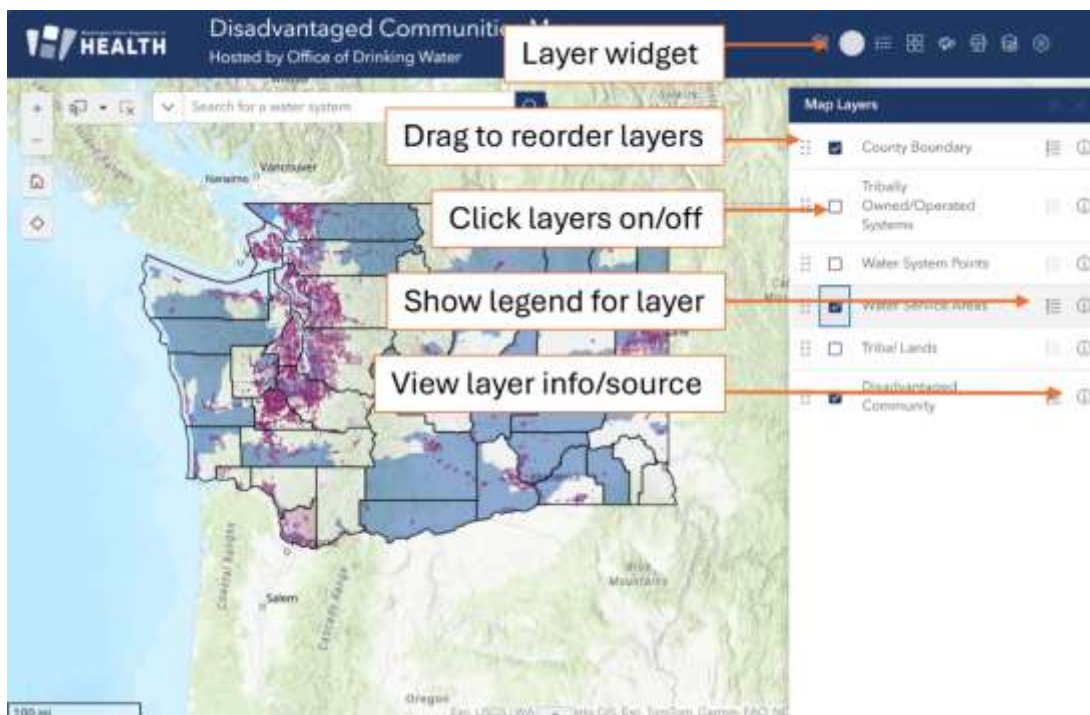
Tribal Lands. This layer shows polygons of tribal boundaries that are an extract of selected geographic and cartographic information from the U.S. Census Bureau's Master Address File/Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing Database.

Disadvantaged Community. This layer shows what census tracts are considered Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) as defined by WAC 246-296-020, identified by criteria outlined annually in the DWSRF Construction Loan Guidelines.

Access the Map

We provide this Disadvantaged Community map tool to determine what census tracts are considered DAC based on the criteria outlined annually in the *DWSRF Construction Loan Guidelines* 331-196 (PDF). Final DAC determination is made at the time of our project review. Qualifying as DAC makes a project eligible for additional subsidies through DWSRF, but does not guarantee we will fund a project or that we will award loan principal forgiveness.

Navigating the Map

Key Functions

Adjust Layers

Select the layer widget. Here you can turn on or off different available layers with the check boxes. When using this map to determine if a water system serves a DAC, turn on water system points, water service areas, and tribally owned/operated systems.

Search for a System

Select the search widget from the header controller, or within the map. To search for a system service area, water system point, or tribally owned/operated system type in the water system name or system ID. Select your desired result and the map will zoom to that system and a pop up with system information will display. To clear the selection, select the X in the search bar.

To determine if a system serves a DAC census tract, click on the service area on the map. In the pop up, toggle over using the arrows to view census tract information. The selection you are viewing in the pop up will always be highlighted on the map.

Pop up of current selection. Viewing water system information

Use arrows to toggle to other layer information, such as census tract data.

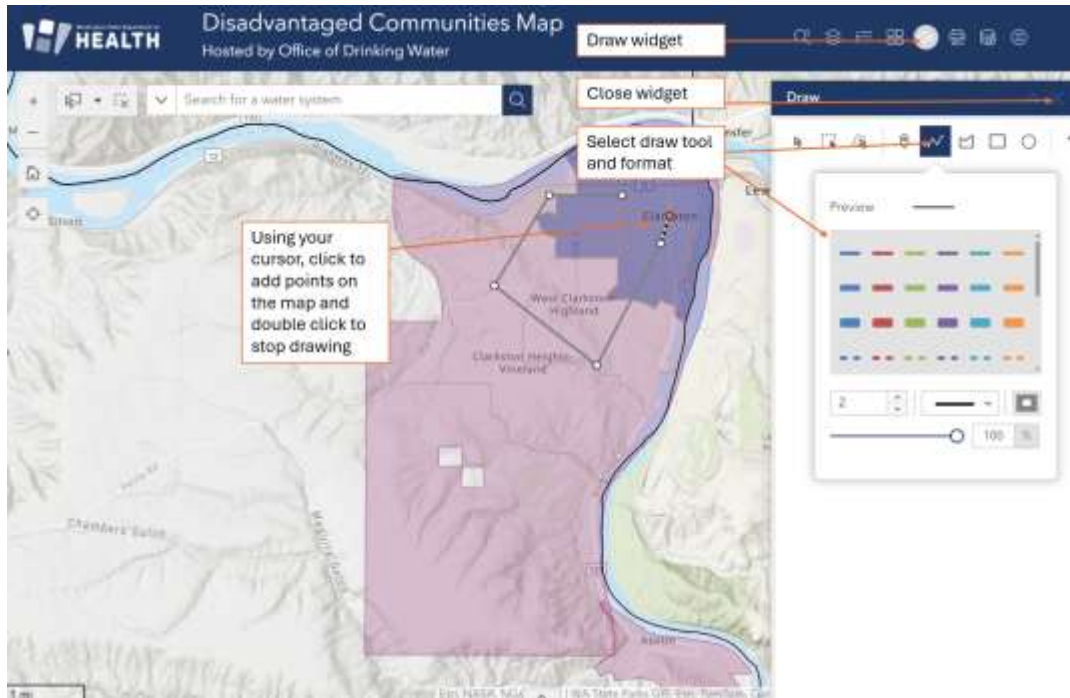Information showing in pop up will be highlighted on map when you toggle views.

Pop up of current selection. Viewing census tract information

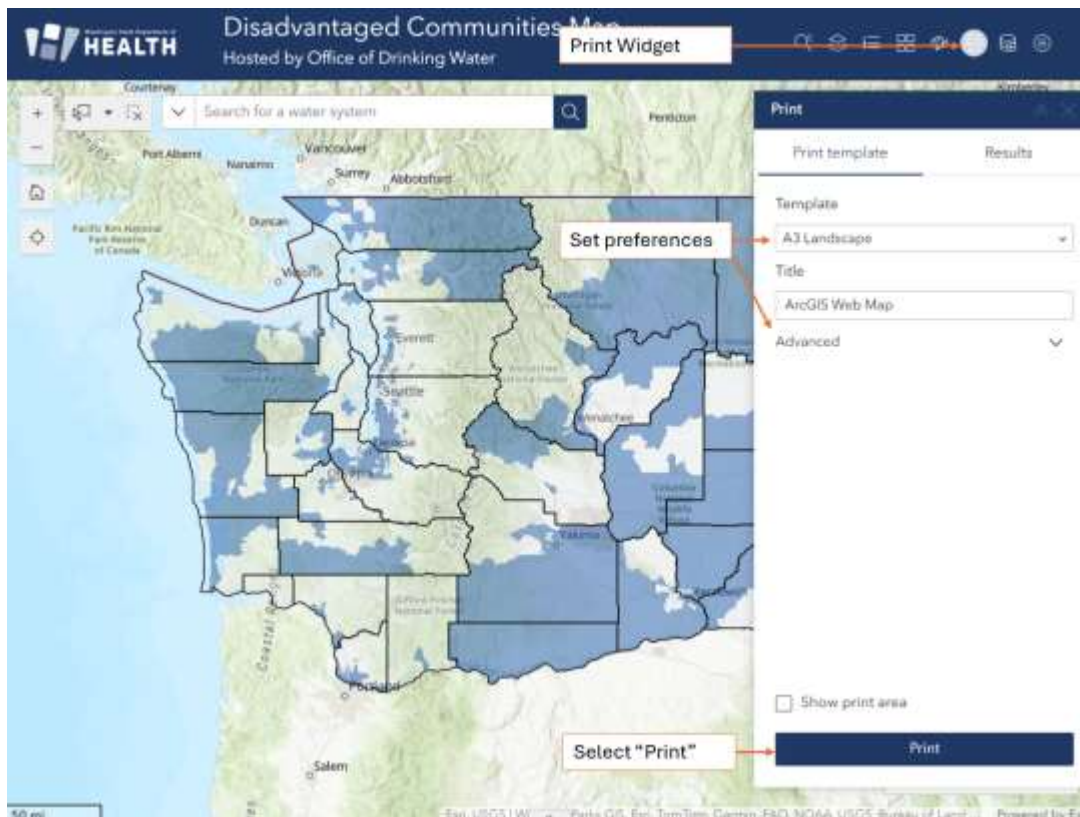Use arrows to toggle to other layer information.

Draw a Project Area

Select the draw widget. Select your draw tool and set the format such as color and thickness you'd like to use. On the map, click to add points and double click to stop drawing. To delete, use the selection tool and select the trash can.
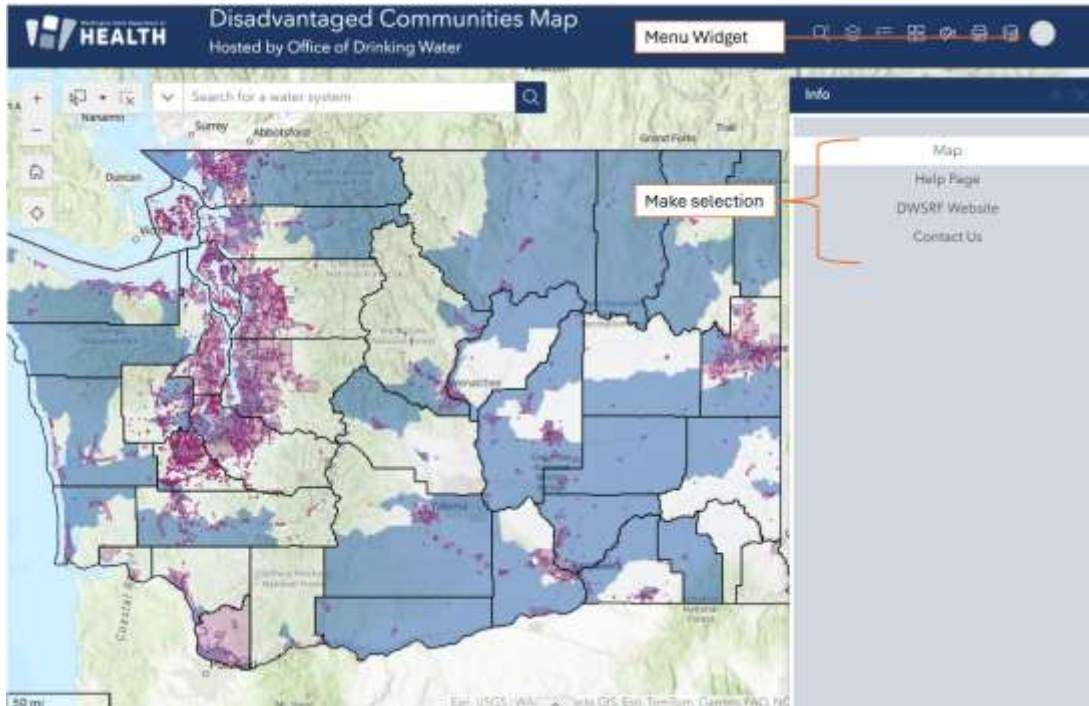

Print Map

Select the print widget and adjust settings. Use the advanced drop down for additional settings. Select "print" to print the current display view. You can save as a PDF or print on a printer.

Open the menu widget. Here you can select the Help Page, navigate to the DWSRF website, or contact us.

For questions about Disadvantaged Communities, DWSRF, or the DAC Mapping tool, please contact DWSRF@doh.wa.gov.

For More Information

Find more resources on our Publications and Forms webpage.

Contact your regional office from 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Friday.

Eastern Region, Spokane 509-329-2100.

Northwest Region, 253-395-6750.

Southwest Region, Tumwater 360-236-3030.

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