



2026 Chelan County Climate Element Engagement Plan

JANUARY 2025

Cover photo © Rick Williams
Used with permission

INTRODUCTION

As part of the 2026 Chelan County Comprehensive Plan update, the county is developing its first Climate Resilience Sub-Element. In accordance with Washington State’s Growth Management Act and House Bill 1181, all fully planning cities must incorporate a Climate Element into their Comprehensive Plan to build resilience to the effects of climate change. The County must also prepare a public engagement strategy. Effective public engagement empowers communities to participate in local democracy by influencing policy decisions that shape their future. Outreach is a key component and requirement (RCW 36.70A.140) of the periodic update. This strategy will guide public outreach efforts and engagement through the Climate Resilience Element planning process and ensure early and continuous transparency in the process.

Note: Chelan County’s Comprehensive Plan is being updated in a parallel, separate process. Where possible, this effort will coordinate with the Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Plan.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of this plan is to create a meaningful engagement framework that provides Chelan County community members multiple avenues to participate in the development of the Climate Resilience Element. The goals of the community engagement strategy will support the Climate Resilience Element planning by ensuring transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness to community feedback throughout the planning process.

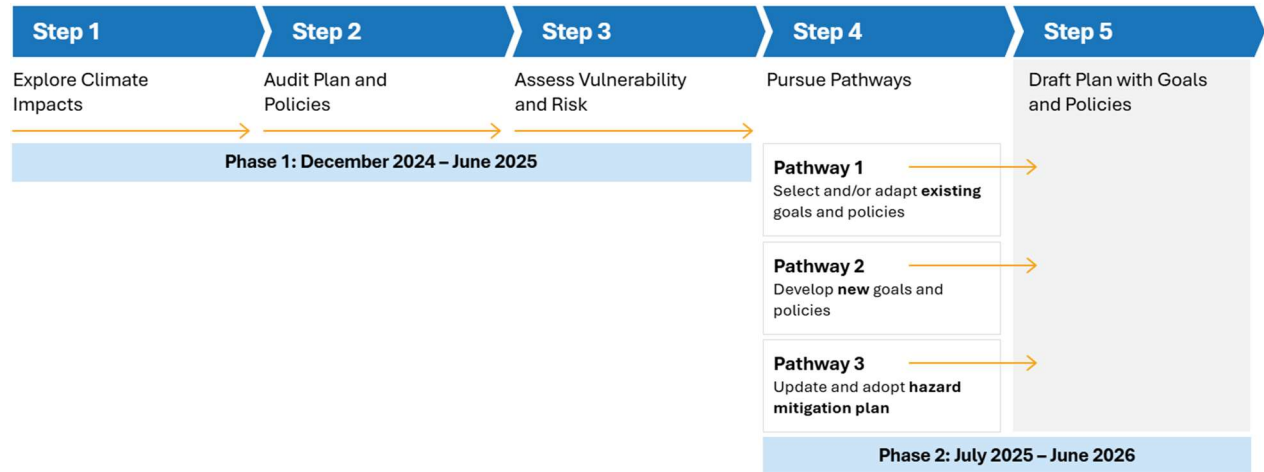
Inclusivity	Achieve meaningful participation from all demographics in Chelan County, ensuring equitable opportunities for feedback across all community sectors.
Accessibility	Communicate effectively with all residents by providing resources and materials in multiple languages and formats that cater to diverse needs.
Authenticity	Solicit and integrate genuine public input at various phases of the planning process, fostering trust and connection with the community.
Transparency	Maintain ongoing communication throughout the engagement process, building a transparent feedback loop with community members.



This effort is supported with funding from Washington’s Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington’s climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available at www.climate.wa.gov.

PLANNING PROCESS AND TIMELINE

This process follows guidance from the Washington State Department of Commerce. Because the grant funding the planning process is divided between two state bienniums, Chelan County has split the project into two phases with the goal of completing Step 3 by June 2025. Phase 2 will be completed in the following biennium.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Target Audiences

To achieve the goals of the engagement plan, a set of specific target audiences with broad reach have been identified to focus on:



Community members: Individuals from diverse backgrounds, ages, and experiences who reside across Chelan County. See Appendix A and B for more information on community demographics.



Business community: Different industries (e.g., agriculture, manufacturing, development, energy) and significant local companies who play a vital role in community economy and sustainability.



Organizations supporting vulnerable populations: Groups that assist the elderly, minority groups, seasonal workers, and other vulnerable community members.



Community-based organizations: Local organizations that reach a wide array of community sectors.

Engagement Tactics and Components

The engagement strategy will comprise the following key components:

01 Bilingual resources: All engagement materials, including informational documents and surveys, will be available in both English and Spanish.

02 Digital engagement: Develop and maintain a central information hub under the Natural Resources Department, featuring up-to-date information, resources, and feedback mechanisms. The webpage will provide an overview of the project, updates, upcoming engagement opportunities, and contact information. Additionally, the webpage will host project materials, including surveys and potential online comment periods.

03 Input collection: Host a community-wide survey to gather early insights and opinions from residents regarding climate-related issues, concerns, and suggestions. The target release date for this survey is February 2025.

04 In-person and online opportunities: Organize at least two engagement events at pivotal planning steps to encourage dialogue, feedback, and deeper discussions, offering venues for both in-person and online participation. Dates for these events are to be determined once more information about the Comprehensive Plan PPP is available.

05 Ongoing communication: Regularly disseminate updates, announcements, and relevant information through current county and stakeholder-owned social media channels to maintain engagement momentum.

06 Climate advisory team: Form an advisory team to build community representation into the planning process and support the development of a climate resilience vision and goals.

07 Climate resilience summit (optional): The climate resilience summit is envisioned as an opportunity for attendees to learn, network, and collaborate with environmental and sustainability professionals, local resiliency advocates, policy makers, community leaders, and others. The summit may include presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities. The details of the summit will be refined during Phase 2.

08 Comprehensive Plan coordination: Coordinate with the Community Development Department to plan and prepare for engagement opportunities that can benefit both planning processes, reach more community members, and provide additional opportunities for engagement.

Key Consultant Deliverables

Component	Description	Timing
Events	Organize at least two events (in-person or virtual) throughout the planning process, providing platforms for dialogue and feedback collection. Plug into existing events where possible. Identify and connect with local community events or forums to integrate climate resilience topics and broaden outreach efforts.	First event in Spring of 2025
Webpage	Refresh the Climate Resilience Strategy webpage that currently exists under the Natural Resources Department. Regularly update the webpage with meeting materials, survey results, new information, event information and more, serving as a single resource hub.	Launch in February 2025
Survey	Develop and launch a community-wide survey to identify community priorities, barriers, and opportunities related to climate resilience early in the planning process.	Launch in February 2025
Collateral	Produce and distribute various digital and print materials for events and online platforms, ensuring they are visually engaging and accessible.	Ongoing, as needed
Social media	Design social media graphics and content to raise awareness and inform community members about engagement opportunities and key updates.	Ongoing, as needed
Press Releases	Craft and distribute press releases to local media outlets to announce key milestones, events, and information regarding the Climate Resilience Element planning.	As needed
Climate Advisory Team	Develop materials and facilitate advisory team meetings.	Monthly
Climate Resilience Summit	Deliverables to be determined during Phase 2.	Phase 2

PLANNING STAKEHOLDERS

The planning stakeholders responsible for the development of the Chelan County Climate Resilience Element include a consulting team, core project team, and climate advisory team. The consulting team is comprised of planning staff from Perteet Inc. and EK Consulting. The core project team is comprised of Chelan County staff from Natural Resources, Emergency Management, Public Works, and Community Development. The climate advisory team is comprised of additional county staff, nonprofit and community-based organization representatives, tribal representatives, academic, scientific, environmental, public health, and business sector representatives, and community members.

Stakeholder List

Name	Organization/Department	Role
Christina Wollman	Perteet Inc.	Planning Consultant
Mandy Maxwell	EK Consulting	Planning Consultant
Elle Robinson	CC Natural Resources	Core Project Team
Mike Kaputa	CC Natural Resources	Core Project Team
Jason Detamore	CC Public Works	Core Project Team
Stan Smoke	CC Emergency Management	Core Project Team
Deanna Walter	CC Community Development	Core Project Team
Ryan William	Cascadia Conservation District	Climate Advisory Team
Marlene Ferrell	Sustainable NCW	Climate Advisory Team
Eric Torres	CD Health District	Climate Advisory Team
Nick Rohrback	CD Regional Port Authority	Climate Advisory Team
Chad Kruger	Washington State University	Climate Advisory Team
Gerardo "Jerry" Perez	Community Health Plan of WA	Climate Advisory Team
Danielle Martin	Building NCW	Climate Advisory Team
Dave and Jen Jones	Community Members	Climate Advisory Team
Kelli Scott	Chelan PUD	Climate Advisory Team
Rowena St. Pierre	Colville Confederated Tribes	Climate Advisory Team
John Sirois	Colville Confederated Tribes	Climate Advisory Team

Roles and Responsibilities



The **consulting team** is responsible for facilitating the planning process (including the climate advisory team), conducting technical and strategic analyses, recommending goals and policies, and developing all required deliverables for the climate element.



The **climate advisory team** (which includes the consultants and core project team) ultimately represents the diverse makeup of Chelan County. The purpose of the advisory team is to build community representation into the planning process. This group supports the development of a climate resilience vision and correlates climate change risks to local populations, activities, and assets. The advisory team provides recommendations for areas of focus, goals and actions that can be readily implemented, and strategies for longer-term actions.



The **core project team** is responsible for the overall success of the process and supporting the consulting team in its work. The core project team provides early feedback, helps address issues, and provides decision-making support.



The **final decision makers** for the Climate Resilience Element are the Chelan County Commissioners, who will vote to approve the plan as part of the Comprehensive Plan update in 2026.

Climate Advisory Team Operating Procedures and Schedule

All meetings are conducted via Zoom, with the option to meet at the Chelan County Department of Natural Resources office. The core project team meets monthly, prior to the climate advisory team meeting. The climate advisory team meets monthly with the exception of months when the consulting team conducts deep analyses and creates deliverables. Each advisory team meeting is aligned with the planning process to review substantial progress at each step. Meeting transcriptions are provided by the consulting team.

Climate advisory team meetings typically occur on the 3rd Thursday of the month, with the core project team meeting the week prior.

Phase 1 Advisory Team Meeting Schedule

Month	Discussion Topics
December 2024	Introductions, roles and responsibilities, planning process overview, preliminary meeting schedule, review county assets, review climate change hazards, confirm climate scenario and time horizons.
January 2025	Review future conditions, review asset-hazard pairs, select priority climate hazards, discuss resilience vision for Chelan County, and review community engagement plan.
February 2025	Review outreach results, review plan and policy audit, introduce vulnerability assessments.
March 2025	No meeting – consultants conducting vulnerability assessments and public outreach.
April 2025	Review vulnerability assessment results, review outreach results, introduce risk characterization.
May 2025	No meeting – consultants conducting risk characterization.
June 2025	Review risk characterization, review outreach results, decide which asset-hazard pairs to act on, introduce goal/policy setting and action planning.

Document Storage and Sharing

While all public-facing documents are to be published on the Chelan County website, the consulting team also maintains an internal drive where all active project documents are managed. The consulting team has provided an extranet folder where the core project team can access presentations and documents for early review and feedback. As each task in the planning process is completed, the consulting team will package all corresponding documents and memos to be shared with the Department of Commerce.

APPENDIX A – COUNTY DEMOGRAPHICS

Age

Data provided by the Washington Office of Financial Management (2024).

Age Group	Total	%
0-4	4,013	5.1%
5-9	4,492	5.7%
10-14	5,207	6.6%
15-19	5,362	6.8%
20-24	4,551	5.8%
25-29	4,570	5.8%
30-34	5,114	6.5%
35-39	5,482	7.0%
40-44	5,470	7.0%
45-49	4,887	6.2%
50-54	4,555	5.8%
55-59	4,731	6.1%
60-64	5,423	6.9%
65-69	5,767	7.4%
70-74	4,960	6.4%
75-79	3,541	4.5%
80-84	2,177	2.8%
85+	1,998	2.6%

Gender

Data provided by the Washington Office of Financial Management (2024).

Male	Female
50.5%	49.5%

Race

[Data](#) provided by the U.S Census Bureau Population Estimates v2024.

Race	Percent of Population
White alone	92.8%
Black alone	1.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2.1%
Asian alone	1.4%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	0.3%
Two or More Races	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino	29.2%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino	66.5%

Income and Earnings

[Data](#) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau 2023 American Community Survey.

Median Income	Percent of Population
Less than \$49,999	31.6%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	30.7%
Over \$100,000	37.7%

Housing Occupation

[Data](#) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau 2023 American Community Survey.

Occupancy Type	Percent of Population
Owner-occupied housing units	65.3%
Renter-occupied housing units	34.7%

Types of Disabilities

[Data](#) provided by the U.S. Census Bureau 2023 American Community Survey.

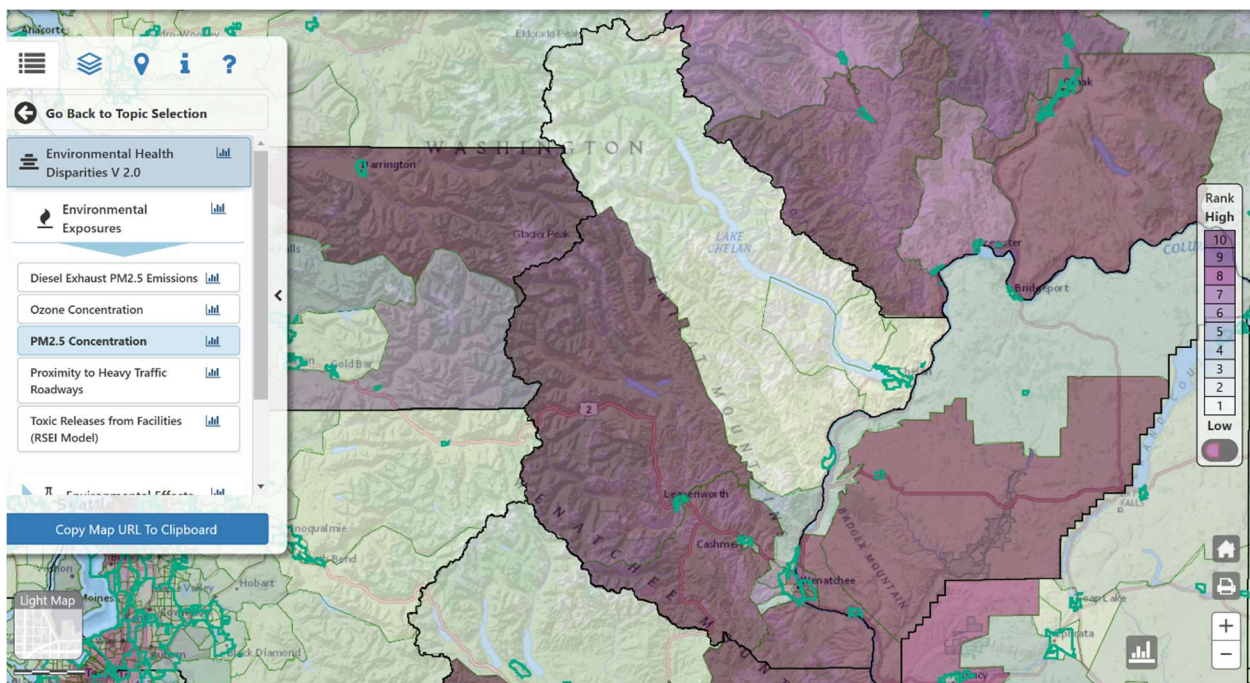
Disability	Percent of Population
Hearing difficulty	4.5%
Vision difficulty	3.2%
Cognitive difficulty	8.7%
Ambulatory difficulty	7.4%
Self-care difficulty	3.7%
Independent living difficulty	6.1%

APPENDIX B – SOCIAL, HEALTH, & ENVIRONMENTAL DISPARITIES

Data provided by the Washington Health Disparities Map. The tool ranks key data categories from 1-10, with 1 being the lowest occurrence of environmental health disparities and 10 being the highest. There are 19 indicators, divided into four themes: Environmental Exposures, Environmental Effects, Socioeconomic Factors, and Sensitive Populations. The following charts break down disparities relevant to this planning process in Chelan County by census tract.

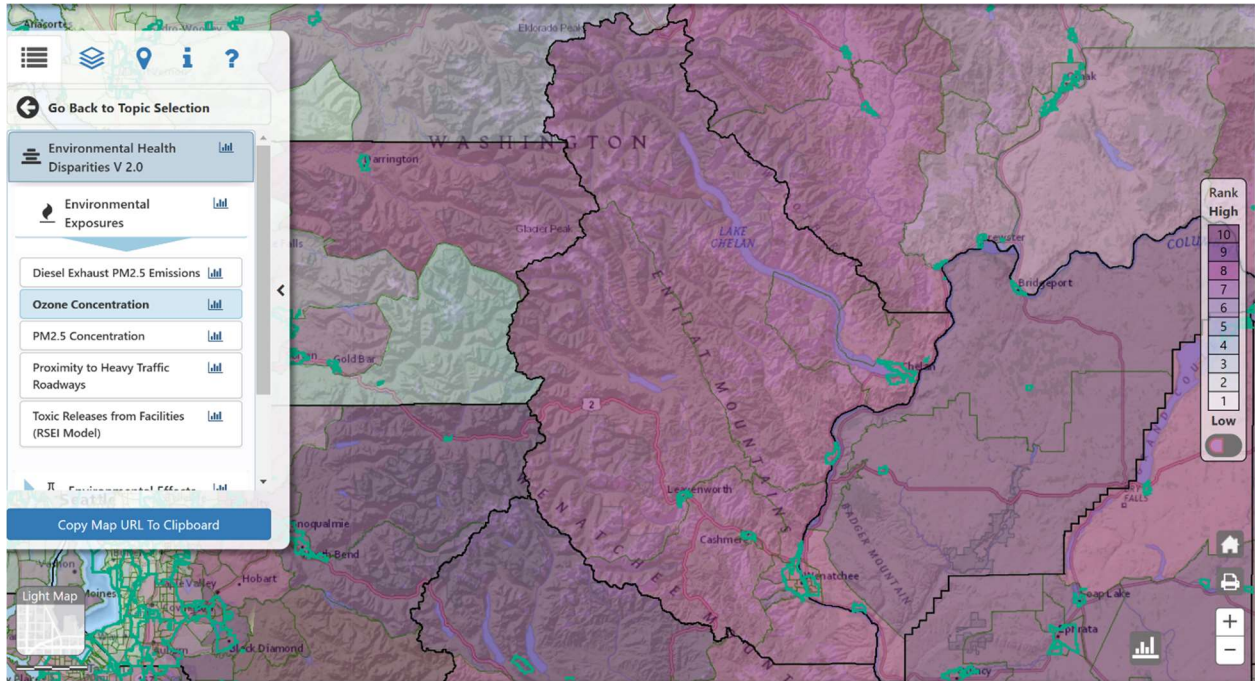
PM2.5 Concentration

Particulate matter (incl. wildfire smoke) presents a greater burden in the more populated areas of the county.



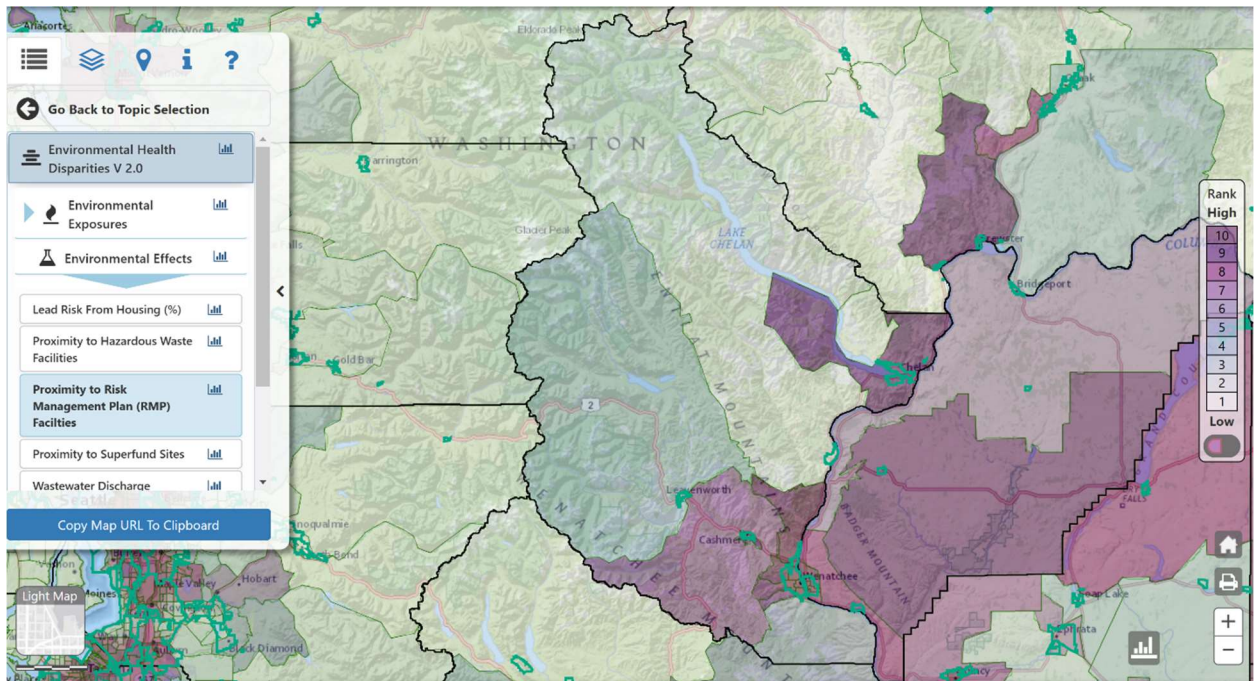
Ozone Concentration

Ozone concentration presents a greater burden across the entire county.



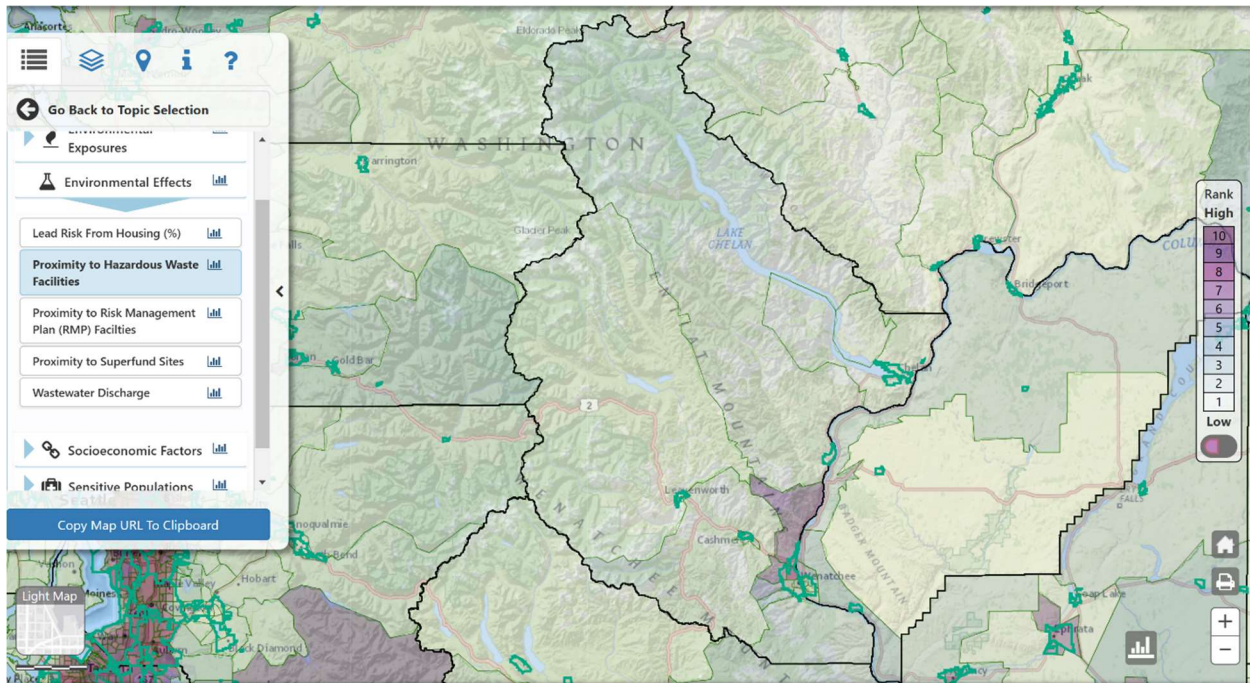
Proximity to Risk Management Plan Facilities

Burden is moderate to high in the southern and eastern portions of the county where facilities are located.



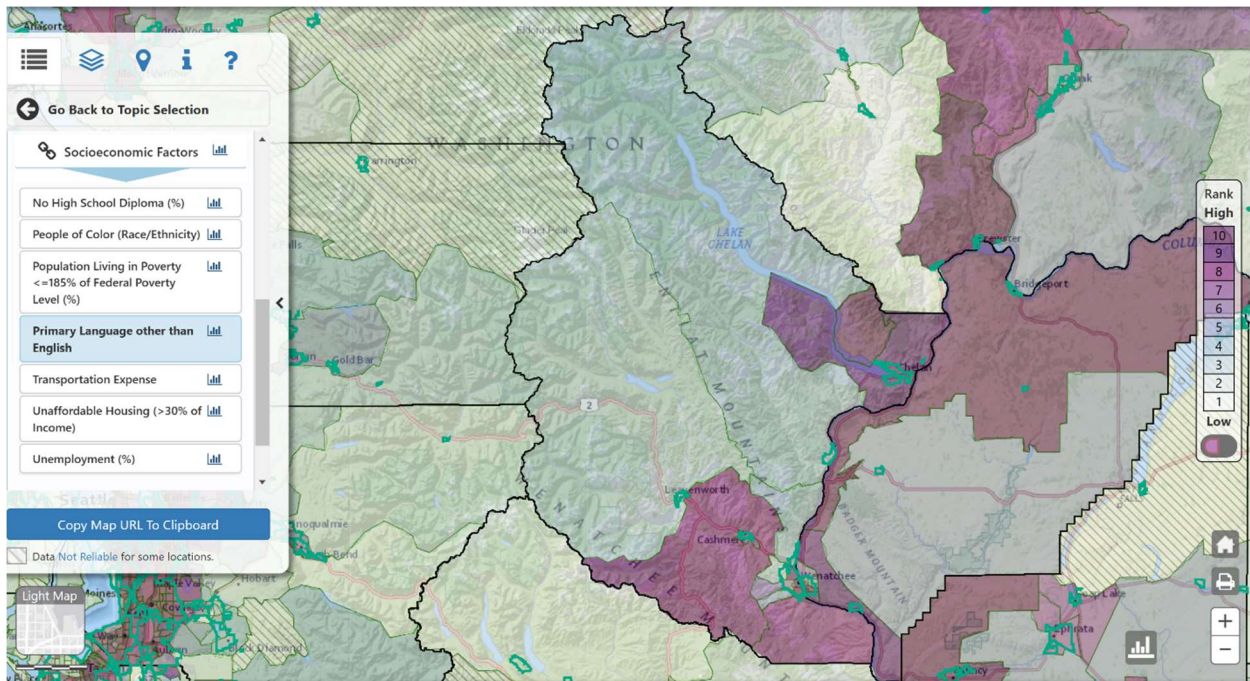
Proximity to Hazardous Waste Storage/Disposal

Burden is moderate to high in the southeast portion of the county where facilities are located.



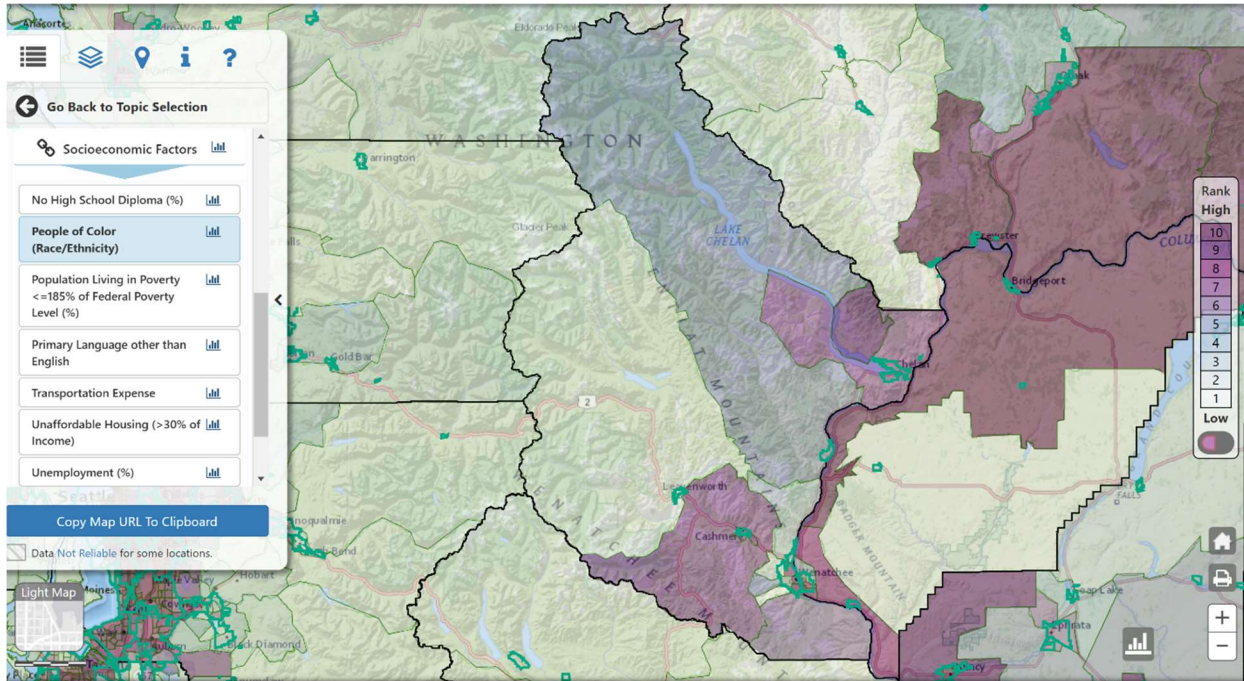
Primary Language Not English

The predominance of non-English speakers is highest in the agricultural portions of the county.



People of Color

All areas of Chelan County are racially diverse.



Populations Living in Poverty

Poverty levels are moderate to high across the entire county, with the highest levels in the south and east.

