We the Environmental Justice Advisory Council did not consent to the process of releasing the Environmental Justice Mapping Tool Request for Proposals (RFP). We believe the decision made by Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to release the RFP to only the approved contractor list violates the tenants of environmental justice and goes against the spirit of the environmental justice law of Vermont. We are requesting information from state agency leadership on how and by whom the decisions were made to release the RFP for GIS support for the EJ mapping tool. In order to ensure a robust, meaningful, equitable procurement process, we are requesting the following:

1) This RFP, a public resource opportunity, be shared with all members of the public and all potential contractors, in alignment with the Principles of Community Engagement approved and published by the AC on (date)
2) An extension in the length of time this RFP is open
3) Consideration of adopting the following efforts for robust public procurement processes for this and future RFPs:

- Extend posting duration. Reason: in VT, a lot of contracting happens between people who know each other, and opportunities often get missed by the broader sector if they're not "in the know" or already holders of state contracts.
- Include scoring rubric with equity measures: This communicates that inclusion and justice are priorities for us, and also ensures we're using an equity lens when evaluating bids.
- Include intent language: This clarifies that we expect the bidders to incorporate our values into their bid submissions.
- Distribute the announcement very broadly: This ensures more people have access, including MWBEs, small firms, and others underrepresented in state contracting.
- Have an inclusive review panel: This ensures we're not pattern-matching by having low diversity in the reviewer team.

Further recommendations to consider implementing from the Connecting People to Power Report, commissioned by Vermont DEC:

- Communicate state contract opportunities via newspapers, trusted organizations, community liaisons, local listservs.
- Consider giving ranking preference to applicants with relationships in local impacted communities.
- Strive to broaden access to contract bid websites by local businesses and organizations.
- Continually conduct public outreach campaigns on how to access the Rules Portal, Environmental Notice Bulletin, Contract Bid Website, and Grants portals.