

Issues and Programs

Our biggest environmental justice issue was the siting of the Midland Avenue Sewage Plant on Syracuse's Southwest side. The Partnership for Onondaga Creek formed in 2000 to fight against the injustice of siting this sewage facility in a residential neighborhood. Since Onondaga County was under federal court order to stop discharging CSOs or combined stormwater and sewage into Syracuse's creeks, the POC began looking for other solutions to the CSO problem -- a solution that would not add any stigma to a neighborhood or add any environmental harms, such as chlorinated sewage to our city's creeks. From 2001 to 2008, the POC advocated for fairer, and more environmentally and fiscally sound alternatives. **To read in more detail about this historical struggle check out our history tab under ABOUT.**

After Onondaga County scrapped the rest of the sewage plants, the POC wanted to help the county educate residents about **Green Infrastructure**. Currently, through a county grant, the POC is working with SU's Environmental Finance Center, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Atlantic States Legal Foundation, Baltimore Woods, Onondaga Environmental Institute, and Onondaga Earth Corps. Together, we are informing city residents, and in particular homeowners, about how they can do their part in keeping stormwater out of the sewer system. Of the green technologies that the county is using, homeowners will find that the easiest and most affordable ones are trees, rain gardens and rain barrels. To read more on GI, go to our Green Infrastructure page.

The POC realized that environmental injustice happens because some neighborhoods are poorer and less connected to the power structure than others. The POC decided to work on the issue of **green jobs**, advocating for training and jobs/contracts for poor urban communities of color. To learn more, check out our Green Jobs page.

And finally, we know that educating our youth about that environment is critical for the long term health of our city neighborhoods. Each year, the POC sponsors Syracuse children to NYSDEC summer camp. But, we just don't recruit and ship these teenagers off to camp, we also involve them monthly in a local outing, an outing that explores the environment. To learn more, check out our **DEC camp** page.

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