

## Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Notes:

### Deeds Shared during the 2021 North American

#### DEI activities your agency has been engaged in.

- Completed a DEI Strategic Plan, inclusive in personnel reviews/goals, menu of mandated and additional voluntary trainings, reps from each division on the team.
- Forest Service Feb 11 Chief issued letter communicating the strengthening of management practices of the USDA Forest Service related to the disciplinary process for sexual misconduct cases and builds on our efforts to end all forms of harassment.
- IHEA-USA: We're excited about 2021. We secured a research MSCG last year to help us create a national student demographic database to better understand the changes to hunter education students that are happening right now with hunter education moving online in many states. We are seeing increased percentages of students from different backgrounds. more to come soon!
- USGS has a great variety of EDI initiatives- including the Peer Support Worker program, Employee Resource Groups, observance events, trainings and a variety of Councils to support EDI across the bureau.
- Team meeting regularly to discuss DEI topics. -Hired DEI Coordinator for Department (within past month) - DEI training required for all staff - Seeking partnerships with diverse outdoor groups - Looking to include more diversity in imagery
- Working to amplify the voices of underrepresented minorities in conservation specifically in hunting and angling.
- AFWA has a Staff Values team. One item we're working on is the development of a document to help staff when hiring: "Increasing Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in AFWA's Hiring Practices: A Checklist.
- Expanding our urban program on wildlife refuges to bring in a more diverse constituency. Featuring "Species of the Month" that recognizes both the biological and cultural significance of native species.
- AFWA is offering the Power of Inclusion beginning this month. Contact Bettina. We started in NC.
- Successfully navigated state hiring system to hire first bilingual educator. This position was filled in September, and we interviewed three outstanding candidates for this entry-level job.
- developed a agency constituency statement (to clearly state who we serve... everybody) and a D+I position statement.
- Exploring how to effectively engage SD Native communities.
- I work on Artemis GA trying to retain women hunters. I also work on Academics Afield recruiting new hunters in a colligate setting. In this program emphasis is put on serving diverse audiences from non-traditional backgrounds.
- USGS Ecosystems Mission Area DEI activities: -monthly discussion series -DEI councils initiated (USGS level, Ecosystems, and some at Center level) - more actions in works related to STEM and Youth

- Nebraska Game and Parks has also developed a DEI Team that will be used to lead collaboration and inclusion into the future.
- Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is currently providing an online survey - provided in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Mandarin Chinese - to better understand our underserved constituent's needs in relation to conservation and outdoor recreation education.
- I heard of one agency that is amending a regulation to remove a specific requirement to wear a hunter orange HAT...as some people are unable or unwilling to wear a hat. The hunter orange requirement is simplified to just a "garment," etc.
- We are just getting started, initial survey work (looking in the mirror), and work/task group formation. Forming program-level diversity teams piloting a project with "Operation Fresh Start" in the fall for habitat management work (70-80% of participants are People of Color) increased DEI training for staff.
- DEI strategic plan development
- Unfortunately nothing. Active resistance from leadership.
- Reworking our internship program and recruitment to be more purposeful about recruiting diverse participants.
- 2020 created DEI internal working group.
- Just launched our "Path to the Uplands" content series to reach a wider audience of individuals who are interested in learning more about conservation and the uplands:  
<https://www.pheasantsforever.org/pathtotheuplands> Women on the Wing initiative:  
<https://www.pheasantsforever.org/Participate/Women-on-the-Wing.aspx>
- We have taken inventory of representation in our department public-facing imagery and have identified specific populations for future photoshoots DEIJ book club within leadership staff. Looking at access regulations through the lens of DEIJ.
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service just published an internal Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Plan (DIIP) focused in three areas: engagement, barrier analysis and removal, and recruitment and hiring. It dovetails well with the Biden Administration's focus on racial equity.
- MI DNR has developed DEI plan at Department level and has hired a DEI coordinator. Wildlife Division has formed a DEI team with 5 subgroups. Collecting and providing information, developing Division plan.
- Trying to move to "customer focus." Use resources to support activities underrepresented groups actually participate in.
- More guidance on "how to" truly offer Diversity and Inclusion within any given group. A list of ways that have proven successful would be great. Partnerships and coalitions focused on transformational change for diversity and inclusion. -A full-on, comprehensive approach to training, resources, barrier removal, and organizational culture work, including with colleges and universities. -Broad lifting up of voices and platforms for conservation professionals of color and identity, diversity of gender identity, sexual orientation, and ableness.
- developing a department and division DEI action plan
- Implicit bias training for entire state
- We've recently hosted two multi-day webinars for staff, one focusing on the intersection of DEI and relevancy, and the other about improving DEI within the agency. We've also hosted a

mentorship webinar for students at minority-serving colleges and universities to help empower them to pursue careers in conservation. All of this is part of the relevancy grant through WMI.

- We're hiring a designated diversity coordinator and are adding DEI into our agency strategic plan.
- We're also participating in the interagency DEI group that we'll hear from later at the meeting today.
- We started our Science Applications national meetings during Black History Month with wonderful stories about personal heroes that people were willing to share. This made for a personal connection to Black History Month that was very enlightening.
- Formation of DEI Committee, including members from state agencies and others.  
<https://archerytrade.org/ata-creates-a-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-committee/> NOAA has a 2020 -2024
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan:  
[https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/NOAA%202020-2024%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion%20Strategic%20Plan\\_0.pdf](https://www.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/NOAA%202020-2024%20Diversity%20and%20Inclusion%20Strategic%20Plan_0.pdf)
- Internal DEI trainings have increased, more paid internships are planned (since unpaid creates barriers), and other outreach planning is underway.
- Partnerships with HBUs for paid summer internships. Being intentional about obtaining and utilizing diverse imagery in communications. Contracting with multicultural marketing agencies to do translation and multicultural advertising.
- Collaborating on a "wildlife viewer" survey to better understand non-traditional constituents.
- Working on a summer diversity fellowship for students. Fellows will build connections with DNR staff and gain real-world experience in their chosen field.
- We are also in the early stages of developing a diversity and inclusion annual "challenge" that will incentivize staff to engage in DEI learning in hands-on ways.
- My specific program trialed an enhanced diversity statement in an internship job posting and saw a marked increase in diversity of applicants, who commented positively on the statement.
- Our agency is offering more paid summer internships than previous years through our state's Diversity Internship Program
- Our new Bird City program both requires and gives applicants "extra points" for work in underserved communities.
- USFWS has various grassroots efforts focused on cultural change, including Executive- and Deputy- level dedicated groups to identify and support actions needed to advance our agency's culture. We are committed to accurately identifying issues, seeking professional help, and employing solutions that actually help, vs. contribute, to the problem.
- Planned training for leadership team. Started working on developing game plan for training and support.

## **Needs From 2021 North American D & I Sessions**

Needs. DEI activities your agency needs guidance on.

- Good DEI questions for interviews, resources for a DEI advocate on hiring committees, ideas for places to share job announcement to get a more diverse applicant pool
- Making sure all feel welcome on public lands and are aware of what public lands offer.

- Financial support for these efforts
- Consistency in policies to require and make available high-quality DEI trainings across federal agencies.
- assessing environmental justice opportunities in communities we serve
- "Breaking into" communities in outreach efforts that might not look like me.
- A DEI Plan for the Agency that will solidify this effort well into the future.
- Need more ways to connect with young folks outside of (prior to) the University system. The University system in many states lack diversity in natural resource fields, based on recent data.
- Need to recruit more diverse staff
- What is good training for staff?
- Getting diversity in imagery and stories.
- IHEA-USA: we could benefit from additional imagery of targeted audiences. Our new website could benefit from more diverse imagery so please share if you've got some that could help.
- Help defining roles and responsibilities of different entities involved in EDI activities. There are a lot of different folks doing things, but it is difficult to make sure we aren't doing rework just because we aren't aware of someone else's efforts.
- How to get close captioning to work on Zoom for hearing impaired
- Better understanding as to the needs of various audiences and how we can better serve them.
- Need insights/direction to address the following.... As a disabled person who needs reasonable accommodations such as a ball chair, VeriDesk, and occasional ability to work remotely... I need to get a doctor's note, which costs \$. Non-disabled folks with the same requests do not need to obtain medical documentation. This is largely a budget issue for agencies as there is no specific federal funding to provide for reasonable accommodations. I am working to draw awareness to the issue and act as a change agent
- How to start the conversation? There needs to be a serious and immediate discussion about the delivery of hunter education programs to communities that have a hard time accessing the traditional in-person programs.
- More diverse photo library. In every sense of word; participants, age, urban and suburban, etc.
- Need more partners. Need more internal staff to jump on the bandwagon. Staff buy-in for some, and administrative support in the form of a formal statement. We haven't been able to get either of these yet.
- Strategies for coordination and collaboration within agencies - i.e., other plans and stories
- We have been applying some technological fixes, still grappling with and have a need to address our culture and develop, to start, a welcoming internal culture that understands the power of DEI in our workforce and with the people we engage with.
- put words into action: for example, strengthening disciplinary practices related to harassment is one positive move but more are needed. Hands on learning that actually builds DEI skills, rather than e-trainings that are quickly forgotten, difficult to translate into behaviors and merely check boxes.
- More training. Knowledge of opportunities. What groups to reach out to? Internal staff trainings, exercises, workshops, etc.
- I am new at my organization and am trying to build a network of colleagues that I can collaborate with to unite grassroots and grassstop efforts in DEI

- Our biggest need is buy-in from all staff, some do not believe DEI work will elevate the agency or is a relevant part of their work.
- A platform to meet up with other states to discuss the work on the ground.
- Quality trainings for staff
- Better or a consistent avenue for communicating what has worked and what has not worked in agencies across the country.
- We need to analyze the participant evaluations for our webinars and use those to develop new workshops for more staff to keep the ball rolling. Once we get our new Diversity Coordinator onboarded, we'll be updating our strategic plan for comprehensive DEI efforts across the agency.
- We could also benefit by improved DEI education for our commission board.
- Needs: how to talk about power dynamics in DEI conversations? Are there good references available for addressing inherent power differences in working groups to encourage an equitable open discussion space?
- Needs: More sharing (like this, so great!) across our conservation community, to learn from each other. Best practices consolidated and targeted to our field on certain topics (hiring, etc.)
- Need to bridge the gap between executive level (who are very supportive) and all of the excellent grassroots-level work being done across the agency. I feel like this may be just around the corner.

### **Results of Guiding Pillars and Practical Applications Discussion**

#### **Coffee Talk Topics:**

- understanding the culture of your agency. How that could be a barrier to inclusion and what might need to change? Being proactive to start this work now.
- Uncoupling diversity, equity and inclusion from EEOC.
- Considerations for staff doing fieldwork in areas lacking diversity. How to best support staff of color and keep staff safe in the field
- exploring the conservation timeline compared to other timelines (compared to when different Treaties came into play, civil rights, etc)
- how to start. how to overcome resistance from "leadership" who just don't see an issue
- How to identify and remove barriers for engagement.
- How to get past "politically correct" and get to being inclusive...
- incorporate social scientists/psychologists as facilitators of diverse group discussions
- Dealing with personal Biases.
- Realize that sometimes just asking a black/brown co-worker about DEI or to participate in DEI can put a burden on them
- Understanding racism in America (history, especially as relates to conservation/science/natural resources)
- How to or should political ideologies be dealt with when trying to talk about racial issues and racism.
- Training on social justice language and tools for facilitating conversations
- What does it mean to be anti-racist for an institution?
- How to have a DEI conversation that is mission focused.

- I'd like to discuss current events happening in the world (unrelated to natural resource management)
- Taking the HUGE problem and breaking it down into actionable chunks.
- How to have conversations- specifically with those who don't embrace DEI
- how do we respectfully acknowledge past inequities, especially with Tribes
- Definitions! When we talk about engaging "diverse" or "underserved" communities are we talking BIPOC, people with disabilities, etc.?
- How can we put ourselves in someone else's shoes to see different perspectives.
- discomfort with terminology. we get a lot of questions about what is an appropriate term for different demographics we're trying to reach.
- How to deal with fearful allies.
- How to approach leadership that are resistant to change and diversity
- How does one operate in an organization where there is low tolerance for addressing these issues?
- How to get staff to see DEI as added value versus extra work.
- How to have uncomfortable conversations with colleagues and org Leaders.
- Allyship
- when/how to intervene
- I don't know what I don't know. so just getting started.
- Recognizing implicit/unconscious bias and/or white fragility
- Power dynamics and how they play a role in DEI conversations, tools to create equitable conversational space
- What we can do the next day to move the needle towards support--for staff that is resistant to embracing DEIJ goals.
- A discussion about labels and the discomfort with labels.
- Best practices for getting the conversation started within your organization.
- What is "Political correctness"?
- A real history of the formation of the US; and then history of conservation
- How to support lgbtq+ employees