Diversity & Inclusion Working Group  
March 7, 2019  
Chair: Jen Newmark  
Vice Chair: David Buggs  
Attendees: 25

Agenda:

Call to order and introductions- Jen

Review of agenda/Additions to agenda?
- Can we add how to have bilingual versions of materials in the state  
  - Texas has some resources to help those states first starting

Diversity Joint Venture (DJV) update
- Conservation career paths → Looking at some areas to increase diversity of people in the pipeline in natural resource fields
- Planning on having a summit on this subject; looking at locations and dates – every comprehensive
- Trying to get people and groups to partner in the joint ventures → no cost, just participation
- Putting together best practices for organizations and state agencies to use to increase diversity and inclusion in their work force.
- Website: www.diversityconservationjobs.org  
  - Employer resources
  - Potential employee resources
  - List of events, jobs, etc
  - We can post jobs and internships on the website for partners
  - Several videos, tips and best practice information available for free
  - Check out the website!
- Currently have 35 partners. They are looking at more applications for potential acceptance very soon; they review applications to make sure their values/mission, etc lines up with the Diversity Joint Venture  
  - State agencies are encouraged to join the DJV

Resiliency through Diversity: Conservation Conversations- Brian Wakeling
- Regular communications about things in our profession that aren’t typical topics may not be comfortable to talk about
- Not all my ideas- shared thoughts and may not be shared by all involved
- First conservation → Diversity
- What is Diversity?  
  - We recognize its value in nature
Diverse ecosystems are often stable, resilient

Is diversity important in the workplace? → relevant thinking!

- Education - barriers
  - Educators' job is to teach people 'how' to think, not 'what' to think
  - Critical thinkers needed
  - Do we reach students early enough?
  - Cost to education can be a barrier

- Salaries
  - Job openings – hard to support yourself when starting out in a profession

- Finding it hard to expand the tent
  - Agencies putting most resources toward R3 and other initiatives
  - Diversity & Inclusion on the back burner

- Needing to understand mutualists, traditionalists and others
  - Proportion of values are changing within our society
  - Agencies aren't mirroring current society values

- Biases - people tent to have blind spots so you may not see the biases in society or a job environment that is there and perhaps others can see or experience

- We are improving → not as quickly as we would like
  - The cost of inherent bias of our education system exists
  - Internal unrecognized biases

- Active Thinking!!!!
  - Am I open to other thoughts and ways to get there?
  - Have I taken a position?
  - Negotiate and compromise - not the same thing

- Discussion:
  - Always good to get a pulse on your agency before bringing on changes
    - Can be strategic with more information and direction

Relevancy Road Map - Jen

- Need for having active conversations
- Looking to the future of our state agencies
- Mutualists are growing, and traditionalists are shrinking in most states
- Have work to do to improve the diversity and culture in the state agencies to better represent our constituents
- 26 barriers identified that state agencies face to becoming more relevant
  - Agency culture
  - Agency capacity
  - Constituent culture
  - Constituent capacity
  - Political constraints
• Human dimensions and data show that we are all moving in the same direction, just at slightly different rates
• Next steps: looking at some high-level strategies to overcome some of these barriers; presenting strategies to the directors; looking at tactics and the how’s to specifically tackle the barriers; this is not prescriptive but is completely voluntary
• Some barriers are just perceived barriers → working on identifying those as well
• Discussion: need courageous leadership to pave the way; risk-takers
  o Not just the responsibility of the agency leadership; need to be accountable on an individual level
  o Change needs to be strategic
  o Setting expectations and having accountability to those expectations

Next Steps/actions
• Provide support to those courageous leaders
• Share success stories of Diversity & Inclusion in state agencies
• Should be create a Diversity & Inclusion newsletter??
  o A way to share success stories
  o Need to decide frequency and how to/who to send or build this distribution list
  o Possibly mid-summer for first newsletter; strategize in the meantime