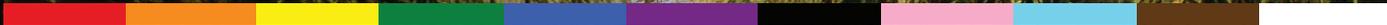




Oregon Department
of Fish & Wildlife

2024 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PLAN



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Message from the Director

The mission of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) is to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations. This mission – rooted in sustainability and inclusivity – serves as an inspiration for us all.

It is our philosophy that everyone belongs outdoors. Our agency is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Fulfilling this commitment goes beyond words, and creating safe spaces where people feel truly welcome takes action. Our agency is fortunate to have a passionate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee, and I thank them for tireless work to advance workforce diversity and inclusion, expand the population served by our agency, and integrate diversity and inclusion into our existing programs.

While we have made strides, we have much work ahead—and not only in terms of building a workforce that is reflective of Oregon's diverse population. We want to work towards the goal of all Oregonians feeling welcome and safe in the outdoors, taking advantage of the benefits of spending time outdoors and understanding the state's many opportunities to fish, hunt, or view wildlife. As director, I will work intentionally to advance our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, leaning into ideas and strategies identified by the ODFW DEI Committee, the agency leadership team, and staff.

I look forward to harnessing the passion, knowledge, and creativity of our staff, partners, and many collaborators to ensure that all of our employees can thrive in the ODFW work environment and all Oregonians belong outdoors.

Best,



Debbie Colbert
Director



Message from ODFW Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee

ODFW is committed to serve every person in Oregon from diverse backgrounds, including Tribes, Latinx communities, communities of color, Women, Veterans, and LGBTQIA communities in alignment with Oregon's constantly evolving population. We believe that everyone belongs outdoors. We work to maintain diversity of the landscape acknowledging our responsibility in conservation of all species extending beyond hunting and angling. The ecological diversity maintains the resources that we can provide to all communities in Oregon who are passionate about natural resources.

This report provides information about key strategies and focus areas that have been identified by the committee. Foremost among these efforts has work to communicate the agency's philosophy that everyone belongs outdoors. A good example of this work is the Progress Pride Logos developed by the DEI Committee and Information and Education (I&E) Division. These logos help us underscore our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and were sent to all staff and fish and wildlife commissioners for use in email signature lines in recognition of inclusion and progress. Managers are also working with staff interested in outreach and tabling opportunities at Pride Month events to share information about connecting with the outdoors and ODFW's mission.



We are excited to see this example of our efforts and look forward to advancing the many strategies discussed in this report.

Sincerely,

ODFW DEI Committee

Kaly Adkins, Biologist, Wildlife, East

Luke Curtis, Recruitment, HR, HQ

Jessie Doyle, GIS Analyst, ISD, HQ

Meghan Dugan, PIO, I&E, Southwest/MRP

Saul Goldfarb, OS, NWWD

Alexis Isom, HR Analyst-AA/DEI Agency Lead, HR, HQ

Mike Lance, Biologist, Fish, East

Ariana Scipioni, Biologist, Habitat, NWWD

Emily Vanwyk, Biologist, Wildlife, HQ

Ken Loffink, Interim Deputy Director for Administration, DO, HQ

Key Strategy and Focus Areas

ODFW Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee has identified seven key strategies and focus areas as part of our action plan:

- 1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
- 2. COMMUNICATIONS**
- 3. DATA**
- 4. DECISION MAKING AND BUDGETS**
- 5. CONTRACTING AND PROCUREMENT**
- 6. DIVERSIFYING WORKFORCE AND INTERNAL CULTURE**
- 7. SERVICE DELIVERY**

Additional resources supporting these efforts

[ODFW Affirmative Action Plan 2023-2025](#)

[Environmental Justice Council Annual Report 2023](#)

1. Community Engagement

The customers that we serve are not representative of the diversity in Oregon. Here is what we are doing to change that:

- We are listening to different segments of the public to better understand their views on fish and wildlife and their habitats. This occurs at Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings, public meetings, and in day-to-day public facing meetings, calls, and emails.
- We affirm the advancement of environmental justice and equity for all through the development of habitat restoration projects to invest in disadvantaged or underserved communities where climate, environmental, and income disparities affect the holistic needs of the community. To accomplish this, we use maps based on social vulnerability indices to identify where US Census tract population metrics are ranked above the nationwide average of these disparities and will directly benefit from a project that improves water quality, improve, or expand public access to nature, and provide economic growth opportunities or improve fish and wildlife populations that provide a source of low-cost food.
- We are pursuing the following actions:
 - Conducting outreach to local community organizations including faith-based communities. This includes sharing current events such as hunting or angling for these communities.
 - Developing outreach materials that reflect diversity by including various images and languages. This includes social media platforms, field reports and published materials.
 - Collaborating with other public organizations to foster diversity equity, and inclusion. Working with neighboring state and federal agencies.
 - Fostering relationships with outdoor recreation sponsors that support diversity, equity, and inclusion such as REI and Travel Oregon.
 - Promoting outdoor opportunities in locations and/or communities that are underserved (particularly urban communities).
 - Developing more multilingual signage and materials for customers.
 - Conducting outdoor skills workshops and family fishing events in ways that increase accessibility for diverse audiences.
 - Recently updating a map of accessible fishing locations is available on the ODFW webpage.
 - Hosting and partnering on free fishing events to help remove barriers to those who would enjoy angling opportunities.

2. Communication

We are committed to increasing communication related to the diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts across the agency.

- As an agency, we are working to increase our efforts in communicating the work we accomplish to our constituents. This includes in field reports, executive leadership meetings, and using the recently established ODFW DEI email address.
- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee will educate employees on diversity initiatives and provide regular information related to diversity and inclusion to staff.
- Images shared with news releases and on social media will better reflect the diversity of the state's population participating in hunting, fishing, viewing.

3. Data

The DEI Committee reviewed the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) sponsored DEI survey results from 2022 to learn about current DEI needs.

The intent of this assessment was to provide data that will help WAFWA organizations:

- Prep for current and projected demographics.
- Uncover culturally diverse community beliefs and practices regarding fish and wildlife, conservation, and outdoor-related programs and services.
- Identify challenges and potential resources and strategies.
- Reveal resources for increasing diversity on policy, decision-making, and organizational leadership structures.

Of 115 respondents at ODFW, 47% self-identified as male and 47% self-identified as female. 6% preferred not to disclose. 92% identify as white or Caucasian, 3% identify as Hispanic or Latino, 1% identify as Asian American, 1% identify as native American and 4% identify as Other.

Here's what that survey told us:

DEI Domains	DEI Strengths and Assets	DEI Growth and Opportunity Areas
Community Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff can describe the culturally diverse communities in your state and their strengths and social challenges. • Staff know their outdoor social or recreational habits. • Staff are aware of their geographic locations. 	Become more familiar and develop relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal community leaders • Religious leaders • Minority business alliances • Know where culturally diverse communities turn for reliable information.
Community Engagement	Staff feel safe in culturally diverse communities.	Attend cultural or ceremonial functions held within or sponsored by the culturally diverse communities in your state. Contract with, or purchase goods or services from, culturally diverse merchants in your state.
Community Resources and Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print and social media include images of culturally diverse people and communities. • Agency includes culturally diverse individuals on policy- or decision-making bodies. • Agency collaborates with local or state agencies when designing programs, messages, or services for culturally diverse groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop more written materials for non-English speaking communities in your state. • Sponsor or convene DEI workshops or training activities as it concerns culturally diverse groups. • Incorporate art, reading material, or decor reflecting culturally diverse groups in the agency facilities.
Staff Development and Staffing Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure ADA accommodations for employees. • Have a leave policy that reflects the needs of all staff members. • Hire diverse students, interns, or fellows. • Has DEI in its mission, vision, or goal statements. • Hire bilingual staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routinely ask people diversity-related questions in the job interview process. • Establish a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan. • Have a DEI metric included in staff performance reviews.
Community Outreach	Effective outreach to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European or White community. • Youth and adolescents. • People who are seniors or elderly. • Women. 	Increase and improve outreach to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barber shops and salons, • neighborhood eateries. • People who are homeless. • Diverse fraternities and sororities.

4. Decision Making and Budgets

ODFW is working to diversify, expand, and align funding with the work we do and the people we serve.

Currently, the department is currently developing its 2025-27 Agency Request Budget. There are a number of areas that intersect with the Department's DEI strategies. One such area is expanding the department's reach and presence in suburban and urban areas. While instructions from the Governor's Office and Department of Administrative Services indicate a constrained general fund outlook for the coming biennium, ODFW was able to include a policy option package related to living with wildlife in suburban and urban areas. This will include biologists and support for rehabilitation centers to provide outreach and support for communities to help them co-exist with wildlife and better understand and feel connected to wildlife in these suburban and urban settings.

The department's 2025-27 budget will also be dependent on adjustments to commercial and recreational fishing and recreational hunting fees. In developing fee adjustment scenarios, the department has prioritized holding juvenile licenses constant while increasing other products. This supports the agency's goal to ensure that families are able to participate in hunting and angling opportunities. The department is also evaluating new products such as a low-cost shad fishing license to provide affordable fishing opportunities for under-represented populations. Staff are also researching the possibility of statutory changes to allow the use of SNAP benefits for purchasing hunting and fishing licenses for securing food resources.

5. Contracting and Procurement

While the number of contracts awarded under Business Oregon's Certification Office of Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) is increasing, ODFW is working to continue the upward trend.

To prioritize increasing ODFW's contracting with COBID-certified firms, the agency has performed and continues to perform the following:

- Consistent with Executive Order 18-03, for intermediate procurements, solicit quotes or bids from at least one minority-owned business, one woman-owned business, one business that a service-disabled veteran owns, and one emerging small business, when possible.
- Participate in the new DAS Procurement Services Training, "New Statewide Policy and Procedure for Business Equity, Inclusion and Engagement in Public Procurement."
- Provide training to staff throughout the state on how to seek out and include COBID-certified businesses for small procurement opportunities.

6. Diversifying Workforce and Internal Culture

ODFW's workforce does not currently reflect the diversity of Oregon's population. This can cause certain groups to feel isolated in the workplace. Here is the agency's plan to improve that.

To improve the diversity of our workforce, the agency is committed to operationalizing our values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the recruitment and selection process. In 2024, we are continuing our focus on the following strategies and tools to further this goal.

- Post positions broadly, tracking where applicants heard about the job and what attracted them to the position.
- Encourage participation in career days and provide resources and materials to managers.
- Educate managers on hiring guidelines including information about unconscious bias.
- Identify and eliminate exclusionary language from job postings.
- Increase or maintain our visibility as an employer with existing colleges.

- Update current internship resources to focus on DEI and review through an equity lens.

To better foster and support a diverse internal culture, the agency plans to launch employee resource groups for ODFW employees by December of 2024. These groups would provide a safe space for interested employees to connect with colleagues who have similar backgrounds or experiences.

7. Service Delivery

The agency is working to increase our population served, diversifying the Oregonians that receive services from our agency.

- The agency is currently inviting members of the public from underrepresented communities to complete a [racial equity participation questionnaire](#) regarding interest in engaging in rulemaking and other processes that may affect their community or region.
- The Limited English Proficiency Plan outlines how the agency will provide timely and meaningful access to ODFW programs, services, and benefits to individuals that do not speak English as their primary language and have limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English, as well as deaf or hard of hearing individuals.
- The Program Accessibility for People with Disabilities Policy confirms that no person with a disability shall be denied the benefits of, excluded from participation in, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any programs, activities, or services of ODFW because facilities accessible to, or usable by, persons with disabilities are not available.
- The Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund (OCRF) funds projects designed to serve environmental justice communities, and focuses on engaging with underserved people and communities that have not traditionally participated in conservation issues or outdoor recreation in the past due to various barriers including but not limited to ethnicity, race, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disabilities, and/or other cultural, religious and/or economic status, and other considerations as listed in the State of Oregon Equity Framework.
- ODFW welcomes people to hunt, fish, trap, harvest shellfish, and participate in wildlife viewing regardless of their race, color, religion, national origin (including language), sex, age, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation.

The following efforts have been initiative to reach that goal:

- Conduct effective stewardship of Oregon's fish, wildlife, and their habitats through sound science and addressing constituent needs.
- Identify full breadth of constituents (Oregonians) so that we can use that information to communicate effectively, diversify our programs, adequately fund the agency to support their interests, and incorporate them into our decision-making processes.
- Increase or maintain public satisfaction with ODFW as the agency responsible for protecting and managing fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- Efficiently engage a broader constituency in ODFW's public processes and continue to build trust through transparency.
- Increase the proportion of Oregonians participating in hunting, angling, shellfish harvest, or wildlife viewing.
- Maintain high quality access experience for all user groups of anglers and hunters.
- Increase diversity of customers to represent social demographic trends in Oregon to include gender, age, and ethnicity.

Contact Us

ODFW.DEI@ODFW.OREGON.GOV

ODFW DIRECTOR-DEBBIE COLBERT
503-947-6044

**INTERIM DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR
ADMINISTRATION-KEN LOFFINK**
971-718-3929

**ODFW AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
REPRESENTATIVE-ALEXIS ISOM**
503-947-6058

