

## **Equity Resolution**

### **OWEB Resolution 01-2023**

#### **Background**

WHEREAS, OWEB's mission is "to help protect and restore healthy watersheds and natural habitats that support thriving communities and strong economies."

WHEREAS, robust ecosystem biodiversity is a critical component of ecological stability and resilience.

WHEREAS, the same is true for social systems as it is for ecological systems- diversity of experience, thought, and approach strengthen our organization and thus our watershed restoration and conservation work.

WHEREAS, OWEB recognizes that diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice must be front and center in all our board decisions, policy making, and budgeting processes, as these are integral to the protection and long-term sustainability of our ecosystems, wildlife populations and communities.

WHEREAS, Historically, white European-centric institutions have dominated the conservation movement in the United States. At the same time there has been exclusion, divestment, and dispossession of BIPOC communities.

WHEREAS, OWEB acknowledges that historically we too have failed to question the status-quo and prioritize our attentions to marginalized communities that rely on stable ecosystems for their health and their livelihoods. We have also failed to appropriately consider the conservation practices and strategies of indigenous peoples or to recognize and integrate culturally diverse perspectives and values of nature and its contributions.

WHEREAS, diversifying our representation, including non-traditional knowledge forms, and expanding on our current set of European-centric metrics of success, we will achieve a more equitable distribution of our funding opportunities, allocation of resources, and greater environmental impact across Oregon.

#### **Resolution**

**Be it resolved** that the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board will:

- Continue learning how to recognize and eliminate biases, counteract institutional racism, expand beyond white-dominant culture, and build a more inclusive grantmaking process.

- Incorporating non-traditional knowledge, scientific ideals, metrics, and strategies.
- Reach out to and work with non-traditional partners, especially those who prioritize and serve traditionally underrepresented and marginalized communities.
- Allocate resources to fairly compensate the expertise and participation of traditionally underrepresented and marginalized communities.
- Review and update OWEB’s grant application process to ensure it is accessible to all eligible applicants.
- Humbly engage in this work while recognizing that we are human, will make mistakes, and that this is a continuous process of learning and unlearning.
- Learn and apply diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice principles when making funding decisions to address challenges arising from climate change to traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities.
- Engage traditionally underrepresented and impacted communities in processes to craft meaningful solutions that are integrated into funding decisions.

**It is further resolved** that the above resolutions will be implemented through applicable strategies within OWEB’s authorities. Strategies include but are not limited to:

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## **Definitions**

Underrepresented communities:

BIPOC:

Traditional Ecological Knowledge:

European-Centric:

White dominant: