



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of State Lands

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Amria Streeter
Environmental Justice Task Force
Office of the Governor
900 Court Street NE
Salem OR 97301

State Land Board

Kate Brown
Governor

Bev Clarno
Secretary of State

Re: DSL Annual Report – Calendar Year 2019

Tobias Read
State Treasurer

Dear Task Force Members:

The Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) respectfully submits our annual report to the Environmental Justice Task Force (EJTF). Though this report reflects back on our 2019 work, I want to take a moment to look ahead to 2020. Current events are shining a hard light on environmental justice and racial justice in our state and across the nation. This year, DSL will begin examining our programs, policies, and processes to address inequities in our operations. We look forward to sharing updates on our progress throughout the year.

Introduction

DSL is the State Land Board's administrative agency, carrying out the day-to-day work of managing the school lands and resources that contribute revenue to the Common School Fund. The Department's core programs:

- **Manage land to benefit education.** The Real Property Program manages school lands and other lands overseen by DSL.
- **Protect waters and wetlands.** The Aquatic Resource Management Program oversees the state's removal-fill law, the federal North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and use of state-owned waterways.
- **Increase understanding of estuaries and coastal watersheds.** The 5,900-acre South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve, managed in partnership by DSL and the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration, provides research and education to support stewardship of natural resources in Oregon and beyond.
- **Ensure exceptional public service.** The Director's Office and Administration teams ensure DSL meets the expectations of the Land Board, the Legislature, and all Oregonians.

DSL actively supports the EJTF in protecting environmental justice communities from disproportionate environmental impacts. The agency's communications manager serves as DSL's EJTF advocate. The advocate is the primary contact for environmental justice concerns:

Ali Ryan Hansen
Communications Manager
Oregon Department of State Lands
Phone: 503-510-6860
ali.r.hansen@state.or.us

The advocate continues to seek, support and create opportunities for further environmental justice training for all DSL employees. The advocate participates in the quarterly EJTF meetings and discusses agency-related EJTF meeting topics with relevant management and staff.

DSL has developed an environmental justice webpage featuring links to valuable resources such as the "Environmental Justice: Best Practices for Oregon's Natural Resource Agencies" handbook by the EJTF; the Environmental Protection Agency's "EJSCREEN: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool Share"; and the EPA's environmental justice strategy. The webpage also provides links to agency EJTF reports and EJTF citizen advocate contact information.

2019 Environmental Justice Efforts at DSL

Working with Tribal Governments. DSL coordinates with Oregon's nine federally recognized tribal governments as outlined in the agency's [State Agency Coordination Program](#) (SAC). The program commits DSL to:

- Include affected Tribal interests in the review/comment of agency actions likely to affect Tribal members or resources of Tribal interest.
- Carefully and thoughtfully consider Tribal comments concerning pending decisions and actions.
- Provide materials to natural resource agencies within each Tribal government that explain DSL's roles and responsibilities in natural resource management.

DSL has adopted an agency policy that works to establish, promote and improve government-to-government relations between DSL and Oregon's federally recognized tribes.

Throughout 2019, staff participated in the Cultural Resources and Natural Resources Workgroup meetings. In addition, multiple staff attended a Government-to-Government training hosted by the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians on November 7. The Annual State-Tribal Summit on December 3 was attended by both the Director and the agency Tribal Liaison, as was the Cultural Cluster meeting on December 4.

Staff members from different programs participated in multiple forms of communication and coordination with tribal representatives and workgroups. Increased outreach efforts were

made during 2019, including requests for comment and participation with potentially affected tribes regarding removal-fill permit and land management activities, and regarding potential regulatory process changes. DSL executive staff engaged in government-to-government consultation with tribes on several high-profile projects including the potential Elliott State Research Forest and the proposed Jordan Cove Energy Project. DSL's coordination with the tribes is detailed in the agency's [2019 Annual Government-to-Government Report](#).

DSL's Multicultural Awareness Committee also provides information on National American Indian Heritage Month for all staff, and posts the Governor's proclamation in November of each year.

Multicultural Awareness Committee. The Multicultural Awareness Committee (MAC) fosters an inclusive environment within DSL, and includes the following areas of focus:

Awareness: The committee promotes everyday awareness of the diverse nature of the people and cultures that comprise DSL's staff and Oregon's population. The committee looks for opportunities to celebrate diversity in ways that ensure an open and inclusive workplace.

Training: The committee provides agency-wide biennial training on multicultural awareness to:

- Ensure that all employees possess social and cultural awareness that will allow them to effectively interact with a diverse community and workforce.
- Increase on-the-job effectiveness by fostering acceptance of cultural differences.

Customer Engagement Strategy. The agency's Strategic Plan, adopted in 2017, includes an objective to "Develop and implement a customer engagement strategy, which includes program-specific customer service improvement plans."

DSL's Customer Engagement Guidelines were finalized in 2018, and implementation continued into 2019. The guidelines – an informational, user-friendly resource that outline DSL's shared philosophies, standards, and responsibilities when engaging with our customers – were developed by an agencywide workgroup in 2017-2018. The work group reviewed and used the EJTF Best Practices Handbook in drafting the guidelines. The work group also solicited feedback from both internal and external customers through the review of the draft document and the completion of a short survey. A member of the EJTF participated in this review and survey.

Outreach and Public Participation. DSL is guided by the EJTF Best Practices Handbook and EJSCREEN in developing public engagement and outreach plans. EJSCREEN is used to evaluate proposed waterways management and removal/fill permit activities, with data on the demographic index, low-income households, and linguistic isolation used to flag activities needing further evaluation. Any demographics over the 80th percentile are flagged for further evaluation.

In 2019, DSL continued to implement a rulemaking outreach strategy originally developed in 2016. DSL engages in many rulemaking efforts annually, with many different staff leading those efforts. The goal of the outreach strategy is to provide guidance and consistency on how to promote meaningful public participation in these rulemaking efforts through the appointment of rules advisory committees, public meetings and hearings in affected communities, and public comment.

Additional significant public participation efforts in 2019 included:

- Conducting a public comment opportunity for the proposed Jordan Cove Energy Project removal-fill permit application (since withdrawn). The public involvement approach focused on providing multiple opportunities for the public to learn about the proposed removal-fill activity, and multiple ways to provide comment, and included extensive outreach to inform potentially interested or affected communities of comment opportunities. DSL ultimately received more than 50,000 comments.
- Elliott State Research Forest Project: In December 2018, the State Land Board directed DSL to work with Oregon State University to develop a plan for transforming the Elliott State Forest into a research forest. The engagement approach for the exploratory process focuses on providing accessible, inclusive opportunities for information and input. In 2019, the emphasis was keeping communities informed, with open houses held in Coos Bay, Salem, Portland, and Roseburg, and updates provided on the [project website](#) and by email. The EJTF Best Practices Handbook will continue to be used to guide development of engagement and outreach efforts.

2020 Goals

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, in 2020 DSL will review agency programs, policies, and practices with the goal of equity across all agency operations. As this critical work begins, we will also continue existing efforts to examine and improve customer service and public involvement practices and rulemaking and permit review processes.

I am extremely proud of our efforts thus far but know significant and serious work remains. DSL is committed to continuing to support the EJTF's efforts, to expanding our understanding of environmental justice issues, and to actively and meaningfully make progress toward equality.

Sincerely,



Vicki L. Walker
Director