



Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Policy on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) is a grassroots organization representing conservation districts in Washington State. WACD is committed to embracing people and perspectives from all walks of life and backgrounds. We recognize that the diversity of people in Washington State has not historically been reflected in our WACD leadership, staff, or membership. Moving forward, we support actions that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the work we do.

We take our general definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion from the work of the National Association of Conservation District's DEI Task Force:

- **Diversity is who we are.** It is a broad concept that encompasses all the differences among individuals. Diversity, therefore, is inclusive of all people and their thoughts, ideas, backgrounds, and experiences.
- **Equity is how we do it.** It is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all.
- **Inclusion is what we do.** It is bringing individuals and groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that empowers and values them.

A core value of the conservation districts we serve is to work at the grassroots level. Conservation districts work directly with local communities and landowners to help them solve natural resources concerns in a voluntary and collaborative manner. We recognize that to be of service and to stay relevant to communities across the state we must continually seek out, include, and learn from people that are representative of the diversity of the natural resource concerns in our communities. We continually strive for better future conditions of natural resources because they affect everyone.

We commit to encouraging greater diversity in our state board and in local conservation district boards. We commit to a continual examination of our own programs, policies, procedures, and actions to improve DEI in our work for and with conservation districts and conservation partners. We commit to working with every member district in Washington State to encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion in their leadership, their staff, and their service to their communities.

The values and actions identified in this policy are transformational and will take many years of consistent, persistent work to create true and lasting change. As WACD approaches its 80th anniversary, we recognize that we can no longer wait. The time to begin is now. WACD is fully engaged in improving diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work with conservation districts, conservation partners, and others to achieve our fundamental goal of transforming how we reach and work with people in all our communities in Washington State to protect and conserve our invaluable natural resources.