

Diversity & Inclusion Working Group

Chair: Jennifer Newmark (NV)

Thursday, March 29, 2018

3:30-5PM

Attendees = 23

- Welcome and introductions- Jen
- Diversity Joint Venture (DJV)-
 - Background: a partnership of federal and state agencies, universities, NGOs, foundations and professional societies with a shared purpose of increasing the number of women and people of color into the workforce of professionals who preserve and protect natural resources. It also furthers the idea that a diverse and inclusive workforce, including diverse thoughts and experiences will enhance our ability to preserve and protect natural resources.
 - Would like AFWA to be officially a part/join this Joint Venture
 - Drafting resolution to this affect for the September AFWA Annual Meeting in September
 - Partnership includes the sharing of knowledge and skills to advance this initiative; diversity will improve the outcomes through increased creativity, problem-solving, innovation and performance.
 - The DJV has been around ~3 years → a fairly new initiative
 - Jen will send out the full list of those who are already members of the DJV via email to the group
- Draft resolution for AFWA to join the DJV- for review
 - May need to wordsmith some of the language
 - See draft resolution and suggested edits in track changes [attached]
- Diversity & Inclusion Working Group- Work Plan
 - We will be reviewing and updating this plan at our AFWA Annual Meeting
 - In the plan this as far as objectives/activities:
 1. Work towards increased relevancy of states to broader constituencies by incorporating concepts of diversity and inclusion both internally and externally.
 2. Work with other committees and subcommittees/working groups in messaging diversity and inclusion topics and incorporating concepts into outreach materials.
 3. Assist in the development of materials for agencies to incorporate internally that incorporates diversity and inclusion.
 - Discussion: create a photo database that can be used by others that shows diversity & inclusion; create a best practices guide of what people should do
 - Discussion: can we do case studies to see what other states have done and sharing success stories → perhaps create best practices and lessons learned **[ACTION]**

- Discussion: create a database to share how state agencies are being diverse and inclusive
 - Where would you get that information?
 - States may be uncomfortable in sharing that information
 - Should be available through state agency HR department
 - Show benchmarks and progress
 - This effort was tried years ago and the states wouldn't share; might be different now??

- Discussion: perhaps this WG can create an award that can be given annually/bi-annually to a state agency for their Diversity & Inclusion efforts [ACTION]
 - Overall the group was very much in favor of this idea
 - Might even add some sort of veterans award as part of this idea
 - Question: where would we present this award→ not during the AFWA Awards banquet

- ACTION: ask if this award can be part of the AFWA Awards, and if not then find another prominent place to place this award; based on relevancy

- FUTURE ACTION ITEM: the Diversity & Inclusion Working Group will work on creating an award commending forward efforts in diversity and inclusion in state agencies that increases state agency relevancy.
 - Will talk with Tony to see where he feels this belongs then move it along the proper chain of command. [ACTION]
 - Create a creative award: a coin or something else creative that would become a sort of sought out collectable item.
 - Would want to create some sort of nomination criteria and a rubric to show 'path' of getting award

- Discussion: add agency recognition in showing state agency relevancy; telling the state story
 - Mechanism on AFWA website is already in place, just need content

- Discussion: most states are in their infancy diversity & inclusion, so having case studies and best practices for states to use

- Make suggestions to “**Walk the Talk**” in future plenary sessions that includes diversity and inclusion in regards to increasing state agency relevancy

- Working to create a Basecamp or Google Docs to work on documents internally
 - Looking for volunteers
 - Creating a collaborative workspace
 - Kelly Reynolds will help create a google docs space for collaborative efforts

- Look at creating frequent conference calls (monthly?) for this working group [ACTION]
 - Patty will create a survey to collect who wants to be part of that call and how frequently the calls should be
 - Jen- will need help providing content and discussion points for these calls

- Recovering America's Wildlife Act- how can we help
 - To help reach inwardly to get the word out and support → to help change agency culture
 - All in favor of this effort
 - We can promote asking to share the OurNatureUSA.org and ask people to their call to action
 - Share the social media posts from the Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife
 - We need to make this a priority and help our constituency see themselves as benefiting from these efforts