



WRIA 8 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan Summary

Vision:

Since 2000, 28 local governments in WRIA 8 and representatives from businesses, community groups, residents, state, and federal agencies have partnered to recover endangered Chinook and other salmon species in the watershed. As the most populated watershed in Washington State, WRIA 8 is dedicated to restoring watershed health for the benefit of salmon and people and to strengthening our commitments to diversity, equity, inclusion, and environmental justice.

Our vision is grounded in an understanding that salmon recovery and values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are fundamentally inseparable. Recovering salmon takes working together and ensuring those contributing to and benefitting from salmon recovery reflect the diversity of communities in the watershed. Maintaining and expanding involvement of all people in the watershed and empowering diverse perspectives better equips us to tackle the complex challenges we face in salmon recovery efforts. We recognize recovering salmon requires long-term commitment, and efforts to engage and inspire a next generation of salmon recovery leaders are critical.

Restoring salmon habitat benefits human health and well-being by protecting and increasing open space, reducing flood risk, improving water quality and quantity, improving stormwater management, increasing recreational opportunities, and helping mitigate impacts from climate change. We acknowledge our role and responsibility to affirm and advance environmental equity and justice and are committed to advancing equitable distribution of the benefits and burdens in setting and implementing salmon recovery priorities throughout the watershed. By advancing equity in recovery outcomes, we open the door for increased and more innovative opportunities to restore the whole watershed for salmon and people.

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee Purpose:

- ◆ Develop Strategic Plan to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in WRIA 8 salmon recovery.
- ◆ Provide recommendations to the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council and committees.
- ◆ Lead implementation of DEI strategies and actions.
- ◆ Ensure continuous learning, partnerships, ongoing engagement, evaluation, and adaptation.

Goals:

1. Achieve equitable and intentional distribution of resources, benefits, and risks of WRIA 8 salmon recovery work.
2. Identify and address barriers that may prevent diverse and inclusive participation in WRIA 8, so we reflect all people in the watershed and benefit from a richness of perspectives, experiences, and skills.
3. Center environmental justice in opportunities and outcomes of WRIA 8 salmon recovery.
4. Ensure WRIA 8 provides culturally appropriate and accessible opportunities and information for the communities we serve.
5. Support tribal treaty rights in recovering sustainable and harvestable salmon stocks that, in turn, sustain tribal fisheries.

Initial Strategies:

- ◆ Establish a WRIA 8 SRC Subcommittee to create and implement WRIA 8's DEI vision.
- ◆ Revise grant funding applications and review criteria to strengthen DEI principles in the grant round process and funding decisions and outcomes.
- ◆ Incorporate DEI principles in WRIA 8 communications and outreach.
- ◆ Strengthen connections between WRIA 8 and community groups and organizations focused on environmental equity and justice.