



**JUSTICE
EQUITY
DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION
(JEDI)
REPORT**

DECEMBER 2021

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WHO WE ARE

We are a national network of conservation, scientific, education, religious, sporting, outdoor recreation, business and community organizations—and nearly 600,000 individual activists and supporters—all dedicated to protecting our nation's disappearing wildlife and last remaining wild places. We use grassroots mobilization, education, and targeted campaigns to enable every American to participate in actions that impact the democratic political process.



OUR JEDI MISSION STATEMENT

WHY

The Endangered Species Coalition (ESC) believes that in order to truly protect our natural environment and biodiversity, the environmental movement must work in meaningful collaboration with all members of our society. All the world's people are impacted by the loss of biodiversity and, therefore, must be included and have a say in how we respond, especially the frontline communities most vulnerable to environmental collapse. We know that our movement and our organization are stronger when we are unified and inclusive in our mission. Inclusivity means we will intentionally foster a culture and approach that can enhance our ability to attract people with racial, ethnic, cultural, historical, and gender differences to our board and staff. Incorporating diverse perspectives will enable ESC to face challenges in a more global, creative way. By working with diverse individuals, communities, and groups, ESC is open to new opportunities to continuously reassess historical and contemporary injustices. We remain conscious of areas where acknowledgement, growth, and change are necessary and attainable.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

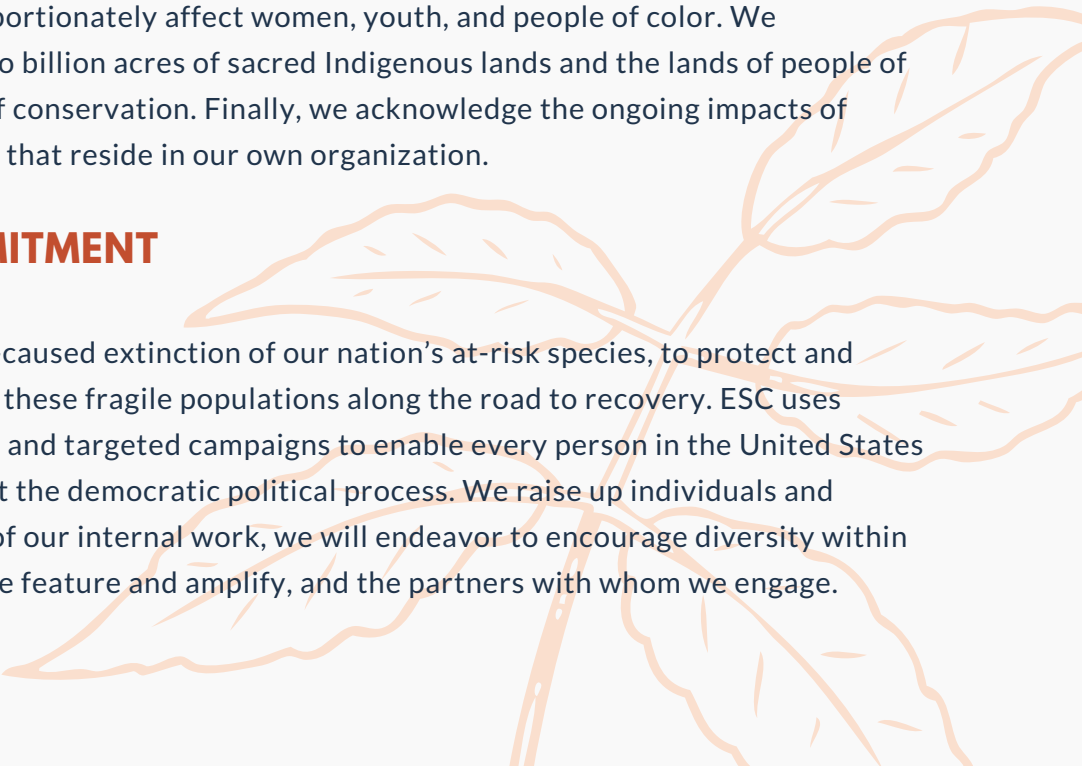
ESC acknowledges that in order to effectively conserve the diversity of life within our nation, we must build a movement that represents and reflects all people across this nation and its island territories. In order to do this, we must first acknowledge the wrongs of the past, and the inequitable impact of these wrongs on the present.

We acknowledge the discriminatory practices perpetrated by society as a whole. In that spirit we acknowledge the systemic exclusivity of the environmental movement, and recognize that the impacts of environmental degradation disproportionately affect women, youth, and people of color. We acknowledge the theft of nearly two billion acres of sacred Indigenous lands and the lands of people of color, including theft in the name of conservation. Finally, we acknowledge the ongoing impacts of historic racism and colonial culture that reside in our own organization.

ESC'S ROLE AND COMMITMENT

ESC AS AN INSTITUTION

ESC's mission is to stop the human-caused extinction of our nation's at-risk species, to protect and restore their habitats, and to guide these fragile populations along the road to recovery. ESC uses grassroots mobilization, education, and targeted campaigns to enable every person in the United States to participate in actions that impact the democratic political process. We raise up individuals and partners as spokespeople. As part of our internal work, we will endeavor to encourage diversity within our internal practices, the voices we feature and amplify, and the partners with whom we engage.



OUR JEDI MISSION STATEMENT

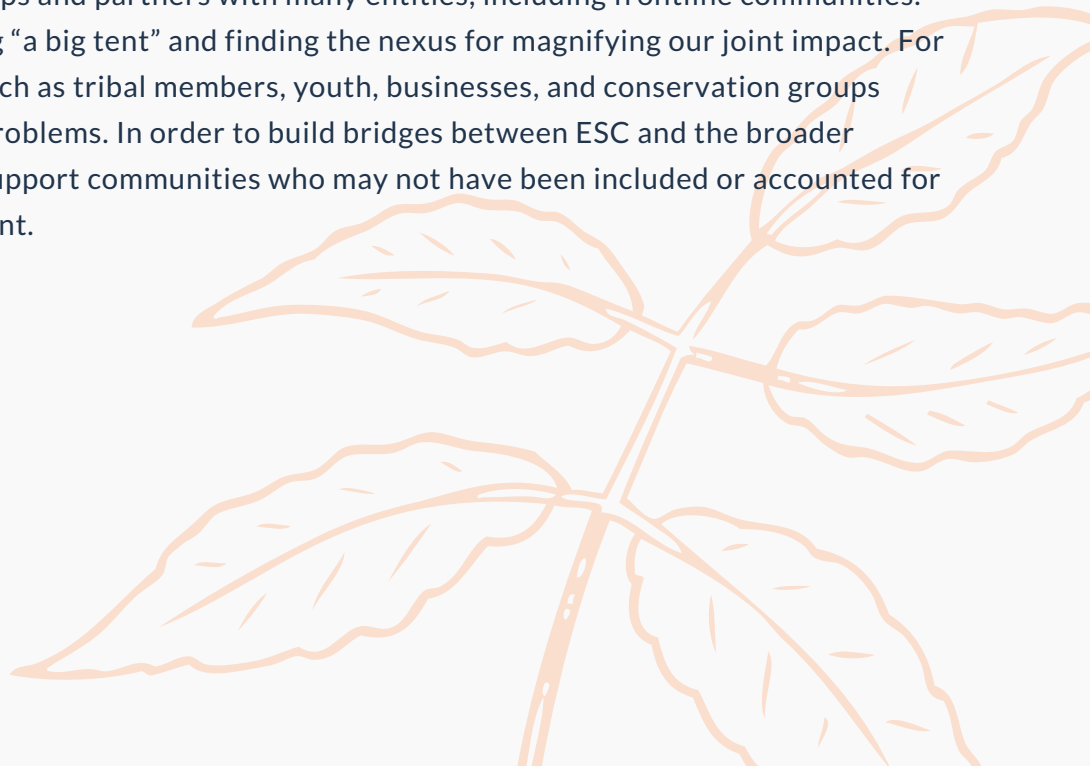
We believe that it is our responsibility to demonstrate and communicate a) that every person has the right to the beauty of nature, and to natural systems that are functional and intact – and b) that impacts to vulnerable plants and animals are linked to impacts on communities vulnerable to systemic racism and income inequality. When biodiversity suffers, these communities are hurt “first and worst,” carrying a disproportionate impact of pollution and biodiversity loss. Furthermore, the forces—namely an underlying culture of dominance—that diminish thriving, healthy communities are the same as the forces that diminish thriving, healthy biodiversity. We face some of the same opponents—industries and organizations that prioritize extractive values that are harmful to nature and to communities. In order to fulfill our duty to be a part of the conversation and to address systemic problems, we will be a voice that speaks to and spreads awareness about the link between environmental concerns and social justice issues.

ESC AS A COALITION

After we ensure that our organization internally has an ongoing commitment to implement JEDI principles ourselves, we may serve as a model. As a coalition, we have a unique opportunity to grow our community to be reflective of the diversity of our country. We are also in a position to disseminate, support, and encourage the JEDI work of other nonprofit organizations. To support our coalition’s implementation of JEDI principles, we will actively broaden diverse representation of organizations within the coalition and provide our platform to groups who model diversity and cross-sectionality.

ESC & THE BROADER COMMUNITY

In our work, ESC builds relationships and partners with many entities, including frontline communities. We seek opportunities for building “a big tent” and finding the nexus for magnifying our joint impact. For instance, we bring stakeholders such as tribal members, youth, businesses, and conservation groups together to address overlapping problems. In order to build bridges between ESC and the broader community, we will listen to and support communities who may not have been included or accounted for within the environmental movement.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

INTERNAL WORK

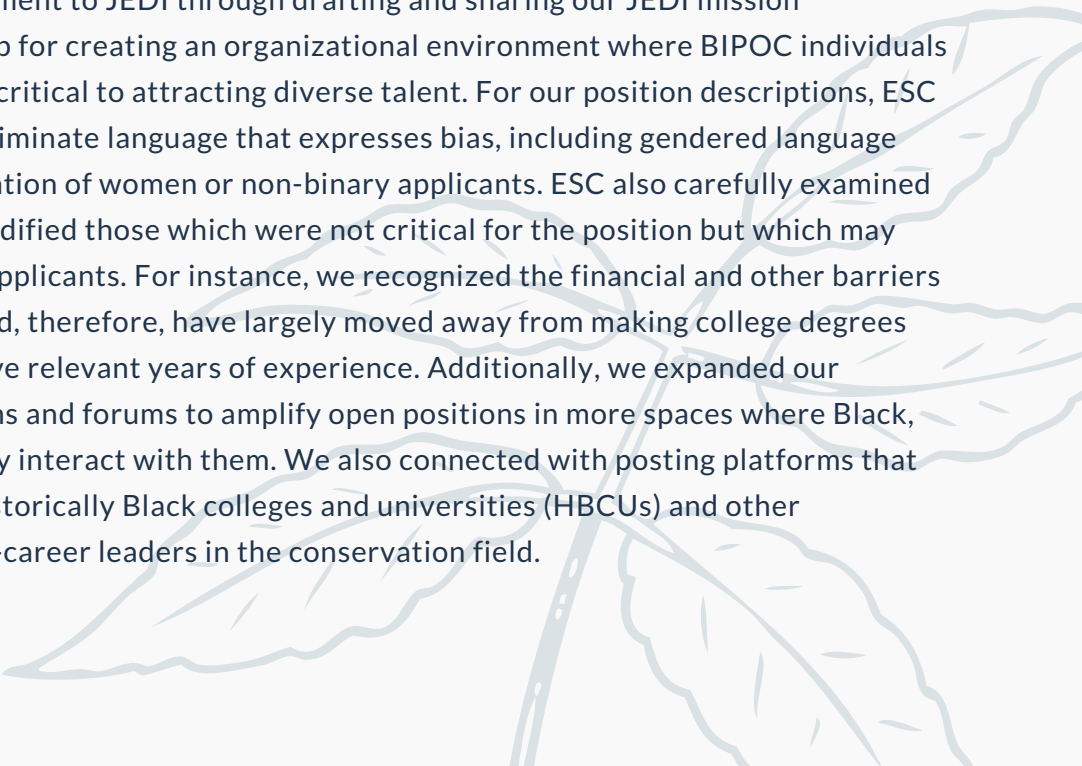
BASELINE ASSESSMENT & THE CHANGE TEAM

In early 2020, ESC completed a baseline assessment about JEDI. This assessment was a survey taken by staff and board members, who shared observations, feelings, and ideas about JEDI at our organization. The results of this baseline assessment served as a launching point for our work, and have informed our actions since then.

Shortly after completing the baseline assessment, ESC determined that an internal JEDI team was necessary. "The Change Team" is a subset of ESC staff, with the purpose of describing, planning, and leading the work required to ensure a continuous process of becoming more just, equitable, inclusive, and diverse. To ensure that varying "levels" of staff and perspectives within ESC are represented, the Change Team is composed of a mix of field staff and leadership. The team meets for an hour and half every two weeks, and rotates staff every six to twelve months. The Change Team has identified a number of goals for ESC and continuously works to advance those goals.

HIRING

ESC acknowledges that despite an increase in diversity of staff in many sectors, the environmental conservation community remains behind in the percentage of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) who are on staff at conservation organizations. ESC has worked to internally address this gap by examining our recruitment and hiring practices and adjusting them to be more equitable and inclusive. Firstly, ESC verbalized our commitment to JEDI through drafting and sharing our JEDI mission statement. This is an important step for creating an organizational environment where BIPOC individuals feel safe, seen, and heard, which is critical to attracting diverse talent. For our position descriptions, ESC worked with JEDI consultants to eliminate language that expresses bias, including gendered language which may discourage the participation of women or non-binary applicants. ESC also carefully examined our required qualifications, and modified those which were not critical for the position but which may have served as a barrier for some applicants. For instance, we recognized the financial and other barriers to obtaining a college education and, therefore, have largely moved away from making college degrees mandatory when job applicants have relevant years of experience. Additionally, we expanded our network of BIPOC-led organizations and forums to amplify open positions in more spaces where Black, Indigenous, and people of color may interact with them. We also connected with posting platforms that allow us to share positions with Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other universities to reach diverse, early-career leaders in the conservation field.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

INTERNAL WORK

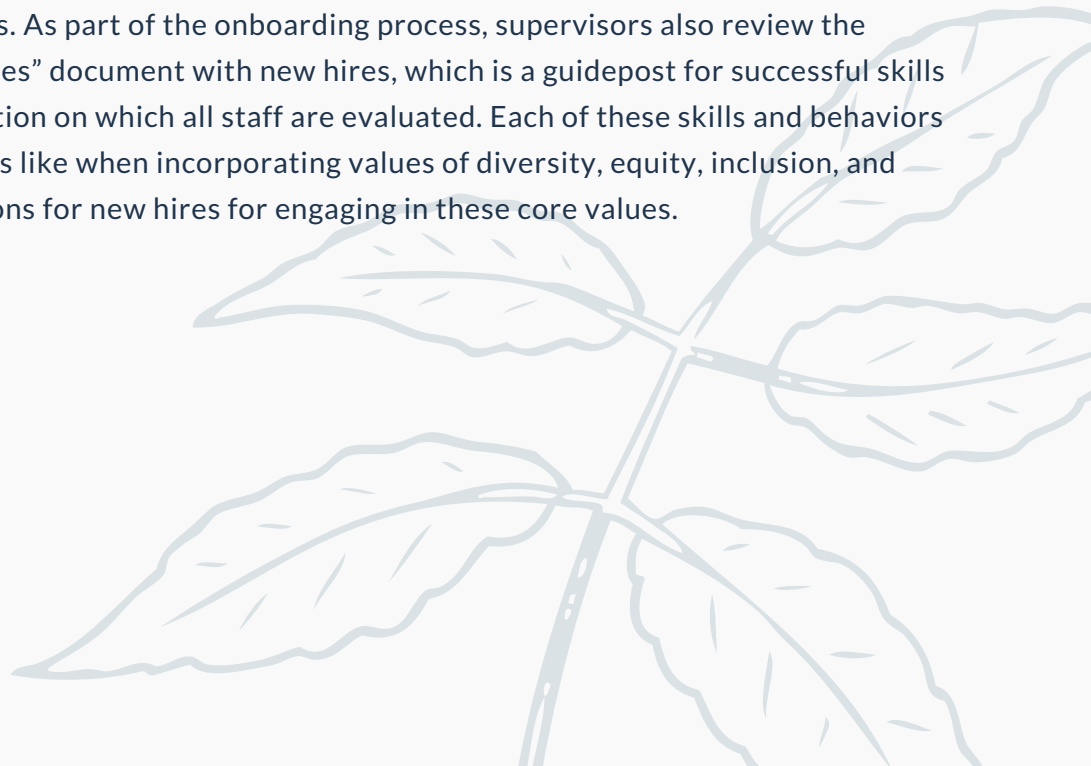
STAFF ONBOARDING

ESC has worked to integrate JEDI into onboarding processes for new staff by ensuring that the organization's JEDI commitments have been read and agreed to by new hires. All ESC employees receive a copy of our employee handbook, which includes a few forms that employees must sign. One form covers sexual and other harassment that requires employees to acknowledge they understand the policy and agree to comply. Another form requires that employees acknowledge that they have received, read, and understood ESC's JEDI mission statement, and it requires employees to make the following commitments:

- I commit to examine my unconscious bias;
- I commit to being open to participating in organization-wide conversations and efforts to address JEDI concerns;
- I commit to actively address JEDI issues in my campaign and work.

Once these forms are signed, the employee follows up with a scheduled conversation with their supervisors on what upholding the JEDI mission statement, specifically, means in relation to their position.

ESC also requires new hires to watch two recorded webinars on JEDI and working with diverse communities in order to build cultural sensitivity and awareness as they begin to interact with ESC's networks and partner communities. As part of the onboarding process, supervisors also review the "Leadership Skills and Competencies" document with new hires, which is a guidepost for successful skills and behaviors within the organization on which all staff are evaluated. Each of these skills and behaviors emphasize what performance looks like when incorporating values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice and lay out clear expectations for new hires for engaging in these core values.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

INTERNAL WORK

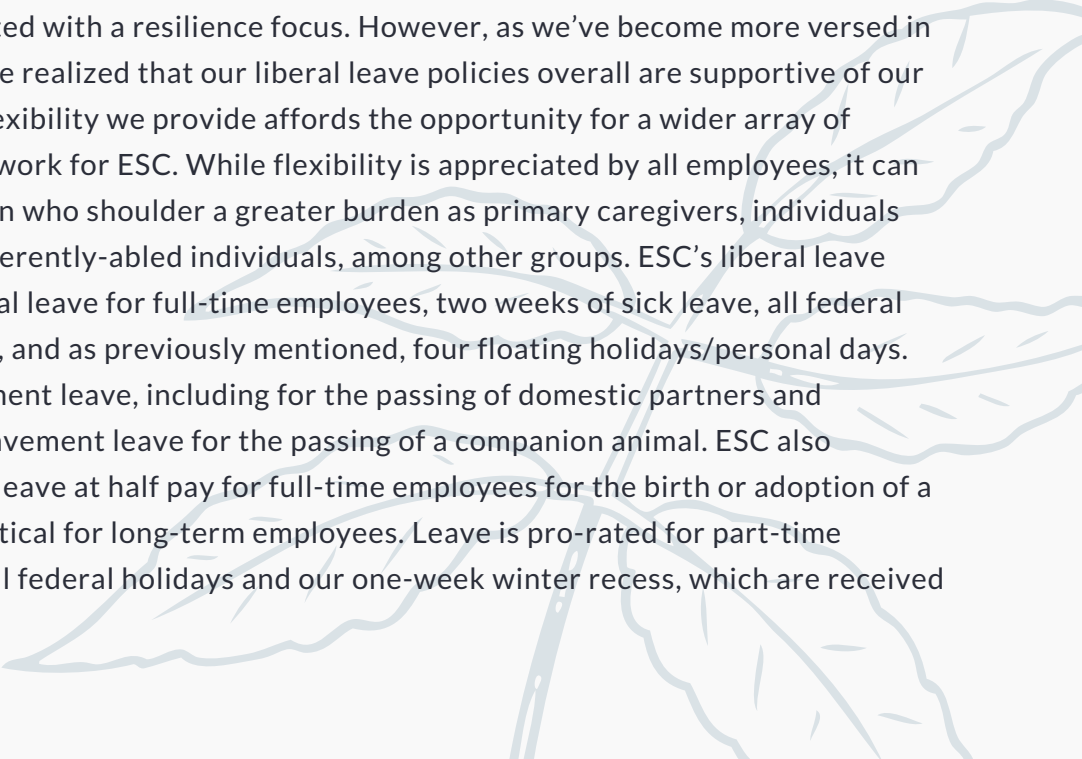
GOAL-SETTING AND EVALUATIONS

In spring 2021, the leadership team at ESC reviewed our staff evaluation process and incorporated JEDI competencies for staff in our performance reviews. During the review process, we also ask staff to determine JEDI goals for the upcoming year. We felt it was important to include JEDI principles into our reviews and goal-setting to make our JEDI work more intentional and transparent, and to encourage all staff to develop their individual competencies in this area. For example, in our staff evaluation process, we review how well staff are collaborating and partnering with movements that combat white supremacy, and how well they are building movements that are accessible and inclusive of those historically ignored within the environmental movement. We also assess how staff are working to consciously address and respond to workplace biases and develop individually as anti-racists.

LEAVE AND VACATION POLICIES

A few of ESC's leave policies were created expressly to address JEDI values. Our parental leave was set up many years ago specifically as parental vs. maternal leave to even the gender playing field. ESC also provided Juneteenth as a holiday before it was made a federal holiday, to honor and acknowledge the historic and ongoing struggle for Black liberation in our country. Finally, we provided four floating holidays/personal days, so that atheists, agnostics, and practitioners of any religion have the same opportunity and access to celebrate religious holidays or to take time off for personally meaningful or significant days.

Our other leave policies were created with a resilience focus. However, as we've become more versed in implementing JEDI principles, we've realized that our liberal leave policies overall are supportive of our JEDI values. We believe that the flexibility we provide affords the opportunity for a wider array of individuals to have the capacity to work for ESC. While flexibility is appreciated by all employees, it can be particularly beneficial for women who shoulder a greater burden as primary caregivers, individuals living with a mental illness, and differently-abled individuals, among other groups. ESC's liberal leave policy provides four weeks of annual leave for full-time employees, two weeks of sick leave, all federal holidays, a one-week winter recess, and as previously mentioned, four floating holidays/personal days. ESC provides five days of bereavement leave, including for the passing of domestic partners and grandparents, and one day of bereavement leave for the passing of a companion animal. ESC also provides three months of parental leave at half pay for full-time employees for the birth or adoption of a child. Finally, ESC provides a sabbatical for long-term employees. Leave is pro-rated for part-time employees, with the exception of all federal holidays and our one-week winter recess, which are received in full by part-time employees.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

INTERNAL WORK

PARTNERING WITH CONSULTANTS

As an organization, we acknowledge that upholding the values of JEDI is the work of all staff. At the same time, we recognize that there are experts with deep knowledge from whom we are able to benefit. Consultants are able to give us language to name the issues that the organization is grappling with, to provide us with best practices gleaned from their experience, and to suggest concrete strategies in implementing our JEDI values.

ESC has, therefore, partnered with consultants who specialize in JEDI work and multi-cultural communications to provide guidance and training for the staff and board, to facilitate occasional calls to help resolve difficult issues, to suggest resources that can deepen our understanding, and to review ESC's communications. Consultants have regularly met with ESC's leadership to assist them in setting a course to deeply integrate JEDI values into the organization. In addition, individual staff have benefited from the expertise and knowledge of these consultants. For instance, some staff have participated in programs dedicated exclusively to supporting staff of color in majority white organizations. ESC's Executive Director has participated in a program for white leaders who seek to achieve a diverse, equitable, just, and inclusive organization. Much of the progress that we have made to date has been accomplished in no small part thanks to the investment of time that we have received from our consultant partners. We view our JEDI efforts as an ongoing process that will always need continuous care and attention. For that reason, we anticipate that our partnerships with consultants will continue.

MONTHLY CONVERSATIONS

Every week, the entire ESC team meets for a regular all-staff call. In January 2021, we began setting aside one of these calls each month for JEDI-focused conversations. The Change Team selects the topic each month and provides facilitation. For example, the topics we have covered on previous calls include: Our Identities and How They Impact Us, Implicit Bias, "Cancel Culture," Cultural Appropriation vs. Appreciation, and Code-Switching. Staff typically complete readings, watch videos, or fill out worksheets before the call, and then participate in a facilitated discussion. The goal of these conversations is to promote ongoing learning and reflection among our staff, as well as to build an environment where people are more comfortable discussing JEDI issues when they arise outside of staff calls.

In addition, we created Slack channels that focus on conversations around JEDI issues. These channels allow staff to interact outside of calls and trainings to continue to engage in conversations about ongoing and new issues.

WHAT WE'VE DONE:

INTERNAL WORK

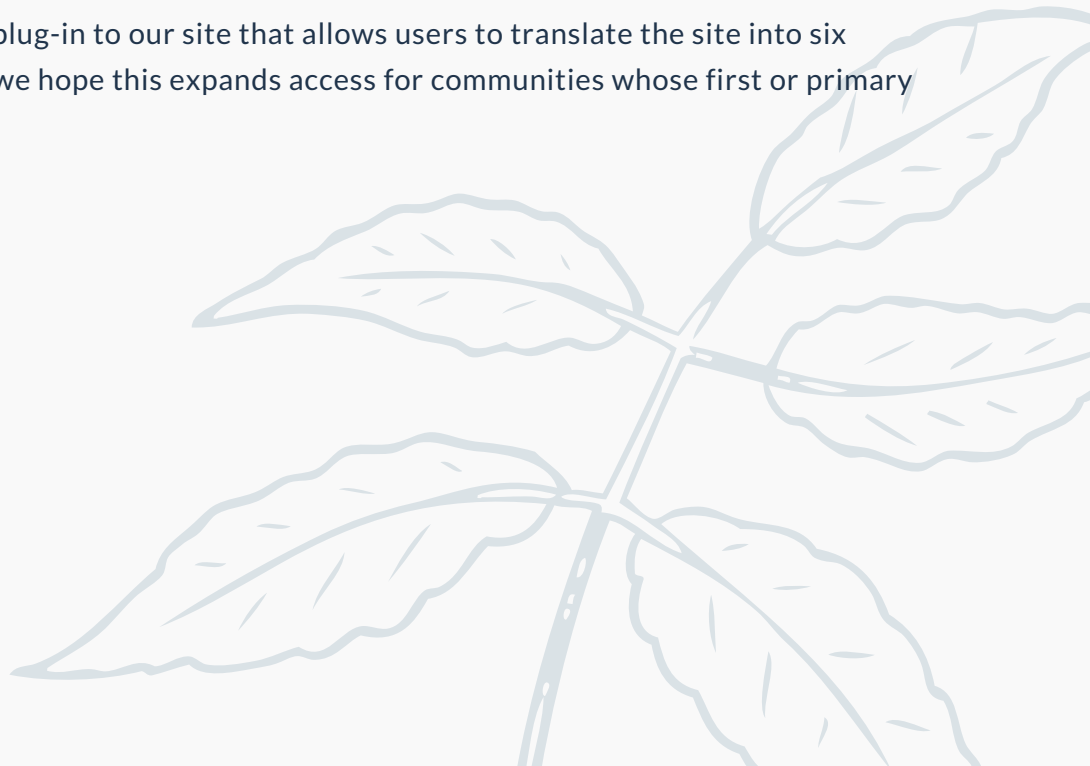
WEBSITE ACCESSIBILITY

ESC recently redesigned our website to facilitate a greater focus on accessibility. Our goal is to provide digital inclusion for people with disabilities—19 percent of the U.S. population—to allow more individuals to be a part of our movement.

Specifically, we have made these changes or additions in pursuit of that accessibility goal:

- The website uses semantic HTML structure to allow visitors to access the content with screen readers. (A screen reader is an assistive technology that transforms text and images into speech or braille—used by those with learning disabilities and/or those who are blind, visually impaired, or illiterate.)
- It has expanded informative alt-text (written copy that is conveyed in place of an image) on images and graphics.
- Newly-added videos will include captions and newly-added PDF files will meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 to make it possible for a screen reader to properly read the file.
- It uses sufficient color contrast in all areas to allow people with dyslexia or low vision to read text.
- It does not use rapid flashing animations that have been found to contribute to seizures.
- It supports keyboard navigation (in addition to or in place of mouse or trackpad clicks) for non-sighted people or those with motor disabilities.

Additionally, we recently added a plug-in to our site that allows users to translate the site into six different languages. In particular, we hope this expands access for communities whose first or primary language is not English.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

PROGRAMMATIC WORK

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE REPORT

ESC has released a new report, *Justly Biodiverse: Nature's Lifeline for the Health of All Communities*, that shines a spotlight on how systemic environmental racism has deprived low-income and communities of color of the benefits of biodiversity.

We cannot live healthily on a planet stripped of its biodiversity—that is our life-support system. For instance, COVID-19, Ebola, SARS, and other zoonotic diseases make it clear that when we endanger biodiversity, we endanger ourselves. And due to systemic racism—in this case in our health care systems—communities of color have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.

This is just one of many examples in which there are greater impacts from the often targeted loss of biodiversity to low-income and communities of color compared to white communities, particularly those that are middle- and high-income. This is exacerbated by a narrative that people and nature are two separate entities. The report acknowledges the role of the mainstream environmental community, including ESC, in creating a divide that needs to be eliminated. The mainstream conservation movement has largely framed conservation as protecting “untrammelled” wilderness and conserving biodiversity hotspots. Yet, environmental protections repeatedly led to the violation of human rights.

The report gives examples of some of the imperiled species and habitats that play particularly heightened roles in supporting twelve different ways in which healthy biodiversity aids and safeguards humanity. It sets out recommendations and encourages others to offer solutions.

Our goals for the report are to:

- Call on all environmental groups to help uncover how biodiversity loss is an environmental justice issue.
- Support communities working for environmental justice in securing greater biodiversity protections.
- Persuade policymakers that biodiversity loss has significant environmental justice implications.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

PROGRAMMATIC WORK

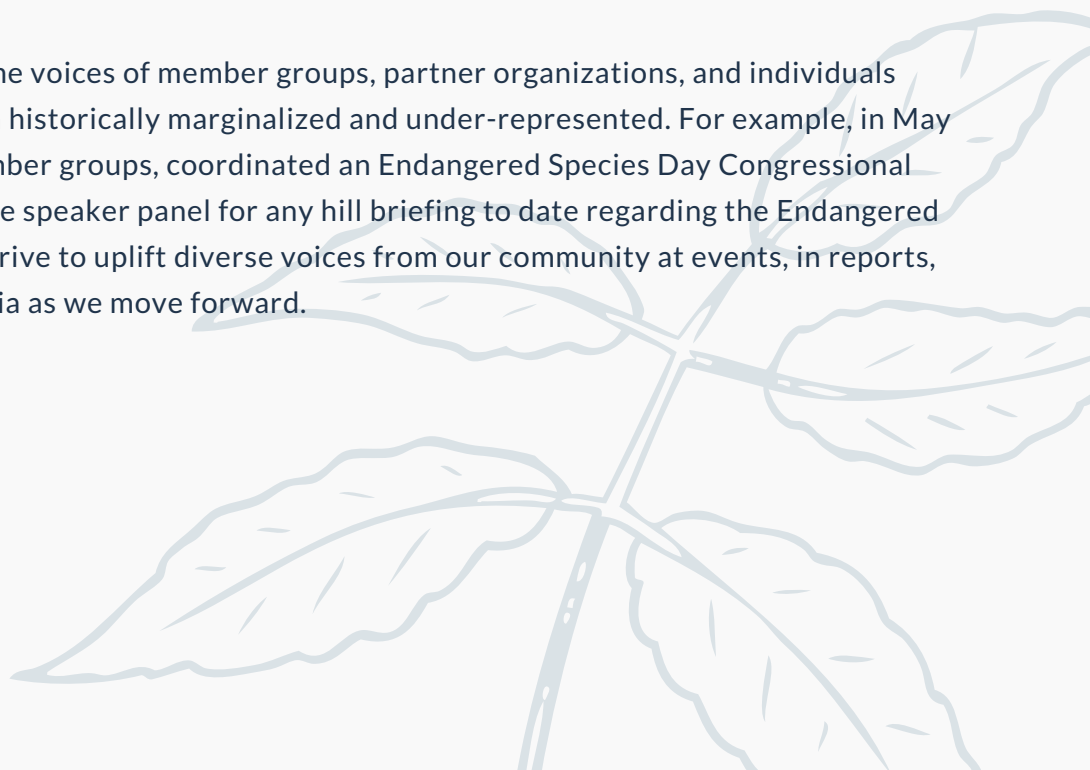
GRASSROOTS CALLS AND MEMBER GROUPS

Since the summer of 2020, ESC's member group work has been more focused on JEDI than ever before. To start, we have made a concerted effort to include more diverse speakers and topics on our bi-monthly grassroots calls, which are open to all of our member organizations, and to engage with more diverse organizations and coalitions.

In regard to speakers and topics, we have had presentations regarding: the role of pesticides in violence and racism; environmental justice and prison abolition; and Declaration for American Democracy, a coalition of 150 diverse labor, environmental, racial justice, and other organizations geared towards get-out-the-vote efforts. We have also had speakers such as Betty Osceola, a conservationist, anti-fracking and clean water advocate, and member of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida of the Panther Clan, who discussed her protest activities, and Jonathan Jennings, with Health in Harmony, whose presentation "Regenerating rainforests by investing in community-designed solutions" was particularly informative regarding the absolute importance of the inclusion of indigenous people in conservation to save humans, wildlife, and the world.

ESC has also joined Neighbors United for DC Statehood and Climate Crisis Policy, both of which are diverse coalitions fighting for racial justice in climate policy and democracy. We hope to continue to support and ally with coalitions like these in the future that connect environmental and justice organizations and build intersectional movements.

We are also working to highlight the voices of member groups, partner organizations, and individuals within our network that have been historically marginalized and under-represented. For example, in May 2021, ESC, along with several member groups, coordinated an Endangered Species Day Congressional briefing which had the most diverse speaker panel for any hill briefing to date regarding the Endangered Species Act. We will continue to strive to uplift diverse voices from our community at events, in reports, and on our website and social media as we move forward.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

PROGRAMMATIC WORK

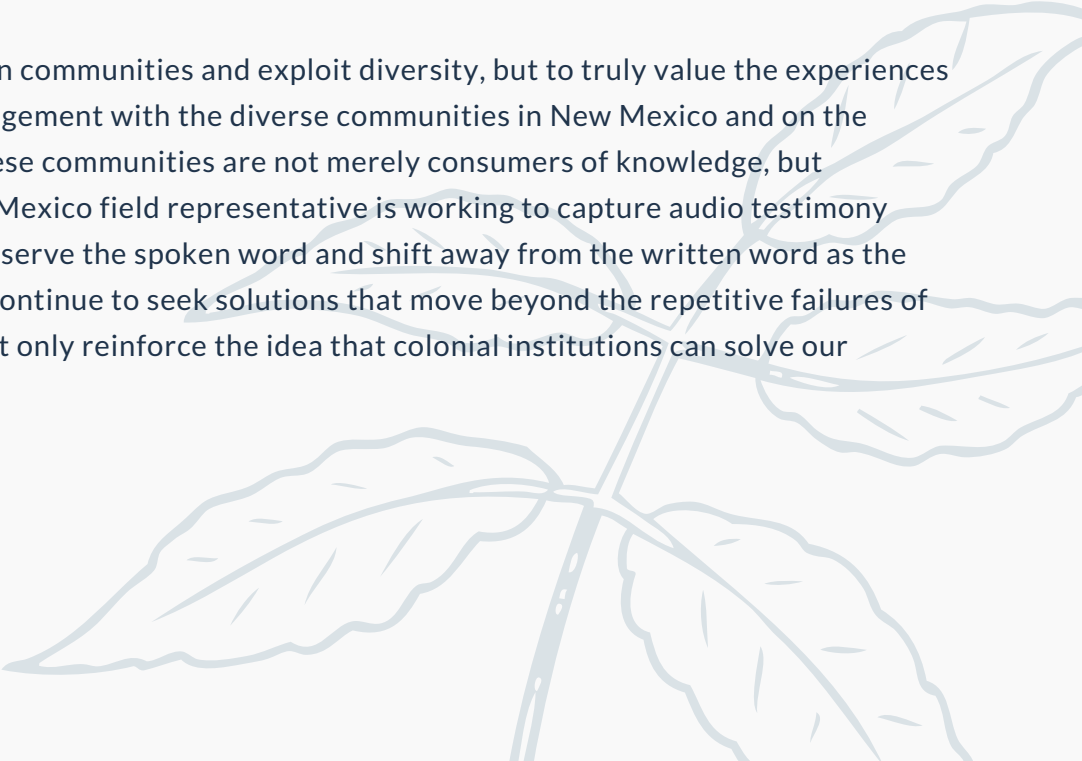
JEDI IN OUR FIELD CAMPAIGNS: NEW MEXICO

ESC has a team of four field staff who each organize in critical campaigns in a specific region: the Northern Rockies, Southern Rockies, Pacific Northwest, and the Southwest. All of our field staff work to integrate JEDI into their regional campaigns.

In New Mexico, our field representative works collectively with member groups and advocates to understand issues and develop localized solutions to affect change. His campaigns reflect the belief that everyone has something to bring to the table, that expertise is not exclusive to academics or within prestigious titles, and that we must value the knowledge of those who most intimately know injustice within the communities we represent. By creating flexible frameworks for change, solutions can be adapted to the diverse interests and needs of the communities we engage with.

For instance, in his pollinator campaign in New Mexico, our field representative has provided local policy examples that can be modified, adapted, and crafted to speak to the values and pressing issues of individual counties in the state. He is also integrating artistic elements into our New Mexico campaigns, particularly using art to tell the story of the importance of migration and pollination. The New Mexico field representative has been meticulously choosing traditionally underserved areas for art projects like the *colonias* of the borderland. Public art not only serves as neighborhood beautification, it also fosters reflexivity and empathy in those who consume it and exposes people to new ideas and stories to cultivate social consciousness.

He is careful to not push agendas on communities and exploit diversity, but to truly value the experiences of community members. In his engagement with the diverse communities in New Mexico and on the borderlands, he recognizes that these communities are not merely consumers of knowledge, but producers of knowledge. The New Mexico field representative is working to capture audio testimony from advocates in the region to preserve the spoken word and shift away from the written word as the only source of knowledge. He will continue to seek solutions that move beyond the repetitive failures of pseudo-activism and strategies that only reinforce the idea that colonial institutions can solve our problems.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

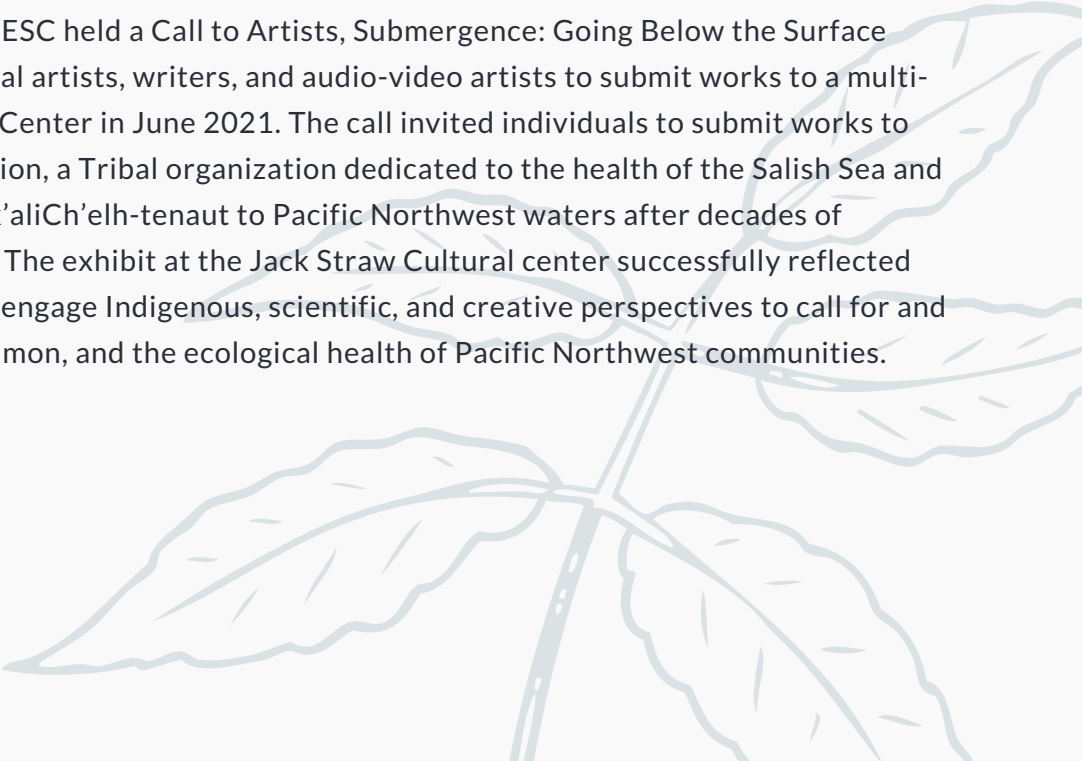
PROGRAMMATIC WORK

JEDI IN OUR FIELD CAMPAIGNS: NORTHERN ROCKIES

As another example of JEDI in our field campaigns, in the Northern Rockies, our field representative integrates JEDI concepts into his work on a regular basis. He has sought to amplify underrepresented and often-marginalized constituencies in biodiversity conservation efforts. For instance, in this region of the country, Native Peoples comprise the largest nonwhite demographic. Due to poor access to healthcare facilities and the rural nature of tribal lands, Native Peoples have experienced high-severity COVID infections at greater rates than white people. So, when planning the grassroots virtual fly-in on pandemics and wildlife trafficking in the winter of 2021, our representative worked with local tribal members in Idaho to elevate their perspectives and center their voices in meetings with Congressional staff. In addition, he has also worked over the years to support tribal members in grizzly bear conservation advocacy.

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Beginning in 2019, ESC has collaborated with our member group Creature Conserve on a workshop and event series related to orca-salmon co/recovery. This project incorporates diverse perspectives of scientists, Indigenous community members, artists and writers to share perspectives on the biological significance and cultural relationships of orca and salmon in the Pacific Northwest. ESC and Creature Conserve jointly held three workshops, one for artists, one for writers, and a third, highly innovative workshop engaging both artists and writers in collaboration. Each workshop featured a speaker from Lummi Nation; Tribal guest speakers included Sul ka dub (Freddie Lane), former council member and visual artist, and Rena Priest, poet. ESC held a Call to Artists, Submergence: Going Below the Surface with Orca and Salmon, inviting visual artists, writers, and audio-video artists to submit works to a multi-media show at Jack Straw Cultural Center in June 2021. The call invited individuals to submit works to donate to the Laqh'temish Foundation, a Tribal organization dedicated to the health of the Salish Sea and return of southern resident orca Sk'aliCh'elh-tenaut to Pacific Northwest waters after decades of captivity at the Miami Seaquarium. The exhibit at the Jack Straw Cultural center successfully reflected our overall vision of the project: to engage Indigenous, scientific, and creative perspectives to call for and enact processes to restore orca, salmon, and the ecological health of Pacific Northwest communities.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

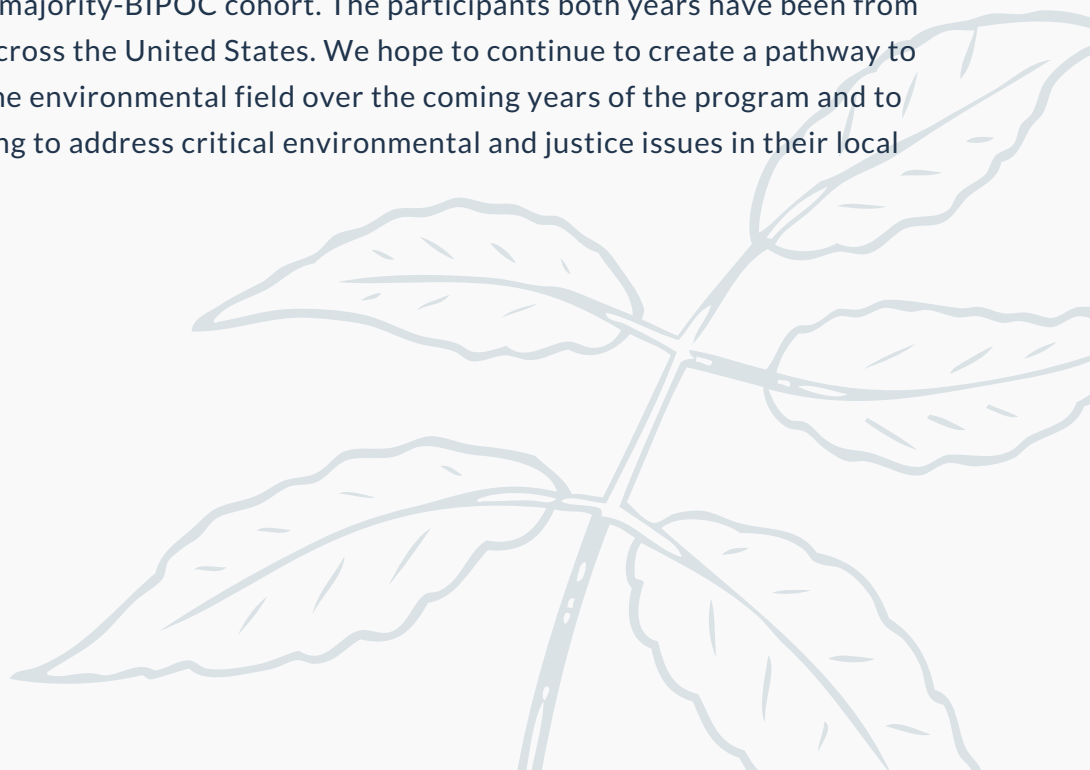
PROGRAMMATIC WORK

INCREASING ACCESS: THE ACTIVIST TRAINING LAB

The Activist Training Lab is a yearlong training program designed to create a pipeline for people of diverse backgrounds to enter the field of environmental and justice organizing. Created in 2020, the program provides approximately 100 hours of classroom training and hands-on experience to a small cohort of twelve to sixteen people. These individuals graduate from the program with the skills, knowledge, experience, and connections needed to launch careers in grassroots organizing and organize campaigns within their local communities.

The program is designed to be accessible to people from different backgrounds. The low time commitment, eight hours per month, means that people with work, school, childcare, family, or other obligations are able to participate. Due to the virtual nature of the program, people can participate from anywhere in the country. The program is free, and we are able to provide support if financial barriers prevent access to technology or the internet. Additionally, the Activist Training Lab lessons are designed to support a variety of educational backgrounds and learning styles, and we have worked to build an inclusive group culture.

For our first year, we were able to recruit a cohort of participants aged seventeen to sixty-one; six different racial identities were represented among the cohort; and more than 40% of the participants came from low-income or working-class backgrounds. In our second year, 66% of the participants are BIPOC individuals, representing a majority-BIPOC cohort. The participants both years have been from rural, suburban, and urban areas across the United States. We hope to continue to create a pathway to achieving a diverse workforce in the environmental field over the coming years of the program and to support individuals who are working to address critical environmental and justice issues in their local communities.



WHAT WE'VE DONE:

PROGRAMMATIC WORK

POLLINATOR PROTECTORS

Through our Pollinator Protectors program, ESC creates habitat for native pollinators by putting local, native plant species in the ground at planting sites across the country— in partnership with and benefitting from the expertise of local leaders. The creation or restoration of planting sites engages community partnerships of all kinds: farms, land trusts, schools, faith organizations, wildlife refuges, national historic monuments, tribes, and many, many other kinds of organizations and communities. Community collaboration is essential to this work, reflecting the linked relationship between people and pollinators. Since 2016, ESC has provided mini-grants to these partners to fund the development or expansion of plantings to more than 150.

Our planting sites demonstrate the local biodiversity knowledge inherent in diverse communities across the country. Since 2016, ESC has worked with planting partners to advance equity and justice, through efforts to create and restore native plant and pollinator habitat. We prioritize attention to local expertise, community-articulated needs, and innovative strategies for addressing access to native plants and pollination. For example, our partnerships with Tilth Alliance, Global Gardens, and other place-based groups that are leaders in addressing food insecurity in their communities have led to plantings that increase pollination benefits at farms and gardens. By leveraging each other's strengths and expertise, we are supporting food security for marginalized communities, including refugee communities and communities that lack food access. Through a new partnership with Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticide's programs at Fort Hall Shoshone-Bannock Reservation, we will provide financial support to tribal community members to disseminate information about their traditional knowledge of native plant material to other tribal members, increasing existing community connection and participation in native plantings. In Columbus, Ohio, we partner with Sunny Glen Garden, funding their comprehensive, community-centered outreach to increase access to pollinator benefits and share knowledge of native plants.

In communities across the country, which have been historically marginalized by environmentally racist policies, community leaders are mobilizing residents to restore and secure accessible pollinator habitat. ESC, together with our mission-aligned partners—the Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, American Farmland Trust, and Xerces Society—is supporting these efforts, contributing environmental, ecological, and agricultural education as well as financial resources. Tribal communities at the Nez Perce National Historic Park, on Nez Perce Reservation lands, and at United Indians of all Tribes' headquarters are restoring habitat for pollinators with our partnership. Tribal leaders' expertise is ensuring that our collaboration includes plantings that support Indigenous plant use, as food, medicine, and for ritual, as well as restoring habitat for wildlife.

LOOKING FORWARD

WHAT WE PLAN TO DO

ESC acknowledges that we still have much more work to do to advance justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion within our organization and our broader community. Looking toward the future, we intend to focus on four broad priorities to continue this journey, guided by the Change Team.

Core Values and Beliefs

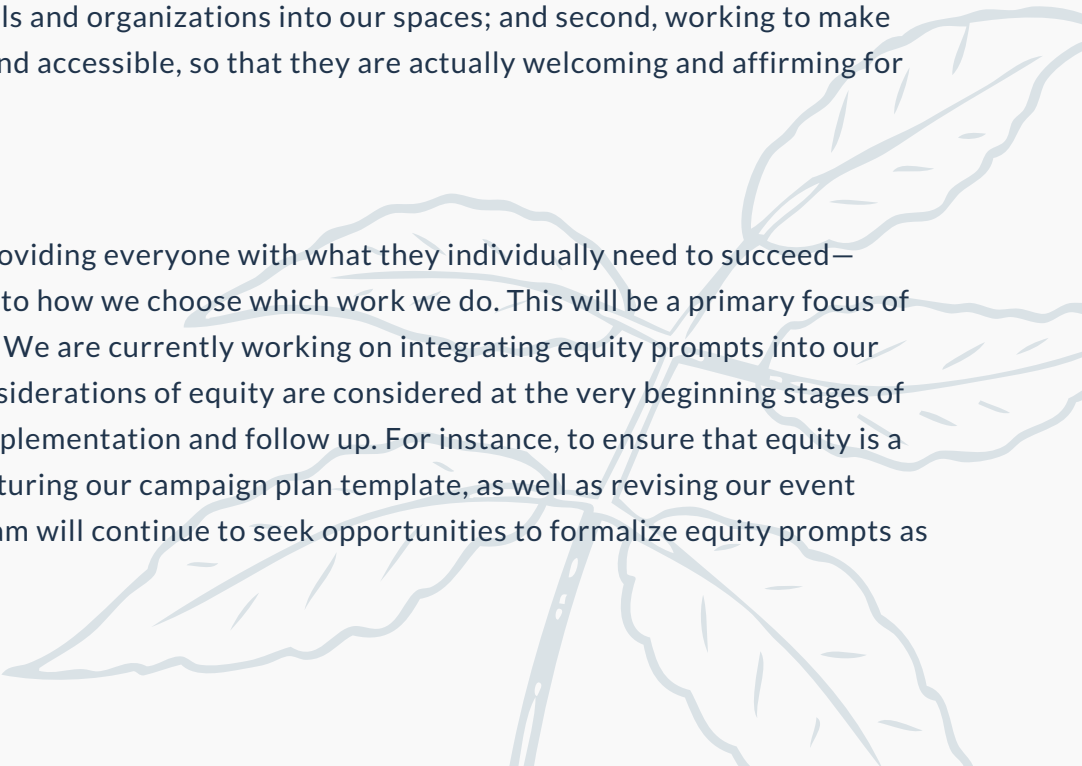
To become a truly anti-racist organization, ESC will revisit our core values and beliefs to continuously reaffirm our commitment to racial justice and anti-racist principles. We have and will work jointly to identify our current culture and norms—both spoken and unspoken. Then, as a staff, we will identify the core values and beliefs we would like to implement moving forward. Together, we will proceed to formalize a plan on how to operationalize each of these values and beliefs.

Prioritize Diversity

Prioritizing diversity is and will continue to be a primary focus area in all the circles that we create and participate in. This includes increasing diversity on our staff, our board of directors, and our various advisory boards; increasing the diversity of our member groups; and increasing diversity among our volunteers, our partner organizations, and voices we choose to highlight in events, in reports, on social media, and on our website. Our goal, ultimately, is that the diversity of all our spaces reflects the diversity of the country at large, in terms of race, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and other identities. In order to create more diverse spaces, we will focus on two things: first, actively recruiting and inviting more diverse individuals and organizations into our spaces; and second, working to make those spaces equitable, inclusive, and accessible, so that they are actually welcoming and affirming for diverse individuals to be a part of.

Prioritize Equity

We have begun to make equity—providing everyone with what they individually need to succeed—central to how we do our work and to how we choose which work we do. This will be a primary focus of our organization in the year ahead. We are currently working on integrating equity prompts into our processes and systems, so that considerations of equity are considered at the very beginning stages of our work and carried through to implementation and follow up. For instance, to ensure that equity is a priority, we are completely restructuring our campaign plan template, as well as revising our event planning template. Our Change Team will continue to seek opportunities to formalize equity prompts as part of all of our processes.



LOOKING FORWARD

Collapsing Hierarchies and Shared Decision-Making

Top heavy hierarchies and tightly held decision-making are a norm in white, male dominant culture. In order to move toward a more anti-racist organization, we will prioritize giving a voice to all staff in important decisions and we will prioritize providing clarity on how decisions are made. We will specifically focus on several key areas. We will institute a bottom-up budgeting process and will include all staff in fundraising. We currently encourage staff at all levels to recognize the good work of other staff. In the future, we will explore the possibility of formalizing this process by tying staff recognition, particularly of implementation of core values to benefits.

Finally, we will create a meeting space, tentatively called The Roundtable, to allow all staff to bring up and address organization-wide issues. The meeting is likely to be held biweekly and we will allow any staff to join. The types of issues discussed will be those that require organization-wide considerations, have a long timeline, and rise to the level that the Executive Director needs to be involved in the discussion; discussions must engage at least 4 people. Examples of topics might include an idea to launch or carry out a major revision of a new campaign, strategy, or significant new tactic; setting the culture of ESC; or planning our staff retreat.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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