

Work Plan for Developing a California Fish and Game Commission Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Approved April 14, 2021

The California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) is committed to developing a plan to promote justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI), both in its internal operations and its work with and for the people of California.

In June 2020, Commission Vice President Samantha Murray and President (then commissioner) Pete Silva made public statements against racism and white supremacy, emphasizing that policies are better informed when they include wide-ranging voices and varied perspectives. Since that time, staff has begun initial work that will support development of a Commission JEDI plan, to ensure that the Commission's commitment to these values is carried forward into action.

The Commission is one of several agencies in California responsible for holding California's fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public trust and consistently works with other federal, tribal, state, and local government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the people of California to successfully deliver on that commitment.

As an agency charged with serving the public, the Commission is committed to engaging with and receiving input from all members of the public. The mission of the Commission acknowledges that "...transparent and open dialogue where information, ideas and facts are easily available, understood and discussed..." is critical to ensuring "...that California will have abundant, healthy, and diverse fish and wildlife that thrive within dynamic ecosystems, managed with public confidence and participation, through actions that are thoughtful, bold, and visionary in an ever-changing environment." The Commission relies on the input of the public that it serves in order to make the best possible decisions; the Commission cannot know if its decisions unintentionally disadvantage certain groups if it does not hear from people representative of the entire state of California. The goal of this plan is not to diminish existing voices; it is to ensure the Commission is hearing from voices representing all Californians impacted by its work so that it can make the best-informed decisions possible.

This document provides an approach for developing the Commission's JEDI plan, and describes components included in the plan. FGC approved this work plan at its April 2021 meeting with the understanding that additional revisions may be necessary to incorporate new information as FGC develops its full plan.

JEDI Principles

Justice is the administration of what is, or the quality of being, just, impartial or fair (Merriam-Webster). As a public agency, the Commission is part of a broader social structure that has historically excluded, restricted, or harmed groups of people on the basis of their background, race or identity. To act in a way that is just, impartial and fair, the Commission must, within its jurisdiction, assure all Californians have equitable access to environmental benefits, opportunities, and services, as well as the decision-making process concerning those resources. Within its power, the Commission must make every effort to guarantee equitable treatment with respect to developing, adopting, implementing and enforcing regulations and policies related to the state's fish and wildlife.

The goal of equity is to achieve equal outcomes; equity allocates resources and opportunities differently to different groups or individuals in support of equal outcomes by recognizing circumstances that might put a group or individual at a disadvantage. Where equality would ensure that all participants are given equal opportunity and resources, equity requires accounting for those who experience barriers, such as historic systems of oppression and/or exclusion, and aiming to eliminate the barriers. Through the lens of equity, the Commission can reduce barriers to participation for those who currently and have historically experienced them. For example, one means of pursuing equity is through anti-racism, a philosophy that actively opposes racism by taking conscious and deliberate action to dismantle racist systems. In the context of the Commission's work, anti-racist action would mean deliberately examining current and future natural resources decisions, regulations, programs, etc. and choosing to act in a way that opposes bias.

Diversity is the condition of having or being composed of differing elements or variety in a group or organization (Merriam-Webster), and can take many forms, whether related to race, gender, age, religion, economic background, ability, or other factors. Increasing diversity can lead to reduced misconceptions, broader perspectives and diminishing discrimination, as well as better decision-making and outcomes. The Harvard Business Review found that cognitive diversity (diversity in perspective and information processing style) solved problems more quickly¹. Additionally, studies have found that non-homogeneous teams are more focused on facts, process information more carefully, and are more innovative.² By increasing diversity of the people who engage in the Commission's decision-making process, problem-solving to address fish and wildlife challenges can be enhanced.

Inclusion is the sense of belonging that people feel in an organization or community. Inclusion calls for a supportive environment where differences are represented and respected, and cultivates community empowerment, care of natural resources, personal connections, and a sense of ownership. While justice dictates that all Californians should have equitable access, inclusion is what creates a space in which all Californians are able to participate and feel empowered and comfortable using their voices. Without an inclusive environment, diversity cannot be maintained, justice cannot be served, and equity will fail to reach those that need it.

A Common Foundation

One of the first steps when embarking on any project is ensuring that the project team has a shared understanding of key concepts and terms to lay a foundation for effective discussions throughout the project development process. Having shared definitions and understanding will also be an important element of discussions with participants in the JEDI plan development process and it is expected that the Commission will define key terms as part of developing its plan. Example definitions, many used by other organizations, are included as Appendix A. The examples lay a foundation for future discussion.

¹ Harvard Business Review, *Teams Solve Problems Faster When They're More Cognitively Diverse*, March 17, 2017

² Harvard Business Review, *Why Diverse Teams are Smarter*, November 4, 2016

Resources

While staff time and resources are limited, this is a high-priority project and significant staff time will be dedicated in concert with that of commission members. The core team would like to acknowledge that Rose Dodgen, the Commission's former Sea Grant state fellow, played a large part in developing the initial proposal for this work plan. The Commission core team is partnering with CDFW's Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Team to collaborate, share resources, and avoid duplication of work to the extent practicable.

In addition to partnering with CDFW, FGC will seek to partner with external organizations with experience and expertise in this type of work and, to the extent possible, staff will utilize no-cost resources and educational tools. Additionally, Commission members will help explore outside funding and resources to secure external support in developing a JEDI plan that is tailored to the Commission's unique needs and authority and will support successful outcomes. The Commission is committed to learning from expert resources and making every effort to listen to and include the voices of diverse individuals and communities that directly represent the diversity and inclusion we aim to promote through the JEDI plan.

Development and Review Process

This draft final work plan identifies potential JEDI plan components that staff recommends be developed in three phases.

Phase 0: While developing a JEDI plan can be complex and nuanced, there is a need and desire to begin this work immediately. There are some tasks outlined throughout this document that can start now, even while the full plan is in development, including:

- Acknowledge current and ancestral tribal lands at the beginning of Commission and committee meetings;
- communicate internally and externally that justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are values of the Commission;
- establish multiple pathways for staff and stakeholders to provide feedback regarding opportunities for increased inclusivity;
- add fostering a welcoming workplace and creating a sense of belonging for all employees as a criterion for annual performance reviews for managers and supervisors;
- support staff learning to increase awareness of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion issues; and
- recruit more broadly and implement hiring practices that minimize implicit bias.

Phase 1: The initial phase will set the foundation for successful development of the JEDI plan, including early, more limited learning opportunities, stakeholder outreach and engagement, developing a Commission JEDI vision statement and/or policy, creating multiple coordination pathways with CDFW, and collecting data that will ultimately support long-term analyses.

Phase 2: The second phase is proposed to include developing various initiatives designed to improve JEDI in the Commission's internal and external relationships. Internal initiatives may include expanding learning opportunities, promoting fair hiring practices that ensure equal treatment of all applicants, and fostering an inclusive culture. External initiatives may include an equity analysis tool for decision-making regarding public resources, a JEDI stakeholder

engagement strategy, and an evaluation of equitable access to public resources in areas where the Commission has authority or influence.

Phase 3: The final phase is proposed to develop a plan to monitor and assess the Commission’s progress in the ongoing implementation of each initiative.

Development Steps Common to All Phases

Under the leadership of the Commission, each plan component is proposed to be developed using similar steps; however, the steps may be modified to best fit the goals of each component. There are five proposed steps:

1. Research and Development

Staff will research best practices utilized by other organizations and recommended by experts to develop initial proposals for consideration and feedback through a variety of channels. Based upon Commission direction, this step may also include informal stakeholder coordination and initial data collection (more detailed data needs will be evaluated and pursued within each component).

2. Informal Feedback from Commissioners

President Silva and Vice President Murray have agreed to serve as lead advisors on developing a JEDI plan, and will work closely with staff to co-develop and/or provide early, informal feedback on work products. The lead commissioners will meet monthly with staff to provide additional guidance on developing and implementing the JEDI plan. Concurrently, other individual commissioners will provide informal feedback between Commission meetings.

3. Targeted Stakeholder and Tribal Engagement

One of the core purposes of this project is to engage new, diverse stakeholders who are affected by and may be interested in Commission activities but have not previously actively participated in Commission decision-making processes. While this is a long-term initiative that will require years of work, this work plan proposes engaging a group of targeted stakeholders and tribal representatives to provide early feedback on developing and implementing the JEDI plan.

4. CDFW Coordination and Engagement

CDFW is in the process of developing its own JEDI plan; as an organization with over 3,000 staff, CDFW is beginning the process primarily focused on human resources practices and staff education. As CDFW is the Commission’s primary partner, the Commission will leverage that partnership, collaborate with CDFW, and integrate the knowledge and experience of CDFW staff in developing and implementing its own JEDI principles. Although there will be distinct components to each agency’s plan, there is also a great deal of commonality that lends itself to knowledge-sharing. For this reason,

the Commission will coordinate closely with, and seek feedback from, CDFW during the development of its JEDI plan.

5. Formal Feedback and Approval at Commission Meetings

Materials developed as part of the JEDI plan will be presented at Commission meetings during development and for final approval. An iterative process will allow staff to incorporate feedback from Commission members and other participants through the regular public comment process as work products are developed. Additionally, the Commission will host public work sessions in conjunction with regularly-scheduled meetings. The final step is approval of each plan component at a Commission meeting.

Potential Plan Components

Eleven potential JEDI plan components are proposed in support of laying a solid foundation, developing initiatives, and defining advancement indicators. While the components are described in three general phases in order to provide structure and organization to the process, the work is not strictly sequential. Some tasks found within various components (described above as “Phase 0”) will begin immediately, while others may overlap with components found in different phases.

Phase 1. Laying the Foundation

1. Purpose or Vision Statement and Key Definitions

Draft Goal: Develop a shared understanding of what justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are for the Commission and why it is developing a JEDI plan to facilitate future discussions and plan development.

Proposed Task: Develop a working purpose/vision statement and key definitions for approval by the Commission and inclusion in the JEDI plan.

Timing Considerations: Proposed first step in developing the JEDI plan. Summer 2021.

2. JEDI Policy Statement

Draft Goal: Clearly articulate the Commission’s policy position regarding JEDI and actively opposing discrimination of any type, including through antiracism; provide guidance and consistency for developing and implementing all other plan components.

Proposed Task: Develop a draft Commission JEDI policy statement for approval by the Commission and inclusion in the JEDI plan.

Timing Considerations: Staff proposes this task begin immediately after or concurrently with the purpose/vision statement. As an overarching, guiding policy, this policy should be complete prior to developing any other JEDI plan components. Summer 2021.

3. Shared Pathways with CDFW

Draft Goal(s):

- Establish clear and consistent pathways for Commission coordination with CDFW as each organization develops its JEDI plan.

- Foster and maintain a constructive working relationship with CDFW that cultivates knowledge exchange and facilitates implementation of JEDI principles.

Proposed Tasks:

- Create a venue and communication pathways for the Commission and CDFW to develop their respective plans in close coordination.

Timing Considerations: Staff propose this task take place concurrently with steps 1 and 2. Spring/Summer 2021.

Phase 2. Paving the Path

4. Learning Opportunities (Internal)

Draft Goal: Increase Commissioners' and staff's knowledge to effectively develop and implement a JEDI plan.

Proposed Tasks:

- Review and evaluate learning opportunities developed by CDFW as part of its JEDI initiative (many aspects of CDFW's learning plan will be incorporated into the Commission's practices) and evaluate what additional learning opportunities the Commission may wish to pursue.
- Identify additional learning opportunities for commissioners, executive team members, and all staff.

Timing Considerations:

- Early steps: Early learning opportunities for members and staff would help from a strong foundation for developing the JEDI plan. Beginning Spring 2021.
- Long-term: Develop ongoing learning for commissioners and staff proposed to begin following development of components 1-3. Exact timing based on availability of opportunities and Commission priority amongst other priorities. Concurrent with other Phase 2 components. Late 2021 – 2022.

5. Equitable Recruitment and Reducing Implicit Bias in Hiring

Draft Goal: Ensure that Commission recruitment and hiring practices reach a broad and diverse audience, are inclusive, and provide equal opportunities to all potential applicants.

Proposed Task: Review and evaluate recruitment and hiring practices to diversify the applicant pool and minimize the effects of implicit bias in hiring. Expanding and diversifying the applicant pool will allow FGC to reach additional qualified candidates and, ultimately, hire the most qualified candidates, in accordance with civil service rules.

- Engage with CDFW as it reviews and develops its recruitment and hiring practices as part of its JEDI initiative.
- Review CDFW recruitment hiring practices, conduct additional research, and determine if the Commission wishes to take any additional steps, e.g., LinkedIn, additional recruitment efforts, etc.

Timing Considerations: Some of this work, such as removing sources of implicit bias from the recruitment and interview process, has already begun. Exact timing based on Commission priority amongst other priorities. This step may take place concurrently with other components in Phase 2. This would likely take place later in the development process to ensure Commission work builds on CDFW's work in this area.

6. *Foster an Inclusive Culture (Internal)*

Draft Goal: Foster a culture of inclusivity where all staff can fully contribute, diversity is valued, and opportunities are afforded equally.

Proposed Tasks:

- Communicate the value of justice, diversity, equity and inclusion clearly and regularly from leadership in the recruitment process, in new hire onboarding, and with current employees.
- Build upon current Americans with Disabilities Act and Equal Employment Opportunity compliance, and clearly and proactively communicate Commission leadership support above and beyond minimum compliance.
- Establish multiple pathways for staff to provide feedback regarding opportunities for increased inclusiveness.
- Add fostering a welcoming workplace and creating a sense of belonging for all employees as a criterion for annual performance reviews for managers and supervisors.
- Support and require staff learning to increase awareness of diversity and inclusion (also see component 4).
- Engage with CDFW as it reviews and develops its retention and inclusion practices as part of its JEDI initiative.
- Review CDFW retention and inclusion practices, conduct additional research, and determine if the Commission wishes to take any additional steps.

Timing Considerations: Tasks fully contained within the Commission office will begin immediately. Some tasks would likely take place later in the development process to ensure Commission work builds on CDFW's work in this area. No end date.

7. *Build on Tribal Engagement (External)*

Draft Goal: Examine and evaluate the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the Commission's engagement with tribes and determine pathways to increase participation among tribes and tribal communities.

Proposed Tasks:

- Acknowledge tribal and ancestral lands at Commission and committee meetings.
- Explore areas where the Commission's mission and goals share common ground with tribal cultures and values.
- Identify areas where tribal engagement could be more effective and work to build new connections.

- Identify and understand underlying, tribe-specific barriers to tribal participation in Commission meetings and decision-making processes (listen to and understand tribal government partners, with potential mechanisms including targeted outreach, semi-structured interviews with leaders, broader survey)
- Based on the identified barriers, research and consult on options for increasing opportunities for tribal participation:
 - How to make participation productive/worthwhile for tribal partners
 - How to engage local tribes when the Commission travels to locations throughout the state
 - How to structure or conduct Tribal Committee meetings to incorporate any of these opportunities
 - How to ensure that government-to-government consultation is effectively utilized and productive
- Identify potential actions the Commission can take to remove participation barriers and encourage participation by tribes.
- Identify areas where access to traditional resources has been compromised (e.g., CDFW public lands, fisheries, recreational opportunities under the purview of the Commission, etc.). Explore and consider opportunities to restore access.
 - Engage with tribes to identify public resources with barriers to access.
 - Work with tribes to identify potential solutions.
- Hire a Commission tribal advisor and liaison to coordinate and amplify tribal voices.

Timing Considerations: Outreach and engagement with tribes would begin after hiring the tribal advisor and liaison. First steps would be operationalizing the proposed tasks with specific steps.

8. *Diversify Engaged Stakeholders (External)*

Draft Goal: Examine/evaluate how the Commission’s processes incentivize or disincentivize participation by historically-underrepresented groups, determine ways to create more incentives for participation, counteract or reduce disincentives, foster a culture of inclusivity in the Commission’s external activities and interactions, and integrate diverse feedback into decision-making.

Proposed Tasks:

- Develop a plan to engage stakeholders that are representative of the state as a whole.
 - Understand why some communities are less engaged than others in the Commission’s decision-making process
 - Identify and build connections with potential stakeholders that may experience barriers to participation or feel apathy toward public policymaking
 - Identify underlying barriers to participation in Commission decision-making for current and new potential stakeholders

- Listen to and understand the needs of current and potential stakeholders using method such as targeted outreach, semi-structured interviews with key leaders, surveys, etc.
- Research and consult on options for increasing opportunities for participation:
 - How to make information more accessible and equitable (language, access, etc.)
 - How to make meeting participation more accessible and equitable
 - How to make participation worthwhile for new or historically underrepresented participants
 - How to reach, hear feedback from, and integrate perspectives from underrepresented communities (media, social media, community organizations, etc.)
 - How to engage local communities informally when the Commission travels to locations throughout the state
- Identify potential actions the Commission can take to remove participation barriers and encourage participation.
- Identify areas where there is not equitable access to public resources (e.g., CDFW public lands, fisheries, recreational opportunities under the purview of the Commission, etc.) consider opportunities to increase equitable access.
 - Engage with stakeholders to discover and identify public resources (e.g., CDFW public lands, fisheries, etc.) with barriers to access.
 - Work with stakeholders to identify potential solutions.

Timing Considerations:

- Early outreach and engagement on development of a plan would begin immediately. Summer 2021.
- Develop JEDI Stakeholder Engagement Plan to guide ongoing stakeholder engagement. Exact timing based on Commission priority. This step may take place concurrently with other components in Phase 2. Throughout 2021 and 2022.

9. *Formalize Inclusion and Equity in Commission Decisions (External)*

Draft Goal: Develop a tool that can be applied to Commission decisions to ensure that justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are considered in the Commission’s decision-making process.

Proposed Tasks:

- Define what inclusion and equity tools are and learn how they might apply to Commission decision-making processes.
- Research and identify potential inclusion and equity tools for use in Commission decision-making.
- Design and implement Commission inclusion and equity tool.
 - What type of tool would be used? Examples have resembled checklists, but this could take other forms.
 - Determine where and how tool could be used:

- At what point in the decision-making process would this tool be incorporated?
- Would it be used for all decisions or only certain types?

Timing Considerations: Proposed to begin following development of components 1-3. Exact timing based on Commission priority. This step may take place concurrently with other components in Phase 2. 2022.

Phase 3. Sustainable Advancement

10. Monitoring Plan

Draft Goal: Monitor implementation of the JEDI plan to ensure that progress is being made under each component.

Proposed Task: Develop monitoring plan that includes indicators or other means of assessing progress on each of the Commission's JEDI goals. Example indicators could include:

- Number of active participants in Commission and committee meetings
- Number of new active participants in Commission and committee meetings
- Number of organizations represented at Commission and committee meetings
- Number of new organizations represented at Commission and committee meetings
- Quality of participation opportunities as measured by survey or other data collection tool

Timing Considerations: Indicators or other monitoring tools should be identified as part of developing each initiative (4-8). The overall monitoring plan would be the last step in developing the JEDI plan. Late 2022 to early 2023.

Appendix A: Example Definitions

Example definitions are provided to show the range of definitions available in the dictionary and used by other organizations, as a means to spur discussion. The definitions provided in this section are not the work of the Commission.

1. Justice

- The maintenance or administration of what is just especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments.³
- The quality of being just, impartial, or fair.⁴
- The principle that all people should have access to healthy, safe, livable communities and environments.^{5,6,7}
- Justice in the context of the Commission would mean that all Californians have equitable access to environmental benefits, opportunities, and services, equitable access to the decision-making process concerning those resources, and equitable treatment with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.^{2,8,9}

2. Equity

- Justice according to natural law or right, specifically freedom from bias or favoritism.¹
- Fairness of achieving outcomes for all groups and no one factor, such as race, can be used to predict outcomes. Equity is defined in the context of social and racial equity.^{2,10}
- The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all participants, and active identification and elimination of barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.¹¹
- The process of just and fair consideration because of someone's experience or social position.¹²

3. Diversity

- The condition of having or being composed of differing elements, especially the inclusion of different types of people (such as people of different races or cultures) in a group or organization.¹

³ Merriam-Webster Dictionary

⁴ Merriam-Webster Dictionary

⁵ California State Coastal Conservancy

⁶ California Environmental Justice Alliance

⁷ Communities for a Better Environment

⁸ US Environmental Protection Agency

⁹ California Coastal Commission

¹⁰ San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

¹¹ Emory University Department of Medicine

¹² California Ocean Protection Council

- The range of similarities and differences in individual and organizational characteristics that shape a workplace. These include but are not limited to national origin, language, race, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and family structure. The concept also encompasses other differences among people, including geographic differences and, importantly, diversity of thought and life experiences. These differences between people may also lead to different experiences in systemic advantages or encounters with systemic barriers to opportunity.^{2,13,14}
- A variety of people, experiences, and perspectives. Often nestled under the umbrellas of identity, including race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, dis/ability (differently-abled), socioeconomics, political affiliation, and more.⁹

4. Inclusion

- The act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability).¹
- Creation of a welcoming environment (1) where people's differences are represented and respected; (2) that embraces multicultural and indigenous histories and presence; and (3) cultivates community empowerment, care of natural resources, personal connections, and a sense of ownership.^{2,15}
- A culture that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all employees are able to participate and contribute to their full potential.⁸
- The sense of belonging that people feel in an organization or community. In the case of the MPA [marine protected area] network, think of how people might feel connected to, involved with, or represented within MPA network management and programming decisions.⁹

5. Antiracism

- Fighting against racism. Being antiracist results from a conscious decision to make frequent, consistent, equitable choices daily. These choices require ongoing self-awareness and self-reflection as we move through life. In the absence of making antiracist choices, we (un)consciously uphold aspects of white supremacy, white-dominant culture, and unequal institutions and society.¹⁶
- The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.¹⁷

¹³ The Avarna Group

¹⁴ Securities Exchange Commission

¹⁵ The Coro Fellows Program

¹⁶ The National Museum of African American History and Culture

¹⁷ Race Forward

- Conscious efforts and deliberate actions to dismantle racist systems and provide equitable opportunities on both an individual and systemic level.

6. Underrepresented

- Provided with insufficient or inadequate representation.¹⁸
- Groups who have been denied access and/or suffered past institutional discrimination in the United States and, according to the Census and other federal measuring tools, includes African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics or Chicanos/Latinos, and Native Americans.¹⁹

7. Outreach

- A way of conducting business to ensure that underserved individuals and groups are made aware of, understand, and have a working knowledge of programs and services. Outreach will ensure that these programs and services are equitable and made accessible to all.²⁰

8. Engagement

- Stakeholder engagement, in the natural resource management context, most often refers to the participation of stakeholders in planning or decision-making efforts in order to integrate their knowledge and values with a particular project's more specialized knowledge and purpose.²¹

9. Stakeholder

- One who is involved in or affected by a course of action.¹
- An individual, group, or organization involved in or can affect or be affected by a course of action or by the achievement of an organization's objectives.^{22,23,24}

¹⁸ Oxford Languages

¹⁹ Emory University Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

²⁰ US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

²¹ Talley, J. L., J. Schneider, and E. Lindquist. 2016. A simplified approach to stakeholder engagement in natural resource management: the Five-Feature Framework. *Ecology and Society* 21(4):38.

²² POLICY Project, 1999

²³ Managing Policy Reform: Concepts and Tools for Decision-makers in Developing and Transitioning Countries, Brinkerhoff and Crosby, 2002

²⁴ Stakeholder engagement in policy development: challenges and opportunities for human genomics, Lemke and Harris-Wai, 2015

California Fish and Game Commission
Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan Development:
Adopted Working Vision Statement
October 14, 2021

All people enjoy safe and equitable access to California's thriving native wildlife and natural habitats supported by inclusive decision-making that reflects the needs and values of the state's diverse communities.

California Fish and Game Commission
Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Plan Development: Draft Policy
Statement Concepts

October 8, 2021

The second step in the California Fish and Game Commission’s (Commission) Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Work Plan is to develop and adopt a policy statement clearly articulating the Commission’s policy position regarding JEDI and actively opposing discrimination of any type to provide guidance and consistency for developing and implementing all other plan components.

This document provides potential concepts to include in a Commission JEDI policy statement. Staff will use feedback from the Commission on these concepts to help inform development of a Commission JEDI policy statement.

Potential JEDI Policy Statement Concepts

Positive vision

- Create a culture of respect for all persons as a fundamental characteristic of our organization and wider public community.
- Move forward in a just, equitable, and inclusive manner.
- Committed to ensuring California’s fish and wildlife is managed with public confidence and participation.

Values we hold as central to our mission

- Integrity, transparency, innovation, collaboration, excellence, stewardship
- Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Diversity and equity in workforce outreach recruitment efforts
- Ensuring that hiring practices are not discriminatory and are compliant with the state's merit system and anti-discrimination laws.
- Acknowledgement of well-documented and detrimental nature gap in historically marginalized and underserved communities and privilege associated with outdoor access.
- Importance of serving all people of California.
- We find extraordinary value in differences of culture, circumstance, lived experience and worldview and see varied backgrounds as experiential assets that strengthen our decision-making.

Actions to Commit to

- Recognize California Native American Tribes’ connection to the environment, acknowledge significant past injustices, and amplify tribal voices and issues.
- Use our sphere of influence to counteract historic legacies and systems of exclusion

- Promote equity through more inclusive decision-making that considers and corrects for disproportionate burdens on historically marginalized communities, including but not limited to California Native American Tribes.
- Promote meaningful and long-term partnerships with communities and cultures that have relationships to activities, fish, or wildlife that we regulate.
- Promote engagement in Commission decision-making by all affected and interested people.
- Conduct the agency's business in a manner that operationalizes issues of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Create and maintain a space where all ideas, values, and cultures are welcomed, heard, and respected.
- Champion equitable access to nature and abundant and healthy resources through careful stewardship.
- Improve and promote equity in access to natural spaces.
- Promote economic, cultural and community opportunities related to fish and wildlife.

California Fish and Game Commission

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan Development: Sample Definitions for Key Terms

October 8, 2021

Term	Seattle Public Utilities	City of San Jose	City of Portland	California State Agency
Diversity	N/A	Diversity: A multiplicity of races, genders, sexual orientations, classes, ages, countries of origin, educational status, religions, physical, or cognitive abilities, documentation status, etc. within a community, organization or grouping of some kind. Pop wisdom: Achieving diversity is not the same thing as achieving inclusion or equity.	Diversity: includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from one another. <i>Source: UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity</i>	Diversity refers to the various characteristics and ways in which individuals or groups differ from one another. Diversity encompasses different races, ethnicities, sexual orientations, etc., as well as belief systems, ideas, and values. Diversity is necessary but not sufficient to achieve equity, which demands an ongoing commitment not just to include, but to value and empower, all people.
Equity	The distribution of resources that accounts for past history and current position, so that future outcomes are fairly distributed.	Fairness and justice in policy, practice, and opportunity consciously designed to address the distinct challenges of non-dominant social groups, with an eye to equitable outcomes. See also: Racial equity.	Equity Lens: is a critical thinking approach to undoing institutional and structural racism, which evaluates burdens, benefits, and outcomes to underserved communities.	Equity recognizes that because different individuals or groups have different histories and circumstances, they have different needs and unequal starting points. Using an equity approach, individuals and groups receive different resources, opportunities, support, or treatment based on their specific needs. By providing what each individual or group needs, they can have equal or fair outcomes.

Term	Seattle Public Utilities	City of San Jose	City of Portland	California State Agency
Implicit Bias	N/A	Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics.	The evaluation of one group and its members relative to one another, expressed indirectly, usually without awareness. This operates in one's subconscious.	Unconscious thoughts, attitudes, and feelings that result in preferences for or aversions to certain types of people, often associated with stereotypes based on characteristics such as race, gender, appearance, etc. Implicit Bias operates both on the individual level and on the institutional level, and can create real-world consequences even when biases are not consciously known or recognized. Institutional Implicit Bias occurs when certain policies, programs, or processes routinely benefit one group over another, even if they do so unintentionally.
Institutional Racism	Organizational programs, policies or procedures that work to the benefit of White people and to the detriment of people of color, usually unintentionally or inadvertently.	Institutional racism refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people of color.	Occurs within institutions and systems of power. It is the unfair policies and discriminatory practices of particular institutions (schools, workplaces, etc.). <i>Source: Race Forward, Moving the Race Conversation Forward</i>	The ways in which policies and practices perpetuated by institutions, including governments and private groups, produce different outcomes for different racial groups in a manner that benefits the dominant group. In the United States, Institutional Racism includes policies that may not mention race, but still result in benefiting white people over people of color.

Term	Seattle Public Utilities	City of San Jose	City of Portland	California State Agency
Racial Equity	When social, economic, and political opportunities are not predicted based upon a person's race.	Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.	When race does not determine or predict the distribution of resources, opportunities, and burdens for group members in society.	The condition achieved when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes and conditions for all groups are improved.
Sources	https://www.seattle.gov/utilities/protecting-our-environment/community-programs/environmental-justice-and-service-equity/glossary	https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/office-of-the-city-manager/racial-equity-resources/racial-equity-glossary	https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/pbot-racial-equity-plan-123016_report.pdf	Working definitions from a California State government entity

Guiding Questions for Nov 17, 2021 JEDI Listening Session

- Are there other **concepts or values** that you would like to see included or emphasized in a JEDI policy statement for the California Fish and Game Commission? What additions need to be made?
- Are there other **actions** that you would like to see included or emphasized in a JEDI policy statement for the California Fish and Game Commission? What additions need to be made?
 - Are there specific **issues** that you feel are underrepresented in the work of the Commission?
 - Are there specific **communities** that you feel are underrepresented in the work of the Commission? Can you help us reach them?
- Which of these concept, values, and actions do you see as **most critical** to the Commission's ultimate success?
- Where have you seen other agencies or organizations successfully pursue policies related to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion (JEDI), and **what made them successful?**
- Are we on the right track? Any other feedback?

Terms to explore for a FGC JEDI Glossary of Terms:

The Commission's work toward a more equitable, representative, and inclusive future will grow and evolve over time, adapting to issues expressed by the community, new legislative requirements, organizational needs, and other changes in society and the environment.

In order for the Commission to most effectively communicate with the public and other agencies on issues related to justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion, FGC seeks your input on terms related to JEDI for which our staff can develop working definitions. Some terms already under development by staff include: Antiracism, Diversity, Engagement, Equity, Implicit Bias, Inclusion, Institutional Racism, Justice, Outreach, Racial Equity, Stakeholder, and Underrepresented.

These definitions, once finalized, will be included in FGC's JEDI Plan and shared with CDFW and our other partner agencies for their consideration. The Commission's JEDI Plan, even when adopted by the FGC, will be considered a living document and include measures to evaluate progress, and be updated or revised over time.

California Fish and Game Commission
Summary of Key Themes from Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Listening
Session and Discussion: Draft Work Plan
March 17, 2021

On March 17, 2021, the California Fish and Game Commission (Commission) held a listening session in support of its work related to Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI). The listening session centered around the development of the Commission's proposed work plan for developing a JEDI plan; however, discussion related to all aspects of JEDI was welcome. This document summarizes key themes that were discussed during the listening session.

- Overall support for the Commission doing this work/engaging with JEDI issues.
- The importance of both the Commission and staff recognizing and representing the diversity of Californians.
- The importance of the Commission devoting resources, staff, and funding toward JEDI goals.
- The importance of building relationships and long-term connections with community partners, and partnering with organizations that are already doing this work.
- The importance of learning before doing.
- Discussion of barriers to participation in Commission activities and the importance of identifying these barriers with affected communities. Barriers identified included:
 - No options for non-English or American Sign Language speakers to access information or participate in the Commission's work.
 - Overreliance on jargon.
 - Lack of knowledge/education about how to participate in Commission meetings/processes.
 - Formal Commission meetings can be intimidating.
 - For in-person meetings, travel is a barrier.
 - Commission meetings held during the day when many people must work or have other obligations.
- Suggestions for overcoming these barriers and increasing access and inclusivity included:
 - Providing information in multiple languages.
 - Live ASL interpretation and closed captioning for Commission meetings and events.
 - Initiatives making information accessible to diverse audiences, such as a bilingual video series on how to engage with the Commission.
 - Clear communication welcoming and valuing all participants, regardless of background.
 - Using inclusive language.

- Providing children access to the nature and the outdoors from a young age.
- Setting aside time for an informal meet and greets where people can talk to Commissioners directly.
- Implementing a mentorship program for experienced commenters to help inexperienced ones.
- Partnering with community groups near meeting locations to create meeting-adjacent events allowing Commissioners to engage directly with the local community.