



**NATURAL
RESOURCES**

HILARY S. FRANZ
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

PRO-EQUITY ANTI-RACISM (PEAR) PLAN 2024-2026

DRAFT 7/16/24



DNR'S COMMITMENT



In March 2022, Governor Inslee, in coordination with the state Office of Equity, signed Executive Order 22-04 for state agencies to develop a Pro-Equity, Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan using the PEAR Playbook. The PEAR Playbook establishes a unified vision of equity for state government — mission, values, and goals — and contains a guide for developing, implementing, and embedding PEAR into every action across state government agencies. While DNR is not required to develop a PEAR Plan, we are participating because we believe in the importance of this work.

At DNR, our mission directs us to manage, sustain, and protect the health and productivity of Washington's lands and waters to meet the needs of present and future generations. To truly fulfill that mission, we must center and incorporate the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of vulnerable and overburdened communities. We began this work by updating our agency's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan to include pro-equity metrics and environmental justice priorities.

Our agency is developing a PEAR Plan that will align this initiative with our Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) work, as well as our other Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) work.

To meet the needs of the PEAR Plan, the Office of Workplace Culture and Development (WCD) and the Office of Equity and Environmental Justice (OEEJ) have joined to create a core team to lead this initiative.

The core team will:

- Identify and catalog current and planned work that has a PEAR & EEJ focus.
- Ensure representation from staff, our communities, and Tribal Nation partners.
- Streamline our approach to PEAR & EEJ work, ensuring we aren't duplicating efforts.
- Support PEAR and EEJ-focused goals and initiatives providing strength behind this work.
- Catalog and track PEAR & EEJ-focused goals and report to agency leaders, employees, Tribal Nation partners, and the public.

The strength of this work depends on each of us taking action. While our professional responsibilities may differ, we must all commit to the values of pro-equity and anti-racism.

I look forward to continuing this journey with each of you, our partners, and the Washington State Office of Equity.

Please contact our core team: Annette Meyer, Betsy Vandrush-Borgacz, Brandon Schmidt, Eliseo Juárez, Jim Dunivan, and Patrick DePoe with questions or ideas.

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To truly fulfill DNR's mission, we must center and incorporate the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of vulnerable and overburdened communities."

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Cover Photo: Students from "Hip Hop is Green's Youth Excellence Program (YEP)" observe a beach seining during the Fidalgo Bay Day at DNR's aquatic reserve.



PRO-EQUITY ANTI-RACISM (PEAR) PLAN 2024-2026

Prepared by Washington State
Department of Natural Resources,
Workplace Culture and Development (WCD)
July 2024



WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF
**NATURAL
RESOURCES**

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Introduction

What Is PEAR?

The PEAR Plan reinforces a unified vision of pro-equity anti-racism (PEAR) for DNR, supporting DNR’s mission, values, and goals for developing, implementing, and embedding PEAR into every action across the agency. DNR’s PEAR Plan will incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) as well as environmental justice (EJ) initiatives under a single equity framework. The PEAR Plan reflects how we do our daily work and who we are at our core – public servants with a shared desire for promoting equity, justice, access, and belonging for the people we serve and the staff who serve them.

Why Is DNR Creating A PEAR Plan?

DNR recognizes that to achieve its mission and vision in service of Washingtonians, the agency must embrace the values of diversity, pro-equity, anti-racism, inclusion, and belonging in all aspects of its work. The state of Washington is diverse, and the agency should reflect that diversity. At DNR, a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace is where all employees and volunteers, whatever their gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, age, sexual orientation or identity, education, or ability, feel valued and respected. When DNR is representative of the people the agency serves, DNR can better address the outcomes for marginalized and underrepresented communities through purposeful, conscious, and equitable use of resources and programs. This commitment will improve the effectiveness of DNR’s programs and services by ensuring agency actions and decisions are equitable and just.

How Is DNR Engaging In PEAR?

To accomplish these goals, DNR is examining current DEIB and EJ work and initiatives within the agency using a pro-equity anti-racism approach that fits within the PEAR framework. The agency is determining which areas DNR can better support and expand. Furthermore, this work will uncover and address any existing systemic inequities. Active pro-equity anti-racism initiatives are essential as an agency to continue confronting the discrimination and bias that exists within broader society. For example, DNR is committed to increasing partnerships with diverse community organizations moving forward to ensure agency programs and services are informed by those the agency serves. Engaging in PEAR initiatives helps to ensure that systemic issues do not impede the agency’s work. DNR will implement regular equity audits and publicize agency progress to maintain transparency and accountability.

Much work remains to dismantle past systems and practices that perpetuate inequity. DNR will do our part to create an equitable and just agency for our employees and the communities we serve.



The PEAR Plan reflects who we are at our core— public servants with a shared desire for promoting equity, justice, access, and belonging for the people we serve and the staff who serve them.





Executive Summary

DNR'S IMPACT

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages 5.6 million acres of land across the state, including forests, farmlands, rivers, and intertidal zones. The agency also employs more than 1,700 staff who are experts in forestry, aquaculture, ecology, geology, horticulture, habitat restoration, wildfire, engineering, trail design, geospatial information, policy, and archaeology.

The creation of DNR's PEAR Plan complements and advances the agency's mission and strategic priorities through intentional efforts that address systemic inequities and barriers, specifically those experienced by underrepresented and underserved communities. By centering and incorporating the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of vulnerable and overburdened communities into DNR's PEAR Goals and Intentional Investments, the agency can deliver services that meet the needs of Washingtonians.

This PEAR Plan is a critical part of bridging these gaps, reducing disparities, and increasing participation in agency decision-making.

DNR'S MISSION

Manage, sustain, and protect the health and productivity of Washington's lands and waters to meet the needs of present and future generations.

DNR'S VISION AND STRATEGIES

DNR's vision, as stated in the 2022-2025 DNR Strategic Plan, is to ensure a future in which Washington's lands, waters, and communities thrive.

BECOMING PRO-EQUITY

DNR recognizes that many government actions and plans are embedded in unjust policies and practices, often creating deep inequities for the communities that the agency serves.

The PEAR Plan is intended to identify and break down existing inequities and prevent future inequities. DNR is focusing on intentional investments in systems, for employees, and for the public.

DNR is evaluating current processes to identify inequities and will work to address them as the agency moves forward. The agency is committed to continued improvement.

DNR'S 2024-2026 PRO-EQUITY ANTI-RACISM PLAN

DEVELOPMENT OF DNR'S PEAR PLAN

The PEAR Plan process began in 2021 with a small group at DNR and has grown to a much larger team. Many of the goals, investments, and initiatives found within this plan are well underway. This plan is a framework to gather all the agency's pro-equity work under one vision, supporting our employee's and communities' efforts.

The first phase of DNR's PEAR Plan was to conduct a review and analysis of all pro-equity related work. In July 2023, the Office of Workplace Culture and Development (WCD) released the first PEAR Baseline Report, a snapshot of the pro-equity work on which DNR was engaging. From this report, the Core PEAR Team created a unified approach to the agency's work, creating strategies and overall goals.

To achieve DNR's PEAR goals, the agency is addressing eight focus areas:

1. Leadership, Hiring, Operations & Services
2. Workforce Culture, Development, & Equity
3. Tribal Engagement
4. Community Partnerships & Engagement
5. Agency External Communications
6. Equitable Contracting & Systems Improvements
7. Policies, Planning, & Budgets
8. Building Our PEAR Capacity & Understanding Our Impact

DNR'S PEAR TEAM

DNR has formed a team of more than 40 agency employees and leaders. The agency plans to expand the team to include community members and Tribal Nations. The PEAR Team will meet regularly to review current progress, discuss agency efforts, make recommendations, and report on agency progress.



Linking To DNR's Strategic Plan

To begin this work, the agency included pro-equity metrics and environmental justice priorities in DNR's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan. Goals A, B, C, and D found within this plan contain specific goals and strategies that align with the agency's PEAR Plan.

A Make DNR a Great Place to Work and Serve Washington's Lands and Communities

GOALS

- A 2** A culture of service, inclusion, and innovation
- A 3** A high-functioning and diverse organization that draws talented people to stay and grow

STRATEGIES

- A 4.2** Develop and implement the Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan
- A 4.3** Ensure all DNR employees have the tools, resources, training, and communication skills to successfully engage in their communities.
- A 4.5** Implement and disclose Equity Impact Reviews and Environmental Justice screens on new or updated Commissioner's Orders and policies relating to natural resource regulation and/or management
- A 4.6** Develop methods for assessing the impact of deliverables and outcomes on equity and environmental justice goals

B Serve Washingtonians Through Thoughtful Communication, Ongoing Collaboration, and Authentic Engagement

GOALS

- B 3** Tell the story of public lands and the wide-ranging effects of DNR's work on behalf of Washington's communities

STRATEGIES

- B 1.1** Design and implement robust input and feedback policies for the public and partners
- B 1.2** Launch a Rights and Compliance section on DNR's website that publishes civil rights reports, the agency's DEIB Strategic Plan, and existing federal and state laws and policies related to environmental justice
- B 1.3** Implement an agency-wide public comment policy focused on equitable engagement and participation for all significant agency actions and all boards and commissions governed by the agency by 2024
- B 1.5** Implement an agency-wide pro-transparency policy to make our work more accessible, understood, and responsive to public need
- B 4.1** Partner to promote natural resources careers with Tribal members, indigenous people, youth, adults, veterans, and those most impacted by environmental disparities
- B 4.3** Conduct community engagement strategies across Washington to ensure programs and policy are informed by the people we serve

C Invest in Washington's People, Lands, and Communities

STRATEGIES

- C 4.3** Grow K-12, technical, and college natural resource education programs by establishing and expanding public-private partnerships, intergovernmental agreements, and NGO collaborations
- C 5.2** Develop and implement an agency-wide procedure for identifying disproportionate health impacts of agency actions

D Protect Our Lands and Waters

STRATEGIES

- D 3.4** Identify and publish gaps in how equity and environmental justice are considered in natural hazard assessments



Plan Implementation

DNR will create a new PEAR Plan every two years. By doing so, the agency can strategically shift efforts where the needs are the greatest. On an annual basis, the Core PEAR Team will submit a PEAR Progress Report to agency leadership and to the Washington State Office of Equity.

The 2024-2026 PEAR Plan will provide key baseline data on goals and investments identified. The collected data from this plan will allow DNR to identify and incorporate achievable improvement measures for subsequent plans. Subsequent PEAR Plans will include specific outcome measures intending to improve upon the baseline data collected from the 2024-2026 PEAR Plan.

Following adoption of the 2024-2026 PEAR Plan, the Office of Workplace Culture and Development (WCD), the Office of Equity and Environmental Justice (OEEJ), and the PEAR Team will provide guidance to the agency on implementation. These groups will create a PEAR Implementation Guide, including tracking metrics connected to each goal, investment, and outcome measure. Additionally, the implementation guide will identify the work units responsible for tracking metrics, and establish data reporting schedules. This information will be publicly available by fall 2025 on DNR's public website.

Throughout the implementation of the PEAR Plan, DNR strives to:

- **Listen to the priorities and concerns** of the communities that the agency serves, and adapt its approach to efforts based on agency learned knowledge.
- **Look at agency efforts and adapt** to respond to what is or is not working based on community feedback.
- **Actively monitor agency progress and efforts** and seek feedback.
- **Learn and share** what is happening around the agency to responsibly engage with the communities DNR serves. Through active engagement, DNR will understand what communities need.



Understanding DNR’s PEAR Goals

The PEAR Team has divided the PEAR Goals into eight focus areas. Within each focus area, several goals are listed in the left-hand column to establish initiatives DNR will concentrate on to achieve the agency’s PEAR work. The middle three columns are the intentional investments (a combination of monetary, time, and community outreach investments) that DNR will make to support and achieve the goals. The far right column includes transparent outcome measures that keep the agency accountable. The goals, intentional investments, and outcome measures are described below.

DNR’S EIGHT AREAS OF FOCUS FOR PEAR

1. Leadership, Hiring, Operations, & Services
2. Workforce Culture, Development, & Equity
3. Tribal Engagement
4. Community Partnerships & Engagement
5. Agency External Communications
6. Equitable Contracting & Systems Improvements
7. Policies, Planning, & Budgets
8. Building Our PEAR Capacity & Understanding Our Impact

About The Tables

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS	OUTCOME MEASURES
<p>Identified and actionable pro-equity anti-racism goals that individuals, divisions, regions, and programs can align existing and future DNR work to. These are the goals that DNR is striving to achieve.</p>	<p>These are intentional investments that are a combination of monetary, time commitments, and community outreach initiatives. These are investments DNR is making to support and achieve our PEAR goals.</p> <p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <p>DNR will proactively address inequities at their root cause through strategic planning and early intervention. These investments help address inequities before they become a problem.</p> <p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <p>DNR will ensure that all employees are valued for their unique assets and experiences, investing in growing their talent regardless of who they are, where they come from, and where they are in the agency. The agency’s efforts will prioritize employees traditionally denied equitable access to employment and professional growth opportunities.</p> <p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <p>DNR will invest in community-based partnerships, such as corps programs, to foster strong relationships with diverse communities. Through these intentional investments, DNR will co-create equitable, informed, and responsive PEAR policies and programs.</p>	<p>These include measurable outcomes that are included in annual reporting. This is how DNR plans to create transparency in our equity-based initiatives.</p>



PEAR GOALS AND INVESTMENTS

GOAL

1

Leadership, Hiring, Operations, & Services

This area focuses on advancing PEAR practices and systems at all levels of agency operations. This is achieved through transparent and accountable organizational development, adaptive leadership, and through hiring and developing PEAR change agents.

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The agency creates and supports PEAR values. Agency leadership is effective and accountable for advancing PEAR. All employees are PEAR change agents. Agency operations reflect PEAR values. The agency hires and develops leaders to be PEAR change agents reflective of the communities the agency serves. Hiring practices are effective, inclusive, and equitable. 	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guide agency operations and programs with diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB), and PEAR values. Invest early in agency operations and services where needs are the greatest by allocating resources that maximize PEAR and DEIB outcomes. Provide DEIB, PEAR, and Tribal relations training to develop staff to lead a racially just, engaged, and inclusive culture. Provide hiring best practices and training for hiring managers that emphasizes PEAR and anti-bias efforts to reduce bias in the hiring process. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower employees by providing feedback opportunities to reduce barriers that impact the success of DEIB, PEAR, and Environmental Justice (EJ) initiatives. Build DEIB and PEAR values, competencies, and expectations into newly created or updated position descriptions. Provide leadership training and guidance to enhance employee and leadership proficiencies in delivering services that support DNR's DEIB and PEAR values. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide accessible and inclusive opportunities for our communities to receive information and provide feedback to inform DNR's PEAR goals and assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency leadership is responsible for ensuring that quarterly and annual progress reports for PEAR and EJ goals are provided to Workplace Culture and Development (WCD). WCD implements a biennial PEAR Strategic Plan. WCD publishes a dashboard displaying the progress of PEAR goals. DNR annually reports the percentage of position descriptions that include DEIB and PEAR competencies.



DNR's Dive Team supporting compliance operations for the Washington State Wild Stock Geoduck Fishery.



GOAL

2

Workplace Culture, Development, & Equity

This area focuses on aligning DNR’s actions with State Human Resources Directive 20-02 by investing in, creating, and fostering a PEAR organization and culture. DNR focuses on building racially diverse and culturally responsive pathways for current and future staff at all levels. DNR’s goal is to create opportunities for staff to bring their full selves to work and feel welcomed, supported, and valued.

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<p>1. DNR has a culture of pro-equity, racial justice, and belonging.</p> <p>2. DNR Core Competencies include DEIB & PEAR values and are integrated across the agency.</p> <p>3. DNR commits resources to support and grow employees through training, development, coaching, and mentoring.</p> <p>4. DNR removes employment advancement barriers and provides equitable opportunities for agency jobs.</p>	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a streamlined and equitable hiring process and experience, especially for underrepresented communities seeking new pathways into the natural resources. • Eliminate barriers to high-salaried employment opportunities for people of color, Indigenous Peoples, and other underrepresented communities. • Evaluate the effectiveness of current policy, workforce development programs, and inter-agency and community partnerships. • Develop a workforce development program with on-ramps and equitable advancement opportunities. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in lower-salaried employees through active employee development plans. • Expand equitable access to career development resources for employees. • Develop career pathways focused on retention and advancement for current and future employees. • Incorporate DEIB and PEAR values, DNR Core Competencies, and expectations into Performance and Development Plans. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand community partnerships that support DNR’s workforce development strategies. • Invest in career exploration, preparation, and launch programs for youth with the greatest barriers to employment. • Leverage partnerships with key onramp and pathways programs to expand career pathway opportunities for underrepresented communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR revises, tracks, and supports agency-wide expectations for annual Performance and Development Plans. • WCD publishes an annual workforce dashboard displaying hiring trends and agency demographics. • WCD publishes an annual report highlighting the number of employees hired into a permanent role that began with the agency in a seasonal/temporary position. • WCD publishes an annual report highlighting educational and career development spending from WCD budget. • DNR uses equity best practices to evaluate and inform current and future workplace policies, procedures, and practices.



DNR staff attending the 2024 Thurston County Pride Fair sharing information about DNR, our culture, and job opportunities to those in attendance.



Tribal Engagement

This area focuses on DNR’s commitment to continuing to invest in Tribal Nations to cultivate equitable, racially just, and accessible participation with recognition of the unique histories of Tribes and Indigenous people, and the significance of the connection between the land and cultural ways of life practiced since time immemorial. This work is supported by DNR’s Tribal Government Consultation Policy.*

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The agency fosters mutual trust and authenticity with Tribal leaders and/or Tribal government designees. Tribal relationships are rooted in DNR’s PEAR strategies which respect Tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, and Tribal perspectives. 	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand DNR resources and staff to facilitate early, upstream, and authentic consultation and engagement with Tribal Nations. Utilize DNR’s Tribal Government Consultation Policy, allowing DNR employees the ability to “make every effort to include Tribal Nations, Tribal members, and Tribal perspectives in DNR’s community, engagement, and participation processes” that fosters full and equitable community participation. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create hiring and advancement opportunities that complement DNR’s Tribal Relations efforts. Provide professional development opportunities to foster Tribal relations skills and knowledge throughout the agency. Provide Tribal relations training and guidance to the Executive Leadership Team, Project Leads, and All Agency Staff in accordance with DNR’s Training Plan. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in partnerships to streamline Tribal communications and inform decision-making. Build, enhance, and improve relationships between DNR and Tribes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tribal Relations develops and actively updates a public-facing dashboard to report on key agency consultation, coordination, and partnership with Tribal Nations. DNR annually reports training compliance as dictated by DNR’s Tribal Government Consultation Policy. Tribal Relations office reports on the number of positions within the agency that include Tribal relations duties as part of the position description.

* Tribal Nations are partners to DNR in stewardship and management of shared public lands, waters, and resources. DNR recognizes that this partnership is situated within the context of a history of colonization and decisions and actions by the State which have and continue to harm Tribal communities and their traditional practices of resource management and their access to and exercise of Tribal rights and resources. DNR’s Tribal Government Consultation Policy was developed to foster mutual respect, and establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Tribal officials for agency actions that have Tribal implications. DNR seeks to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with Tribes that share territory with and have interests in Washington State.



Tribal leadership coming together with DNR leadership at DNR’s Tribal Summit having dialogue about natural resources.



GOAL

4

Community Partnerships & Engagement

This area focuses on ensuring DNR’s communities, staff, and partners collaborate to develop and share mutual PEAR efforts. This will be supported by intentional investments to support community outreach efforts.

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<p>1. DNR prioritizes equitable, early, and frequent engagement with WA residents and communities.</p> <p>2. DNR provides meaningful opportunities to fully participate and provide feedback on activities administered by the agency.</p> <p>3. DNR engages with WA residents and invites them to participate in telling the story of public lands, and the wide-ranging impacts the agency’s work has on their communities.</p> <p>4. DNR prioritizes accessibility of agency-managed lands, engages with communities who are underrepresented in the outdoors, and improves access for all communities.</p>	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an agency-wide training program that supports the need for proactive, effective, and inclusive community engagement on all significant agency actions, key agency projects, initiatives, and programs. • Update staff and agency software and tools to better connect with the communities they serve. • Increase the number of public-facing materials, dashboards, and tools that are available in languages other than English on DNR’s website. • Invest in translation and/or interpretation services as needed for public meetings, emergency management, and public engagement events. • Recognize that accomplishing these goals requires significant new work. DNR will add staff as necessary to accomplish this work. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key leadership design and implement strategic outlines to staff and programs for proactive, equitable community engagement plans that align with the Agency’s strategic plan, EEJ, and Tribal Relations needs and priorities. • Provide best practices and guidance for public outreach and engagement to meet language accessibility requirements and comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). • Develop and compensate language, cultural, and community engagement skills that are used as an official part of position duties. • Provide resources to improve outreach and collaboration with Limited-English Speaking (LES) communities. • Provide best practices and guidance to staff to understand the experiences of recreationalists from communities underrepresented in the outdoors. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and develop community partnerships with organizations and communities where DNR has not traditionally engaged. • Strengthen community-based relationships by working with partner agencies, municipalities, and partners to ensure coordinated and equitable public engagement. • Institutionalize a process in which community feedback is incorporated into agency communications, programs, and services. • Develop toolkits and educational opportunities for DNR employees to equitably engage with community-based organizations and community leaders. • Adopt a Lived Experience Compensation Policy. • Evaluate and make recommendations for how to improve the Everyone Outdoors Pilot Program to increase access to free Discover Passes for underrepresented communities. • Develop an accessibility and visitor experience assessment for recreational sites through partnership with community-based organizations. organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR reports on key resources and programs provided to community-based partners. • DNR develops and actively updates a public-facing dashboard to report on key agency community engagement events, outcomes, findings, initiatives, programs, and training.



Agency Communications

This area focuses on supporting and advancing DNR’s capacity to better communicate with the public in equitable, racially just, and accessible ways that cultivate a sense of belonging and understanding. DNR is committed to utilize language translation and interpretation services in public communications. This ensures that information, data, and resources are available to Washingtonians’ emergency planning. Additionally, DNR is committed to adapting and using new communication channels to increase the agency’s communication reach to the public.

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DNR communicates effectively with people with limited English proficiency and those with disabilities. 2. Communications in emergencies are provided equitably, regardless of barriers, allowing people timely access to lifesaving information. 3. DNR supports and updates tools for agency communication in alignment with the languages of the communities we serve. 4. DNR tells the story of public lands, the benefits created by our work, and the effectiveness of our efforts on behalf of Washington’s communities. 	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and increase the agency’s language access tools to better connect with the communities we serve. • Establish partnerships with agencies, municipalities, and other organizations to maximize the reach of emergency communications. • Increase utilization of language translation and interpreter services with an emphasis on wildfire hazards, geological hazards, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). • Ensure all digital communications comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a policy that agency communications must meet a minimum standard of ADA and inclusive language best practices. • Provide training and guidance on communications that meet ADA accessibility and inclusive language best practices. • Provide easy access to language translation and interpretation services to employees. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize civic engagement opportunities via community media outlets and organizations. • Expand community preparedness by publishing emergency information in multiple languages. • Increase the use of non-traditional communication channels to reach communities with the greatest need. • Establish mechanisms to gather public feedback that measures communication effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR identifies, translates, and provides essential documents in seven languages statewide: English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, Tagalog, and Korean. • Regions identify, translate, and provide essential documents in the top seven languages for their geographic area based on American Community Survey (ACS) and Census data. • DNR increases investments in availability and use of pro-equity and accessible technologies. • Agency leadership is responsible for ensuring that language services utilized, including interpreter services, are provided to Workplace Culture and Development (WCD) for annual reporting. • DNR utilizes ACS and Census data in decision making for language services.



Washington Geological Survey staff watching staff presentations during their all-staff field trip in June, 2023 at the summit lookout of Green Mountain in the Green Mountain State Forest.



GOAL

6

Facilities, Contracting, & Systems Improvements

This area focuses on two key pieces for contracting: 1) removing contracting barriers, and 2) prioritizing contracts awarded to small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses. These efforts are informed by the Office of Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises (OMWBE) and Department of Enterprise Services (DES) small, diverse, and veteran-owned business criteria. This work is in response to the DES Supplier Diversity Policy (DES-090-06) and Governor Executive Order Equity in Public Contracting (22-01).

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DNR tracks and reports awarded contracts based on Office of Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises (OMWBE) and Department of Enterprise Services (DES) criteria. 2. DNR has a strategic approach to award contracts informed by OMWBE, DES small diverse and veteran owned business criteria, and annual tracking reports. 3. DNR encourages contractors of varied sizes and capacities to compete for business. 4. DNR increases the number of contracts awarded to small and diverse vendors. 5. DNR removes contracting barriers to support the participation of small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses. 	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support prospective vendors and contractors through coaching and resource sharing. • Support agency contracting managers by standardizing practices and implementation procedures for contracting. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide Supplier Diversity Training for employees with contracting responsibilities. • Identify and eliminate barriers for staff seeking to promote equitable contracting. • Simplify and streamline DNR implementation of purchasing and contracts training for employees, where possible. • Provide comprehensive job-specific contracting training that addresses contracting practices and procedures. • Ensure all employees have access to written contract policies once adopted, with easy to understand guidelines and procedures. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and diversify the agency’s use of OMWBE certified businesses. • Increase opportunities for equitable contract awarding for diverse suppliers. • Conduct outreach with small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses. • Engage the public with education opportunities for contracting processes and services with DNR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Office of Legal Affairs and Business Practices (OLABP) and Enterprise Projects & Performance Management Office (EPPMO) guides, recognizes, and accounts for progress via the PEAR Tracking Dashboard and other identified mechanisms. • OLABP and EPPMO reports the number of DNR contracts, identifying OMWBE certified and DES small diverse and veteran owned businesses annually.



Building SP0210—Belfair Work Center. Constructed during the 19-21 Biennium with capital funds, the building was completed in the spring of 2021. The building is approximately 3100 sq.ft. in size and replaced a mobile office trailer that had been in place as a DNR office for nearly 30 years. The building accommodates roughly 18 personnel depending on configuration and use pattern. The project cost roughly \$1.5 Million and utilized a pre-manufactured construction method.



Policies, Planning, & Budgets

This area focuses on ensuring that DNR will be accountable for incorporating PEAR values into agency plans, policies, and budgets to meet the needs of the public by incorporating Environmental Justice Assessments (EJAs) and Equity Impact Reviews (EIRs) for significant agency actions. Budget decisions will be made according to the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act and Climate Commitment Act (CCA) criteria.

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EJ and PEAR priorities are incorporated into the agency's strategic plan. 2. DNR's policies incorporate EJ and PEAR values in practice and in analysis decisions. 3. Budget, allocation, and priorities will be informed by strategies of the agency's Environmental Justice Implementation Plan. 4. DNR conducts Environmental Justice Assessments (EJA) and Equity Impact Reviews (EIR) on significant agency actions. 	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide new resources on demographic conditions for planners, analysts, and project managers to inform decision-making. • Develop improved equity analysis tools for plans, policies, and budgets. • Ensure budget decisions support community investments, informed by the agency's Environmental Justice Implementation Plan. • Adopt a community engagement plan. • Adopt an Equity Impact Review Policy and Procedure. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train leaders, planners, analysts, and project managers on the use of Environmental Justice best practices and equity impact tools. • Ensure employees have the tools and resources to conduct required Environmental Justice Assessments. • Implement an EJ and PEAR screening in agency budget development process. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the use of Public Outreach and Feedback Procedures in external planning and policy processes. • Assess the impact and measure the benefit created through the HEAL Act and Climate Commitment Act (CCA) budgetary decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR advocates for funding at the state level that creates equitable access to agency services. • DNR annually reports the number of new and updated policies that incorporate EJ and PEAR values. • DNR prioritizes transparency and accountability to overburdened communities by integrating environmental health disparities (EHD) in decision-making, as required by the HEAL Act. • OEEJ embeds EJ practices into agency management, operations, and processes, as required by the HEAL Act. • DNR and OEEJ annually reports fiscal commitments based on HEAL and CCA criteria. • OEEJ and WCD provides an annual summary for all EJAs and EIRs conducted by the agency, as required by the HEAL Act and Washington's Office of Equity.



Small Forest Landowner Regulation Assistance Fish and Wildlife Biologist, Brent Haverkamp and Small Forest Landowner Regulation Assistance Forester, Roslyn Henricks conducting a visual survey for the presence of fish in a stream.



GOAL

8

Building Our PEAR Capacity & Understanding Our Impact

This area focuses on utilizing public data tracking and reporting in DNR’s efforts to achieve PEAR outcomes. When addressing complex issues, DNR will ensure that data collection and analysis methods are transparent and utilized for decision-making.

GOALS	INTENTIONAL INVESTMENTS			OUTCOME MEASURES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DNR develops data tracking metrics for key EJ and PEAR objectives. 2. DNR decision-making is informed by PEAR and EJ data. 3. DNR has a culture of transparency to meet PEAR objectives. 4. DNR visibly and publicly displays agency progress on PEAR and EJ objectives. 	<p>IN SYSTEMS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and distribute data dashboards and reports as a resource to the agency to identify areas of improvement. • Implement an agency-wide pro-transparency policy to make our work more accessible, understood, and responsive to public needs. 	<p>FOR EMPLOYEES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present data findings through informational sessions for all employees to learn about our progress and ask questions. • Provide and explain PEAR data in a manner that is easy to understand. • Establish a PEAR Team that includes representation of every program, division, and region to support the advancement of pro-equity, racial justice, access, and belonging at all levels of our agency. • Provide supplemental training for data interpretation to aid employees in utilizing PEAR data in decision-making. 	<p>FOR THE PUBLIC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host town halls and informational sessions for the public to learn about our progress and ask questions. • Utilize community partnerships to provide engagement opportunities to provide feedback and on PEAR data tracking. • Establish PEAR Community Advisory Team workgroups led by DNR’s PEAR Team to provide community insights to the agency, which will be used to inform agency goals, initiatives, and decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DNR develops PEAR measurement tools. • DNR publishes and adheres to a schedule sharing progress on PEAR implementation. • DNR publicly provides agency progress on PEAR Plan goals. • DNR centralizes accounting for agency progress on the PEAR tracking dashboard on its website.



Participants in an education event at Woodard Bay with targeted outreach to Spanish-speaking community members observe aquatic organisms under a microscope. The event was coordinated by DNR, the Pacific Education Institute, and the Department of Fish & Wildlife.



**BUILDING OUR PEER CAPACITY &
UNDERSTANDING OUR IMPACT**



DNR's Current Pro-Equity Work

HIGHLIGHTING EXISTING INITIATIVES



Over the last several years, DNR has worked to advance pro-equity anti-racism practices and initiatives within the agency. This includes the establishment of the Office of Workplace Culture and Development and the Office of

Equity and Environmental Justice. Together, these teams have made important progress in making DNR a more equitable place to work while accomplishing our mission. The PEAR plan provides additional focus and strategy to enhance the impact of WCD and OEEJ initiatives. These teams are ensuring jobs provided at DNR are rooted in serving those most impacted by health and environmental disparities, and are able to preserve public lands and water for future generations.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND JOBS

DNR has prioritized creating new pathways to natural resources employment in the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan by incorporating Environmental Justice, Pro-Equity Anti-Racism, and Workforce Development goals focused on providing new pathways to employment for underrepresented communities. DNR is increasing natural resources workforce development through the implementation of three focused programs.

This includes a **Youth Education and Outreach Program**, which delivers place-based, career-connected education for Washington students to explore and prepare for careers in natural resource management; an **Adult Education and Outreach Program** providing coordinated strategies for adult on-ramps into natural resources and forestry fields through academic, observational, and field-based learning opportunities; and a **Career Pathway Program** that establishes pathways for DNR employees to grow throughout their career to meet professional goals.

This work provides social and environmental benefits to working families in Washington, forest and natural resources sector industries, our natural ecosystems, and the interests of the state, counties, and cities.



Top: Snohomish students in the Youth Engaged in Sustainable Systems summer internship program visit with DNR foresters to learn about sustainable timber harvest on state trust lands.

Middle: Commissioner Franz job shadowing with DNR law enforcement.

Bottom: DNR crew planting seedlings as part of the agency's re-forestation efforts after a fire.



ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES

DNR is committed to labor standards and practices that promote careers and multi-generational economic opportunities. Social equity in labor programs and projects instituted by Washington jurisdictions have proven successful in fostering careers for workers-in-training, residents of economically disadvantaged communities, and those underrepresented in particular industry sectors in Washington. This work aligns with DNR's equity and social justice goals, and grows the skilled workforce that is necessary for Washington to continue to prosper.

Under Commissioner Franz, Project Labor Agreements (PLA) are now utilized for clean energy projects on DNR-managed lands. The department has also included labor peace agreements in commercial leases, such as the Edgewater Hotel in Seattle.

With funding from HB 1168, which the agency secured with unanimous support from the legislature in 2021, resulting in DNR's Correctional Camps Crews being paid the equivalent of local minimum wage when assigned to an active wildfire. This not only provides crew members important job skills for when they are released, but also savings to help them transition from incarceration.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Public policy discussions and decision-making spaces should center and reflect the lives and expertise of Washingtonians – that is why DNR launched the [Environmental Justice Action Plan for Boards and Commissions](#). Launched in 2023, the plan directs the agency to expand community representation, implement more equitable practices for engagement, compensate community members for their expertise, and diversify the bodies that advise the agency on policy, practices, and planning. DNR also added capacity and for the first time, opened all advisory boards to public applications in a competitive, open process for highly qualified and frontline communities to have new opportunities to guide the agency.

The new Environmental Justice Action Plan for Boards and Commissions is a substantial step forward for more equitable representation and environmental justice. By creating a new framework for who guides the agency's work, DNR is ensuring voices most impacted by policies are included in governance and evaluation of agency actions with institutional power via their participation on formal advisory boards.

YOUTH EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

In 2023, DNR launched its Youth Education and Outreach Program (YEOP) to facilitate place-based, career-connected, outdoor learning experiences on state lands and cultivate the next generation of natural resource professionals.

In the first year of the program launching, DNR has connected with more than 2,000 K-12 students through: field-based learning; classroom activities; career fairs; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) nights; internships; and other group activities. This program supported more than 4,500 hours of educational programming and provided professional learning opportunities for more than 120 K-12 teachers, including half-day, full-day, and multi-day workshops.

COMMUNITY HEALTH AND RESILIENCE

After touring the damage in the town of Malden, where a Labor Day 2020 firestorm leveled most of the town, Commissioner Franz directed DNR to work with communities to build resilience throughout the state. The Wildfire Ready Neighbors program was developed to help property owners and local fire districts integrate defensible space and home hardening approaches to make Washington's communities more wildfire ready. Launched in 2021 in six Eastern Washington counties, more than 4,000 participants have already pledged more than 20,000 actions to make their homes and communities more wildfire ready. In 2023, DNR launched the program in three counties on the western side of the state. The agency will expand to five additional at-risk counties with additional funding from HB 1168.

DNR is also addressing fire risks with home weatherization approaches to help mitigate smoke and air quality concerns. Home assessments will be accompanied by direct connections to weatherization grant programs to help Washingtonians make home improvements, such as ventilation systems, insulation, and sealing air gaps and leaks in the home. As a key strategy within the DNR Wildland Fire Protection 10-Year Strategic Plan, the agency continues to help communities identify smoke respite areas and utilize community buildings as clean air and cooling centers.



URBAN FORESTRY

Trees and tree canopies are essential to healthy communities and healthy people. They lower the temperature in neighborhoods and help mitigate the impacts of climate change. In 2021, through the passage of HB 1216, [DNR's Urban and Community Forestry](#) program took its first major step towards incorporating environmental justice and salmon recovery into the program's core mission.

DNR is committed to ensuring that all Washingtonians have access to trees and greenspaces in their neighborhoods. In 2023, DNR collaborated with American Forests to deploy a tool to support the agency's work to achieve tree equity throughout the state. In 2024, DNR awarded more than \$8 million to communities throughout the state to plant trees and improve tree canopy.

DNR and American Forests launched the Washington State Tree Equity Collaborative to support this work. The Collaborative's purpose is to expand and fortify neighborhood tree canopy cover by engaging cities, community organizations, and key partners to build and support rigorous and inclusive urban forestry programs across the state.

DNR is using the Tree Equity Score tool provided by American Forests to prioritize creating equitable tree cover in urban neighborhoods that have inadequate tree cover. Through this collaboration, American Forests will increase the Tree Equity score to provide tree canopy cover in all Washington cities. DNR will work with jurisdictions, Tribes, nonprofits, and other partners to raise all urban census block groups to a score of 75 or higher.

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION POLICY

DNR's Tribal Government Consultation Policy provides guidelines and expectations for DNR employees to consult and coordinate on a government-to-government basis with Federally recognized Tribes when a proposed DNR policy, agreement, or program implementation may affect Tribal interests. DNR worked alongside Tribes to create this policy, which was adopted after many months of work with DNR leadership and Tribal engagement, feedback, and consultation. As stated in DNR's Tribal Government Consultation Policy:

Tribal Nations are partners to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) in stewardship and management of our shared public lands, waters, and resources. DNR recognizes that this partnership is situated within the context of a history of colonization and decisions and actions by the State which have and continue to harm Tribal communities and their traditional practices of resource management and their access to and exercise of Tribal rights and resources.



Yakama Nation Council Chairman Gerald Lewis speaking at DNR's 2024 Tribal Summit.

DNR strives to honor Tribal requests through Tribal consultation and/or coordination with Federally recognized Tribes. Ultimately, final decision-making on DNR activities is an authority reserved by the state of Washington and the Commissioner of Public Lands. Any Federally recognized Tribe may request consultation on any DNR activity at any time.

NEW PUBLIC MEETINGS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT POLICY

DNR's new Public Meetings and Community Involvement Policy underscores the agency's commitment to environmental justice and community engagement, emphasizing the importance of incorporating vulnerable and overburdened communities' perspectives in the agency's decision-making processes. The policy is rooted in expanding meaningful participation, ensuring robust input and accountability, and securing deliverables with community consent. It aims for operational excellence and adherence to best practices, making public meetings more accessible, and fostering robust public input.

The new policy directives include: broad dissemination of meeting notices, including contact information in the state's top five languages, and regular collaboration with community-based organizations (CBOs) to ensure broad dissemination. Meeting agendas will be automatically translated when needed, and all public meetings will offer translation services upon request. ADA accessibility for in-person meetings is mandated. Finally, the policy includes a public comment period requirement mandating a 20-minute public comment or participation period in all DNR-hosted public meetings.

The new Public Meetings and Community Involvement Policy represents a significant shift towards inclusivity, accountability, and environmental justice. It aims to ensure that every community member has a voice in the management and protection of natural resources.



“Our work on behalf of the public is improved when we build authentic relationships that invite and incorporate public expertise and aspirations in meaningful ways.”

EJ JUÁREZ
DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF EQUITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (OEEJ)



EVERYONE OUTDOORS PILOT PROGRAM

Launched in 2024, the [Everyone Outdoors Pilot Program](#) aims to reduce barriers to outdoor access by providing applicants with the opportunity to receive free annual Discover Passes.

This is a collaborative effort by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and DNR. Passes are available to community and volunteer groups, youth and outdoor recreational programs, nonprofits, veterans, and other organizations facing barriers to outdoor access.

NEW AND UPDATED POLICIES

DNR is actively updating and implementing new internal policies to address inequities and advance environmental justice within the agency. Below are policies and procedures that DNR has recently created or updated.

Policies:

- **NEW:** Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- **NEW:** Safe and Respectful Workplace
- **NEW:** Sexual Harassment
- **NEW:** Commute Trip Reduction
- **NEW:** Cultural Resources on Aquatic State Lands
- **NEW:** Public Meetings and Community Involvement Policy and Tasks
- **NEW:** Preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) Procedure
- **NEW:** Tribal Government Consultation Policy
- **UPDATED:** Employee Tuition Assistance Program
- **UPDATED:** Energy Conservation



Acknowledgments

This plan was crafted with input from many public servants at DNR with guidance from community partners across Washington. We acknowledge their contributions in crafting this vision for the agency and thank them for their passion for promoting equity, justice, access, and belonging for our public lands, the people we serve, and our colleagues who serve them.

Senior authorship of the PEAR Plan was provided by Brandon Schmidt, DEIB and Development Strategist, within the Office of Workplace Culture and Development, with editorial support from Ariana Flournoy, DEIB Communication and Outreach Support Specialist, and leadership support from Betsy Vandrush-Borgacz, Director of Workplace Culture and Development, and Eliseo (EJ) Juárez, Director of Equity and Environmental Justice.

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PEAR work involves all of us. With empathetic and sincere engagement of employees, the public, and our partners throughout the state, we can create significant change in addressing the needs of all Washingtonians."

BETSY VANDRUSH-BORGACZ

DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF
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Contact

DNR welcomes input and ideas about how to continue to implement pro-equity anti-racism work.

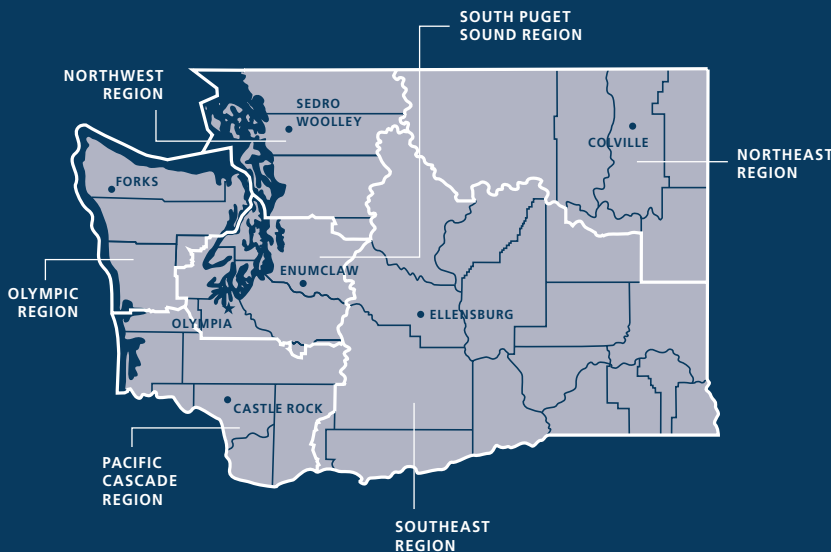
For more information about DNR's PEAR Plan, please visit: dnr.wa.gov/EnvironmentalJustice

 Visit our website
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NATURAL RESOURCES

HILARY S. FRANZ
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

