

**West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District**  
**Equity Lens**

**March 30, 2018**  
**Post Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee Discussion**

**Equity Lens Purpose**

Achieve the District's vision for racial equity, as well as ensure fulfillment of our non-discrimination statement. Excerpts of both are below.

**WMSWCD Racial Equity Statement: Vision**

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District is a culturally inclusive organization that welcomes and engages people of color in all facets of our organization, activities and programs. The Board and staff of the District, the customers we serve, the contractors we hire and the people who benefit from our work resemble the racial diversity found within our service territory. The District reaches out to communities of color to determine their conservation priorities for the purpose of enhancing livability through healthy soil, clean water and diverse habitats. We willingly share with others our experiences in pursuing racial equity.

**WMSWCD Statement of Non-Discrimination**

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District does not discriminate based on any class or identity including age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, genetic information, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and veteran status. The District is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. The District makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities and special needs to provide access to district events, materials and services.

**Equity Lens Question:**

- What is the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review?
- What are the organizational factors that affect the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review?
- Of these factors, which ones does the District have full decision control over and which ones would the District have to advocate for needed change with other organizations?

**Surface Assumptions and Set Outcomes**

- What assumptions are you bringing into the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review?
- What is (are) the outcome(s) you are hoping to create with the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review?

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- Who is interested in the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review (i.e., has a list of stakeholders or other interested parties been developed or mapped)?

### **Equity and Inclusion**

- Does the policy, program, practice and/or decision benefit any specific group or identifier? If yes, who will benefit?
- Of those who will benefit, list those groups or identifiers that have been subject to discrimination, disparities or other forms of oppression.
- Have we missed any groups that could benefit from the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review especially because they have been subject to discrimination, disparities and other forms of oppression?
- What are the equity and inclusion outcomes you seek for those groups or identifiers intended to benefit from the policy, program, practice and/or decision but have been subject to discrimination, disparities and other forms of oppression?
- How are the equity and inclusion outcomes we seek going to be achieved in the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review? For each equity and inclusion outcome identified above, explain the steps, means or actions in policy, program, practice and/or decision under review that is going to achieve the outcome. “
- Revisit your surface assumptions and set outcomes from above. Do any of these contradict with the equity and inclusion outcomes we seek and the methods to achieve them? How do we eliminate any contradictions so as to achieve the equity and inclusion outcomes we seek?

### **Engage Multiple Perspectives**

- What is your process for engaging multiple perspectives and stakeholders, with the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review?
- Do we need cultural, race or other identifier liaisons to communicate and/or help carry out what we are doing in the policy, program, practice and/or decision to achieve our desired equity and inclusion outcomes? If yes, who are they?
- How will their participation achieve the equity and inclusion outcomes we seek?

### **Attend to Unintended Outcomes**

- What are the potential unintended outcomes that go against or contradict equity and inclusion? What disparities could be reinforced? How will you avoid these?
- What barriers exist to more equitable outcomes, for example conflicts with religious or other culturally specific events, customs or protocols? How will you remove these barriers?

### **Evaluation, Learning, and Building Awareness**

#### Planning Phase

- What will be the process and timeframe for reviewing the policy, program, practice

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and/or decision to evaluate whether any unintended outcomes that go against or contradict equity and inclusion developed? For example:

- Will feedback from multiple perspectives and stakeholders be collected?
- Who will you share this feedback with and how will it be used to update the policy, program, practice and/or decision so it becomes more equitable?

Immediate Response Phase

- Based on applying this equity lens to the policy, program, practice and/or decision under review, what immediate changes to the policy, program, practice and/or decision are you going to make to remove identified conflicts and contradictions with equity and inclusion?

Post Implementation Evaluation Phase

- Based on the identified timeframe, implement the Planning Phase as identified above.
- What did we learn about how well our equity lens performed and how will we incorporate this learning into any changes in our equity lens?
- What changes to the policy, program, practice and/or decision implemented are you going to make to remove identified conflicts and contradictions with equity and inclusion?
- How will you use this evaluation and learning to raise racial awareness and awareness of other identifiers as listed in our non-discrimination policy?

## Definition of Terms

**Assumptions** – What do we mean by assumptions (question raised by Michael)?

**Barriers** – Anything that is limiting access and/or inclusion that lead to the presence of disparities for a specific identifying group. Language or physical access barriers are common examples but specific barriers can be much more subtle in their presence.

**Identifiers** – This is a placeholder term that this equity lens is intended to be used beyond race or culture. For example, one set of identifiers would be the protected classes called out in our Statement of Non-Discrimination. Other examples of identifiers are indigenous/First Peoples, visible minorities, marital / family status, education, geographic location, language, religion / spirituality. Another example of an identifier is any type of theme bonding a group of individuals such as pollinator wonks, invasive species warriors, bikers, etc.