
Recommendations for WMSWCD Education Program

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Prepared on behalf of West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District
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Many thanks for sharing your perspectives and helping guide this work:

Discussion Group Participants

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

PKS International Community Engagement Liaison Services Program

Gladys Ruiz Consulting

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1. Key Findings & Recommendations

Discussion groups provided many suggestions and requests for WMSWCD as they work to find the best role they can play in local land-based education. The discussion group participants included racially and culturally diverse community members and land-based education leaders, K-12 school educators, local nonprofit leaders and staff, and government staff . Recommendations from community members and our project team reflect a broad understanding of what land-based education is and includes.

Recommendation Areas

The following six overarching recommendation areas emerged from the requests of community members and leaders, the land-based education gap analysis, and our team’s analysis. There are many detailed recommendations to explore within each area, and these are described in Section 3 of this report.

1. Increase access to land among Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and culturally specific groups.
2. Increase culturally specific land-based education, including funding and support for BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups to provide land-based education.
3. Continue conversations and relationships started through this project. Hearing and responding to input from racially and culturally diverse community members is vital to WMSWCD’s mission to support communities in their service area. Discussion group participants requested more opportunities to connect to one another and continue the conversations started. These discussions are important to the work of racial and social justice in land-based education.
4. Use WMSWCD’s institutional power for change, including work to change land use rules and regulations, create land-sharing relationships, change land ownership rules to serve on the Board of Directors, and advocate for those with less power and privilege.
5. Increase Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and members of culturally specific groups on WMSWCD staff and board.
6. Work to connect K-12 educators in the WMSWCD service area to existing land-based education resources, rather than creating or offering the resources internally.

2. Project context and approach

1. Overview

West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSWCD) is working to identify the best role their organization can play in local, land-based education. WMSWCD hired Stamberger Outreach Consulting (with subconsultants PKS International (CELS Program) and Gladys Ruiz Consulting) to conduct this education niche-finding project to help understand how their education programs can best address the needs and interests of community members moving forward. This project focused particularly on the needs and requests of Black, Native and Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC) and other culturally specific groups, immigrants, and refugees, many of whom have been marginalized and systematically denied access to land for many years.

2. Project Research Objectives

The objectives of this education niche-finding project were to:

- Understand how WMSWCD education programs can best address the needs and interests of communities
- Hear land-based education leaders' needs, interests and recommendations for supporting their work
- Hear early-childhood and K-12 educator needs, interests and recommendations for supporting them, and the students and communities they serve
- Learn how remaining unmet education needs can be addressed through other existing organizations and programs
- Document existing land-based education resources provided within the WMSWCD service area
- Document the gap between community requests and existing education resources
- Develop recommendations and possible education program roles for WMSWCD to help address education gaps, prioritizing recommendations from BIPOC and culturally specific communities

3. This project built on previous WMSWCD community engagement work.

Shortly before this project, WMSWCD partnered with community-specific liaisons to conduct surveys with 160 members of historically marginalized communities, including Arabic, African American, Chinese, Latinx, Native American, Slavic, and Vietnamese communities. In addition to the community survey work, WMSWCD convened a diverse advisory committee to provide guidance on its newly adopted 5-year plan.

The themes emerging from this engagement work included:

- Most important environmental topics: clean water, clean air, soil health, climate change
- Most important WMSWCD services: project and grant funding, youth programming
- Barriers to accessing WMSWCD services: unaware of services, don't own land, lack of funding, language barriers, cultural conflicts with invasive species management
- Community Member Requests:
 - Opportunities to culturally connect, enjoy, access, and help protect and enhance land, including access to land to harvest First Foods and medicines, access to land for farming and gardening, support and increased knowledge of local parks and open space, support enhancing community spaces that aligns with community needs

- Vegetable and herb gardening and soil health skills and information
- More school and community gardens
- More culturally specific local food sources
- Connect those that own land with those that seek to access to land

4. Project approach

Our project approach included the following three elements:

- 1. Project Advisory Committee** - To help ensure that this project best hears and reflects community needs and interests, a Project Advisory Committee comprised of members of each stakeholder group below was paid \$100/hour up to eight total hours (except government agency staff) to review a project Research Plan (how project was to be implemented), focus group questions for groups described below, and this Education Program Recommendations Report.
- 2. Discussion Groups** - To hear community perspectives and recommendations, we heard from 29 stakeholders through five discussion groups. Discussion groups were two hours long and held online using Zoom. Participants were selected based on recommendations from Mary Logalbo, CELs liaisons, Jamie Stamberger, and Gladys Ruiz. All participants (except those in the Government group) were paid \$150 for their time and labor participating in a discussion group. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. Participants gave verbal consent to participate after having the project described to them in detail and having an opportunity to ask any clarifying questions.

The groups were conducted in the order listed below. In the first three groups, we shared themes heard in previous community engagement work and asked participants to tell us more about these themes and share any additional feedback and recommendations for WMSWCD to better support their communities. In the nonprofit and government discussion groups, we presented the requests from participants in the first three groups and asked organizations if and how their programs are working to meet these requests, and for their recommendations of community-based groups who are already doing this work that WMSWCD might be able to contact and explore supporting.

Discussion Group	Participant Characteristics	# of Participants	Group Facilitator
Community Members	Identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, or other people of color and/or members of culturally specific, immigrant, or refugee groups; Live in the WMSWCD service area, or grow food or other plants there; Are adult or youth leaders or advocates in their community	8 in discussion group	Alvey Seeyouma (CELs Native American Liaison)
Local Leaders in Land-Based Education	Identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, or other people of color and/or members of culturally specific, immigrant, or refugee groups; Provide land-based education programs or services in the WMSWCD service area	3 in discussion group, 2 write in	Gladys Ruiz

K-12 Education Providers	Provide early childhood or K-12 education in the WMSWCD service area; Included educators who identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, or other people of color, and/or members of culturally specific, immigrant, or refugee groups	4 in discussion group, 1 write in	Jamie Stamberger
Nonprofit Staff and Leaders	Provide, or are able to provide, land-based education programs in the WMSWCD service area; Included people who identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, or other people of color and/or members of culturally specific, immigrant, or refugee groups	8 in discussion group	Jamie Stamberger
School and Government Staff	Are able to provide land-based education services in the WMSWCD service area; Included people who identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, or other people of color and/or members of culturally specific, immigrant, or refugee groups	6 in discussion group	Jamie Stamberger

3. Land-Based Education Gap Analysis

The Land-Based Education Gap Analysis includes two components:

1. Documentation of the existing land-based education resources serving the WMSWCD service area
2. Documentation of the gap between community requests and existing land-based education resources

Step 1: Jamie Stamberger created an Excel spreadsheet of organizations providing land-based education programs and services in the WMSWCD service area. The sheet was populated with organizations participating in discussion groups, organizations currently partnering with WMSWCD, organizations mentioned or recommended during discussion groups, and additional organizations found through online research. Each entry includes a short description of services provided and audiences served, and an assessment of the extent to which an organization is led by Black, Indigenous or Native, or other people of color or a culturally specific group, and whether the organization provides culturally specific programming. For this report, when we say BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups, we mean groups in which ultimate decision-making power at the highest level is held by Black, Native and Indigenous, or other people of color, or by members of culturally specific groups.

Step 2: In the discussion groups, community members, leaders, and educators helped further refine and identify specific community needs for land-based education services in the WMSWCD service area that build off of recent community survey findings. The gap in land-based education is the difference between community needs and available resources. For this step, Jamie Stamberger created an Excel spreadsheet listing each community-identified need, resources available to meet that need as identified in the spreadsheet of existing resources, and a determination and description of the gap between each community-identified need and existing resources (major, moderate, small). A list and description of opportunities to address gaps is included in this final project report.

5. Terms

The following terms are used in this report. Please review this list to help add context and build a shared understanding as you read through the report.

“BIPOC”

Throughout this report, we have used the term BIPOC to mean “Black, Native and Indigenous, and other people of color”. We acknowledge that language matters, and that this term is imperfect. We also acknowledge that this term does not resonate with all people. We have worked to spell out the specific groups we are referring to as much as possible in this report, and we have sometimes used the term BIPOC to make reading the report easier. According to the website *Greatest*¹, “BIPOC has developed as a term to highlight the fact that, in North America, Black and Indigenous folks have a specific relationship to racism and white supremacy. ‘Black’ denotes the hypervisibility of Black people in American society, while ‘Indigenous’ is included to highlight the erasure of Indigenous people.” We welcome additional conversation and feedback about the use of the term BIPOC.

BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups

For this report, when we say BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups, we mean groups in which ultimate decision-making power at the highest level is held by Black, Native and Indigenous, or other people of color, or by members of culturally specific groups.

Discussion groups

The discussion groups provided recommendations found in this report. Discussion group participants included racially and culturally diverse community members and land-based education leaders, K-12 school educators, local nonprofit leaders and staff, and government staff.

Environmental racism

Environmental racism is defined as the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of color. Environmental justice is the movement against environmental racism—one focused on minimizing environmental impacts on all people, advocating for fairer environmental policies and lawmaking, and installing greater protections for BIPOC communities².

Equitable access to land

Throughout US History, Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and culturally specific groups have been denied equal access to owning and enjoying land, including ancestral lands, farmland, homeownership, and safe access and enjoyment of public lands, among others. Equitable access to land requires institutional and policy changes to remove barriers land ownership and visiting and safely enjoying land among BIPOC people, as well as transition of land ownership to BIPOC and culturally specific groups, until the ability to visit and safely enjoy land and the likelihood of owning land is no longer co-associated with one’s race or ethnicity.

Institutional racism

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 from groups classified as people of color³.

¹ <https://greatist.com/grow/bipoc-meaning#bipoc-vs-poc>

² <https://www.treehugger.com/what-is-environmental-racism-5185776>

³ MP Associates, Center for Assessment and Policy Development, and World Trust Educational Services, October 2021. <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Intersectionality

Intersectionality refers to the simultaneous experience of categorical and hierarchical classifications including but not limited to race, class, gender, sexuality, and nationality. It also refers to the fact that what is often perceived as disparate forms of oppression, like racism, classism, sexism, and xenophobia, are actually mutually dependent and intersecting in nature, and together they compose a unified system of oppression. Thus, the privileges we enjoy and the discrimination we face are a product of our unique positioning in society as determined by these social classifiers.⁴

Latine

Latine (pronounced la-'ti-ne) is a gender-neutral form of the word Latino, created by LGBTQIA+, gender non-binary, and feminist communities in Spanish speaking countries. The objective of the term Latine is to remove gender from the Spanish word Latino, by replacing it with the gender-neutral Spanish letter E. This idea is native to the Spanish language and can be seen in many gender-neutral words like “estudiante.”⁵

LGBTQIA+

This denotation includes space for those identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (and in some cases, "questioning"), intersex, asexual (and sometimes "ally"), and the "+" is for a plethora of other orientations and identities⁶.

Microaggression

The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership².

Racism

Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices².

Racial Equity

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 that fail to eliminate them².

Traditional foods and medicines

Plants and other natural materials local to a place traditionally used for food and medicine by Indigenous people living in that place.

⁴ Cole, Nicki Lisa, Ph.D. "Definition of Intersectionality." ThoughtCo, Jul. 31, 2021, [thoughtco.com/intersectionality-definition-3026353](https://www.thoughtco.com/intersectionality-definition-3026353).

⁵ <https://callmelatine.com/faq/>

⁶ <https://bestlifeonline.com/what-lgbtqia-means/>

3. Detailed Findings & Recommendations

This section describes the key findings and recommendations in detail, including highlighting the opinions of discussion group participants.

1. Increase access to land among Black, Native or Indigenous, and other people of color and culturally specific groups.

FINDINGS: Many participants who identify as Black, Native or Indigenous, other people of color, or from a culturally specific group described significant barriers that keep them from accessing land. These include systems of private and public property ownership, land access rules and regulations, chemical use in land management making harvesting unsafe, lack of community gardens, and institutional racism. Some described how institutional racism in the US has built intergenerational wealth among White people who own most of the land, while people of color were denied land ownership. Some participants said they want to own land but face many barriers. Black, Native and Indigenous, other people of color, and people from culturally specific groups also requested more culturally specific education, including BIPOC-only spaces to connect with land, and education provided in their language. Educators in Portland Public Schools said there is inequitable access to outdoor spaces at schools. Barriers they described included land use rules and regulations, little support from school district maintenance staff, and inconsistent funding to develop and maintain green spaces for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO INCREASING ACCESS TO LAND:

1. OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Continue to build relationships with BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups** to develop an understanding of their specific needs and interests surrounding land access and food gardens and farming.
- **Work to improve safe access to greenspaces in low-income communities and communities with higher proportions of people of color** (including public transit access and other transportation needs)
- **Facilitate workshops or trainings about financial and policy aspects of land acquisition**

2. ACCESS TO LAND FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Indigenous people in Oregon have had a specific experience of land left and forced displacement from the land. Facilitating access to land by Indigenous people must consider that specific experience.

- **Continue to build relationships with local Tribes and Indigenous communities** to understand how WMSWCD can support access to land for harvesting food and medicine – pay for their time
- **Publish and share information about chemical use and harvesting safety on public lands**

- **Facilitate changes in rules and regulations and access agreements for private and public land, including conservation easements, to facilitate Indigenous land management and harvesting food and medicine.** A participant who identified as Indigenous mentioned concerns about appropriate compensation for Native people who are stewarding public land. WMSWCD should ensure any work Native people are doing on public land is fairly compensated.
- **Fund Native people and Native-led organizations and support their work with Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)**
- **Become involved in and support Land Back work** (put Indigenous lands back into Indigenous ownership). This may include involvement in property acquisitions and giving acquired land back to Indigenous people. One local initiative doing this work is the Oregon Land Justice Project (<https://www.oregonlandjustice.org/>). EMSWCD is already participating. One participant who identified as Indigenous encouraged WMSWCD to be aware of potential inequities in Land Back work including when land being given back is very low quality and will require significant work to restore. In these cases, they request that funding is also given to Native communities in these instances to help restore the land.

3. ACCESS TO LAND FOR BLACK COMMUNITIES

Black people in Oregon have also had a specific experience of denial of land ownership in Oregon. Facilitating access to land by Black people must also consider that specific history and experience.

- **Increase Black farmland ownership.** Due to a history of specific exclusion of Black people from owning land in Oregon, little farmland is owned by Black people in the state. These specific barriers to farming and land ownership are connected to ongoing food insecurity among Black communities. According to the Black-led organization Feed'em Freedom⁷, "Black Oregonians are almost six times more likely than white Oregonians to suffer from food insecurity." There is a need for specific work to increase Black ownership of farmland and support food sovereignty work of Black-led organizations.
- **Facilitate dialogues and relationships between Black, Indigenous, and other farmers of color and culturally specific farmers and other landholders on Sauvie (Wapato) Island.** One participant who identified as Black indicated there is tension on Sauvie (Wapato) Island between Black farmers and other farmers of color and White landowners. They requested support navigating this tension and working to build relationships to support sharing of the land.
- **Invest in Black-owned farm business development.** A participant who identified as Black said Black farmers in the WMSWCD service area are ready to take their farming operations to the next level, and they need quality support for growing farming businesses. They recommended WMSWCD support Come Thru Market Farmer Training Program⁸, a BIPOC-specific farm business training program.

⁷ <https://feedemfreedom.org/>

⁸ <https://www.comethrupdx.org/ftp>

- **Support Black leadership, decision-making power and sovereignty** by financially supporting and advocating for organizations developed and led by Black people for Black people (see providers list for a list of local, Black-led organizations)

4. ACCESS TO LAND FOR GROWING FOOD

- **Facilitate farmland ownership transition to Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and members of culturally specific groups.** Over 60% (10 million acres) of Oregon's farmland will change ownership in the next 20 years, and farmers face pressure to sell their land to developers (OSU, 2016⁹). Farmland transition programs present an opportunity to protect farmland and increase land ownership among BIPOC and culturally specific farmers by connecting retiring farmers with up-and-coming farmers who face many barriers to accessing land. EMSWCD is also exploring this work. Rogue Farm Corps¹⁰ and Friends of Family Farmers¹¹ are local organizations with programs working on farmland transition.
- **Support public and private land sharing partnerships for farming and community gardens for BIPOC people and members of culturally specific groups.**
- **Work with culturally specific groups to build and support community gardens specifically for their use** – there were specific requests from African immigrant communities and Latine community members. This work should also support ongoing garden maintenance. Village Gardens¹² in North Portland provides one example of community-specific co-creation of garden plots. One agency partner suggests NRCS Urban Conservation program funding may be available to support this type of program or project.
- **Increase individual community garden plots specifically for people of color.** Portland Parks and Recreation Dept. Community Gardens program has difficulty building community gardens on parks properties in West Multnomah County, and they have deprioritized building new gardens in the WMSWCD service area. Community members seeking garden plots through this program are typically on a 2-3 year waiting list with only approximately 1 new garden created per year city-wide.
- **Share City of Portland Community Gardens income-based garden fee scholarship information with community members**

⁹ <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1148&context=metropolitanstudies>

¹⁰ <https://www.roguefarmcorps.org/changinghands>

¹¹ <https://friendsoffamilyfarmers.org/farm-link/>

¹² <http://www.villagegardens.org/community-programs>

2. Increase culturally specific land-based education, including funding and support for BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups to land-based education.

FINDINGS:

- **Community members and land-based education leaders said there is a need for more culturally specific land-based education and more funding to support BIPOC-led and culturally specific programming.** There are many BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups doing impactful land-based education work in the WMSWCD service area (see providers list in Appendix A).
- **A number of participants expressed that Indigenous knowledge and practices should be taught by people belonging to the cultural group to which the knowledge belongs, and it is important to teach the history of Indigenous people in the area.** Indigenous discussion participants said if an organization doesn't have the right staff (culturally specific staff) to teach TEK and other culturally specific practices, they should hire and pay culturally specific staff to teach them. Participants also said it is important to include the history of Indigenous people in land-based education, including the painful history of genocide and land theft forced upon them. One Indigenous participant said there is a difference between teaching Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and teaching about the history of Native people: Indigenous TEK should only be taught by Indigenous people, and history can be taught by a variety of people.
- **Community members and government agencies may have differing views about what is included in land-based education.** We asked each discussion group to tell us what "land-based education" means to them before we shared WMSWCD's definition. There were similar themes across groups when describing land-based education, including that it relates to the interconnectedness of people and nature, and includes caring for the Earth. Participants in the Community Members, Leaders in Land-Based Education, and K-12 Educators discussion groups said land-based education includes the history of a place including the history of Indigenous people on the land, their ways of land management, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). Some also mentioned the exclusionary history of White-dominant land-based education that suppressed and sought to delegitimize Indigenous and other culturally specific ways of knowing. Participants in the Schools and Government staff discussion group did not mention these topics in their initial description of land-based education.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Prioritize funding BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups providing land-based education.** We recognize WMSWCD likely has limited financial resources and must prioritize where their money is spent. We encourage WMSWCD to prioritize funding the work of BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups first, followed by groups providing BIPOC and culturally specific programming. Organizations that are not BIPOC-led or culturally specific and do not offer BIPOC or culturally specific programming should be lower priority for funding. For help prioritizing, we have prepared a list of groups that are able to provide land-based education in the WMSWCD Service Area, organized by BIPOC and culturally specific leadership. (see section 4).

- **Financially support and advocate for Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to be taught by Indigenous people only, and to consult them about the most appropriate way to teach the history of Indigenous people.** Examples of this type of work being done by groups in the WMSWCD service area include: organizations paying Indigenous educators to help learn the most appropriate way to present Indigenous history and knowledge; paying Indigenous educators to provide classroom lessons and field trips (example: Confluence Project¹³); the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Tribal History Curriculum for use in K-12 classrooms¹⁴
- **Invest in relationship building.** We encourage WMSWCD to work to build authentic relationships with BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups as an initial step before offering or providing funding. This may include attending public events and discussions held by the group, organizing meet and greets, and conducting listening sessions without agendas. WMSWCD should work to de-center themselves in this relationship building and prioritize listening and hearing the perspectives and interests of communities above achieving their organization's objectives.
- **Offer general capacity funding to BIPOC-led organizations and work to reduce other funding barriers** like complicated applications and reporting, match requirements, and offering up-front funding. See the 2021 [equity-focused evaluation](#) of the EMSWCD PIC grants program for more detailed recommendations on reducing barriers for BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups to access funding.
- **Offer to share administration and operations costs**, vehicles, tools etc. One agency partner suggests that WMSWCD support costs other agencies are not able to cover, such as boundary fencing for urban farmers.
- **Support BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups to build capacity to provide their own culturally relevant land-based education as they request.** This may include connecting to funding, support for creating classes and curriculum, etc.
- **Support BIPOC-only spaces** where Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and culturally specific groups can connect with the land without White people present.
- **Support WMSWCD, school, and other government agencies to expand their understanding of what is included in land-based education** to include the history of Indigenous people on the land, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and other culturally specific ways of knowing.
- **Hold workshops or trainings to introduce BIPOC and culturally specific farmers to NRCS and FSA funding opportunities.**

SPECIFIC TO FOOD GARDENING EDUCATION:

- **Increase culturally specific food gardening education by paying culturally specific educators who can teach in multiple languages.** Prioritize local community members. Consider partnering with PPR Community Gardens staff who hope to do more of this work in the coming year. There were specific

¹³ <https://www.confluenceproject.org/stories-learning/in-the-schools/>

¹⁴ <https://www.grandronde.org/history-culture/culture/curriculum/>

requests for this type of education for African immigrants and Latine communities. The Anahuac Program in Woodburn, Oregon¹⁵ is an example of a Latine-led organization providing culturally specific gardening and food education.

- **Fund BIPOC and culturally specific farmer capacity building including training and support for successful farm businesses.** WMSWCD could support the Come Thru Market¹⁶ - a BIPOC-led organization providing this kind of capacity building training for BIPOC farmers. Work with BIPOC and culturally specific farmers in the District service area to determine the need and how to best partner to implement trainings. OSU Extension service may be a good partner for this work.

3. Continue conversations started through this project

FINDINGS: Participants in the community member discussion group, the nonprofit leaders and staff discussion group, and the school and government discussion group requested more opportunities to connect to one another and continue the conversations started. They had a lot to share, and felt these discussions are important to the work of racial and social justice in land-based education.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Continue relationship building and conversations started through this project.** This may take the form of additional facilitated discussion groups on similar topics, planned networking events for groups on the call and others as determined, and other community building activities. It is important to continue to financially support community member participants and nonprofit staff who are not automatically compensated through their work for the time spent in a group like this, as well as people of color who may provide education and emotional labor at these groups.
- One participant in the K-12 educators group also said WMSWCD should consider **discussion groups with youth** to gather their input and recommendations for youth education programs.
- **One agency partner encourages WMSWCD to participate more fully in Local Working Groups (LWGs)** with NRCS to convene community members for discussion and access funding and communicate with federal agencies.

4. Use WMSWCD's institutional power for change

FINDINGS: WMSWCD has significant power as a long-standing local governmental institution with deep roots in local agriculture and natural area land management. WMSWCD has a voice and is present in spaces where Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and members of culturally specific groups are often denied access and decision-making power. Participants in some groups encouraged and requested that WMSWCD use this power to change systems that uphold and perpetuate institutional racism,

¹⁵ <https://capacesleadership.org/anahuac/>

¹⁶ <https://www.comethrupdx.org/>

specifically regarding systems of White control over land, decision-making power, and access to food and farming.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Show authentic engagement with diversity, equity, and inclusion work and intentional and meaningful action towards changing systemic racism.** Most participants in the land-based education leaders discussion group said White-led organizations start to make moves on diversity, equity, and inclusion work, like writing DEI plans, but then stop short of real systemic change. They expressed that real change will require organizational self-reflection, transparency about where your organization is in the process, actually diversifying staff and Boards, and changing how things are “typically” done.
- **Lead by example by continuing to prioritize learning about and dismantling systems of racism and exclusion within WMSWCD and within larger agencies and organizations.** This will include intentional and thoughtful internal work on the part of the staff and Board and may include trainings and consultant support. One specific suggestion was to support trainings to interrupt microaggressions.
- **Provide financial and advocacy support for BIPOC and culturally specific communities to build power as stakeholder groups and build capacity and influence of groups to give them a place at the table and more decision-making power.**
- **Continue work to change rules about Board of Directors eligibility requirements at the state level** that currently exclude anyone who does not own at least 10 acres of land or is directly appointed by the Board and waits a full year to be promoted to a full directorship (collaborate with other SWCDs and politicians in this work, build a coalition)
- **Show up in spaces and conversations where WMSWCD has a voice and advocate for systems change**
- **Impact how funding is passed down from the federal and state level, including NRCS**
- **Facilitate collaborative strategic planning (including with BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups) to protect local food-sheds and watersheds**

5. Increase Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and culturally specific staff and board members, and increase organizational capacity to support diverse staff

FINDINGS: Racial and cultural diversity of the WMSWCD staff and board is important in order to meaningfully serve all residents of the District’s Service Area. Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and members of culturally specific groups we talked to through this project have a variety of thoughts and experiences about how to best increase the racial and cultural diversity of staff and board members. Most participants encourage WMSWCD to hire and recruit more BIPOC and culturally specific people to serve on the Board of Directors, and some participants cautioned WMSWCD to be careful and intentional as they do this work. They explained that White-dominant workplaces can be toxic and harmful for people of color,

and often the burden of change falls upon them when the power systems at their organization don't change.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Hiring people of color is not a stand-alone solution to inequity. **WMSWCD must continue to develop an internal racial equity analysis (lens) and a consistent approach to identifying and dismantling systems of oppression within the WMSWCD organization.** This is particularly important to ensuring that staff of color within WMSWCD are not subjected to oppression and harm within the workplace. This work will include significant additional investment of time and intention by WMSWCD staff and Board and may include additional DEI trainings and consultant support.
- **Leading with racial diversity in diversifying WMSWCD helps mitigate exclusionary practices that would otherwise leave out people of color. Development of an internal racial equity analysis should also include an understanding and acknowledgement of intersectional identities,** which if not acknowledged, can be harmful to BIPOC staff.
- **Include other forms of diversity in hiring practices such as diverse genders, physical abilities, and sexual orientations.**
- **Try to hire more than one person of color at a time and support affinity groups for BIPOC staff**
- **Do not assume all Black, Indigenous, and other people of color have fully developed skills to navigate equity work** – check in and support DEIJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice) skill building and capacity building
- **When considering creating Community Advisory Groups to the Board of Directors, work in advance to facilitate power-sharing agreements between the Board and the Advisory Group.** Facilitate understandings about the level of decision-making power the Advisory Group will have and how their input will be used. We advise against having a group that will have no authority or power at the organization. We also encourage facilitating dialogue, relationship building, and forming shared understandings and common language between the Board and an Advisory Group. A professional outside facilitator with a strong organizational equity approach may be helpful for this work.
- **Use philanthropic funding to support leadership transition support at White-led organizations to transition to leadership of people of color**

5. Work to connect K-12 educators in the WMSWCD service area to existing land-based education resources, rather than creating or offering the resources internally.

FINDINGS: K-12 educators shared many barriers and needs for support for land-based education at K-12 schools. Among these included providing garden and land-based curriculum, providing technical assistance and funding support for outdoor spaces at schools, funding both outside groups and internal

staff at schools to provide land-based education lessons, and convening networking opportunities for educators and administrative staff working to increase land-based education opportunities at schools. In our research to identify the organizations offering land-based education in the WMSWCD service area, we found many curriculum resources for land-based educators including school garden curriculum, many funding opportunities, and several school garden support networks. Several local organizations offer in-classroom lessons. We also learned that Portland Public Schools is working to develop a program to provide hands-on and technical support for outdoor spaces like gardens on school grounds, and that there may be funding available from OSU or other funders to support this work.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Although there is a significant need for support for this work at schools, we feel these resources already exist or may be in the process of being developed, and that the best role is for WMSWCD to direct schools to resources, rather than create or implement resources themselves.** This will allow WMSWCD to prioritize using their limited resources to address other community needs outlined in this report. Directing to resources may include creating a collated emailable list of local resources for educators, providing presentations to educator groups about available resources, or holding resource fairs to connect educators with resources.
- **Stay connected and partner with PPS to increase school project resources for schools and connect local schools to those opportunities as they become available.**

4. Discussion Group Results

We held five discussion groups through this project, one group with each of five stakeholder groups. The stakeholder groups included: Community Members, Land-Based Education Leaders, K-12 School Educators, Nonprofit Organization Staff and Leaders, and School and Government Agency Staff. This section describes themes from each discussion group and highlights the voices and opinions of participants.

Community Members

Community members in this group either live or grow food in the WMSWCD service area. They also identify as Black, Native, or other People of Color, from a culturally specific group, immigrants, or refugees.

1. What is land-based education?

We asked discussion group participants to tell us what “land-based education” means to them and what it includes. Their answers included:

- How to work with and conserve or preserve land for future generations, including taking care of water
- A culture and way of life for native people - *“You don’t have anything without land-based education. You don’t have a culture. For what I was taught, without the land and all it teaches us, there’s not education at all for my way of life.”*
- Honoring native people and history – *“Acknowledging the honor, the Tribes or ethnic groups in the land that were here before, the history of that land.”*
- Includes agriculture, plants, vegetables, trees, rivers
- Fishing mentioned twice
- Food gardening mentioned twice

2. Barriers to WMSWCD programs and land-based education

As part of our discussion, we reviewed the barriers described by previous survey respondents (included: unaware of services, don’t own land, lack of funding, language barriers, cultural conflicts with invasive species management). We then asked discussion participants for their thoughts about these barriers.

- About half of participants agreed information only being provided in English was a barrier. *“I also think about our elders who don’t want to speak English. There’s a lot of knowledge with our traditional language, and if you speak your own language, you know that words are very powerful.”*
- Half also mentioned barriers to accessing land (see below)
- Other barriers mentioned included:
 - Cultural conflicts with herbicide use, labeling plant species as “invasive”, and otherwise using terms of violence to describe their management, such as “eradicate”.

- Lack of funding for community organizations to obtain land and grow food
- One participant agreed with all barriers mentioned by survey participants

3. Need for access to land

The need for access to land had come up as a theme in previous surveys. We asked participants for their thoughts about the need for communities to have more access to land.

More than half of participants said barriers to land access and land ownership are problems for them. *“I work as a day laborer. I work for people who own land, and I don’t personally own any land, and people like me who has worked on someone else’s land, they wish to have a little piece of land. For me it was frustrating not to have something, at least a little piece of land to use it.”*

Many references were about the difficulty of finding land where they can grow food. Many agreed the wait lists for community garden plots are part of the problem. One said residents of new developments want space for food gardening, and that space is not being including in building plans. *“All [my] coworkers, they expressed the desire to borrow a little piece of land to do some gardening. It would be nice if the city has more places where people can go where they can practice and plant any kind of plant and feel like they own for a few months a little piece of land where they can do what they like to do.”*

Some participants said the current system of land ownership denies land access to people. *“What if I just want to get a piece of land and cultivate it - I just want to live and grow things? I can’t do it because someone from the government is going to come up and say I can’t be there. That kind of thought is pretty sad; how we can create spaces where we have access to land, I don’t know what you define as access to land, to go do something on the land and not be punished for that.”*

One participant who identifies as Native said rules, regulations, and White-dominant culture ideas about land conservation keep Native people from harvesting first foods on public and private land. They said there are not enough foods to harvest and the use of pesticides in land management also keeps them from feeling safe harvesting them. They said harvesting foods and medicines is important to the land, and the land is sick because of this broken connection. *“Where we have grown, we belong in these places. Our traditional ways of harvesting and ways of life are meant to be in those places. You can see the lack of presence in these areas. You can see why these places are sick: because we’ve been removed from them. Bringing us back to where we belong and giving us the space to have our cultures and to exist, it’s necessary to heal the land itself. The land is the people.”*

4. Community Member Requests for WMSWCD

We asked participants what recommendations or advice they would give to WMSWCD as they work to find the most helpful and appropriate role for their education program moving forward. Their requests and recommendations included:

1. Increase access to land for food gardening.

- Add more community gardens and plots
- Reduce or eliminate fees for BIPOC and people from culturally specific groups
- Provide garden areas for culturally specific gardening groups that already exist but are struggling to access land for their community. This was a specific request from immigrants from Africa, and likely applies to other communities as well.

2. Increase food gardening education.

- Requests from several participants who were immigrants about the need for help understanding how to grow food in a new and different climate.
- Some participants from African countries said it was important to be able to grow culturally specific foods as a way to stay connected to their home countries.
- Several mentioned the disconnect between people and where their food comes from and wanting to restore that connection.

“I would more talk about the gardening for my community because it has benefits for exercise and stress relief, and in terms of the pride in your work.”

“It’s different in our county, we can harvest all the time, it’s not like winter and all the plants die and you have to [plant] all the plants again. That’s why we say we need that learning from you guys...”

“When we go to the garden, when we farm, it brings us closer to home. There’s this feeling of home sickness - it brings you closer to the ancestors. So, being able to have the opportunity to have [access to food gardening] will go a long way to helping people adapt to their environment.”

3. Provide opportunities to continue these conversations about land-based education, food gardening, and access to land among diverse communities. Some said two hours was not nearly enough to have this full discussion. They appreciated the conversation, learned a lot, and asked for more discussion groups to continue this work.

4. Reduce language barriers.

- Hire and pay bilingual educators and translators
- Hold additional discussion groups in other languages to include voices from experts who have not been able to participate because of language barriers

5. Remove barriers to Indigenous harvesting of traditional foods and medicines.

- Direct financial resources to Native people to support them to care for the land, plant and cultivate traditional foods and medicines, and work to bring Native people back into forests.
- Avoid using pesticides in areas where people may harvest foods and medicines.
- Facilitate changes in rules and regulations that allow Native people to care for the land and harvest foods and medicines on public and private land, including conservation easements.

“There's a reconnecting that needs to happen with land managers. By bringing people back into these areas and having a plan to do that. If you have conservation easements and all of this power, use it well, that's my invitation, try to use the resources and try to direct them back to the folks who've been trying to do it since day one.”

6. Support culturally appropriate education.

- Hire more diverse staff and educators (BIPOC people and people from culturally specific groups)
- Work to develop education that makes sense to culturally specific groups, culturally appropriate communication (to Latine community farmworkers specifically mentioned)

7. Provide funding to BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups to provide land-based education.

The following groups were specifically mentioned, but this is not an exhaustive list of culturally specific groups that could be funded or supported. Additional groups that provide culturally specific land-based education can be found in Appendix A.

- Native people and Native-led groups
- HAKI: Making America home for East African immigrants - <https://hakicomunity.org/about/>
- De Rose Community Bridge and Holistic Wellness - <https://www.facebook.com/derosebridge/>

Land-Based Education Leaders

Participants in this discussion group were leaders in the environmental and/or agricultural education field. They also identify as Black, Native, or other People of Color.

1. Need to reconnect with nature and the land among BIPOC communities

Most land-based education leaders we spoke to mentioned a need to reconnect with the land among BIPOC and culturally-specific communities. They said disconnection happened when colonizers stole land from Native people and stole people from their land and enslaved them, and the impact of this separation from land continues today. They said there is a need to heal the trauma of that separation and connect back with the land through ancestral knowledge and by spending intentional time in nature. One participant said limited resources and struggling to survive in a city is another reason BIPOC communities are disconnected from nature.

“The through line for me is the separation from land and reclaiming that connection through engaging with the land we’re on now. Myself, like many, don’t have access to the land that is our ancestral land. Many of us were stolen from our land and displaced. I’ll try and learn about some of the plants from the western coasts of Africa, and try to point out those plants when they appear on this continent.”

“Working with native youth, if I can tie back what it is we’re learning or doing together, help them see the connection that this sort of knowledge existed before colonization. Our program is mostly native adults, important to validate that, we’ll teach STEAM and traditional knowledge, first foods is science is botany, called something different now but we did have that knowledge. Sometimes in those conversations, people’s minds are blown – haven’t had it put that way to them by someone who’s in charge.”

2. Biggest challenges faced

We asked land-based education leaders to describe some of the biggest challenges they face in their work. Challenges they described included:

Requirement to own at least 10 acres of land to serve on WMSWCD Board of Directors. Leaders in the group highlighted this restriction on board membership as an example of institutional racism and White supremacy. They said the make-up of WMSWCD’s Board makes it hard to trust them.

“I’m not surprised, the very first thing I did when I got invited to this was I went on the website, and I’ve worked with SWCDs before, I know it’s a White-led organization, but just seeing all the staff and Board of Directors. For me as an individual, my hackles go up and ‘can I trust these people?’ my answer is ‘no’. What is your plan for diversifying your staff and what is your plan for the early staff you might hire might go through (trauma). When I think about the Board of Directors, I’m like ‘ahh!’ There’s a lot of work to be done before you’ll be able to build trust with some of the communities I’m part of.”

“A lot of what I talk about is so called ‘professional development’, what kinds of things can you get on your resume. Sitting on boards is one of them. How do I go out with my interns and learn about wapato on Wapato Island? What if one of them comes up to me and says they want to be on that board? What do I need to do my work better? For certain organizations that hold so much power to be honest with themselves and look at how White supremacy and generational wealth affect these partnerships. It’s hard to trust people when you see what they do and when you see how White their boards are, and that’s all it is.”

Funder power dynamic and site visits. The leaders talked about the power dynamic inherent in the relationship between a funder and who they are funding. They specifically mentioned the emotional labor and discomfort caused by White funders doing site visits to “observe” students and interns. One said the funder power dynamic makes it hard to feel like SWCD staff are people who they can go to for help. *“Sometimes we’ll get requests from funders to come out and see the kids. Maybe it’s a well-meaning request, but at the end of the day they’re strangers to the people I’m mentoring. It’s really weird and uncomfortable for young folks to be learning and working the land, maybe it’s a place they don’t know, and then to have someone be there and be like ‘I just wanna watch you’. It’s very uncomfortable. It’s the last thing I’d ever want to do for my students, I don’t want to make them feel unsafe. Sometimes the work people do puts you in a hard spot, especially when there’s money involved from a funder.”*

Government land ownership and control. Some participants pointed out barriers associated with government ownership of much of the land communities might use for harvesting food or medicine or otherwise connecting to the land. They said the government's need to control and impose strict rules about who connects with the land and how, and what is allowed to be done on the land, creates barriers. *"It takes White organizations and agencies to understand how impactful these places can be if they just relax their rules, and the need to be in control of everything. Those instances when we're out with our students, the students get so much from it, and they come back out [into nature]."*

Primarily White staff prevents culturally appropriate land-based education. Leaders we talked to said the primarily White staff at many organizations makes it hard for communities to trust organizations and gets in the way of culturally appropriate land-based education and connection. One leader said the identity of the educator influences the story the student learns and their experience. They described that BIPOC people need to be with other BIPOC people to heal and make new connections to the land on their terms. They also said land-based education should include discussions of the connections between native people and the land, but it is not appropriate for White people to teach this. *"When I was in a role bringing people into nature, the best time was when there were no White people there. There's always a feeling of being watched [when White people are there]. The conversation is always different when people all share a collective history around that connection to land to colonization."*

Primarily White staff creates a hostile work environment for BIPOC staff. One participant explained, *"It is violent as a workplace if you're the only person of color. I've left every job because of that."*

Challenge connecting youth to career pathways. Some leaders said it is a challenge for them to connect youth they work with to career pathways in environmental work. This is related to White-dominant workplaces. *"How do you put together a program where [youth] learn the skills they need, and find a place for themselves and their cultural group in what they currently feel are White-only spaces? If we can get that done, we can keep people in the sector, and if we don't, the system is the system."*

Challenge connecting land-based education to other life scenarios. One leader said it is important and challenging to show people the many different ways land-based education connects to aspects of their daily life.

3. What is land-based education?

We asked participants to describe what land-based education means to them. Their answers included:

- Accurate and respectful history of a place, who uses it and how that has changed over time, human interconnectedness with nature – A Native discussion group participant described, *"In my work, we'll talk about TEK and how important it is to be learning from your people, your elders, and*

so important to know too whose homeland you're on and honoring that and respecting it as well."

- both STEAM and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, connections between ancestral knowledge and conventional science
- Observation and using all the senses
- Seeing how nature is useful and learnings apply to our everyday lives, including connections to physical, psychological, economic aspects of our lives – *"Part of nature-based education is helping people understand the wisdom of nature and how much it can teach us if we're paying attention."*
- Hands-on projects that benefit the community
- Learning by doing out on the land

4. Land-Based Education Leader Requests for WMSWCD

Throughout our conversation, leader participants described requests, recommendations, and advice for WMSWCD as they work to find the most helpful and appropriate role for their education program moving forward.

- 1. BIPOC only spaces to connect with land.** Many participants said BIPOC people are best able to connect with land and heal in BIPOC-only spaces, without the presence of White people. They requested an increase in BIPOC staff and education leaders, and for them to have access to land spaces on their own for their own work.
- 2. Increase BIPOC and culturally specific staff.** Most participants said BIPOC representation in staff is important for building trust with communities. One participant called attention to the dominance of White women in environmental organizations. However, they also warned that White-dominant workplaces can be toxic for BIPOC people when they are hired. They recommended hiring more than one person of color at a time for support. They also said there are affinity groups of BIPOC people building in the land-based education sector that WMSWCD should support. Another suggestion, specifically for White women, is to consider a job transition plan to prepare a person of color to take their place when they decide to move on.
- 3. Show authentic engagement in work to change systemic racism.** Most leaders in the group said White-led organizations start to make moves on diversity, equity, and inclusion work, like writing DEI plans, but then stop short of real systemic change. They expressed that real change will require organizational self-reflection, transparency about where your organization is in the process, actually diversifying staff and Boards, and changing how things are "typically" done.
- 4. Give BIPOC people access to land.** Leaders in this discussion group agreed that BIPOC communities need to be given access to land and would know what to do with it. One participant said, *"Really, it's just about access. We all understand the connection between land ownership and access to land. We just need the access - we know what to do."* Another said government landowners should relax some of their need to control and place rules around who can access land and how. They

said it is hard for their students to relax in nature because they are waiting for someone to come tell them they aren't allowed to be there.

5. **Give communities space, patience, and time to connect to land.** One participant expressed that landholders and funders often request programs and initiatives on their timeline and schedule without regard to the space and time communities need to reconnect with the land. They asked for more space, patience, and time. *“Really what we’re trying to do is rebuild people’s intuitive connection to land and sometimes it involves silence and stillness and see what comes through. White people are in a chipper good mood. I think step #1 is some sort of authentic connection piece. Western science is good at giving itself a stamp of approval – it’s not everything. The ratio of white adults. What do I need? Space and time and patience. Agencies, landholders, and funders, it’s all about their timeframe and their schedule, but recovery and rebuilding connection to land through trauma, that stuff takes a lot of time, patience and time.”*
6. **Support communities to build power as stakeholder groups.** One participant said communities could use support to build their capacity to participate in land use decision-making processes. They said some stakeholder groups have spent many years getting involved in land use projects and have developed power as a stakeholder group through this work, and this model can be used to help increase decision making power for communities of color.
7. **Funding support, paying community members for their time.** One leader we spoke to recommended that WMSWCD provide financial resources for community projects. Another said if WMSWCD doesn't have staff who can appropriately teach land-based education, they should hire and pay people or organizations who do.
8. **Curriculum support.** One participant said support for curriculum development and implementation related to clean water, clean air, soil, nature, conservation, and food production would be helpful to them. They said curriculum needs to be connected to daily life and provide connections to life skills and should be reinforced with a hands-on project.
9. **Communicate herbicide use and toxicity.** One participant wondered what WMSWCD is doing to communicate herbicide use and toxicity information to people who may be harvesting food and medicine in areas they manage.

K-12 School Educators

Participants in this discussion group Provide or support K-12 education through schools in the WMSWCD service area. The group included people with diverse racial and cultural backgrounds.

1. What is land-based education?

We asked K-12 educators to describe what land-based education means to them. Their answers included:

- When the outdoors becomes the classroom, using the land around you to teach a lesson
- Includes history of the land, and land acknowledgement – *“What is the history of the land, where it came from and what the intention is for the future.”*
- How to care for nature
- Who is connected to the land: people and animals – *“How we as the people interact with the land, its resources, and how that ties into communities and the people that live within it.”*
- *“Outdoor School”*

2. Challenges specific to land-based education efforts at their schools

Educators described challenges they face that are specific to their land-based education efforts at schools. These included:

School teachers are very stressed and additional activities or programs outside of their planned lessons are very difficult for them to accommodate. They said this can make it difficult to access the kids for special programs like gardening, and avoiding disrupting teachers is critical to success of extra programs. *“If it fits within their existing language [i.e. education plans] they can usually say yes to it, and if it breaks their mold, then you're making people uncomfortable.”*

Unstable funding for land-based education programs and projects. Some garden projects don’t have a budget and teachers pay for it out of their own pockets.

Lack of physical support for projects and programs, including the need for staff, parents, or volunteers to help with garden projects and field trips.

Disconnect between PPS grounds maintenance limitations and school garden projects. Some talked about problems with maintenance accidentally mowing over garden projects.

Curriculum lost in staff turnover – one participant said they had created a lot of curriculum around a school garden, but it would be lost when they followed their children to another school. They said they had seen this happen many times. *“I've always been starting with nothing, starting from scratch. When I leave, everything I've created is going with me. PTA put in a nice garden, it's all figured out, but there will be no curriculum really. This has happened before, they've had a garden and somebody stopped [doing garden programming], and repeat, a curriculum to pass on would be amazing.”*

Lack of student interest – one said students don’t show up for their after-school programs

3. Challenges specific to food gardening at schools

We asked teacher participants what challenges they face working with food gardens at schools and support is needed to overcome these challenges. Challenges mentioned included:

Gardening timeline conflict with school year – most crops mature in summer when students are gone and no one is there to harvest them. Untended maturing vegetables attract vermin and cause conflict with PPS maintenance staff.

Not enough tools for projects

Not enough consistent people power for projects

Lack of teacher knowledge of food gardening to teach students

Lack of garden space at a school

A middle school after teacher said it would be a challenge to motivate their students to participate. They said kids don't want to get dirty, and that the lack of instant gratification for students would be challenging.

4. Inequities in land-based education at schools

Most participants described inequities in land-based education programs at schools, including:

Classes with more involved parents receive more extra education, including land-based education. For example, teachers rely on parents to teach garden classes, and classes with parents that can do this receive more garden education.

Only offering paid land-based education programs after school to avoid disrupting the school day –
"Many teachers don't have time and bandwidth to squeeze it in, then it's pushed to after school, which seems good, but it's at cost, so it's inequitable, and only people who can afford it could join."

Land-based programs off school grounds will need to have transportation provided (some people may not drive)

Likely a need for programs offered in languages other than English

5. Access to Land

We asked participants if they feel there is a need to connect with land among students and their communities.

There is a need for connection to land. Several educators we spoke to said they see a need for connection to land among their students. Some said continuous access to connection with land at a young age would foster longer-term connection to the environment and stewardship into adulthood.

"Lack of ownership of place and connection to land is really present among students: there is a need to change the cultural mindset from "that's not mine" to "this is ours".

"If [land-based education] could be fostered as a norm and rhythm in the schools. If we can get our kids to start in kindergarten and have that continuity, you'd have little powerhouses by the time they're done with school."

“[Land-based education] would provide an opportunity for kids [I work with] to learn more about the environment and how to combat environmental racism. I would like to be able to help them learn about mini-gardens and keeping land concrete free. It is a serious health hazard as I learned last summer that poor and non-white folks are more likely to die in the heat because concrete exudes so much more heat. No trees, means it’s hotter in those areas. It would be a good opportunity for them to see how land-based education can benefit them. Most kids don’t get the opportunity to do anything like this until Outdoor School in sixth grade, it’s a foreign experience and it lasts a week. And most probably don’t have another experience like it again.”

One educator participant said there is a big need for more food among communities they work with. They felt food gardening at schools would help provide more food for communities.

There is a need for dedicated outdoor space at schools. Some educators expressed the need for a dedicated outdoor space at schools – a place classes and kids on their own can go that is their place to be in nature and connect to land at school. One said some schools have this, but others don’t. They felt WMSWCD could make a big impact by working with schools that don’t have a dedicated garden space to create one. When asked if they had to choose between an outdoor space or field trips, some said an outdoor space would have a longer-term impact, but one pointed out that both need teacher buy-in and involvement to work. *“One teacher said [to me], ‘I don’t want to bring my kids outside just for the sake of bringing them outside, there’s gotta be something of value there’. I agree if you create [an outdoor space], the long-term benefits are there, yet it still takes effort to get the kids out. You can have it, and kids might still not come out because there’s no one there to support it.”*

Field trips are very beneficial for students, and teachers struggle to accommodate them. We asked educators their thoughts about field trips. They agreed off-site field trips are incredibly valuable for students. They also said field trips disrupt teachers’ schedules and can be frustrating for them to accommodate. Some said it is important to have enough staff or volunteers to support students with extra behavioral needs, and one said they expect a lot more students to have extra behavioral support needs after COVID-19. *“We love [field trips], students love them. They can be a hassle for teachers to deal with, but it’s worth it, students get so much out of it. Also, it’s important to have enough helpers for students who need more attention, for behavior issues. Teachers really have to be driven to do field trips because it’s disruptive to their colleagues too, it disrupts the flow, which I think is fine, but there’s a lot of people that don’t like to ride waves. It was a problem to bring dirt inside the building. Any little change makes people upset, when you have to return and work next to your colleagues, it can be hard for teachers to step outside their comfort zone.”*

6. Educator requests for WMSWCD

Throughout the discussion, educator participants provided the following requests and recommendations for WMSWCD as they work to find a helpful and appropriate role for their education program.

- 1. Curriculum support.** Most participants said support for garden curriculum and other land-based education curriculum is very much needed. One said there is a need for a curriculum that can be handed

down from one garden educator to another, rather than being lost in a staff transition. One participant suggested a simple, organized online curriculum searchable by grade level.

- 2. Project planning and installation support.** Several said there is a need for support for long-term project planning, help organizing volunteers, technical project consultations, help schools create outdoor spaces on their grounds, especially schools that don't have these spaces
- 3. Support nonprofits who can deliver programming to schools.** Some said having an outside group with organized lessons and activities was very helpful, one participant reached out to a local nonprofit for this support and found they were too expensive for their garden group, they requested WMSWCD continue to fund these groups so they can support schools
- 4. Deliver lessons to schools.** One educator said they lack land-based education knowledge, but their students would benefit from lessons, another said WMSWCD may be able to do "lunch and learns" on school grounds to provide an outdoor learning alternative to field trips
- 5. Provide stable and consistent funding for school programs and projects.** Stability of funding that can be relied on year to year was important. Funding for materials, partner organizations, and garden staff specifically mentioned. One participant felt strongly that paid garden staff were crucial to the success of garden-based education at their school.
- 6. Conduct discussion groups with youth.** One participant said WMSWCD should conduct more listening sessions with youth and ask for their input on land-based education. They recommended reaching out to school affinity groups at local middle and high schools, for example the Black Student Union (BSU), Genders and Sexualities Alliance (GSA), Latin Heritage Group, Muslim Group, Jewish Group, etc.
- 7. Develop programming that engages and is relatable and attainable for middle school and high school youth.** One participant said it can be very difficult to motivate these age groups to participate in extra school programs. They recommended T-shirts, free food, gift cards, extra credits at school, stipends or job training programs, and field trips, getting their friends involved, making it fun, involving their parents, and offering interpreters at field trips. They said *"Make it relatable and attainable so that middle school kids could see themselves being able to do this."*
- 8. Build a network and promote programming to schools and teachers.** There was a sense that WMSWCD offers what schools and teachers need, but people don't know about them or what they offer. Participants recommended WMSWCD build intentional networks and promote their programs to increase participation. Specifically, they recommended connecting with the Eco Schools Network. Speaking of creating intentional networks, one participant said, *"For it to take off and be consumed by schools and communities, look at your end goal and work backwards. What strategic partners do you need in each section? From there, you have specific people that are your engagement people that can make sure the relationships and the programming and connections are happening."*

Local nonprofit organizations offering land-based education

Participants in this discussion group were staff and leaders of local nonprofit organizations that provide, or could provide, land-based education programs in the WMSWCD service area. The group included participants with diverse racial and cultural backgrounds representing seven local organizations.

1. What is land-based education?

We asked nonprofit staff and leaders to describe what land-based education means to them. Participant responses largely described connection and history.

Connection. Connection referred to connection with plants and animals and respect for all living things, understanding the place of people in an interconnected ecosystem, connecting with other people, and connecting with history. One participant who provides watershed-focused education said water and watersheds provide a good example of the interconnectedness of things.

“For me it’s like honor and respect every single living thing that is on the earth and that brings us together as humans. We learn a lot from the lands and the soils. I grew up in a farm and we were dependent a lot on that soil, on that land.”

“For me land based education means that you’re educated completely about the land. Speaks about the ecology, we are learning about not only that the funguses are there, but the native plants are there, and then we move that up the micro scale to the animals and the critters of course. And then the two legged, the Indigenous people of the land, how they care for the land. The most importantly, once we cover all those parts, we make the connection of how can modern people today connect with all of those things from the past.”

“In the watershed world, we’re so often talking about water has a way making connections like all water move down stream and what happens upstream and down stream. Any river system or creek system is very inter-connected so I think that from connection building perspective, the water is there.”

History. Participants said the history of a place is central to land-based education, including learning about Indigenous inhabitants of the land and how the land was historically managed, the difficult and true stories about land theft and genocide of Indigenous people on the land, how history affects how land is managed today, and how to change land management to restore original connections and access for Indigenous people.

“I think here land education is really looking at the ecological history, the cultural history, and the learning about the land. We need to learn about our native plants, need to learn where they come from. We also need to learn about the people and not just going back to when people first came here. We’re talking about, we need to learn the true history going through and learning through all people, because some of us some of our people weren’t here originally but came here and have a history and make an impact and we need to learn that too. We need to learn past, present and future of where we are going from here and how we make it accessible for everybody. So, land education is really a deep rooting, getting connected to it, but also having some hard

stories and hearing some hard stories about the truth, that's really truth and not hiding what's really about this land. Not making it more mythical or legendary than it is, talking about atrocities and things that go on to because that also makes it up."

Exclusionary history of White-dominant land-based education and need to reframe it to include all people. One participant talked about being forced to give up their ancestral definitions of land-based education and be trained within the White dominant paradigm to be considered knowledgeable about land-based education. They said this is a tension in current land-based education.

2. How Nonprofits are Working Towards Community Member Requests Heard in Other Discussion Groups

Next, we presented discussion group participants with the requests made by racially and culturally diverse community members in previous discussion groups and asked if and how their organizations are working towards meeting these requests.

BIPOC and culturally specific programming. Six of the seven organizations participating said they are providing BIPOC specific and culturally specific programming for youth and adults, including nature-based camps and paid internships for youth, access to land for food including land for farming and home gardening and land for growing and harvesting Indigenous foods and medicines. One participant said their organization offers education to youth in multiple languages when they have staff that speak that language.

One participant who identified as Mexican clarified that culturally specific education is different for all cultures; each culture has its own specific needs and although some people look alike, their cultural needs may be very different.

"When we talk culturally specific, I would say I am Mexican, but there are some Guatemalans, and some at different countries - they all have their own things that they like. We look alike but we are not from the same countries, and we have different culturally specific need. We don't need the same thing, and we need access to bring more, for example, vegetables or different plants."

Teaching Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). Three organizations with Indigenous staff said they teach Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and one organization without Indigenous staff said they had stripped TEK from their curriculum because they don't have Indigenous staff to teach it. Another White-led organization said they are paying a local Indigenous leader in land-based education to consult with their organization about how they can best include TEK without appropriating knowledge that is not theirs.

"We did have some lessons that brought in more Indigenous TEK, but through the years, through processes like this, like that your [presentation of community requests] says, it wasn't appropriate for us to be teaching some of those things, so we've stripped those things from our curriculum unless we have Indigenous educators at the time, which

right now we don't. [We] make sure we aren't co-opting and teaching stuff that isn't ours to share, which it's not."

"We're having (paid) meetings with [a local Indigenous leader in land-based education] to figure out how to best share indigenous ecological narratives in our watershed-based workshops: What to share and how, to neither appropriate indigenous knowledge nor contribute to erasure by not mentioning anything about indigenous presence and stewardship."

BIPOC leadership and BIPOC only spaces. Two participants talked about the importance of BIPOC leadership at their organizations. One leader expressed how important it is to have organizations with all Black and Indigenous board and staff creating and providing programming specifically for Black and Indigenous people rather than funding organizations led by others to provide this programming. They talked about the specific regional history and context for Black people in Oregon, and the need for Black people to have their own organizations and movements to access funding and infrastructure that has been given to other groups. They also mentioned the importance of Black people needing to create their own treaties with Indigenous people in Oregon. They also agreed with the need for BIPOC only spaces to connect with land. They are providing this through the creation of Black and Indigenous farms. Another organization said their director is an Indigenous person with a strong vision for making their organization more inclusive.

Building relationships among organizations and among community members. A number of participants said they work to build relationships with BIPOC and culturally specific community organizations. Among the ways organizations say they partner included: facilitating Native-led organizations to lead programming, applying for funding and then sharing it with a BIPOC-led organization, offering experience and resources to support BIPOC-led organizational development, including BIPOC and culturally specific organizational leadership on their board of directors, and partnering with BIPOC-led and culturally specific organizations co co-offer programming. One participant said they "disguise" their land-based education as learning about techniques, but it's actually a way to bring diverse people together to heal and build community.

"The exercise that we are doing in the community, we are trying to do it for composting, but we are doing it amongst people of different economic backgrounds, different social backgrounds, but for the common goal of producing food - you tear down barriers. So, we have these community composting workshops, but they are really dissolving workshops and breaking down boundaries workshops."

BIPOC and culturally specific access to land. A number of organizations participating said they are working on increasing access to land for BIPOC and culturally specific people, including access to land and garden space for growing food for Black, Indigenous, and Latine people, and access to land and spaces for Indigenous people to harvest traditional foods and medicines.

- One organization provides food gardening beds at peoples' homes.
- Another organization is working to overcome regulations and similar institutional barriers to harvesting of food and medicine by Indigenous people on public and private land.

- Another organization has worked to secure access to OSU Extension Service land and Metro-owned land for Black and Indigenous farmers. They said they wanted to “level-up” access to food gardening from raised beds to access to actual land for farming as the next step, and as a way to avoid colliding with all the other groups offering raised bed-style gardening programs.
- Another organization is leasing land from a farmer to build an Indigenous food forest and garden. They said their community workshops also encourage local landowners to share their land with others who want to farm – there is no formal program for this land-sharing, it happens organically through community connection.
- One participant said their organization is working to partner with other organizations providing food gardens at schools to provide seed saving and a food garden, including Indigenous traditional foods and medicines, for every elementary school in their area.

Increase staff and board diversity. Three organizations said they are working to increase racial and ethnic diversity on their board and staff. One participant said their organization had significantly increased this diversity on their staff and board through intentional board restructuring and bringing up new BIPOC staff through paid internship program. One organization said they had made some progress, and a third organization said they had a lot more work to do to increase BIPOC representation, but that they do have LGBTQIA+ staff representation, which is also important when working with youth. One participant explained that it can be difficult to find staff of color that have the right skills and experience for doing this work within the current system. *“These kids who work with us during the year [in internship program] go off into our organizations in the summer. We had a very diverse staff last year, coming from all backgrounds, and it's mostly White kids they're teaching, but the point is to model so kids can see people that don't look like them teaching them, and vice versa - our youth can learn to work with kids that don't look like them. That's a big part of the problem is the lack of genuine interaction with kids that don't look like them. Of the 12 people we had on staff, 8 of them were people of color, and that's unheard of [in our organization].”*

Paid BIPOC staff and interns. Two organizations said they offer paid internships for BIPOC youth. One organization said they used to rely on unpaid volunteers to staff their education programs, and these people were mostly White. They have changed to now pay all of their educators and also have more BIPOC educators.

DEI trainings and steering committees. Several participants said their organizations have participated (or are about to participate) in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) trainings. One said they have an equity steering committee to help guide their work and transformation. A participant who identified as Black and Indigenous described that DEI work can look different in organizations led by people of color.

3. Recommendations for WMSWCD from Nonprofit Staff and Leaders

Throughout the discussion, nonprofit group participants provided these thoughts and recommendations for WMSWCD as they work to find the most helpful and appropriate role for their education program. The following five topics were the most mentioned.

1. There is a need among communities for access to land for growing food gardens, farming, and harvesting first foods and medicines, and there are many barriers to this access.

Barriers described included:

- Not enough community garden spaces
- Immigration status barriers to owning land
- Land being used for growing food is borrowed not owned (need for land ownership)
- Chemicals used in land management make harvesting unsafe
- Rules around land ownership and access make many areas off-limits
- There is a tension about sharing land in the WMSWCD service area, especially for Indigenous access for harvesting and sharing farmland.

"Indigenous Tribes and communities of the land known as West Multnomah today have little access to gather First Foods, gather as a community and access rivers, creeks, lakes and mountains (cultural sites). Local Oregon Tribes, Urban Native communities and elders have told me this for the past twenty years. Few if any areas are accessible through public transit as well."

2. WMSWCD should work to change systems to increase access to land for BIPOC and culturally specific groups. A number of participants requested that WMSWCD support institutional and systemic change to remove these barriers and provide access to land. Requests included:

- Facilitate land ownership for Black, Indigenous and other people of color,
- Increase access to land for BIPOC and culturally specific farmers
- Create more community gardens that can be used by BIPOC and culturally specific groups
- Facilitate safe land access for Indigenous people to care for land and harvest first foods and medicines
- Provide support for farm business capacity building among Black, Indigenous, and other people of color
- Work to build relationships on Sauvie (Wapato) Island between landowners and BIPOC and culturally specific farmers to promote sharing of the land for growing food
- Work to reduce or eliminate chemical use on public and private land where people may harvest food and medicine

"Strategic land purchases and protections that center BIPOC communities would also enable BIPOC communities to safely access landscapes, First [traditional] Foods and medicines. There is a lack of land that BIPOC communities could access, land repatriation and land back into BIPOC access is essential."

"There is a role for WMSWCD to play, that kind of leveraging your ability to make change in that arena [about] more access to private lands. How do we make that happen? What does that look like? How do we get past the red tape and other processes and regulations for being able to do all these things we're talking about? Not a lot of agencies want to take that stand and have that backbone, but you are different...I think you can play a major role in not being afraid in thinking about changing the system."

- 3. Most participants said WMSWCD should continue and expand funding for BIPOC-led and culturally specific organizations already doing culturally specific work in the community. This includes general capacity funding for overall organizational use as needed. It also includes sharing institutional and decision-making power.**

“Capacity building means letting Black and Brown folks lead the work, hold the authority, and perform the work.”

“WMSWCD could dedicate specific resources to support community organizations that have the cultural knowledge and awareness to facilitate BIPOC experiences on lands within West Multnomah.”

- 4. Use institutional power for change.** Some participants requested that WMSWCD use their institutional power and privilege to change systems of inequity and challenge existing power structures in ways that are difficult to access for organizations with less access to institutional power.

- Use relationships and power to help navigate and change rules and regulations that currently deny access to private lands for Indigenous people and other people of color.
- Use power to influence how conservation district funding is distributed at the federal and state level
- Facilitate collaborative strategic planning with diverse communities to protect our “environmental shed” including food and watersheds
- Use institutional power and privilege (voice and seat at the table) to advocate for those who do not have this power and privilege, including Black, Indigenous and other people of color and culturally specific groups

“I think WMSWCD is starting on some great work, and I am glad they are looking to BIPOC communities for feedback. I think the overarching challenge is to implement these steps and share power with BIPOC groups. The environmental/conservation field is changing, WMSWCD can be leaders in this change as much as they want to be.”

“Being the advocate in the places where other organizations can’t get to. You can really get those voices out there when we can’t, in the places we can’t. You have more of an advantage in being able to do that. The thing is advocacy strong advocacy and continuing to do that.”

- 5. Convene more discussions, relationship building.** Several participants in this group said discussions like this are valuable and asked for more of this kind of conversation and relationship building. One person said, *“Continuing what you’re doing right here; These conversations need to keep going so it’s always fresh.”*

- 6. The following additional recommendations were offered by individual participants.**

- Leadership transition support. A White-identified leader of a nonprofit suggested that WMSWCD might provide resources to help White leaders transition leadership of their organization to people of color. They specifically suggested funding this through “trust-based philanthropy”.
- Learn from successes of other movements. Another participant suggested that WMSWCD study the successes of other movements like the Women’s Rights movement and use this knowledge to help build a movement that is also successful for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.
- Liaisons between BIPOC communities and agencies. One person said it could be helpful to find and work with people who “sit in the middle” and have relationships in both BIPOC communities and government agencies.
- Paid youth internships. Another participant said it is important to fund paid youth internships for BIPOC and culturally specific youth.

Local School and Government Staff

Participants in this discussion group were staff of local school and government organizations that work in land-based education and provide, or could provide, land-based education programs in the WMSWCD service area. The group included participants with diverse racial and cultural backgrounds employed with five local organizations, including representatives from local schools and local government agencies.

1. What is land-based education?

We asked school and government staff to describe what land-based education means to them. Participant responses were sorted into the following themes:

- Place-based, connecting people to land, *“Connecting people to land, place-based education, rooting people to natural places within their communities”*
- Stewardship and land management, *“Land management aspect, yes nature but also agriculture, maybe ranching, wetlands water areas, sensitive and critical habitats interface between developed and non-developed spaces.”*
- Hands-on, experiential learning, includes all parts of nature, *“Experiential education also, instead of sitting in a classroom you’re getting dirty and connecting to the land”*
- Important for psycho-social development, *“I think of place based, experiential, engages multiple intelligences, at its core it positively alters either a school or the physical social and curricular learning environment in very specific ways that leads to specific outcomes related and individuals and how they think and feel individually and collectively, population wise.”*

2. How Schools and Governments are Working Towards Community Member Requests Heard in Other Discussion Groups

Next, we presented discussion group participants with the requests made by racially and culturally diverse community members in previous discussion groups and asked if and how their organizations are working towards meeting these requests. Their responses fell into the following categories:

Barriers within school and government organizations. Most participants acknowledged institutional and systemic barriers within their organizations that contribute to the exclusion of Black, Indigenous and other people of color, and stand in the way of equitable access to land and culturally specific education. Specific barriers they mentioned included:

- **The statewide requirement to own land to be eligible to run in elections for “Zone” positions on the Board of Directors at Soil and Water Conservation Districts (including WMSWCD, East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District, and Tualatin Soil and Water Conservation District).** Participants agreed the legislation that enforces this rule perpetuates racist and exclusionary power structures and needs to be changed. One acknowledged that their Board of Directors is almost always all White. Some local soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) attempted to change this law at the state level recently but met strong resistance from other SWCDs. Participants expressed ongoing work at their organizations to work towards changing this law to allow more diverse representation on their Boards.
- **Barriers to access to community gardens.** These included 3-4 year long wait lists for community garden plots, an entrenched system that favors White gardeners, hilly parks in SW Portland that are not good for building community gardens, slow creation of additional community gardens, and organizational directive to direct more resources to other areas of the City of Portland because SW Portland is considered a “high resource area” with less need.
- **Barriers to accessing school land.** One participant acknowledged that Portland Public School District is the second largest landowner in the City of Portland. They described a number of barriers to creating accessible green spaces and gardens for schools and communities. These included lack of staff support and funding to develop green spaces at schools (an initiative exists, but is currently unstaffed and unfunded). Other barriers included a complicated form and process for school green space projects, lack of facilities maintenance staff available to do green space maintenance other than mowing, and a reactive school garden support system that responds to requests from volunteers but does not have a proactive plan to ensure staff resources are equitably distributed across schools. They said many school garden projects are run by volunteers who are privileged to have the time and capacity to implement them, which leads to more affluent schools having more green spaces.

“I understand there are many priorities: we have to get students to schools, we have to feed students, different priorities at the moment. We would need to find grants [for green space work]. Having consistency in funding is a problem.”

- **Legal barriers to government programs that prevent preference for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.** Several participants said they had looked into providing preferential access to land to people of color, but their legal departments had said doing so was illegal and could expose their organization to lawsuits, so they were not permitted to do this. *“I wanted to prioritize working with BIPOC farmers, and maybe we can offer them special things, and our lawyer told me I can’t because the law is*

stuck on equality and not on equity – the law is behind in this sense. Some of the things I’ve wanted to do have been smacked down.”

- **Land access safety issues.** One participant explained that simply providing access to public land does not necessarily mean it will be safe to harvest there. They specifically mentioned safety challenges related to houseless residents living in and using public lands, and there needs to be plan around safe access. They also mentioned the risk of potential environmental contaminants such as those found by scientists in moss and lichens. They mentioned that houseless people as a land user group have not been heard in this conversation.

"With the houseless crisis and unaffordability of the area, there’s a lot of camps, there can be human waste and needles. There’s real safety concerns to accessing and using the land - how to respectfully address those concerns, when to remove things, when to leave them - it’s a real challenge - and when the land is accessible in a dense urban area, there might be multiple users who also want to access that space. Just providing access may not be enough. There needs to be a plan in place to have some sort of agreement with intended accessors of the land as well as the actual accessors of the land."

- **Barriers to culturally specific land-based education.** One participant described barriers at their organization including that a majority of their educators are White but serving schools with high proportions of students of color, White staff in leadership roles supporting racially diverse communities, and unfunded initiatives that support equity, but don’t provide any resources to implement them.

Work towards increasing access to land. Some participants described ways their organizations are working to increase access to land for Black, Indigenous and other people of color and culturally specific groups. These ways included:

- **Increasing access to community gardens.** Community garden staff said they do offer an income-based scholarship program for garden plots, all community gardens are organic, and no chemicals are used in their maintenance. They also said they have an informal method of transitioning garden plots to culturally specific groups that want to garden together, but this is something that is only shared by word-of-mouth. EMSWCD staff said they offer grant funding to build community gardens.
- **Increasing access to land for Indigenous people.**
 - The City of Portland Community Gardens program also owns and facilitates a Native Gathering Garden in Northeast Portland. Programming for this garden is run by a committee of Indigenous people who make decisions about the space, what to grow there, and what classes are offered, in conjunction with parks.
 - EMSWCD has a land acquisition program. They are currently involved in a process to allow BIPOC farmers to access a piece of farmland they purchased, and this process is being guided by BIPOC groups through and advisory structure. EMSWCD is also currently participating in the Oregon Land Justice Project’s year-long Learning Journey to explore how local land trusts can be involved in the Indigenous Land Back movement to restore Indigenous ownership of the land. They are also working to build their relationship with Indigenous communities and hope to improve access to the land they own for Indigenous use and

to play a future role in connecting Indigenous communities with rural landowners to facilitate land access for harvesting food and medicine. EMSWCD has also supported local Indigenous led and supporting groups to purchase land and fund garden space on that land.

- Neither TSWCD nor WMSWCD have robust land acquisition programs.

Work towards increasing culturally specific education. Most participants described ways their organizations are working towards increasing culturally specific education.

- Participants from EMSWCD, TSWCD, and OSU Extension Service said their organizations providing funding for BIPOC-led and culturally specific groups through their grant programs. Two participants said their grants applications include specific questions about the communities that will be served by the grant funds, which helps them prioritize projects that serve communities of color. They said they have worked to reduce barriers to grant application requirements, including low match requirements, less complicated applications, and offering up-front funding. EMSWD has also recently offered free plants to some BIPOC-led organizations. OSU Extension service and other state funding agencies are currently working with local Indigenous groups to increase their ability to apply for and receive grant funds through their organizations. OSU has also funded culturally specific groups to grow culturally specific demonstration gardens on OSU land.
- A few participants said their organizations are providing some land-based education in other languages, including translating materials into Spanish, offering some workshops in other languages, and providing signage in other languages. All participants agreed they need to invest more resources into providing education in other languages.
- Portland Parks and Recreation Department Community Gardens Program facilitates Indigenous-led programming at the Native Gathering Garden in Northeast Portland. They are also planning to have all of their community garden classes this year be led by BIPOC gardeners. Staff also said they see immigrant groups teaching each other about local gardening in their community gardens, and they are interested in pursuing more formal opportunities for culturally specific gardening education for immigrant groups.
- Portland Parks and Recreation Department Environmental Education Program said they have a strong equity focus in their department, offer paid internship opportunities that sometimes lead to permanent employment, and are consistently working to develop relationships.
- Portland Public Schools staff said they are in the process of undertaking a large shift towards providing more support for green spaces at schools. They want to move slowly and intentionally to build an equitable and inclusive program to support green spaces at schools.
- OSU Extension facilitates cultural work groups including groups for: Older Americans, African Heritage, Latinx, Micronesian, and Indigenous people. These groups help translate OSU materials. In the past year, the cultural work groups worked with their communities to develop lists of foods that were meaningful in their cultures. OSU then applied for a grant and funded a BIPOC-led farm and Indigenous growers to demonstrate these culturally relevant crops on OSU land, collect the seeds, and distribute them to school groups and community groups. OSU spoke to the benefit of co-creation and their evolution of eventually

looking to the cultural work groups to craft culturally specific materials for their communities in lieu of simply providing these groups with resources and asking them for input and translation services.

Work to support schools. Participants described the ways their organizations provide support for schools.

- Portland Public Schools has recently worked with communities to secure grants for green spaces on school property. As previously mentioned, PPS is currently working to increase their support for school green space projects.
- EMSWCD and TSWCD support school garden and green space projects through their grant programs. OSU Extension staff said Oregon Department of Education also offers funding for school gardens.
- OSU Extension Service partners with other statewide organizations to provide curriculum, activities, and lessons for school gardens, and TSWCD is working to adapt soil curriculum for schools. OSU Extension 4-H program also offers curriculum and some financial support for teen garden leaders.
- Portland Public Schools, EMSWCD, and TSWCD also support outside organizations that can offer educational programming to schools. PPS often partners with Growing Gardens or Grow Portland, EMSWCD provides funding through grants, and TSWCD supports a staff position through the Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation.

3. Recommendations for WMSWCD from School and Government Staff

We asked school and government discussion group participants for their thoughts and recommendations for WMSWCD as they work to find the most helpful and appropriate role for their education program.

- 1. Connector/convener/network facilitator.** Several participants said there is a need for someone to bring together discussion groups like this, and also to convene people working on land-based education in the region.

“We’re hearing the community say they need this, this, and this, and now we know there’s these funding streams and people working on this, potentially the SWCD [could bring] all of those components together - The connector role is coming to the front of mind for me.”

- 2. Continue to fund and support BIPOC and culturally specific groups doing land-based education.** Several others said it is important to continue funding local groups doing this work. Other ideas for support included providing technical assistance to groups working to create their own curriculum or programming, from creating their ideas through funding and implementation.

- 3. Several participants said WMSWCD should hire more people of color. One cautioned not to assume that all people of color** have fully developed skills to navigate equity work – it is necessary to check in and support DEIJ skill building and capacity building.

- 4. The following additional recommendations were offered by individual participants.**

- Pilot test a land-based education coordinator for the District service area.

- Develop K-12 student field trips to farms
- Serve in a story teller role. *“...The unique role of the storyteller, to lift up different stories, we are the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves, it’s a very critical role.”*
- Research
- Curriculum development workshop series. *“Hosting a curriculum development workshop series with k-12 educators, TOSAs [Teacher On Special Assignment], and land-based organizations and educators. The gap between what teachers have time for and needing resources is that even the best resources may not get used because they are not integrated into what teachers plan their year off of or they do not directly align with educational standards.”*

Conclusions

The contributors to this report had many suggestions and requests for WMSWCD as they work to find the best role they can play in local land-based education. A summary of key findings and recommendations is found on page 3, with detailed findings starting on page 9, and discussion group results on page 18. The list of local land-based education providers and gap analysis are found in the Appendices (A, B). The project team extends our deepest thanks to all that supported and contributed to this project.

APPENDIX A: Land-Based Education Providers offering programming or Able to offer programming in West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District Service Area

Organization Name	Website	Phone/Email	Land-Based Education Related Services offered to WMSWCD area	Audiences Served	Type of Organization	BIPOC-led or culturally specific organization?	Provide BIPOC and culturally specific programming?
Adelante Mujeres	https://www.adelantemujeres.org/our-story-and-values	erodriguez@adelantemujeres.org	chicas youth program, empresas small business development program, regenerative agriculture program	Latine youth, women, families	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Asian Health Center	https://ahscpdx.org/index.html	503-772-5893	many health and social centered groups for older adults, some focused on food and active lifestyles	Asian adults	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Black Food Sovereignty Coalition	https://blackfoodnw.org/		Grandma's Hands: Black grandmothers share family recipes and food traditions, Back to the Root: Annual Black growers conference; On-farm food growing and connection	Black adults, families	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes

Blueprint Foundation	https://www.theblueprintfoundation.org/		Grounding Waters Black Youth Mentoring Program; Constructing Careers Black Youth Mentoring Program (both focused on environmental stewardship and professional mentoring)	Black Youth	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Come Thru Market	https://www.come thru dx.org/	comethrupdx@gmail.com	incubator market centering Black and Indigenous farmers and makers; Farmer Training Program that builds farmers market readiness and success	BIPOC farmers and makers	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
De Rose Community Bridge and Holistic Wellness	https://www.facebook.com/derosebridge/	503-841-3297, 503-593-9392, 503-607-9965, 503-496-8850, 503-739-6731	Culturally specific wrap-around services for Africans and other immigrant and refugee women and youth (after school youth programs, job mentoring, houseless outreach, civic engagement, gardening classes)	African immigrants	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes

E.L.S.O. (Experience Life Science Outdoors)	https://www.elsoinc.org/	info@campelso.org	STEAM based camp for K-8th grade BIPOC youth Your Street Your Voice Program: paid cohort-based program for youth; EmpowHER Program: paid learning program centering BIPOC Women, Femme, Trans, Non-binary identifying youth; Tappin Roots partner with Friends of Tryon Creek: paid internship for Black high school youth.	BIPOC Youth	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Familias en Acción	https://www.familiasenaccion.org/nutrition-food-equity/	503-201-9865	Food equity programming, classes, resources	Latine, Youth and Families	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Feed'em Freedom	https://feedemfreedom.org/	feedemfreedomfoundation@gmail.com	Black and BIPOC-specific farming internships and farm business training and incubator programs (nonprofit arm of Mudbone Grown)	Black and BIPOC adults	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes

Friends of Tryon Creek	https://tryonfriends.org/	503-636-4398	youth nature camp, culturally specific environmental internship program for Black identified high school students, at-home nature learning activities, nature field trips for school classes, recorded community ecology talks	All, youth and adult programs	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
HAKI: Making America home for East African immigrants	https://hakicommunity.org/about/	503-515-8278	Support for new and recent immigrants - focus on East African immigrants (tenants rights, homeownership workshops, citizenship classes, Swahili language interpretation, help with forms paperwork and accessing social services, English language classes, nutrition and cooking, programs for youth, Arabic cultural classes	Recent immigrants (focus on East African communities)	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Native American Rehabilitation Association (NARA)	https://www.naranothwest.org/	503-224-1044	Youth Program, Veteran Services, Elder Services and intergenerational programming,	Indigenous	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes

Native American Youth and Family Center	https://nayapdx.org/	(503) 288-8177	Many services - only a subset listed here: Culturally specific educational programming, youth camps and seasonal programming (language arts, math, science, cultural knowledge), Many Nations Academy (9-12th grade culturally relevant student-centered blended high school, college and career readiness program), low-income housing development	Indigenous Youth and Families	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Self Enhancement Inc.	https://www.selfenhancement.org/home		K-12 individualized student support during school, after school programs, summer programs, SUN program implementor, parent involvement program, post high school life skills and employment program, career and apprenticeship opportunities,	BIPOC Youth and Families	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes

Verde	https://www.verdenw.org/	503-290-8570	K-12 environmental education classroom and after school programs in English and Spanish; Urban Habitat and Rain Garden program for low-income households; Verde Builds - training in English and Spanish for landscaping, native plants, pesticide licensing, landscape contractor licensing.	Latine focus, youth and adult programs	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Voz Workers' Rights Education Project	https://portlandvoz.org/	503-234-2043	Leadership development, grassroots organizing, economic empowerment, sustainable landscaping and gardening trainings for day laborers in Portland area	Latine focus, day laborers and farmworkers	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes

Wisdom of the Elders	https://wisdomoftheelders.org/	503-775-4014	Wisdom Workforce Development: 12-week paid internship for Native American and BIPOC adults; Wisdom Agricultural Business Incubator; Northwest Indian Storytelling Festivals, Native American Storytelling and Traditional Foods Symposium; Wisdom Youth Science Education Program; Native Youth Leadership Initiative and Summer Field Science Camps for Native youth, Native Youth Leadership Training	Indigenous, Youth and Adults	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Youth Empowerment Project NW	https://www.yeppnw.org/	503 702-9259	Culturally specific programs for youth, focus on BIPOC, immigrants and refugees - school based mental health, mentorship, family engagement, cultural identity development, hate incidence response	BIPOC youth and families	Nonprofit	Yes	Yes
Chinook Nation	https://chinooknation.org/	360-875-6670	Canoe family, education committee, scholarship program	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes

Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission	https://critfc.org/	(503) 238-0667	higher education internships, salmon camp for tribal youth, salmon activity book available for download and ordering print copies, kid-focused web page	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes
Confederated Tribes and Bands of Yakama Nation	http://www.yakamnation.net/	(509) 865-5121	Museum, Youth Activities Program, Tribal School, Higher Education Program, Adult vocational training program, Cultural Heritage Center	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians	https://www.ctsi.sn.us/	541-444-2532	Culture programs, language program, Run to the Rogue, head start, educational support for native youth, adult vocational training, scholarships	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes
Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde	https://www.grandronde.org/	503-879-5211	Tribal history curriculum for outside educators (free, K-12), recreation program, youth education, youth enrichment and educational support, culture immersion program	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	https://www.ctuir.org/departments/education/#	541-276-8120	Adult basic education program, higher education and adult vocational training, internship program, youth employment program, day care program, head start, culture programs for schools, language program, after school education program (k-3 grade), recreation program, summer school	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes
Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs	https://warmsprings-nsn.gov/treaty-documents/	(541) 553-1161	culture programs (cultural classes, culture camps), higher education scholarships, Native child-specific educational support, K-8 academy, immersion school, credit recovery/career pathway program for youth and young adults, Tribal day care program, head start, partnership with OSU Extension service	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes

Nez Perce Tribe	https://nezperce.org/	208-843-7342	career center, early childhood development, students for success program, vocational rehabilitation services, higher education scholarship program, youth mentorship program	Indigenous	Tribal Government	Yes	Yes
Oregon Land Justice Project	https://www.oregonlandjustice.org/	kelley@oregonlandtrusts.org	Learning Journey: The outcomes of the Learning Journey process are to transform knowledge, thinking and actions of the conservation community to focus on expanding Indigenous stewardship of land in order to repair relationships, grant legal access, share and repatriate land to Indigenous people.	Land Trusts, eventually community partners	Collaborative	Yes	Yes
Confluence Project	https://www.confluenceproject.org/	360-693-0123	Confluence in the Classroom Program - Native educators and lessons delivered by them to classrooms, curriculum and training for educators in sharing Indigenous histories	Youth, Teachers	Nonprofit	Mixed	Yes

Ecotrust	https://ecotrust.org/our-programs/food-and-farms/	503-227-6225	Viviane Barnett Fellowship for Food System Leaders (18-month cohort based fellowship program for BIPOC people focused on intersection of agriculture, food systems, and climate); Ag of the Middle Accelerator Program (two-year, hands on capacity building business development program); Work with Farm to School Network to connect producers to school clients	BIPOC adults	Nonprofit	No	Yes
Forest Park Conservancy	https://forestparkconservancy.org/	503-223-5449	Volunteer work parties in Forest Park (plant work, trail maintenance), Green Jobs Training program for BIPOC youth and young adults	Adults, young adults	Nonprofit	No	Yes

Green Workforce Academy	https://ecotrust.org/project/green-workforce/	contact@greenworkforcepd.org	5-week paid opportunity for Black, Native and people of color in Portland who want to learn more about jobs in the green economy (partnership between Ecotrust, Blueprint Foundation, Native American Youth and Family Center, Self Enhancement, Inc., Widsom of the Elders)	BIPOC adults	Nonprofit	No	Yes
Growing Gardens	https://www.growing-gardens.org/	503-284-8420	Home Gardens Program - garden building and mentorship for growing food, Regional Hub for the Oregon Fam to School and School Garden Network; school garden consultations , K-12 garden education, high school action clubs, paid high school community food system interns, donate food to school and families, family events, Lettuce Grow: gardens at prisons	All, youth and adult programs	Nonprofit	No	Yes

Sauvie Island Center	https://www.sauvieislandcenter.org/	503-341-8627	K-12 school field trips, summer camps, in-school lessons, community farm days, hands-on farm-based curriculum aligned with NGSS teaching standards, located on 130-acre Topaz Farm on Sauvie Island which is open to the public, field trips occur on Topaz Farm	K-12 students	Nonprofit	No	Yes
Friends of Trees	https://friendsofrees.org/	503-282-8846	Neighborhood tree planting events, green space planting events, K-12 school classroom programming and events, adult urban forestry workforce training program	All, youth and adult programs	Nonprofit	No	Yes
Native American Community Advisory Council	https://www.portland.gov/parks/native-american-community-advisory-council	971-269-9042	forum for Indigenous community members, relationship building between city of portland and Indigenous communities	Indigenous	City Government	No	Yes
OSU Extension Farm to School	https://extension.oregonstate.edu/farm-to-school/education-school-gardens	michelle.markesteyn@oregonstate.edu	Free K-12 garden curriculum	Educators	State Government	No	Yes

			Most programs at-cost. Camps (winter and spring break, and summer camp) for grades 1-12; Outdoor School For All provider; virtual school presentations (grades K-5), guided tours of Audubon Sanctuary, the Columbia River Gorge, and other Portland natural areas for youth groups; at-school presentations K-12; family programs; sliding scale birding education; classes for adults (birding, art); birding trips				
Audubon Society of Portland	https://audubonportland.org/	503-292-6855		All	Nonprofit	No	No
Children and Nature Network	https://www.childrenandnature.org/	(612) 351-2723	Greening Schoolyards - resources program, \$500 grants and training for youth 16-28 years old, free family nature club toolkit (also in Spanish), nature education resources for educators	Youth, Teachers	Nonprofit	No	No

Ecology in Classrooms and Outdoors	https://www.ecologyoutdoors.org/	503-272-1774	hands-on ecology lessons at K-12 schools, stewardship field trip projects in partnership with land management agencies, mostly free K-12 curriculum aligned with NGSS and Common Core teaching standards	K-12 youth	Nonprofit	No	No
Friends of Family Farmers	https://friendsoffamilyfarmers.org/	503-581-7124	farmer listening sessions, farmland transition match-making work	All, mostly adults	Nonprofit	No	No
Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation	https://oregonaitc.org/	(541) 737-8629	curriculum, lessons, activities, lending library of resources, possible in-classroom lessons	Youth, Teachers	Nonprofit	No	No
Oregon Green Schools	https://oregongreen.schools.org/	541.224.6810	support for teachers, curriculum and project planning support for student sustainability projects (free)	Youth, Teachers	Nonprofit	No	No
Rogue Farm Corps	https://www.roguefarmcorps.org/		new farmer training programs, farmland ownership transition programs	Farmers	Nonprofit	No	No
Tryon Creek Watershed Council	https://tryoncreek.org/	971-404-4909	Volunteer work parties, Watershed 101 Workshop, public recorded science talks, plant management work on private properties along streams	Mostly adults	Nonprofit	No	No

Portland Farm and Garden Educators Network	https://www.growing-gardens.org/pfgen/		Garden educators listserve, gatherings, facebook page, resource sharing for garden educators, regional research	Educators	Informal Network	No	No
Eco Schools Network	https://ecoschoolnetwork.org/	503.960.5252	Support and community for parents and schools for sustainability projects at schools, Eco-schools Leadership Training (free), gatherings, and resources	Parents, Teachers	Tax-Exempt	No	No
Portland Parks and Recreation_Community Gardens	https://www.portland.gov/parks/community-gardens	503-823-1612	Community garden volunteer program, manage 58 community gardens in Portland	Mostly adults	Local Government	No	No
Portland Parks and Recreation_Environmental Education	https://www.portland.gov/parks/environmental-education	503-823-1149	Ladybug Nature Walks (Guided public nature walks in parks ages 0-6), K-12 Nature-based field trips, Nature birthday parties, City Nature Explorers classes (ages 6-9), Life Long Learning Sessions (nature play instruction sessions for parent or teacher groups), volunteer nature educators program	Mostly K-12 youth	Local Government	No	No

Portland Community College (PCC) courses and programs	https://www.pcc.edu/programs/environmental-studies/ ; https://www.pcc.edu/programs/landscape/	https://www.pcc.edu/programs/get-in-touch/?discipline=Environmental+Studies	transferrable coursework in environmental science, including restoration, biology, geology; career pathways and associate degrees in landscaping-related fields and arboriculture,	Adults	Local Government	No	No
Portland Public Schools_Greening Schoolyards Program	https://www.pps.net/Page/2095	Form on website	Greening Projects: works with schools to design and utilize schoolyards to bring classes outside, Provide connections to partner organizations that offer hands-on, standards-based outdoor education, Support green schoolyard projects and maintenance	All, youth and adult programs	Local Government	No	No

EMSWCD	https://emswcd.org/about/program-resources/	503-222-7645	Farm business incubator program; Small and large grants for community organizations, agencies, and landowners; weed removal and planting on private property (in priority areas); On-site technical advising for land management; Free Workshops, Short Presentations, and Garden Tours for Adults; Online information on a variety of land management topics	Adults	Local Government	No	No
Tualatin SWCD	https://tualatinswcd.org/	503-334-2288	Limited funding and technical assistance for conservation topics; Tool Loan Program, Contractor Directory (land conservation services), Workshops for Adults; Classroom Education: Agriculture in the Classroom; Virtual Library: instructional videos on conservation topics, fact sheets, links to curriculum of others	Mostly adults	Local Government	No	No

WMSWCD	https://wmswcd.org/	503-238-4775	Limited funding and technical assistance for conservation related projects including school gardens and education; Curriculum of others on website; Annual Workshops for Adults on conservation topics; Online information about land management and conservation resources	All, youth and adult programs	Local Government	No	No
Oregon Zoo	https://www.oregonzoo.org/field-trips	503-226-1561	ZAP (Zoo Animal Presenters) paid youth internship focused on low income youth and youth of color 15-16 years old; discount entry fees for school field trips for K-12, preschool, and college; Education Center provides exhibits and connections to area organizations providing conservation-related education	All, youth and adult programs	Regional Government	No	No

Metro Community Education and Stewardship Team	https://www.oregonmetro.gov/tools-partners/education-resources	503-220-2782	Guided nature classes, walks, stewardship activities, hands-on group experiences, for individuals families and groups, virtual field trips, video lessons, DIY nature activities, conservation related online presentations for K-12 classes, distance learning resources, community workshops and events, learning gardens (Blue Lake Park, Oregon Zoo, Cooper Mountain Nature Center), curriculum online organized by grade level, garbage and recycling internships, community enhancement grants for nonprofits, schools and government	All, youth and adult programs	Regional Government	No	No
Oregon Department of Agriculture Farm to School Program	https://www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/MarketAccess/Pages/FarmtoSchool.aspx	503-709-5360	Supports farmers to become vendors to schools	Farmers	State Government	No	No

Oregon Department of Education Farm to School Program	https://oregonfarmtoschool.org/resources/resources-for-educators/	Free place-based garden curriculum and field trip toolkit for K-12, Guides for starting and planning school gardens, Connections to local and national garden educator support groups lists and resources, Compilation of research on school gardens, List of grants and funding opportunities for school gardens, Information on Racial Equity and Anti-Racism in school gardens, Information on working with Native communities on school gardens, Trainings and Workshops for school garden educators	Educators	State Government	No	No
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OSU Extension Service 4-H Program	https://extension.oregonstate.edu/4h/portland	503-273-4322	4-H Teen teacher corps: Paid opportunity for teens; 4-H Wildlife Stewards Camp (ages 8-12 and also 12-20 Leaders); 4-H Youth Entrepreneurs - mentorship for youth to develop a product and bring it to market.; Curriculum - Salmon in the Classroom(3-6 grade), Pacific Lamprey in the Classroom virtual curriculum (4-8th grade); 4-H Fish Stewards: bring fish and lamprey to schools, raise salmon for release in classrooms; Dive4Ag - immersive farm to table experiences for youth exploring agriculture	Youth and young adults	State Government	No	No
Portland State University (PSU) degree programs	https://www.pdx.edu/	503-725-3000	degrees in climate change science and adaptation, earth environment and society, several environmental science degrees	Adults	State Government	No	No

APPENDIX B: Land-Based Education Gap Analysis

This is a tool to help WMSWCD prioritize work areas for their education program.

	Major gap/high priority for WMSWCD support: requested by multiple community members, and/or few resources exist to address this need
	Moderate gap/medium priority for WMSWCD support: requested by fewer community members, and/or some resources exist to address this need
	Small gap/low priority for WMSWCD support: ample resources exist to address this need

Community-Identified Need	Available Resources in WMSWCD service area	Gap/Priority
Access to land for Indigenous community members	Process for gaining access to land via Metro Regional Government	Major gap/high priority
Organically managed natural areas safe for Indigenous food and medicine harvesting	None known	Major gap/high priority
Access to land for BIPOC and culturally specific groups to grow food	Black Food Sovereignty Coalition, Mudbone Grown/Feed'em Freedom, and Sauvie Island Center working to provide access to land	Major gap/high priority
Safe transportation access to greenspaces for BIPOC and culturally specific groups	None known	Major gap/high priority

Culturally specific food gardening education, including in multiple languages	OSU Extension Service Culturally Specific Food Demonstrations at Black Futures Farm, OSU Extension Service Spanish language education materials, Sauvie Island Center and Wisdom of the Elders First Food Forest on Sauvie (Wapato) Island, Growing Gardens culturally specific garden education for Black and Latine residents	Major gap/high priority
Need more funding to support BIPOC-led and culturally specific programming	Local grant funding, many barriers exist, potential NRCS Urban Conservation program funding	Major gap/high priority
Need for continued conversation about land access and community needs	None known	Major gap/high priority
More BIPOC and culturally specific staff and board members	Internal request for WMSWCD (experienced equity-focused organizational consultants)	Major gap/high priority
Show authentic engagement towards changing systemic racism	Internal request for WMSWCD (experienced equity-focused organizational consultants)	Major gap/high priority
Build community stakeholder power	None known	Major gap/high priority
Not enough community garden plots	Portland Parks and Recreation Community Gardens Program long wait lists, not investing in many new gardens or education in WMSWCD service area	Major gap/high priority
Lack of BIPOC and culturally specific land ownership (especially for agriculture)	Oregon Land Justice Project working with land trusts, EMSWCD and WMSWCD each working on one land acquisition project, Rogue Farm Corps and Friends of Family Farmers have farmland transition programs	Major gap/high priority

Land ownership eligibility barriers to WMSWCD Board Zone Director positions	Conversations at EMSWCD and WMSWCD	Major gap/high priority
School project planning, installation, and maintenance support	Effort beginning within Portland Public Schools Facilities Department to better support technical assistance for school outdoor projects and land-based education	Moderate gap/medium priority
Outside groups to offer lessons at schools	Confluence Project works with schools to bring in Native educators for lessons, OSU Extension may offer some free classroom visits, Ecology Outdoors and in Classrooms (ECO) nonprofit also offers this work to schools for a fee (unless grant funded)	Moderate gap/medium priority
Stable and consistent school project funding	program and Oregon Farm to School and School Gardens Network, but these resources unknown by many educators, consistency is not certain, and educator capacity to apply for and administer grants is limited	Moderate gap/medium priority
Lack of support for building BIPOC and culturally specific farm businesses	Come Thru Market farmer training to build market capacity	Moderate gap/medium priority
Need for paid youth internships	Several local BIPOC-led and community specific organizations provide, but need more funding	Moderate gap/medium priority
Need for land-based education curriculum for K-12 classes	Curriculum available through some Tribal Governments, Audubon Society, City of Portland Parks and Recreation Environmental Education Department, Oregon Farm to School and School Gardens Network, OSU Extension Service 4-H, EcoSchools Network, Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, Oregon Green Schools, Children and Nature Network, etc.	Small gap/low priority

Need for networking for school garden educators and resources	Networking opportunities available through Oregon Farm to School and School Gardens Network and others	Small gap/low priority
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