



EMSWCD Equity Statement

At the East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (EMSWCD) we understand that conservation and social justice are interconnected, and that we have much to learn about the history and implications of this relationship. We cannot authentically and effectively advance our mission of helping people care for land and water without also caring for people. Everyone deserves a healthy environment and should have a voice in shaping what that means for their community. Throughout American history, Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) have been forcibly removed from and denied access to land. They have experienced significantly greater impacts from contaminated water and soils, polluted air, flooding, fire, and the increasing effects of climate change. Until everyone has equitable access to a safe and healthy environment, dismantling racism must be central to our work.

At EMSWCD, we know it is our responsibility to make the organization and our work more equitable. By investing in efforts that foster diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice, we endeavor to create more effective and enduring conservation benefits for all.

Equity Commitments

If we are not actively fighting racism, we are perpetuating it with our silence and inaction. We must be anti-racist. EMSWCD commits to:

- Incorporating diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice into all aspects of our work.
- Developing and maintaining an inclusive working environment where everyone feels welcome and respected, and where staff and Board reflect the diverse communities we serve.
- Engaging and building meaningful relationships with historically marginalized stakeholders and diverse local communities.
- Working with communities to evaluate the full range of impacts and benefits of our programs and adjust accordingly.
- Continuing to learn and apply equity tools, knowledge, and community feedback with intention and humility.
- Providing bold equity leadership within the local, regional, and state conservation community.
- Listening, learning, and speaking out against injustice when we encounter it in our work.
- Within our work, acknowledging where we have privilege and using it to amplify the voices of BIPOC and other marginalized communities.
- When exercising our authority as a conservation district, identifying and working to dismantle programs, policies, and approaches that have, or may have, a disproportionate negative impact on historically disadvantaged communities.
- Admitting our mistakes, seeking to repair the damage, and moving forward.

We have a long journey ahead of us in order to meet these commitments, but we are dedicated to pursuing this work with urgency and perseverance. We vow to hold ourselves accountable and welcome our communities to do the same.