

Environmental Stewardship for the 21st Century
Opportunities and Actions for Improving Cultural Diversity
in Conservation Organizations and Programs

A Report Prepared for the
Natural Resources Council of America

Phase II

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Executive Summary

In May 2002, the Natural Resources Council of America (the Council) issued Phase I of the study project on cultural diversity in conservation organizations and programs. The purpose of the project was to research, inventory and analyze efforts and progress to date, and develop recommendations for future actions in increasing cultural diversity in conservation activities.

This report represents Phase II of the study project and builds on the findings and recommendations set forth in the earlier report. Information used in the Phase II report was collected from a broad spectrum of the nation's citizenry representing our rich cultural diversity.

Perhaps in the history of human endeavor, there is no greater need, other than the education and welfare of our children, for us to come together as a people and as a Nation to conserve our natural resources. We share a mutual concern and dependence on the air we breathe, the water we drink, the soil we cultivate for food, and the habitat we preserve for the benefit of other species which share the Earth with us. Our persistent yearning for a quality environment for all is in keeping with our democratic principles in a multicultural society. As eloquently stated in the President's Advisory Board report, One American in the 21st Century—Forging a New Future, dated September 1998,

“America's greatest promise in the 21st century lies in our ability to harness the strength of our racial diversity. The greatest challenge facing Americans is to accept and take pride in defining ourselves as a multiracial democracy. At the end of the 20th century, America has emerged as the worldwide symbol of opportunity and freedom through leadership that constantly strives to give meaning to democracy's fundamental principles. These principles—justice, opportunity, equality, and racial inclusion—must continue to guide the planning for our future.”

Methodology

Three principal areas for concentration and analysis were identified for Phase II of the report. The areas of concentration were:

- Connected to the Land - A Historical Perspective
- Building Awareness about Conservation Organizations and Programs
- Effective Governance for Achieving Cultural Diversity in Conservation Organizations and Programs, including:
 - Diversity and Employment Program Plan (DEP)
 - Recruitment through Partnership with Colleges and Universities
 - Employee Training and Development

- Executive Diversity Leadership Advisory Council

The data for the study project was obtained through the use of a questionnaire to major organizations with a predominantly culturally diverse leadership and program focus, including American Indians, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Alaskans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders. Phase I of the study project, published in May 2002, utilized the same questionnaire and gathered data from organizations with predominantly African American leadership and program emphasis. It should be noted, however, that each of these organizations provide support and services in areas that in a real sense benefit all citizens, under the principle, “Where freedom is denied to one -- freedom is denied to all.”

Additional data was obtained from extensive library research; consultations with officials in the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, US Office of Personnel Management, US Department of the Interior Equal Opportunity Officer, and the National Park Service Human Resources Office; participation in Green Group dialogue on cultural diversity in conservation and three Board meetings of Council member organizations; and interaction with education and conservation leaders at the national and international levels.

Also invaluable to the data gathering and analysis were the consultant’s experiences as an Ambassador for the 5th World Parks Congress and Visiting Fellow for Conservation at Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, where he designed and co-instructed a graduate course titled “National Parks: Lessons in Diversity, Environmental Quality and Justice.” Diverse leaders in conservation served as guest speakers for this course, including Mr. Samuel N. Penney, Chairman of the Tribal Council of the Nez Perce Tribe and Mr. Barry Hill, Director of the Office for Environmental Justice, US Environmental Protection Agency.

Study Findings

For immediate reference, the Phase I statistical findings of the 2000 Census and the cultural diversity in 61 of the 85 Council member organizations are as follows:

1. 2000 Census

According to the 2000 Census, the cultural diversity representation within the total US population of 281,421,906 citizens is as follows:

| <u>Cultural Group</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Total Population</u> | <u>Percentage of Total Civilian Labor Force</u> |
|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Hispanic | 35,305,818 | 12.5 | 10.8 |
| Asian American | 10,242,998 | 3.6 | 2.9 |
| | | | <u>Percentage of Total Civilian</u> |

| <u>Cultural Group (cont.)</u> | <u>Population</u> | <u>Total Population</u> | <u>Labor Force</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 2,475,956 | 0.90 | 0.80 |
| African American | 34,658,190 | 12.3 | 11.0 |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 398,835 | 0.10 | 0.06 |

2. Cultural Diversity in Organizations

Membership: The total combined membership of the 61 surveyed member organizations is 8.9 million. Definitive cultural diversity statistics within the general membership of Council member organizations is not available. This type of information is not required as part of the membership application process, nor is it captured through any other type of membership survey.

Boards: The total combined board membership of the 61 surveyed member organizations is 1,357. The representation of culturally diverse groups within the total board membership is as follows:

| <u>Cultural Group</u> | <u>Number of Board members</u> | <u>Percentage of total combined board membership</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| Hispanic | 35 | 3 % |
| Asian American | 17 | 1 % |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 18 | 1 % |
| African American | 57 | 4 % |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 0 | 0 % |

Staff: For this portion of the survey, 60 of the 61 groups surveyed provided data. The total combined staff (permanent, temporary and seasonal) of those 60 surveyed members is 6,347. The representation of culturally diverse groups within the total combined staff is as follows:

| <u>Cultural Group</u> | <u>Number of staff</u> | <u>Percentage of total combined staff</u> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Hispanic | 210 | 3 % |
| Asian American | 141 | 2 % |
| American Indian/ Alaska Native | 19 | less than 1 % |
| African American | 357 | 6 % |
| Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander | 5 | less than 1 % |

Youth Employment: The total combined number of youth employed by the 61 surveyed member organizations is 692. The youth serve in a variety of seasonal and intern positions, ranging from office duties to resource conservation in the field.

Part II: Connected to the Land: An Historic Perspective

Comments received from the sources surveyed and consulted, as well as library research, and interaction with various conservation leaders revealed that the involvement and contributions of culturally diverse citizens in conservation of the nation's resources are not well known. Textbooks, the popular media, and the current limited number of diverse citizens in national conservation organizations have seemingly perpetuated this unfortunate notion - that certain members of our society are not concerned with natural resources, nor have they historically shown a care for the land (inclusive of air, water and wildlife). Research indicates that this is a totally inaccurate portrayal of citizens historically involved in conservation.

Many of the national diverse organizations surveyed have a component of their mission to preserve culture and tradition, and give accurate accounting of the historical development of the nation. Accordingly, these organizations would welcome the opportunity to support the Council and its member organizations in telling the "full story" – particularly for the benefit of our youth.

Part III: Building Awareness about Conservation Organizations and Programs

For the most part, national diverse organizations have had only limited direct interaction with national conservation organizations concerning program support, referral of applicants for staff and board positions, technical assistance, and on-going collaboration and cooperation in a wide range of community engagement activities. The data does suggest, however, that in instances of environmental justice issues several diverse national organizations are engaged in collaboration and cooperation efforts with national conservation organizations.

The diverse national organizations applaud the Council's leadership role in promoting

greater awareness and opportunity for culturally diverse citizens to participate in conservation programs. A consistent concern was expressed, however, about seemingly a visible absence of diverse employees in the national conservation organizations, and would like to see more “role models” in the various leadership capacities, i.e. board, staff, research, law, education, etc.

It is noteworthy that national conservation and environmental organizations with culturally diverse leadership have been established, and are generating an increased awareness about conservation programs and organizations among diverse audiences. Accordingly, opportunities need to be further explored in developing collaborative and cooperative relations between these “emerging” organizations and the “traditional” conservation organizations in an effort to strengthen the engagement of all citizens.

Part IV: Effective Governance

The findings of Phase I underscores the need for improved governance with respect to achieving cultural diversity. Several specific recommendations are made in Phase II with respect to the planning, development, administration and evaluation of a Diversity and Employment Program Plan (DEP). The recommendations include planning guidelines, program elements for a plan, and evaluation criteria.

With respect to recruitment, the report further emphasizes the importance of the Council and member organizations developing a strong and on-going relationship with the Tribal Colleges, Hispanic Serving Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. To that end, the report calls for the Council to enter into individual memorandums of understanding with the national associations that provide interagency coordination and support for these colleges and universities, as well as establishing within each of these associations the “Natural Resources Council of America Conservation Scholarship(s).”

Currently, a limited number of culturally diverse employees occupy executive and senior management positions in the Council’s member organizations. Therefore, in addition to recruiting candidates for these leadership positions from outside sources, programs should be available to develop mid-level managers presently in the workforce who eventually could compete for advancement.

Training for managers and supervisors in equal employment opportunity and managing a diverse workforce is stressed. Also an Executive Diversity Advisory Council is recommended. This Council would include citizens with proven records in leadership and conservation who would provide on-going counsel and support to the Council and its member organizations in achieving cultural diversity.

Key Recommendations

- The Council should sponsor a seminar (or conference) that would involve a panel of 3-5 highly acclaimed historians who would lead a comprehensive discussion on the struggles and contributions of culturally diverse groups and individuals to the conservation of the nation's natural resources. The participants, among others, would include the Council's board of directors, CEO's, staff, members and representatives of colleges and universities with predominate or significant diverse student enrollment.
- The Council should produce for wide distribution a professional profile of cultural diverse members of conservation staff and boards. The publication or series of publications should include individual "testimonies" with comment on their respective organizations' specific programs and community engagement activities.
- The Council and its member organizations should undertake all necessary measures to eliminate possible difficulties in communicating its programs and job opportunities to our new citizens. Actions might include, for example, the publishing of conservation articles, research materials, job vacancies, event notices, etc. in multi-languages, i.e., Spanish, Vietnamese, etc., and make wide use of selected news media for publicizing conservation organization business.
- The Council and each member organization should develop and implement a Diversity and Employment Program (DEP) evaluation. The scope of the evaluation will vary with the range of requirements set forth in the individual approved DEPs. However, the elements of the evaluation program should, as a minimum, include a description of each required action along with a corresponding standard for accomplishment. The actual evaluation would determine level of accomplishment, possible areas for improvement, adjustment in target dates, and possibly change in responsible official, in order to achieve a program at desired standards.
- The Council should enter into individual Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the National Association for the Tribal Colleges, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (historically and predominantly Black Colleges and Universities) and the National Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.
- Supervisors and managers in the Council and each member organization should receive basic training in equal employment opportunity and managing a culturally diverse workforce. To that end, the Council should explore with the US Department of Agriculture Graduate School the possibility of designing courses for the benefit of member organizations. The courses could foreseeably be held at a location most convenient to the majority of the prospective participants.

- The Council and its member organizations, in recruiting for senior management and executive positions, should distribute the vacancy announcements to governmental conservation agencies at the Federal, State, County and local levels. The principal contacts in the governmental agencies should be their respective Personnel Officer (Human Resources) and the Diversity and Equal Employment Program Officer.
- Mid-Management Development opportunities should be available for employees in the Council's member organizations. Member organizations with significant capacity, i.e. funding, staffing, etc., might consider establishing their individual development program. A complementary development program could be established and administered by the Council staff and would be open to any eligible employees in Council member organizations. Foreseeably, funding for the Council's program would be provided by the development trainee's respective "home" organization.
- The Council should initiate jointly with member organizations a campaign to raise funds from foundations, corporations, governmental agencies and individuals to support the increased employment and involvement of our youth in conservation organizations and programs. The target increase should be at least 10% above the total number of youth employed in the previous year.
- The Council should chair a meeting with representatives of the principal Federal land management agencies, i.e. Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Park Service to explore opportunities for member organizations' participation in the Public Lands Corps Program. This program makes available Federal funding, work sites, technical assistance, etc., in support of youth employed by partnership organizations.

The Council should establish an Executive Diversity Leadership Council, which would advise on programs, objectives, priorities and funding strategies for improving diversity within member organizations and programs. The Advisory Council members should attend each full Board of Directors meetings, the annual membership meeting, and the annual awards program. At the Board meeting the Council could advise and assist in policy deliberations, program review, and others matters affecting diversity.

Acknowledgments

I acknowledge and applaud the continued cooperation and support of the Natural Resources Council of America for its leadership and goal to improve cultural diversity in conservation organizations and programs. I extend special thanks to Council Executive Director Andrea Yank, Council staff, Board of Directors, members and other organizations and individuals who contributed to Phase II of the study project and report.

I particularly valued the opportunity to address diversity in conservation at the Board of Directors meetings of two of the Council's member organizations, and the opportunity to serve as the moderator of a dialogue between the Green Group and leaders of diverse conservation organizations.

Lastly, I join with the Council in an acknowledgment and thanks to the Jackson Hole Preserve, National Park Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, National Geographic Society, and the Conservation Fund for their generous financial support.

Part I Introduction

This report represents Phase II of the study project for addressing opportunities and actions for improving cultural diversity in conservation organizations and programs, and contains recommendations in the following areas:

- Connected to the Land - A Historical Perspective
- Building Awareness and Appreciation
- Effective Governance for Achieving Cultural Diversity

The recommendations take into consideration data from Phase I of the study project, a literature survey, and suggestions and comments from individuals involved in conservation programs. Also in consideration of the report discussions and recommendations the consultant drew upon his 35-year career experience with the National Park Service. Further, his recent experiences as a Board member of the Accokeek Foundation, Student Conservation Association, Inc., National Audubon Society, African American Experience Fund of the National Park Foundation, Woods Hole Research Center, and Eastern National, and his role as Ambassador for the 5th World Parks Congress were very beneficial in providing direct input for the study. Also, his experiences as a Visiting Fellow at the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies were valuable to the study with respect to research on cultural diversity and conservation. The consultant as part of his Yale appointment developed and co-instructed a graduate course on “National Parks: Lessons in Diversity, Environmental Quality and Justice.” The course was taught during the 2002 fall semester.

The consideration and adoption of the report recommendations will enhance the Council and its member organizations’ capability in the recruitment and retention of diverse staff and board members and strengthen their community engagement programs.

Note: The views expressed in this report reflect those of the consultant and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Natural Resources Council of America or its member organizations.

Part II Connected to the Land: A Historical Perspective

Discussion:

It is critically important that the leadership, staff and members of conservation organizations are knowledgeable of the struggles and contributions that American Indians, Hispanics, Asian Americans, African Americans, Native Alaskans, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders have made to the conservation of our nation's natural resources. Conversely, members of these cultural groups, particularly our youth, should be knowledgeable of their fore-parents historical connection with the land. Efforts to strengthen this mutual frame of reference on the part of all citizens will contribute to an increased interest on the part of diverse citizens to seek employment, appointment to boards and general membership with conservation organizations.

The findings recently released by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) that suggest America is losing sense of its own history. For example, of the 556 college seniors surveyed at 55 of the nation's top colleges and universities, only 60% of the respondents correctly placed the American Civil War in the second half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, only 34% identified George Washington as the American general at the Revolutionary battle at Yorktown; 37% thought it was the Civil War General Ulysses S. Grant.

ACTA also reported that 78% of these institutions no longer require students to take history courses during their undergraduate careers. "It is not surprising," the report states, "that college seniors know little American history. Few students leave high school with an adequate knowledge of American history and even the best colleges and universities do nothing to close the 'knowledge gap.'" ¹

In addressing more than 1,200 participants in the National Park Service Discovery 2000 Conference in St. Louis in September 2000, the distinguished historian Dr. John Hope Franklin offered an uplifting thought on the importance of a nation of diverse citizens to have an appreciation of their shared cultural heritage – "Explaining history from a variety of angles makes it not only more interesting, but also more true. When it is more true, more people come to feel that they have a part in it. That is where patriotism and loyalty intersect with truth."

"Our society, for all its perceived interest in the past, seems always on the verge of historical amnesia. The cure for this country's seeming disinterests is to be more interesting. And to be more interesting, we have to be more truthful and to include stories about everybody that we want to interest." ²

Dr. Olen Cole, Jr., head of the history department at North Carolina A&T University also underscores the need for increased knowledge about the historical contributions of African Americans in conservation. In his book, African Americans in the Civilian Conservation Corps, he notes that from 1933-1942 over 250,000 African Americans contributed to the protection, conservation and development of the country's environmental resources. African American members of the Civilian Conservation Corps performed their duties in a society divided by race,

and often in the presence of officially sanctioned racism.³

The distinguished author Rudolph Anaya, in his essay, “La Llorona, Elkookooee and Sexuality” challenges us to embrace a multiplicity of tradition including those from our Hispanic Past. “The stories from our traditions” he suggests “have much to tell us about the knowledge we need in our journey. We need to get our stories into the schools, as we need the stories of many different ways of life. We need to be more truthful and more sensitive with each other as we learn about the complexity that comes with growth. It is futile and wasteful to depend on only one set of stories to learn the truth. There are many stories to learn the truth. There are many stories, many paths, and they are available to us in our own land.”⁴

Recommendations:

The Council should sponsor a seminar (or conference) that would involve a panel of 3-5 highly acclaimed historians who would lead a comprehensive discussion on the struggles and contributions of culturally diverse groups and individuals to the conservation of the nation’s natural resources. The participants, among others, would include the Council’s board of directors, CEO’s, staff, members and representatives of colleges and universities with predominate or significant diverse student enrollment.

The seminar or conference could be held at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia or on the campus of a college or university. The event should have wide media coverage, and the proceedings published for wide distribution.

Suggested participating historians might include:

Dr. John Hope Franklin
Professor, History Department (Emeritus)
Duke University
Durham, North Carolina

Dr. James Horton
Professor, History Department (Frederick Douglass Chair)
George Washington University
Washington, D.C.

Dr. Olen Cole
Professor, History Department (Chair)
North Carolina A&T University
Greensboro, North Carolina

Dr. Ronald Takaki
Professor

Ethnic Studies
Asian American Studies Program
University of California at Berkeley
Berkeley, California

Dr. Judy Yung
Professor
American Studies Department
University of California at Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, California

Dr. Gary Y. Okohiro
Professor
International and Public Affairs
Columbia University
New York, New York

Dr. Vicki L. Ruiz
Professor, History and Women's Studies
University of California at Irvine
Irvine, California

Dr. Philip I. Deloria
Professor
Department of History
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dr. Joseph Sanchez
Superintendent
Spanish Colonial Research Center
National Park Service
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Dr. Albert Camarilla
History Department
Stanford University
Palo Alto, California

Dr. Ramon Guterrez
Ethnic Studies
University of California at San Diego
San Diego, California

References:

¹ Natural Resources Challenge, National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20001.

² “Cultural Resources Stewardship,” Dr. John Hope Franklin, Keynote Address at the National Park Service’s Discovery 2000 General Conference, St. Louis, Missouri, 2000

³ Olen Cole, Jr., The African American Experience in the Civilian Conservation Corps, Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1997

⁴ “Exploring Hispanic History and Culture - A Dynamic Field,” Cultural Resources Management Bulletin, Washington, DC: National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, Vol. 20, No. 11, 1997.

“Diversity and Cultural Resources,” Cultural Resources Management Bulletin, Washington, DC: National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, Vol. 22, No. 8, 1999

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One America in the 21st Century, The President’s Initiatives on Race, The Advisory Board’s Report to the President, Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office: 1998

Sources Consulted:

Alvin Josephy, Jr., The Nez Perce Indians and Opening of the Northwest, New York, New York: Haughton Mifflin Company, 1997

David Bokin, Our Natural History: The Lessons of Lewis and Clark, New York, New York, The Berkley Publishing Group, 1995

Blacks in the Westward Movement, Washington, DC: Anacostia Neighborhood Museum, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1975

Kim Dromer, Native Americans and Black Americans, Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publisher, 1997

Robert A. Keller and Michael F. Turek, American Indian and National Parks, Tucson, Arizona: The University of Arizona Press

Ruthian Knordson & Bennie C. Keel (editors), The Public Trust and the First American, Corvallis, Oregon: Oregon State University Press, 1995

Ronald Takaki, Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans, Boston, Mass: Little and Brown Publishers, 1988

James Cockcroft, The Latinos in the Making of the United States, New York, NY: Franklin Watts Publishers, 1995

Roger Daniels, Asian America: Chinese and Japanese in the United States, Seattle, Washington: University of Washington Press, 1988

Part III Building an Awareness about Conservation Organizations and Programs

Discussion:

Subsequent to the enactment of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, legally requiring non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity in the work place, gradual progress has been made in the employment of culturally diverse employees in conservation organizations. The same holds true with the appointments to board of directors of these organizations. In addition to compliance with Federal laws governing employment, William A. Shutkin in his book The Land That Could Be gives an accounting of forces that have encouraged conservation organizations to diversify their programs. He observed that:

“As a result of caustic critique of mainstream-professional environmentalism brought by environmental justice activities, both public interest environmental organizations and EPA initiated changes aimed at diversifying their programs and personnel and confronting the activists claim of disproportionate environmental harms and unequal environmental protection in communities of color. These actions (occurring in the early 1990's) forced mainstream-professional environmentalists to take a hard look, often for the first time, at the very culture of mainstream-professional environmentalism and the principles on which it is based.”¹

Unfortunately, significant under-representation in conservation organizations continue to persist into the 21st century. Moreover, little seemingly is known in the diverse communities about the programs of these conservation organizations and their relevancy to their daily lives.

Culturally diverse conservation staff and board members offer tremendous opportunities to serve as “messengers” in demonstrating to prospective future employees, particularly our young people in high school, colleges and universities, the wide range of opportunities in the field of conservation. These officials should be seen frequently, in the popular media, in civic leadership roles as speakers, host for public meetings, media appearances for public service announcements, etc. This would go a long way in reducing the knowledge gap that widely exists, “I didn’t know that we (meaning their respective cultural group) were engaged in this kind of work.”

Recommendation:

The Council should produce for wide distribution a professional profile of cultural diverse members of conservation staff and boards. The publication or series of publications should include individual “testimonies” with comment on their respective organizations’ specific programs and community engagement activities.

Initial publications might feature, among others, the following outstanding staff and board members:

Staff: Ms. Michelle Baccay Alvarez

Staff Attorney
Natural Resources Defense Council

Mr. Reginald “Flip” Hagood
Senior Vice President
Student Conservation, Inc.

Mr. Frank Peterman
Regional Director
Wilderness Society

Boards: Ms. Audrey Peterman
National Park Conservation Association

Mr. Bill Yellowtail
National Audubon Society

Mr. Charles Jordan
Conservation Fund

Mr. Thurgood Marshall, Jr.
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Discussion:

The Hispanic and Asian American populations from 1980 to 2000 increased from 14,608,000 to 35,305,000 (a 117% increase), and from 3,726,000 to 10,242,000 (a 175% increase), respectively. Within these populations are many new citizens who migrated to the United States, and may not be fully knowledgeable of the history of conservation organizations and programs. Also some of these fellow citizens might not have a frame of reference or fully comprehend the various terms and concepts frequently used by men and women in the conservation field.

Recommendation:

The Council and its member organizations should undertake all necessary measures to eliminate possible difficulties in communicating its programs and job opportunities to our new citizens. Actions might include, for example, the publishing of conservation articles, research materials, job vacancies, event notices, etc. in multi-languages, i.e., Spanish, Vietnamese, etc., and make wide use of selected news media for publicizing conservation organization business.

Employees in conservation organizations with proficiency in various languages should be utilized in preparing the publications, job announcements, etc.

Do Good and Then Let Others Know

Discussion:

Public Relations has often been defined as “Doing good and then let others know.” There is no question that the Council and its member organizations are performing outstanding programs and services benefiting the quality of life for all citizens. Yet many of their deeds are not well known and this directly and indirectly limits citizens’ knowledge about the organization as possible sources of employment, membership, and general support. Much, much more awareness is needed. The Council and its member organizations must continue to do good – but also let all segments of our society “know what’s going on.”

Recommendation:

As a minimum, the Council and its member organizations should participate in national observances – specifically those that recognize and celebrate our rich cultural diversity and contributions that men, women and youth of all backgrounds have made to the development of our nation.

The observances include:

Women’s History Month
American Indian Heritage Month
African American History Month
Hispanic Heritage Month
Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

For point, see attached notice of the Exxon Mobil Corporation, placed in national newspapers during African American History month, 2003.

References:

¹ William A. Shutkin, The Land That Could Be (Environmentalism and Democracy in the Twenty-First Century, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000

Sources Consulted:

Audrey Peterson, “The Land Doesn’t Lie,” Pickup & Go, Earthwise Productions, Inc., Miami, FL: Volumes 39, May 2000

Robert Stanton, “National Parks: Reflecting Our Nation’s Many Faces,” In the Western Voices, Summer 1999

Part IV Effective Governance for Achieving Cultural Diversity

Part IV (A): Diversity and Employment Program Plan (DEP)

Discussion:

In order to fully promote progress on workforce diversity in conservation organizations and programs, it is important that clear and precise objectives be identified, be institutionalized into the organization's policy framework and be clearly articulated to all levels within the organization. Accountability must also be established. Managers must be held accountable for action or lack of action taken on their part to achieve the desired objectives of the program. These objectives will vary from organization to organization, but accountability for the objectives established must be in place for a successful program to go forward. In order to achieve workforce diversity, a process for planning must be established which; (1) considers historic and current hiring and promotion trends, (2) determines from available data areas where under-representation exists, (3) sets short-term goals and objectives and (4) develops a strategy to accomplish them.

The importance of a Diversity Employment and Program Plan (DEP) cannot be overemphasized. The Plan not only provides a framework for efficient and effective management, but serves as an anchor of sustained organizational commitment to diversity in face of adjustments in personnel, programs, priorities and budgets. The plan, of course, must remain active.

Recommendation:

Drawing from the US Equal Employment Opportunity's guidance¹ to Federal Agencies, the Council and its member organizations should develop individual DEPs consistent with the following process:

Program Analysis: The first step in the DEP planning is to conduct a comprehensive program analysis of the current status of all diversity employment and program efforts within the organization. Subordinate units (if applicable) including State, regional or district offices should conduct a program analysis for submission to the national office. The national office should aggregate analysis submitted by their respective subordinate units.

For program analysis and planning purposes, the DEP is divided into eight program elements. Organizations and their subordinate units must use all of these program elements in conducting their analysis, but may use some or all of these program elements in developing their plans.

See Appendix D for the program analysis guidelines and an outline of the contents of a DEP.

- Diversity Employment and Program Plan Evaluation

Discussion:

The principles of effective and efficient management stipulate that all processes, procedures, priorities and resource utilization must be periodically evaluated in order to determine if desired results are being achieved. The evaluations assist in the decision-making relative to necessary adjustments required for program improvements.

The Diversity program activities on the part of the Council and its members represent a major commitment in policy, resources and time. It is, therefore, prudent management to evaluate the various actions that each member organization includes in its respective Diversity and Employment Program plan.

Recommendation:

The Council and each of its member organizations should develop and implement a Diversity and Employment Program (DEP) evaluation. The scope of the evaluation will vary with the range of requirements set forth in the individual approved DEPs. However, the elements of the evaluation program should, as a minimum, include a description of each required action along with a corresponding standard for accomplishment. The actual evaluation would determine level of accomplishment, possible areas for improvement, adjustment in target dates, and possibly change in responsible official, in order to achieve a program at desired standards.

The principal evaluation elements (or factors) should include the following:

1. A Diversity and Employment Policy statement issued by the current organization's CEO.
2. A current DEP exists, and has been widely distributed to all employees.
3. Actual budget is sufficient to provide adequate support for the DEP.
4. CEO is briefed on a regular basis with respect to implementation of the DEP.
5. The requirements of the DEP are included in the performance standards for managers and supervisors.
6. Procedures for selection of participants to serve on promotion/selection panels, task forces, etc., are established and monitored to assure representative participation by diverse employees.
7. Official responsible for the DEP reports to or has direct access to CEO of the member organization.
8. Youth employment and cooperative education programs are utilized.

9. Upward mobility, training and development programs are available and are utilized.
10. Job opportunities are widely circulated and include the media with largely diverse citizen readership.

Part IV (B): Recruitment Through Partnerships with Colleges and Universities

Discussion:

Tribal Colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions are excellent sources for the recruitment of interns and career employees. Also faculty and staff of these institutions are often available for short-term appointments in conservation organizations and programs.

Since students, faculty and staff at these institutions of higher learning are recruited by government agencies, school systems, and a variety of private firms, it is important for the Council and its member organizations to establish a “competitive edge” in attracting the diverse students to their employment opportunities.

Recommendation:

The Council should enter into individual Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the National Association for the Tribal Colleges, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (historically and predominantly Black Colleges and Universities) and the National Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

A provision of each MOU might contain a requirement for the Council on behalf of member organizations to sponsor a scholarship(s) in conservation, natural or cultural resources management. The scholarship(s) would be administered by each association and could be designated as the “Natural Resources Council of America’s Scholarship in Conservation.”

The scholarship could serve to attract students to fields of study in conservation, and ideally to career opportunities with Council member organizations.

The member organizations and other sources, i.e, corporations, foundations and individuals might contribute funding for the scholarship(s). Furthermore, the scholarships would be managed in accordance with criteria and guidelines established through mutual agreement between the Council and the respective associations.

The approval of the individual MOUs and announcement of the establishment of the scholarship should include a major signing ceremony with media coverage. The ceremonies might include members of the Hispanic and Congressional Black Caucuses and White House officials responsible for college and university initiatives.

See Appendix E for an example of Memorandum of Understanding with the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education.

Part IV (C): Training and Development

Discussion:

The opportunity for employee on-the-job and formal training is critical in improving the skills and efficiency of an organization's workforce. Employee training and developmental experiences also contribute to their career advancement. All supervisors and managers, in order to be effective, must be well versed and highly skilled in their ability to supervise or manage a diverse workforce.

Supervisory and managerial competencies include sensitivity to cultural diversity, gender and other individual differences in the workforce, and ability to provide employee coaching, and counseling for career development, and ensure that employees are appropriately utilized, appraisal developed and are treated in a fair and equitable manner. Effective supervision is fundamental for the success of retaining employees in the workforce!

Recommendation:

Supervisors and managers in the Council and each member organization should receive basic training in equal employment opportunity and managing a culturally diverse workforce.

The Graduate School of the US Department of Agriculture offers excellent courses in these important areas. While the courses are designed primarily for Federal, State and local governmental employees, the Graduate School will tailor a training program to meet an organization's needs, and also will provide on-site training.²

The Council should explore with the Graduate School the possibility of designing courses for the benefit of member organizations. The courses could foreseeably be held at a location most convenient to the majority of the prospective participants.

Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA)

The provisions of the IPA program offer tremendous opportunities for conservation organizations to meet short-term needs in professional, technical, scientific or managerial areas—plus opportunities for employee career development. Employees in conservation organizations which have met Federal agency eligibility requirements can be detailed to a variety of assignments in the Federal Government, and conversely Federal employees can be placed in eligible conservation organizations.³

Many Federal agencies encourage diverse employees, as part of their career development, to consider IPA assignments. Also diverse employees in conservation organizations could benefit from a Federal assignment as part of their career growth.

Recommendation:

Each Council member organization should consider the feasibility of participating in the IPA program. Coordination between the prospective participating organization and the preferred Federal agency could be provided by Council staff. This would be advisable in order to eliminate possible conflict when several organizations might request personnel from the same agency at the same time. See Appendix F for a detailed briefing statement on the IPA prepared by the National Park Service and copy of the official IPA Assignment Agreement, Optional Form (OPM OF-69). The requirements set forth in the National Park Service briefing statement are generally applicable to other Federal agencies with respect to their individual IPA programs.

Management and Executive Recruitment

Information contained in Phase I report indicates that candidates for managerial and executive positions are recruited through word of mouth, advertisements in newspapers, or a recruitment agency.

Recommendation:

In all instances, it should be clearly established with all sources of applicant referrals and stated in paid advertisements that women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Furthermore, each applicant for senior management and executive positions should be rated against the following qualification criteria:

- Be supportive of diversity and equal opportunity, encouraging efforts that increase the employment and upward mobility of diverse individuals.
- Have personal sensitivity and commitment toward interacting and contributing within a culturally diverse organization and the greater conservation community. Must be free of bias with regard to sex, age, race, color, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, disability and ethnic origin.

Discussion:

The recruitment of candidates for senior management and executive positions will require affirmative action. That is, direct strategies for establishing potentially new recruiting sources must be explored.

Many culturally diverse men and women are employed in Federal environmental and conservation agencies. Often times these employees would welcome the opportunity to learn about career opportunities in non-government conservation organizations. Moreover, upon retiring from the Federal Government, it is not uncommon for senior managers and executives to seek a "second career" in positions and organizations that could use their considerable expertise in furthering the conservation of the nation's natural resources.

State, county and local government agencies located in populous geographical areas generally have significant numbers of culturally diverse employees within their staffs. Accordingly, the conservation organizations at these levels of government might be explored as recruiting sources as well.

Under normal circumstances, at least in the Federal Government, the Personnel Officer (Human Resources) and the Diversity/Equal Employment/Program Officer will distribute the announcement to appropriate staff or line officials who in turn would share the information with their respective employees.

Recommendation:

The Council and its member organizations, in recruiting for senior management and executive positions, should distribute the vacancy announcements to governmental conservation agencies at the Federal, State, County and local levels. The principal contacts in the governmental agencies should be their respective Personnel Officer (Human Resources) and the Diversity and Equal Employment Program Officer.

In all instances the vacancy announcements must state that the Council member organization is an Equal Opportunity employer and women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Mid-Management Development Program

Discussion:

The recruitment of senior managers and chief executive officers for positions within Council member organizations logically come from two sources, from within the organization or from other sources. In view of the current paucity of diverse employees in the senior manager, key executive, and mid-management positions in the Council member organizations, efforts should continue to recruit from other sources concurrently with the development of employees presently in the workforce. Hence, a structured program for mid-management development would offer opportunities to advance employees for leadership positions, contributing to employee retention.

Recommendation:

Mid-Management Development opportunities should be available for employees in the Council member organizations. Member organizations with significant capacity, i.e. funding, staffing, etc., might consider establishing their individual development program. A complimentary development program could be established and administered by Council staff and would be open to any eligible employees in Council member organizations. Anticipated funding for the Council program would be provided by the development trainee's respective "home" organization.

The Council should appoint a task force to develop specific policies, guidelines and criteria for the establishment of a mid-management development program. These program requirements could possibly be used with modification as necessary to meet the needs of the individual member organizations. In any event the program should at a minimum include the following elements:

- A. An "assessment lab" to determine the employee's strengths and weaknesses.
- B. A Core Curriculum of required training and activities.
- C. The selection of a mentor for the entire training period. The mentor should be in the same organization as the trainee, but not the supervisor. The superintendent or assistant superintendent levels would be logical positions to mentor the trainee.
- D. Preparation of a detailed Individual Development Plan that includes core requirements and individual development needs.
- E. A post-program assessment.
- F. A realistic system for placement upon program completion.
- G. A tracking system of the employees' careers.

Youth Employment

The most significant contributions the conservation organization can make toward the conservation of the nation's natural resources is to invest in our young people. Excellent educational and development opportunities for our youth are available within the varied conservation programs. Efforts must be made to connect – in the strongest ways possible – our youth with their natural and cultural heritage. Indeed they are the future stewards and will soon assume the leadership responsibility for the management of the conservation organization.

Recommendation:

The Council should initiate jointly with member organizations a campaign to raise funds from foundations, corporations, governmental agencies and individuals to support the increased employment and involvement of our youth in conservation organizations and programs. The target increase should be at least 10% above the total number of youth employed in the previous year.

The Council should chair a meeting with representatives of the principal Federal land management agencies, i.e. US Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Park Service to explore opportunities for member organizations' participation in the Public Lands Corps Program. This program makes available Federal funding, work sites, technical assistance, etc. in support of youth employed by partnership organizations.

The non-Federal partners in the Federal Lands Corps Program provide a percentage of the cost for supporting youth employment and other expenses. Note: The Student Conservation Association, Inc. (a Council member organization), has been a major partner in the Public Lands Corps Program and could possibly be the lead in organizing the recommended meeting.

Part IV (D) Executive Diversity Leadership Advisory Council

Discussion:

The Council and its member organizations' efforts for improving cultural diversity within their organizations and programs could benefit from "outside" counsel on a continuing basis. The involvement and input from a group of citizens, with proven records in leadership and organizational development, could help strengthen diversity activities in a number of ways: Critique and offer recommendations in diversity recruitment, community engagement, inter-organizational cooperation and collaboration, identification of funding sources and strategies, and build ties between the Council and various diverse citizen organizations and communities. This group of citizens could also assist the Council and its Board of Directors in establishing an awards program for recognizing Council member organizations, officers and staff for their achievements in diversity.

Possible candidates for the Advisory Council might include:

Ms. Rose Ochi, former Director of Community Relations,
US Justice Department and is active with the
Manzanar National Historic Site

Mr. Samuel N. Penney, Chairman of the Executive Committee,
Nez Perce Tribal Council

Ms. Sylvia Baca, former Assistant Secretary,
US Department of the Interior

Mr. Michael Dombeck, former Chief, US Forest Service

Mr. Adrian Wallace, former National President of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
(Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s fraternity). Mr. Wallace led efforts for
Congressional legislation authorizing a national memorial to Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr. in Washington, D.C.

Recommendation:

The Council should establish an Executive Diversity Leadership Council which would advise on programs, objectives, priorities and funding strategies for improving diversity within member organizations and programs. The Advisory Council members should attend each full Board of Directors meetings, the annual membership meeting, and the annual awards program. At the Board meeting the Council could advise and assist in policy deliberations, program review, and other matters affecting diversity.

The Advisory Council members should be citizens with a longstanding interest in conservation and preservation of the nation's natural and cultural resources. The Council should consist of 3-5 members who would serve without compensation for a 1-2 year term. However, all expenses that are incurred with this performance of Council business would be reimbursed.

Organizationally, the Advisory Council should be designated as a sub-component of the Council Board of Directors.

References:

¹ "Planning and Development of Equal Employment Opportunity Program Plans" (EEO-MD-714), US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington, D.C.

² National Training 2003 - Shaping Your Future, Graduate School, US Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

³ "Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Guidelines," National Park Service, US Department of the Interior, 2000

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Lewis Gregg and Lenke-Louis Louw, Valuing Diversity, New York, NY: McGraw Hill, Inc. 1994

Part V: Listing of All Recommendations

- The Council should sponsor a seminar (or conference) that would involve a panel of 3-5 highly acclaimed historians who would lead a comprehensive discussion on the struggles and contributions of culturally diverse groups and individuals to the conservation of the nation's natural resources. The participants, among others, would include the Council's board of directors, CEO's, staff, members and representatives of colleges and universities with predominate or significant diverse student enrollment.

The seminar or conference could be held at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia or on the campus of a college or university. The event should have wide media coverage, and the proceedings published for wide distribution.

- The Council should produce for wide distribution a professional profile of cultural diverse members of conservation staff and boards. The publication or series of publications should include individual "testimonies" with comment on their respective organizations' specific programs and community engagement activities.
- The Council and its member organizations should undertake all necessary measures to eliminate possible difficulties in communicating its programs and job opportunities to our new citizens. Actions might include, for example, the publishing of conservation articles, research materials, job vacancies, event notices, etc. in multi-languages, i.e., Spanish, Vietnamese, etc., and make wide use of selected news media for publicizing conservation organization business.

Employees in conservation organizations with proficiency in various languages should be utilized in preparing the publications, job announcements, etc.

- As a minimum, the Council and its member organizations should participate in national observances – specifically those that recognize and celebrate our rich cultural diversity and contributions that men, women and youth of all backgrounds have made to the development of our nation.

The observances include:

Women's History Month
American Indian Heritage Month
African American History Month
Hispanic Heritage Month
Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

- Drawing from the US Equal Employment Opportunity's guidance to Federal Agencies, the Council and its member organizations should develop individual

Diversity Employment Plans consistent with the following process:

Program Analysis: The first step in the DEP planning is to conduct a comprehensive program analysis of the current status of all diversity employment and program efforts within the organization. Subordinate units (if applicable) including State, regional or district offices should conduct a program analysis for submission to the national office. The national office should aggregate analysis submitted by their respective subordinate units.

For program analysis and planning purposes, the DEP is divided into eight program elements. Organizations and their subordinate units must use all of these program elements in conducting their analysis, but may use some or all of these program elements in developing their plans.

- The Council and each of its member organizations should develop and implement a Diversity and Employment Program (DEP) evaluation. The scope of the evaluation will vary with the range of requirements set forth in the individual approved DEPs. However, the elements of the evaluation program should, as a minimum, include a description of each required action along with a corresponding standard for accomplishment. The actual evaluation would determine level of accomplishment, possible areas for improvement, adjustment in target dates, and possibly change in responsible official, in order to achieve a program at desired standards.
- The Council should enter into individual Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the National Association for the Tribal Colleges, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (historically and predominantly Black Colleges and Universities) and the National Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

A provision of each MOU might contain a requirement for the Council on behalf of member organizations to sponsor a scholarship(s) in conservation, natural or cultural resources management. The scholarship(s) would be administered by each association and could be designated as the “Natural Resources Council of America’s Scholarship in Conservation.”

- Supervisors and managers in the Council and each member organization should receive basic training in equal employment opportunity and managing a culturally diverse workforce.
- Each Council member organization should consider the feasibility of participating in the IPA program. Coordination between the prospective participating organization and the preferred Federal agency could be provided by Council staff. This would be advisable in order to eliminate possible conflict when several organizations might request personnel from the same agency at the same time.
- In all instances, it should be clearly established with all sources of applicant referrals

and stated in paid advertisements that women and minorities are encouraged to apply. Furthermore, each applicant for senior management and executive positions should be rated against noted qualification criteria.

- The Council and its member organizations, in recruiting for senior management and executive positions, should distribute the vacancy announcements to governmental conservation agencies at the Federal, State, County and local levels. The principal contacts in the governmental agencies should be their respective Personnel Officer (Human Resources) and the Diversity and Equal Employment Program Officer. In all instances the vacancy announcements must state that the Council member organization is an Equal Opportunity employer and women and minorities are encouraged to apply.
- Mid-Management Development opportunities should be available for employees in the Council member organizations. Member organizations with significant capacity, i.e. funding, staffing, etc., might consider establishing their individual development program. A complimentary development program could be established and administered by Council staff and would be open to any eligible employees in Council member organizations. Anticipated funding for the Council program would be provided by the development trainee's respective "home" organization.

The Council should appoint a task force to develop specific policies, guidelines and criteria for the establishment of a mid-management development program. These program requirements could possibly be used with modification as necessary to meet the needs of the individual member organizations.

- The Council should initiate jointly with member organizations a campaign to raise funds from foundations, corporations, governmental agencies and individuals to support the increased employment and involvement of our youth in conservation organizations and programs. The target increase should be at least 10% above the total number of youth employed in the previous year.
- The Council should chair a meeting with representatives of the principal Federal land management agencies, i.e. US Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Army Corps of Engineers, and the National Park Service to explore opportunities for member organizations' participation in the Public Lands Corps Program. This program makes available Federal funding, work sites, technical assistance, etc. in support of youth employed by partnership organizations.
- The Council should establish an Executive Diversity Leadership Council that would advise on programs, objectives, priorities and funding strategies for improving diversity within member organizations and programs. The Advisory Council members should attend each full Board of Directors meetings, the annual membership meeting, and the annual awards program. At the Board meeting the Council could advise and assist in policy deliberations, program review, and other matters affecting diversity.

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