



Equity and Inclusion Commitment Statement and Plan

Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission

Adopted on January 12, 2017



Equity and Inclusion Commitment Statement

Water is a part of our daily lives. We all need clean, safe water for drinking, cooking, and simply keeping ourselves clean. Water provides beautiful spaces for us to play and recreate, and to grow our food. Water boosts our local economy, and sustains healthy, diverse ecosystems. Water is a basic human right and access to clean water is fundamental to living a healthy life.

Water is also an equity issue. Often, there is not an equitable representation of voices giving input into water-related priorities or of people with access to water-related recreational activities or educational opportunities.

The Lakes and Watershed Commission is concerned with protecting and improving water quality and ensuring that the Dane County residents have equitable access to water resources, programs, and policy development. Therefore we are adopting the following statement as part of our strategic plan for equity:

The Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission believes that equitable engagement of county residents (in a manner consistent with the diverse makeup of the county) will result in more effective decision-making that better serves the needs and interests of all Dane County residents.

Therefore the Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission will:

- Reach out to other commissions or advisory groups working on equity plans.
- Seek diverse appointments to the Commission.
- Understand the various ways in which county residents relate to water and the different contexts in which water is used.
- Seek a diversity of voices to provide input into Commission decision making.
- Seek and advocate for equity education and opportunities for all Natural Resource Commissions and Committees.
- Support the Office of Lakes and Watersheds and Land and Water Resources Department Staff in their equity efforts.

Refer to the attached Equity and Inclusion Plan for the Commission's plans for putting this commitment into action.

Equity and Inclusion Plan

Area of Opportunity	Tier 1 (Beginning)	Tier 2 (Emerging)	Tier 3 (Advancing)
Organizational Commitment	Develop and adopt a commitment statement	Implement commitment	Promote commitment statement and workplan to other county advisory groups
Reaching out to other commissions or advisory groups working on equity plans	Reach out and find out what they are doing	Apply lessons learned as appropriate	Share lessons learned
Seeking diverse appointments to Commission	Meet with organizations at their locations to make them aware of LWC work and opportunities for service.	Encourage contacts to seek appointments when vacancies arise for the various seats	Share lessons learned with other entities
Understanding the various ways in which county residents relate to water and the different contexts in which water is used.	Reach out to diverse communities	Engage with the communities and gather information	Respond to issues raised through interaction and promote increased involvement in water related events and activities.
Engaging a diversity of voices giving advice to Commission and framing priority issues and developing unique ways to provide input to the Commission for communities with time and financial restrictions that may not allow them to participate in regular Commission meetings.	Meet with organizations at their locations to make them aware of LWC work and opportunities for service	Look for opportunities to include a variety of voices in ad hoc advisory groups to the LWC. Remove barriers and increase access for communities to provide input.	Share success stories: how did this step make decisions better, build new relationships, or increase diverse input to LWC?
Seeking education and development opportunities for Natural Resource Commissions and Committees.	Take advantage of opportunities to learn and stretch, e.g. participate in 21 day environment and equity challenge (EcoEquity group offering). Stay plugged in to Equity office.	Include equity work progress as a standard agenda item at quarterly joint meetings	Implement education and development training.
Supporting OLW and LWRD staff in their efforts to seek out, understand, and engage diverse audiences.	Offer advice and feedback. Help identify connections and contacts for reaching out and communicating with diverse communities.	Offer advice and feedback. Help identify connections and contacts. Support staff in the development of programs and opportunities.	Offer advice and feedback. Help identify connections and contacts. Support staff in increasing resources and implementing programs.
Organizational Commitment	Develop and adopt a commitment statement	Implement commitment	Promote commitment statement and workplan to other county advisory groups