



DNR 2024 HERSHMAN HOST FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION

Host Organization: Washington Department of Natural Resources, Office of the Commissioner of Public Lands

Location: Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington St SE, Olympia WA, 98504

Fellowship Supervisor:

Primary:

Max Showalter, Deputy Policy Director

Secondary: Jayana Marshall, Deputy Director of Tribal Relations

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Project Title: Watershed and Aquatic Resilience Planning

Mentor and Key Staff:

Mentor: Max Showalter, Deputy Policy Director

Key Staff: The following staff represent a subset of those with whom the fellow will interact directly to support completion of their project. However, the fellow should expect to integrate into the team within the Office of the Commissioner and experience regular interaction with her teams, as well as interactions with key operational staff in Olympia and Regional Offices.

- Daily interactions:
 - Jayana Marshall, Deputy Director of Tribal Relations
 - Csenka Favorini-Csorba, Policy Director
- Weekly interactions:
 - Rachel Benbrook, Watershed Steward
 - Natalie Waid, Policy Advisor
 - Jacob Delbridge, Policy Advisor
 - Michael Liang, Policy Advisor
 - Theresa Keith, Policy Advisor
 - Patrick DePoe, Director of Tribal Relations
- As-needed interactions:
 - Alex Smith, Deputy Supervisor for Forest Resilience, Forest Regulation, & Aquatic Resources (FRRAR)
 - Katie Allen, Deputy Assistant Supervisor for FRRAR
 - Tom Gorman, Division Manager of Aquatic Resources
 - Cynthia Catton, Science Advisor of Aquatic Resources
 - Jen Watkins, Division Manager of Forest Resilience
 - Saboor Jawad, Division Manager of Forest Regulation

Project Overview:

Summary: We seek a fellow to work within the Policy and Resilience team to plan, strategize, and initiate implementation of projects promoting watershed resilience, salmon recovery, and healthy riparian and marine ecosystems. This fellowship will provide experiences in policy development, interactions with Tribal nations and stakeholders, and strategic planning and implementation of large projects. Described below, the fellow in this position will help continue development of our Watershed Resilience Program, with additional work supporting the Tribal Relations team and exposure to and opportunities in other Commissioner projects.

About DNR and the Office of Commissioner: Managing nearly 6 million acres of land and water across the state, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provides a wide array of benefits to our state and communities, including hundreds of millions of dollars for schools, hospitals, and libraries. First elected in 2016, Commissioner of Public Lands Hilary Franz leads the ~1,600-person agency. The Office of the Commissioner includes Legislative Affairs, Tribal Relations, External Affairs, Communications, and Federal Affairs, as well as the Policy and Resilience team where the fellow will reside. DNR Policy and Resilience is a 7-person team that leads development and implementation of the Commissioner's priorities in coordination with staff across the agency, state government, and external partners.

Detailed Description: The fellow in this position will co-lead development of watershed scale salmon and ecosystem recovery planning and implementation alongside the primary mentor (approx. 50% of time), with additional work supporting the Tribal Relations office to advance key projects for the agency (approx. 25% of time). There will be with flexibility to participate in additional projects as interested.

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The primary focus of this project is continuing the work of our '23-24 Hershman Fellow to drive implementation of key watershed health projects as part of DNR's Watershed Resilience Program. Building on DNR's flagship Watershed Resilience Action Plan (WRAP) released in February 2022, the Watershed Resilience Program coordinates, enhances and maximizes investments and work to protect and restore salmon habitat in ways that provide jobs and build healthier, more equitable communities. In 2023-2024, a Hershman Fellow strategized development of the program and expanded projects into new watersheds. The '24-'25 fellow will grow this work by continuing implementation, driving additional project development, and contributing strategic vision for the program's future.

This work will also be split at least 25% of the time with DNR's Tribal Relations team supporting core activities. The fellow will engage with the DNR Tribal Relations team and DNR staff to develop strategic plans for communication, meeting agendas, and project timelines for project with Tribal partners and communicate on behalf of the agency where appropriate.

Additional opportunities for the fellow include:

- Assisting in implementation of the Statewide Kelp Forest and Eelgrass Meadow Health and Conservation Plan;
- Analyzing bills on behalf of the agency during Legislative season and develop decision packages for the agency;
- Supporting implementation of recommendations from the state Geoduck Task Force;
- Contributing to development of a nature-based solutions playbook for the agency;
- Attending trips to the DNR Regions and the field to learn more about natural resource policy; and
- Other projects of interest as they arise.

Mentorship, Professional Development, and Networking Opportunities

A primary focus of DNR is to provide mentorship and professional development to the fellow and help build a future workforce of natural resource professionals. The fellow in this position can expect to integrate directly into the Policy team and develop skills in: communication to diverse audiences; conservation and recovery planning and implementation; grant writing; Tribal relations; and stakeholder engagement. This will be the team's second Hershman Fellow, and the Policy team has previously hosted undergraduate and post-graduate interns. The primary mentor has experience mentoring interns and the '23-'24 Hershman fellow, and was a WSG Fellow in the past.

The fellow should expect to gradually develop independence in their work and develop a resume of skills and deliverables suitable to a natural resource career by the end of their fellowship. The office will prioritize opportunities for the fellow to develop a professional local network by providing regular engagement. In addition to networking that directly supports the fellow's project, the fellow can expect to participate in meetings like the DNR Tribal Summit, gain experience in state legislative session and engagement with legislators, and attend other professional conferences or meetings as the fellow is interested.

DNR anticipates providing trainings to the fellow, including Government-to-Government Relations, watershed management, and facilitation depending on the fellow's interest. Weekly check-ins with the primary mentor will ensure the fellow has regular opportunities to receive and provide feedback. At the beginning of the fellowship, the primary mentor and fellow will jointly assess the fellow's interests to build a plan for professional development.



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DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Context and Philosophy

Natural resource management, conservation, and restoration are historically white ventures with a complex legacy of violence and deep roots in colonialism. DNR recognizes that all Washington residents, regardless of income, race, ethnicity, color, or national origin, have a right to live, work, and recreate in a clean and healthy environment. Low-income communities, communities of color, and Indigenous people in Washington and across the country often bear the brunt of pollution and the impacts of climate change. DNR's mission to sustain and protect Washington's natural resources cannot be achieved without putting equity and environmental justice at the forefront.

Building an Inclusive Workspace

DNR strives to build a culture of equity, inclusion, and belonging in its workspace, and ensure employees feel empowered to seek and implement innovation on the job. To do so, DNR requires all employees to engage in a number of trainings focused on engaging in crucial conversations, practicing cultural competency, and ensuring a sense of inclusion.

In addition to promoting retention through improved workplace culture, DNR seeks to recruit candidates for positions from a pool that looks like Washington. DNR is working to build relationships with diverse communities across the state, including through development of workforce training and educational opportunities. Opportunities to engage in this work can be made available to the fellow.

DNR's workspace is ADA compliant. Accessibility accommodations can be made for fellows to ensure they are able to participate in the fellowship with DNR.

Tribal and Indigenous Relations at DNR

DNR partners with Tribal nations as shared stewards of the lands and waters of Washington State. DNR recognizes that this partnership is situated within the context of a history of colonization and decisions and actions by the State. These actions have and continue to harm Tribal communities and their traditional practices of resource management and their access to and exercise of Tribal rights and resources. The recently updated Tribal Consultation Policy is an effort to foster mutual respect and establish regular and meaningful consultation and collaboration with Tribal officials in the development of State policies that have Tribal implications. DNR seeks to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with Tribes that share territory with and have interests in Washington State.

The fellow in this position will have regular interactions with Tribal representatives and Indigenous knowledge. While we do not expect fellows to have previous experience working with Tribes, we do require that fellows interested in this position be capable of approaching Tribal relationships with cultural sensitivity and openness. DNR will seek to provide provide training in government-to-government relations training to the fellow.

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Examples of Equity and Environmental Justice at DNR

Recognizing the context of natural resource management and embodying the philosophy of inclusion, the agency seeks to represent a commitment to improved equity in both planning and practice. Tangible examples of DNR's philosophy on equity and environmental justice (EEJ) can be seen in recent work products that integrate EEJ into decision-making and implementation. As of 2023, DNR has released and updated the following plans for the agency to incorporate EEJ:

- Updated Draft Provisional Community Engagement Plan
- DNR's Draft Environmental Justice/Interagency Implementation Timeline
- DNR's Tribal Consultation Policy (2023)
- 2022-2025 DNR Strategic Plan

An example of how these documents influence decision-making at DNR can be seen in the current process of developing the Statewide Kelp Forest and Eelgrass Meadow Health and Conservation Plan, led by the Policy team and Aquatic Resources Division at DNR. Using the Draft Professional Community Engagement Plan, DNR reviewed development of the Kelp and Eelgrass Engagement Plan for opportunities to improve equity and access during a public input process. In this process, the team identified ways to mitigate barriers to public engagement, balance power dynamics, and center those most-impacted by the Plan. As a result, the Plan development workshops are being hosted in geographically accessible locations which minimize symbolic power of state government; offering American Sign Language interpretation, translation, and childcare; and providing participation stipends or donations to priority communities including, but not limited to: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; low-income individuals; and community-based organizations.

The Policy and Resilience team is a primary driver for EEJ into the Agency, following the guidance of DNR's Office of Equity and Environmental Justice and Director EJ Juárez. The fellow in this position can expect to work closely with both Policy team members and the EEJ team to ensure the guiding principles are meaningfully integrated into the process and outcomes of their projects.

All fellows interested in this position are expected to ensure environmental justice and equity are included within their work process and products in alignment with agency goals. DNR will seek to offer training and experience in EEJ to the fellow during their time at the agency.

The Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act

In addition to DNR's internal commitment to equity and environmental justice, the agency strives to comply with and go beyond equity and environmental justice requirements laid forth by state law. In 2021, the legislature adopted the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act (RCW 70A.02). This historic law provides a multiyear roadmap for the DNR and other state agencies to integrate environmental justice (EJ) into strategic plans and decision-making processes. Starting in the fall of 2021, DNR and six other state agencies (Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Ecology, Health, Transportation, and the Puget Sound Partnership) began meeting with Environmental Justice Council staff to collaborate on the development, authorship, and adoption of this interagency Community Engagement Guide for the first HEAL Act milestone on July 1, 2022. This document reflects close to 10 months of partnership between the HEAL Act agencies and it remains a work in progress.

The HEAL Act states that in developing and updating community engagement plans, covered agencies "must consider any guidance developed by the [EJ] council." To facilitate this, the legislation directed the Department of Health to convene the Council's first meeting by

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January 1, 2022. Due to delays in the appointment process, the EJ Council was not fully appointed and seated until March 2022 and did not convene its first meeting until April 4. As a result, it has not reviewed the current versions of the interagency DRAFT community engagement guide nor any other agency-specific community engagement plans. DNR and other agencies have reaffirmed their commitment to seek guidance and revise plans based on the recommendations of the EJ Council.

DNR is committed to a strong partnership with the EJ Council as we integrate environmental justice into agency activities. We recognize the importance of the Council as community representatives that function in concert with the community relationships we have developed as an agency. The EJ Council recommendations are a critical tool in creating a plan that DNR will implement. While we await that process of EJ Council review, we are also mindful of our duty to the legislature and people of Washington to adopt a community engagement plan by July 1, 2022.

In balancing these interests and obligations, our agency is adopting a provisional community engagement plan. The future implementation of this provisional plan is dependent on coordination with the EJ Council and will incorporate guidance from the Council and communities across Washington state on specific activities and strategies. It will include a robust Tribal Consultation process that is currently being finalized within the agency. Following adoption of the provisional community engagement plan, DNR will collaborate with other HEAL Act agencies and the Council to hold community listening sessions. These sessions and ongoing discussions with the EJ Council will inform further updates and the necessary and expected changes to our provisional community engagement plans.

DNR will continue to be an active partner with the EJ Council as this community engagement plan is refined annually. Authentic community engagement is our forever work and enhances our ability to equitably serve all Washingtonians. A central value in this work is transparency.

Additional information and resources on DNR and the HEAL Act are available on our website, dnr.wa.gov/environmentaljustice .