

# The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations

Mainstream NGOs Foundations Government Agencies

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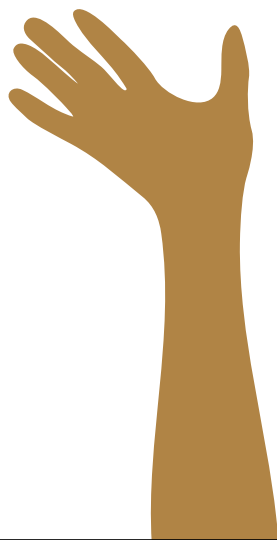
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# Executive Summary

**Environmental institutions have been working on diversity efforts for the better part of five decades. This report discusses the findings of a study of three types of environmental institutions: 191 conservation and preservation organizations, 74 government environmental agencies, and 28 environmental grantmaking foundations. It also reports the findings of interviews conducted with 21 environmental professionals who were asked to reflect on the state of diversity in environmental institutions. The study focuses primarily on gender, racial, and class diversity in these institutions as it pertains to the demographic characteristics of their boards and staff. It examines the recruitment and hiring of new workers as well as the types of diversity initiatives undertaken by the organizations. The report also discusses other kinds of diversities such as cultural, sexual orientation, inter-generational, and rural-urban.**



## The study found that:

### 1. ALL THREE TYPES OF ENVIRONMENTAL INSTITUTIONS HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON GENDER DIVERSITY, BUT THE GAINS HAVE MOSTLY GONE TO WHITE WOMEN, AND MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE.

- a. The percentage of females in leadership positions and on the staff of environmental organizations has increased over time.
- b. Women occupied more than half of the 1,714 leadership positions studied in conservation and preservation organizations.
- c. Women comprised more than 60% of the new hires and interns in conservation and preservation organizations.
- d. Women also dominate the executive director's position in environmental grantmaking foundations.
- e. Women have the greatest likelihood of becoming chair of the board in environmental grantmaking foundations.

### 2. HOWEVER, MEN ARE STILL MORE LIKELY THAN FEMALES TO OCCUPY THE MOST POWERFUL POSITIONS IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.

- a. There is a significant gender gap as more than 70% of the presidents and chairs of the board of conservation/preservation organizations are male.
  - i. Size matters too. The presidents of the largest conservation and preservation organizations (budgets over \$1 million) are overwhelmingly male (90%).
- b. Men also dominate the executive director positions in government environmental agencies.
- c. Males are far more likely than females to be on the staff of government environmental agencies.
- d. Males occupy the majority of the top leadership positions in environmental grantmaking organizations.
  - i. 76.2% of the presidents are male.
  - ii. 55% of the chairs of the board are male.
- e. Males also dominate the board membership in all three kinds of institutions.
  - i. More than 56% of the board members of the environmental organizations studied are male.



### **3. THE CURRENT STATE OF RACIAL DIVERSITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IS TROUBLING, AND LAGS FAR BEHIND GENDER DIVERSITY.**

- a. The percentage of ethnic minorities working in environmental organizations has increased over time.
- b. Despite the growth in the ethnic minority population in the U.S., the percentage of minorities on the boards or general staff of environmental organizations does not exceed 16% in the three types of institutions studied.
- c. Once hired in environmental organizations, ethnic minorities are concentrated in the lower ranks. As a result, ethnic minorities occupy less than 12% of the leadership positions in the environmental organizations studied.
  - i. They rarely occupy the most powerful positions (such as president or chair of the board) in environmental organizations.
  - ii. Size also matters.
    - None of the largest conservation and preservation organizations (budget over \$1 million) has a president who is an ethnic minority.
    - Overall, the smaller conservation and preservation organizations were less racially diverse than the largest ones.
- d. Yet ethnic minorities and people of multi-racial backgrounds comprise about 38% of the U.S. population.
  - i. Ethnic minorities are severely underrepresented in the environmental workforce.
  - ii. Though ethnic minorities are also underrepresented in the science and engineering (S&E) workforce nationwide, they are employed in the S&E workforce to a much greater percentage than they are in the environmental workforce. Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans comprise 29% of the S&E workforce.
- e. The diversity manager's position is the only position that minorities are more likely to hold than Whites in environmental organizations.
  - i. However, relatively few of the organizations had such a position.

### **4. THE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS ARE PREDOMINANTLY WHITE. THE ORGANIZATIONS STUDIED REPORT A MEMBERSHIP OF ABOUT 3.2 MILLION PEOPLE.**

- a. About 59% of these members are male.
- b. The volunteers are evenly split between males and females.
- c. Very few minorities are members or volunteers of the organizations studied.

### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESS A DESIRE TO DIVERSIFY THEIR BOARDS AND STAFF.**

- a. However, few have a diversity manager or have formed a diversity committee.



- b. Diversity managers were more commonly found in government environmental agencies than in conservation/preservation organizations.
- c. None of the grantmaking foundations studied had a diversity manager.

## **6. CROSS-RACE AND CROSS-CLASS COLLABORATIONS ARE STILL UNCOMMON IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.**

- a. Few of the organizations studied collaborate with ethnic minority or low-income institutions or groups.
  - i. Environmental organizations are less likely to collaborate with low-income organizations than with ethnic minority organizations.
- b. However, environmental organizations indicate that they collaborate frequently with other groups in their networks.

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL JOBS ARE STILL BEING ADVERTISED AND ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS RECRUIT NEW EMPLOYEES IN WAYS THAT INTRODUCE UNCONSCIOUS BIASES AND FACILITATE THE REPLICATION OF THE CURRENT WORKFORCE.**

- a. Recruitment for new staff frequently occurs through word-of-mouth and informal networks.
- b. This makes it difficult for ethnic minorities, the working class, or anyone outside of traditional environmental networks to find out about job openings and apply for those jobs.
- c. There is both a spatial and strategic mismatch in the recruiting strategies of environmental organizations when it comes to searching for minority workers.
  - i. Environmental organizations recruit from minority-serving institutions infrequently.
  - ii. Environmental organizations recruit from minority professional gatherings infrequently.
  - iii. This means environmental organizations are not recruiting from places where they are most likely to find new and talented ethnic minorities.
  - iv. Existing pipelines for finding minority environmental employees are currently underutilized by environmental organizations.

## **8. MOREOVER, ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS DO NOT USE THE INTERNSHIP PIPELINE EFFECTIVELY TO FIND ETHNIC MINORITY WORKERS.**

- a. Though environmental organizations host ethnic minorities as interns, they have been very reluctant to hire these talented students onto their staff.
- b. In effect, this creates a ruptured pipeline in which talent flows into the organizations but is allowed to dissipate out instead of being nurtured through the entire organization.



## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS SAY THAT THE BIGGEST BARRIERS TO HIRING MINORITIES IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONS ARE FEW JOB OPENINGS AND LACK OF MINORITY APPLICANTS.**

- a. The organizations do not recognize that their advertising and recruitment strategies could be barriers to minority and low-income applicants.
- b. Despite the claim of few job openings, most of the organizations in the study reported that they hired staff in the last three years. A low percentage hired minorities in that same time period.
  - i. Of the 493 staff hired by conservation/preservation organizations in the last three years, only 63 (or 12.8%) were ethnic minorities.
  - ii. Of the 683 staff hired in government environmental agencies in the last three years, only 80 (or 11.7%) were ethnic minorities.
  - iii. Of the 35 staff hired in environmental grantmaking foundations in the last three years, only 6 (17.1%) were ethnic minorities.

## **10. THE MOST POPULAR DIVERSITY INITIATIVE BEING UNDERTAKEN IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IS THE PROMOTION OF WOMEN ALREADY WORKING IN AN ORGANIZATION TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS.**

- a. Environmental organizations are much less likely to promote ethnic minorities already working in an organization to leadership positions.
- b. Promotions go primarily to White females. Women of color are still on the outside looking in, along with their male counterparts.
- c. This results in a narrowing of the gender gap while perpetuating the already wide racial gap in the leadership of environmental organizations.

## **11. ORGANIZATIONS WERE POLLED TO FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF DIVERSITY ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN IN THEIR REGION AND WHETHER THEY WOULD SUPPORT SUCH ACTIVITIES IF THEY WERE DEVELOPED.**

- a. Despite the professed interest in increasing diversity in environmental organizations, there is a gap between the desire to see diversity initiatives developed and actually supporting such activities once they are in place.
- b. In many instances organizational representatives were significantly more likely to say diversity activities should be undertaken in their region than they were to say that their organization was likely or very likely to support in the activities once they were put in place. For instance,
  - i. More than 70% of all three type of organizations indicated that pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income participants in the environmental workforce and on the boards, yet only 40% of government agencies and 50% environmental NGOs and foundation indicated they would be likely or very likely to support the activity if it were developed.





- ii. Similarly, more than two thirds of the organizations indicated that training programs for minority and low-income residents should be developed, but less than 45% of the organizations would support such training programs.

## 12. THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS INTERVIEWED FELT THAT:

- a. In general, diversity in environmental organizations has improved over time, but significant work has to be done to make the workplace more inclusive and welcoming to a broader range of people.
  - i. The dominant culture of the organizations is alienating to ethnic minorities, the poor, the LGBTQ community, and others outside the mainstream.
  - ii. Diversity, equity, and inclusion should be core values that are included in the mission statements of environmental organizations.
- b. Ethnic minorities are grossly underrepresented in the leadership of environmental organizations. Increasing racial diversity in the organizations should be a high priority.
- c. A significant number of talented ethnic minorities are willing and able to work in environmental organizations, but discriminatory hiring practices prevent them from obtaining jobs in such organizations.
- d. The environmental discourse has to be broadened to include a wider range of people and the issues they are concerned with.
- e. Greater effort should be made to facilitate the emergence of the next generation of leaders. This group should be more multicultural than the current cadre of senior environmental leaders.
- f. Diversity data should be collected and tracked in environmental organizations. This is particularly true of nongovernmental organizations.

### A Note about Terminology

Several terms are used to describe non-European residents of the United States in the scholarly and popular literature as well as in the social and political realms. This report uses the terms “ethnic minority” and “people of color” interchangeably to describe non-European Americans and White to describe Euro-Americans. At times the report makes specific references to specific racial or ethnic groups such as Blacks, Hispanics (Latinos, Chicanos, etc.), Asians, Native Americans, and Arabs.

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**“AS THE NATION CONTINUES TO DIVERSIFY, THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT IS LEFT WITH ONE OF THE GREATEST CHALLENGES IT WILL FACE THIS CENTURY. IN ORDER TO BECOME AN INFLUENTIAL AND SUSTAINABLE MOVEMENT FOR GENERATIONS TO COME, IT NEEDS TO SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESS ITS DIVERSITY CRISIS.”**

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Marcelo Bonta, Director, Center for Diversity & the Environment, 2007

Charles Jordan, Chair of the Board, The Conservation Fund, 2007

Source: Bonta & Jordan, 2007: 13.



# Overview of the Report

**This report contains nine chapters that present the findings of studies of three types of environmental institutions: conservation and preservation organizations, government environmental agencies, and environmental grantmaking foundations. The report also presents the reflections of environmental professionals.**



**Chapter 1** describes diversity initiatives that 16 environmental organizations and government environmental agencies have embarked on since the 1960s. It also contains a table summarizing the main activities of the organization's initiatives.

**Chapter 2** gives an overview of more than five decades of research in the field of diversity in environmental institutions, providing a context in which to situate this study. The chapter examines gender, race, and class inequalities and describes three waves of research focused on the leadership, staff, board, membership, and volunteers of environmental organizations; demographic characteristics of students and faculty in environmental programs; demographic characteristics of federal environmental agencies and environmental grantmaking foundations; networks, wages, and job mobility; access to environmental amenities and participation in outdoor recreation; and the role of environmental justice activism on diversity in the environmental field.

The results of the study of 191 conservation and preservation organizations are presented in **Chapter 3**. The chapter analyzes the demographic characteristics of the leadership, board, staff, volunteers, and interns. It also examines recruitment strategies and hiring, networks and collaborations, diversity initiatives undertaken in the past, diversity initiatives that should be undertaken in the future, and factors hindering the hiring of ethnic minorities.

**Chapter 4** reports on the study of 74 government environmental agencies. The chapter replicates the analysis conducted in the previous chapter, analyzing characteristics of the leadership, board, staff, volunteers, and interns, and examining recruitment strategies and hiring, networks and collaborations, diversity initiatives undertaken in the past, diversity initiatives that should be undertaken in the future, and factors hindering the hiring of ethnic minorities.

**Chapter 5** analyzes the findings of a study of 28 environmental grantmaking foundations. The chapter replicates the analysis conducted in the two preceding chapters.

**Chapter 6** compares the results of the three types of institutions on the dimensions studied in chapters 3-5, demonstrating how the institutions vary depending upon the diversity metric. Chapter 7 tackles the issue of how size is related to diversity, examining the differences between small and large institutions.

**Chapter 8** reports on interviews conducted with 21 environmental professionals who were asked to reflect on the state of diversity in the environmental movement as a whole and in environmental institutions. The chapter explores factors hindering environmental organizations from becoming more diverse, barriers encountered within the organizations, factors associated with successful diversity programs, and factors that help diversity training succeed.

**Chapter 9** discusses the implications of the findings of the study and offers a conclusion. An extensive reference list follows.

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# List of Abbreviations

<b>ASLO</b>	American Society of Limnology and Oceanography
<b>ASLOMP</b>	American Society of Limnology and Oceanography Multicultural Program
<b>BMC</b>	Board Members of Color
<b>CCC</b>	Civilian Conservation Corps
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>DEI</b>	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
<b>DIAC</b>	Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
<b>ECO</b>	Environmental Careers Organization
<b>EJ</b>	Environmental Justice
<b>ELP</b>	Environmental Leadership Program
<b>EDF</b>	Environmental Defense Fund
<b>EPA</b>	Environmental Protection Agency
<b>ESA</b>	Ecological Society of America
<b>HBCU</b>	Historically Black College and University
<b>HEC</b>	Human Environment Center
<b>HSI</b>	Hispanic Serving Institution (college or university)
<b>ICO</b>	Inner City Outings



<b>LEAF</b>	Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future
<b>LGBT</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender
<b>LGBTQ</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning
<b>MANRRS</b>	Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences
<b>MELDI</b>	Multicultural Environmental Leadership Development Initiative
<b>MFP</b>	Minority Fellows Program
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>NHEC</b>	National Hispanic Environmental Council
<b>NOAA</b>	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
<b>NPCA</b>	National Parks Conservation Association
<b>NPS</b>	National Park Service
<b>NWF</b>	National Wildlife Federation
<b>SACNAS</b>	Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science
<b>SCA</b>	Student Conservation Association
<b>S&amp;E</b>	Science and Engineering
<b>SEEDS</b>	Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability
<b>TEC</b>	The Environmental Consortium for Minority Outreach
<b>UCC</b>	United Church of Christ
<b>UNCF</b>	United Negro College Fund
<b>USDA</b>	United States Department of Agriculture



# Chapter 1.

## Overview of Diversity Initiatives

**American environmental organizations trace their roots back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Until the late nineteenth century, these organizations were bastions of upper and middle class White male recreation, adventure-seeking, policymaking, and nature protection. It was during the second half of nineteenth century that upper and middle class White females challenged the status quo and became more active in environmental affairs. During this same time period, the White working class began calling attention to the demographic characteristics of environmental activists. Working class activists also objected to the promulgation of environmental laws they felt penalized the poor, curtailed subsistence activities, and restricted access to resources (Taylor, forthcoming; 2009).**



**The 1960s marked the birth of the modern environmental movement and an exponential rise in the number of environmental activists and institutions. Since that time, the movement’s popularity has grown—and so have questions about the movement’s diversity. The three most common areas of contestation and inquiry revolve around gender, class, and racial diversity. This report focuses on these dimensions of diversity. Age or intergenerational diversity, sexual orientation, cultural, and urban-rural diversity are also discussed. It should be noted that there are many other aspects of diversity such as religion, disability, etc. that are not covered in this report and that should be the focus of future studies.**

**Over the years, environmental organizations have responded to diversity-related criticisms by developing diversity initiatives. Consequently, programs aimed at increasing the diversity of the staff and boards of organizations and agencies have been around for more than half a century. This chapter provides a brief overview of 15 of these efforts. The profiles included in this chapter are intended to serve as examples of diversity efforts. It is beyond the scope of this report to provide a complete review of all the different types of diversities that influence workforce dynamics, initiatives that have been planned or attempted, or programs that currently operate. Table 1.1 provides a summary of the main foci of initiatives profiled below.**

**By and large, these initiatives focus on pipeline activities: providing fellowships for college education, internships, and job opportunities. They also concentrate on mentoring, networking, and professional and leadership development. Initiatives provided resources and educational experiences while some built strategic partnerships. Research on diversity has been a cornerstone of understanding progress on diversity as well as on current and future needs.**

#### **A Note About Terminology**

Several terms are used to describe non-European residents of the United States in the scholarly and popular literature as well as in the social and political realms. This report uses the terms “ethnic minority” and “people of color” interchangeably to describe non-European Americans and White to describe Euro-Americans. At times the report makes specific references to specific racial or ethnic groups such as Blacks, Hispanics (Latinos, Chicanos, etc.), Asians, Native Americans, and Arabs.

Table 1.1. Summary of Diversity Initiatives Profiled

Initiatives Profiled	Primary Foci of Initiative										
	Paid Internship	Mentoring	Temporary or Part-time Work	Full-time Work	Conference, Workshop, Retreat	Job Search, Networking, Professional	Diversity Resources, Website	Diversity Research, Publication	Fellowship, Stipend	Outdoor Experience, Curriculum Building	Institutional and/or Community Partnerships
<i>National Park Service Conservation Corps</i>	✓			✓							
<i>Human Environment Center</i>	✓	✓									
<i>Environmental Protection Agency</i>	✓	✓		✓		✓			✓		
<i>Environmental Careers Organization</i>	✓	✓			✓			✓			
<i>Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences</i>					✓	✓					
<i>The Environmental Consortium for Minority Outreach</i>				✓							
<i>Sierra Club</i>										✓	✓
<i>The Nature Conservancy</i>										✓	
<i>National Wildlife Federation</i>		✓								✓	✓
<i>Mosaic Conferences</i>					✓						
<i>Environmental Leadership Program</i>		✓			✓	✓			✓		
<i>Trust for Public Land</i>										✓	
<i>National Hispanic Environmental Council</i>		✓			✓	✓				✓	
<i>Multicultural Environmental Leadership Initiative</i>		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Environmental Defense Fund</i>									✓		✓

## Kennedy, Udall, and the National Park Service

When President John F. Kennedy took office in 1961, he put the issue of diversity in the federal workforce on the agenda. That year, Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Interior, inquired about how many African Americans worked for the National Park Service (NPS). He discovered there was only one Black park ranger who was stationed at the Virgin Islands National Park. Chiding the NPS on its slow progress towards diversifying its workforce, Udall organized recruiters and ordered them to visit about 30 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to find two students from each college who could be hired as summer interns in the parks (McDonnell, 2006).

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**“SO WHAT I WILL DO IS PULL TOGETHER IN MY IMMEDIATE OFFICE A CADRE OF RECRUITERS TO GO INTO PLACES WHERE INTERIOR HAS NEVER GONE BEFORE, AT LEAST ON A LARGE SCALE, TO RECRUIT FROM THE HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.”**

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Stewart Udall, 1961. Secretary of the Interior.  
Source: Quote copied from McDonnell, 2006: 5.

Robert G. Stanton was one of the students recruited into the NPS program from Huston-Tillotson College. He borrowed \$250 to pay for his transportation, uniform, and supplies, and made his way from Texas to work in the Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming. Stanton’s nearly 44-year career in the NPS culminated in his appointment as the first African American to become the director of the bureau (McDonnell, 2006).

In this early program the primary aim was not to hire minorities into staff positions but simply to find temporary employment for interns. Hiring into a staff position was a secondary goal. One should not assume that agencies lacked diversity because there were no minorities willing and able to work on the staff of government environmental agencies in the 1960s. Two obvious pipelines remained underexploited during that era. Despite the fact that there was rampant racism in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) that limited the range of skills taught to Black enrollees, thousands of Black, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian men were exposed to conservation work in the CCC and could have been hired into government agencies and environmental nonprofits. The CCC ran from 1933 to 1942 (Collins, 1934; Cole, 1999; Sellars, 1997; Taylor, forthcoming). Moreover, American colleges and universities had a robust number of ethnic minority students who could have been employed in the environmental workforce. Many of these students had valuable leadership skills gained from their involvement in the civil rights movement, red power (new Indianism) movement, Chicano rights movement, peace movement, anti-war movement, labor movement, and women’s movement. After all, many of their White classmates— who gained leadership skills in these and similar movements—were hired into staff positions in environmental organizations upon graduation from college.

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**“MY SITUATION, I THINK, PERHAPS MIRRORS SOME OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT CONFRONTED SOME OF THE OTHER STUDENTS. FIRST, YOU HAD TO PROVIDE FOR YOUR OWN TRANSPORTATION, IN MY CASE FROM TEXAS TO WYOMING. SO THAT MEANT TRAINS AND BUS FARE. ALSO YOU HAD TO HAVE YOUR UNIFORM PURCHASED BEFORE YOU ARRIVED ON DUTY. AND THEN YOU HAD TO HAVE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO CARRY YOU THROUGH FOR AT LEAST A WEEK, POSSIBLY TWO WEEKS BEFORE YOU GOT YOUR FIRST PAYCHECK. AND THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO COULD POSSIBLY ASSIST ME WITH THOSE EXPENSES WERE MY MOTHER AND RELATIVES, AND NOBODY HAD \$250 TO LOAN OR GIVE A STUDENT TO GO OUT WEST.”**

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Robert Stanton, 2004. Director of the National Park Service.  
Source: Quote copied from McDonnell, 2006: 7.

While the environmental movement grew rapidly during the 1960s and 1970s and the environmental workforce expanded, the NPS and other environmental institutions added ethnic minorities to their workforce slowly during the period. This led a well-known conservationist, Sydney Howe, to make a stunning declaration at a 1967 conference that was examining how environmentalists could include more social justice issues on their agendas. Howe said, “We are today a racially segregated profession” (Stout, 1996).

Though Black activists such as Nathan Hare and Richard Hatcher, the first Black Mayor of Gary, Indiana called attention to the lack of diversity in the environmental movement in the 1970s, environmental organizations paid little attention to the matter of minority hiring in the environmental workforce (Hare, 1970; Hurley, 1995).

## The Conservation Corps Programs

In 1974, the federal government launched a summer Youth Conservation Corps program as well as a year-round Young Adult Conservation Corps. Federal support for the program ended in 1981 and states were left to absorb the cost (Conservation Corps Minnesota & Iowa, 2014). When the federal program ended, conservationists such as Howe pushed for the re-establishment of the CCC-styled program. Like the CCC, these were conceived as poverty-alleviation job-creation programs with a conservation focus. They presumed that the target group—the poor, the unemployed, and ethnic minorities—had questionable “work ethics,” were not self-reliant, and needed special training to improve educational and employment outcomes (Biers, 1985; Howe, 1982).

Howe (1982) expressed this logic most clearly when he said that, “A national conservation corps could rescue many young men and women from the idleness now burdening their lives and America’s future. The cost would be minimal, and liberals and conservatives alike would find their values served... The [conservation corps] work is demanding, and it builds character, confidence, and basic skills.”

Those promoting the 1980s version of the corps (CCC II, as it was sometimes called) did not question the challenges that ethnic minorities faced in the original CCC—unbridled discrimination, segregated units, assignment to out-of-sight menial tasks (such as kitchen duties) rather than in conservation skills-building and leadership positions, and minimal recruitment into environmental jobs after the program ended (Taylor, forthcoming; Cole, 1999; Sellars, 1997; Collins, 1934).

Though the idea of exposing minority youths to conservation work was a good one, the early CCC II programs did not tie program participation to mentoring, access to college programs, or development of leadership skills that could translate into employment in the professional ranks of environmental organizations.

The CCC II programs were established in states such as Alaska, California, Connecticut, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington, Wisconsin, Texas, and New York that enrolled thousands of young

people between the ages of 18 and 23 for six-month stints. Participants were paid minimum wages. New York City reported that it hired primarily Black and Hispanic high school dropouts at a cost of \$2.9 million to complete projects in more than 70 city parks. The city estimated the open market value of the work completed by these youths was about \$8.8 million (Biers, 1985; Howe, 1982).

The CCC II programs have evolved. Today the Conservation Corps programs help high school dropouts obtain high school diplomas, offer a wider variety of conservation projects in places such as the national parks and forests, and teach skills to help participants transition into the full-time conservation workforce (National Park Service, 2014; U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2014).

## The Human Environment Center

The Human Environment Center (HEC) developed one of the early ethnic minority environmental internship programs that combined work experience in environmental agencies and nonprofit organizations with mentorship and career development. The program, begun in 1984, was funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The collaboration between HEC and the EPA was facilitated by Clarice Gaylord, then director of agency's environmental grants program and Sydney Howe, founder of the Urban Environment Foundation (later renamed HEC) and one of the organizers of Earth Day 1970.

The HEC program provided summer internship opportunities for about 15 high school students in federal environmental agencies and major environmental nonprofits. As interest in diversity grew and documents like the United Church of Christ's (1987) report, *Toxic Wastes and Race*, pointed to the lack of racial diversity in mainstream environmental organizations, HEC conducted an informal survey of institutional diversity in 11 national conservation organizations.

- The 1988 HEC study found that 222 or 16.8% of the 1,317 staff members were ethnic minorities.
- Only 24 or 1.8% of the minorities employed in the conservation organizations were professional staff.
- There were six ethnic minority board members in the 11 organizations studied (ECO, 1992).

As was the case with earlier programs, HEC was unable to establish a pipeline for students exposed to conservation organizations to gain admittance to college environmental programs or secure jobs in such organizations after graduation.

## The Environmental Protection Agency

Under Clarice Gaylord's guidance, the EPA initiated several diversity initiatives. In 1985, she collaborated with the Environmental Careers Organization (ECO) to begin the Minority Fellows Program (MFP). The MFP placed minority students in summer internships with the EPA and also paid full tuition for students at HBCUs and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). The program evolved over the years and in 1990, the EPA expanded the program to include tuition for students attending other types of colleges. The EPA continues to award tuition fellowships and summer internship stipends through programs such as GRO (MELDI, 2009; EPA, 2012).

In 1985, the EPA began an exchange program called the Minority College Diversity Initiative. Chaired by Gaylord, the program was organized so that EPA program officers partnered with HBCUs and HSIs to exchange personnel, hire students, donate supplies and equipment, and participate in joint lecture series. It also functioned as a vehicle to train EPA's administrative staff. Program participants who did not have a college degree could earn one and, in so doing, could seek advanced professional positions in the agency (MELDI, 2009).

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**CLARICE GAYLORD, THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN TO HOLD THE ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTS DIRECTORSHIP AT THE EPA, WAS ALSO THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AT ONE TIME. SHE BECAME THE FIRST DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WHEN THE OFFICE WAS CREATED. GAYLORD HAD A STRONG INTEREST IN PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINORITY STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS TO HAVE INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES AND HOLD LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.**

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Source: MELDI, 2009.

## The Environmental Careers Organization

The Environmental Careers Organization (ECO) provided internship opportunities for students from 1972 till the organization abruptly shuttered its doors and filed for bankruptcy in 2007 in the wake of an audit by the EPA (EPA, 2007; Bailey, 2007).

From the 1990s on, the organization focused on diversifying its internship program and the environmental workforce, in general. ECO began managing the EPA's MFP in the mid-1980s (ECO, 1992).

ECO and the EPA entered into five cooperative agreements between 2001 and 2004 to provide internships opportunities for college students. For this, ECO received a total of \$20,498,630 from the EPA. ECO reports that it provided 1,423 internship opportunities with the funding (EPA, 2007; Bailey, 2007).

Jeff Cook, Founder and former president of ECO, reports that over a twenty-year period, the organization provided internships for nearly 3,000 diverse students. He claims that 35% of the annual placements of interns were students of color. Institutional diversity was also taken seriously at ECO—38% of the organization's staff were people of color and so were 50% of the board members (Cook, 2007; see also ECO, 1992).

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**"WHILE THERE ARE MANY REASONS FOR DIVERSITY WORK, THERE IS A STRONG BUSINESS CASE FOR THIS IMPORTANT ENTERPRISE. THE CHALLENGES OF DIVERSITY ARE DEMANDING THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT TO BE MORE INNOVATIVE, EFFECTIVE AND LEGITIMATE BY BROADENING ITS AGENDA, PERSPECTIVES, IMPACT AND TALENT."**

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Jeff Cook, 2007

Founder of the Environmental Careers Organization

Source: Cook, 2007: 165.

## Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences

The National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) came into being when minority students studying agriculture decided to form an organization to change the culture in the field of agriculture, foster networking, and provide leadership and career development. In the early 1980s, a small group of minority students in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources at Michigan State University began meeting, and in 1982 formed a group, the Minority Agriculture and Natural Resources Association. The Michigan State group visited

Pennsylvania State University in 1985 with the intent of helping to organize a similar group on that campus. The meeting resulted in the formation of Minorities in Agriculture on the Pennsylvania State University campus (Foster & Henson, 1992; *MANRRS Today*, 2010).

The two campuses sponsored a leadership conference in 1986 at Michigan State. More than 40 students from six colleges attended the gathering. The 1987 leadership conference was attended by more than 60 students from 11 colleges. Representatives from six government agencies and five private firms also attended. At the 1988 leadership conference held at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore, the name—Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences—was chosen for the fledgling organization (Foster & Henson, 1992; *MANRRS Today*, 2010).

Today more than 1,000 people attend the MANRRS conferences. MANRRS collaborates closely with the Farm Service Agency and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) (*MANRRS Today*, 2010; 2006). In 2005—two years before ECO shuttered its door—MANRRS signed a memorandum of understanding with ECO to place MANRRS participants in environmental internships (King, 2006).

## The Environmental Consortium for Minority Outreach

A short-lived initiative, the Environmental Consortium for Minority Outreach (TEC) came into being in 1990 after minority and social justice activists sent a letter to environmental organizations that were part of the Green Group accusing them of employing racist hiring practices. The letter was sent to Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Sierra Club, Wilderness Society, National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), Friends of the Earth, the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA), the National Audubon Society, and the Izaak Walton League (Shabecoff, 1990).

In response, members of the Green Group joined forces with Gerry Stover to form TEC. Stover claimed that TEC represented a “concerted effort” to rectify the lack of hiring of minorities in environmental organizations. TEC’s goal was to develop and implement recruitment, internships, education, management training and consulting programs, and seminar programs (Shabecoff, 1990; Snow, 1992b).

It is unclear why this effort fizzled, and there is no data to show how many minorities were hired through this project. However, as the examples in this chapter show, several of the environmental organizations and agencies collaborating with TEC embarked on their own diversity projects.

## Sierra Club

The Sierra Club operates a series of activities that facilitate the inclusion of low-income people and ethnic minorities into conservation activities. The Inner City Outings (ICO) is a Sierra Club diversity initiative that dates back to 1976. The Club’s 52 volunteer-run ICO groups have organized more than 900 outings that serve about 12,000 individuals annually (Sierra Club, 2014; 2013).

In response to criticism from environmental justice activists about mainstream environmental organizations’ lack of involvement in minority and low-income communities, the Sierra Club formed environmental justice community partnerships. The Sierra Club hired staff to facilitate such partnerships in jurisdictions such as Arizona, Texas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Michigan, Central Appalachia, Tennessee, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. Partnerships have also been established with tribes (Sierra Club, 2014).



## The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy began a diversity program, Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF), in 1995, focusing on helping educators in environmentally-themed high schools share resources and effective practices. Urban youth have benefited from this program as it exposes them to environmental activities and conservation career pathways (The Nature Conservancy, 2014).

LEAF currently operates in 25 primarily urban schools in the states of Washington, California, Colorado, Illinois, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Georgia (The Nature Conservancy, 2014).

In addition, TNC's GLOBE (Growing Leaders on Behalf of The Environment) Program hires students to fill over forty paid internship positions. These positions are designed to bridge the gap between academics and the practical work in the conservation field. The program is designed to attract individuals from a variety of socio-cultural experiences. Applicants need to show either that they have "circumstances, experiences, skills or talents that would benefit others and would enhance the diversity of the organization" or "can demonstrate a deep and active commitment to the issues of conservation and human diversity."

## The National Wildlife Federation

The NWF has a Tribal Lands Conservation Program coordinated through its Rocky Mountains and Prairies Regional Center. Tribal leaders collaborate with the NWF to focus on restoring bison on Native lands, helping to reestablish the black-footed ferret on reservations, restoring rivers and other fresh-water ecosystems, and assessing energy production and alternative fuel sources in the Plains states (National Wildlife Federation, 2014).

National Wildlife Federation also coordinates a diversity program for diverse youths called Earth Tomorrow. The program helps inner city youths connect with nature and engage in environmental advocacy. The Atlanta program has a residential summer institute (National Wildlife Federation).

## The Mosaic Conferences

In 1999, the NPS collaborated with the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) and the Student Conservation Association (SCA) to launch a series of multiracial, multi-stakeholder national conferences named "Mosaic" to discuss lack of diversity amongst NPS staff and visitors to the national parks (Keller, 2000; Daerr, 1999).

The first of these conferences, "America's Parks—America's People: A Mosaic in Motion," was attended by more than 500 people, lantha Gantt-Wright, then Director of Cultural Diversity Programs at NPCA, organized the first conference. Gantt-Wright, an African American, had prior experience in door-to-door environmental organizing (Keller, 2000; Daerr, 1999). Additional Mosaic conferences were held in 2000 and 2002 (NPCA, 2010).



## Environmental Leadership Program

The Environmental Leadership Program (ELP) aims to enhance the leadership skills of a diverse group of action-oriented and entrepreneurial “emerging leaders” in the environmental field. In 1997, Paul Sabin noticed how conservative organizations had successfully mobilized funding and people to influence national politics. Believing such strategies could be deployed for environmental purposes, in 2000, Sabin and 10 colleagues obtained funding from the Nathan Cummings Foundation to launch ELP. The goal was to help incubate the next generation of leaders who would have the training, skills, drive, and network to influence the environmental policymaking process (Environmental Leadership Program, 2014; *Grist Staff*, 2002).

Each year about 25 fellows are chosen from among entry- through senior-level professionals with from three to 10 years of work experience. Since 2000, the program has trained more than 600 such individuals, about half of whom are ethnic minorities (Environmental Leadership Program, 2014; *Grist Staff*, 2002).

## Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land undertakes diversity efforts through its attempts to increase access to parks for urban residents. In 2010, the organization launched the ParkScore Project ([parkscore.org](http://parkscore.org)), a comprehensive rating system designed to measure how well the 50 largest U.S. cities are meeting the public’s need for parks. ParkScore ratings are based on three equally weighted factors: (a) park access—the percentage of residents living within a 10-minute walk of a park; park size—a city’s median park size and the percentage of total city area dedicated to parks; and (c) services and investments—the number of playgrounds per 10,000 city residents and per capita park spending. The scorecard has identified cities with adequate access and others with extremely low access to parks. While the maximum score a city receives for public access to parks is 40, Charlotte received a score of 2 and Jacksonville a score of 4 (Trust for Public Land, 2014; 2013; 2012).

## National Hispanic Environmental Council

Roger Rivera founded the National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC) in 1997. With more than 5,000 environmental professionals and students, the organization serves as an advocacy group that facilitates the participation of Hispanics in environmental planning, policy-making, and programming on local, state, and federal levels. NHEC is also an environmental education organization that holds annual training camps as well as leadership and career development conferences. The group has partnered with the NPS to provide paid internship opportunities in the parks. In 2008, NHEC helped to create the National Latino Coalition on Climate Change, a national consortium of 12 Latino organizations (NHEC, 2010).



## Multicultural Environmental Leadership Initiative

The Multicultural Environmental Leadership Initiative (MELDI) was founded in 2002 by Dorceta Taylor and launched with funding from the Joyce Foundation and the University of Michigan. Early funding support was also received from the Ford Foundation and the National Science Foundation. MELDI aimed to provide information to young environmental professionals, those seeking to embark on careers in the environmental field, and those not privy to formal and informal environmental networks about employment and professional development in the field. MELDI quickly became a go-to site for diversity information as it featured several public-access databases. Among these were profiles of minority environmental professionals. MELDI conducted interviews with over 200 minorities who had outstanding environmental careers. These individuals serve as role models, and the profiles also help with networking, mentoring, and job recruitment (MELDI, 2014).

MELDI has facilitated conversations about diversity in the environmental field amongst multiple stakeholders. It has also conducted important national studies about institutional diversity in the field. In 2005, MELDI staff organized a national conference; in 2007, it hosted an international conference that brought together hundreds of students, faculty, researchers, diversity experts, environmental organization leaders, corporate executives, and representatives of environmental grantmaking foundations to assess the state of diversity in the environmental field (Faculty Diversity Symposium, 2007; National Summit on Diversity, 2005). Several papers presented at the 2007 conference were published in the book, *Environment and Social Justice: An International Perspective* (Taylor, 2010a).

Between 2004 and 2006, Taylor conducted four national pipeline studies of diversity: (a) among students in college environmental programs, (b) among faculty in college environmental programs, (c) in environmental organizations, and (d) among environmental professionals (Taylor, 2011; 2010b; 2008; 2007a; 2007b).



## Environmental Defense Fund

In 2008, EDF launched a Climate Corps program. Graduate students with strong management skills are selected as fellows. The fellows are trained in energy efficiency and management strategies. Corporations and a wide variety of other organizations host fellows for 10-12 weeks and provide a stipend to program participants. Since its inception, the Climate Corps have matched more than 400 diverse students with host institutions. Climate Corps draws students from minority-serving institutions such as Morgan State University, Howard University, and Clark Atlanta University (Environmental Defense Fund, 2014).

After more than five decades of conversations about diversity and programs aimed at enhancing diversity in the environmental field, where do we stand? Chapter 2 will provide a brief overview of research that has been conducted on diversity since the 1960s.



**Chapter 2.**  
**A Summary of Research on**  
**Diversity and the Environment**

# Early Research

## THE MEMBERSHIP OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The first wave of research on diversity in the American environmental movement and related institutions focused on the demographic characteristics of members of leading environmental organizations. Such analyses have generally found a middle class membership.

- A 1969 national survey of 907 Sierra Club members indicated that the organization had a middle class membership more highly educated than the general population. At a time when 11% of Americans had a college degree, 74% of Sierra Club members had at least a college degree and 39% had an advanced degree (Devall, 1970; U.S. Census Bureau, 2000).
- A 1971 study of the Puget Sound chapter of the Sierra Club found a very similar profile: 97% of the membership had attended college, 88% had a bachelor's degree, and 71% had a graduate degree (Faich and Gale, 1971).
- A year later, the Sierra Club released data on its membership. The report indicated that students accounted for 19% of members; 18% were teachers; 11% were managers and executives; engineers and technicians constituted 8%; lawyers, doctors, and other professionals not listed above comprised 15%; while clerical and blue-collar workers made up 7% of the membership (Coombs, 1972).
- A 1976 study of the membership of the Audubon Society found that their average income was \$35,700. In addition, 85% were college-educated and 43% had a graduate degree (Fox, 1981).

## THE ACTIVISTS

Some early studies examined the demographic characteristics of environmental activists. These, too, found that participants tended to be White and middle class.

- A 1972 study of 1,500 environmental volunteers nationwide showed that 98% of them were White and 59% held a college or graduate degree (Zinger, Dalsemer, & Magargle, 1972).
- In 1980 and 1982, Milbrath (1984) conducted studies in which he compared 225 and 274 environmental activists respectively with the general population. He found that environmentalists were more highly educated and more likely to hold professional jobs than the general population. The studies also found that while the general population was 83% White, the 1980 environmental sample was 92% White. Ninety-four percent of the 1982 environmental sample was also White.

## COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

There was also interest in diversity in college environmental programs, so investigators began conducting pipeline studies of college students in the 1970s. Researchers generally found that although both female and ethnic minority students were underrepresented in the programs, more progress was being made on gender diversity than racial diversity.

- Hodgdon (1980) examined enrollment in 73 college wildlife and fisheries programs in 1977 and found that female students comprised 24.8% of wildlife programs and 19.6% of fisheries programs.

- Hodgdon (1980) also found that a mere 3.1% of the wildlife and 5.1% of the fisheries students were ethnic minorities.
- Hodgdon (1982) replicated the study when he examined 77 colleges. He found that native-born ethnic minorities accounted for 3.1% of the students enrolled in wildlife and 2.2% of those enrolled in fisheries programs. American ethnic minorities also accounted for about 2% of the students enrolled in related environmental disciplines.

## Participation in Outdoor Activities

Researchers examined diversity in relation to access to environmental amenities and participation in environmental activities. They examined minority participation in outdoor recreational pursuits—particularly in public parks, forests and wilderness areas. The National Recreation Survey (conducted in 1960 and published two years later) found that White respondents were more likely than non-White respondents to say they went driving for pleasure, swimming, sightseeing, boating, taking nature walks, camping, skiing, and hiking. Similar percentages of Whites and non-Whites indicated they went hunting, horseback riding, bicycling, and playing outdoor games. Non-Whites were more likely than Whites to say they went walking for pleasure (Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, 1962).

While the authors of the study recognized that income played a critical role in influencing participation, they did not expound on the ways in which racism, discrimination, and other institutional factors impacted participation. In their discussion of the cultural limitations on participation, they indicated that “culture may limit participation through norms of behavior which originate in religion, color, legal restrictions, male-female role prescriptions, and other traditions or customs which provide a behavior pattern.” They noted that “organizational factors have their impact, also. Hiking and skiing clubs provide channels for learning and the means for status achievement” (Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, 1962: 5). Missing from their discussion was the role that racism and discrimination might play in barring ethnic minorities and Jews from the membership of organizations that facilitate the activities being studied (Taylor, forthcoming).

Other studies followed shortly afterwards.

- A 1965 study of participation in outdoor recreation activities found that 10% of Whites went camping in the summer while the percent of Blacks and other minorities who went camping was “too small to be significant” (U.S. Department of the Interior, 1965: 27).
- A similar study conducted in 1970 found that Whites were much likely to go bird watching than Blacks or other minorities (U.S. Department of the Interior, 1970).
- Not widely reported were results from studies such as the one conducted in Harlem in the late 1960s that showed that when residents were asked what they liked least about their blocks, the answer most frequently given was not enough trees and grass; 24% of the respondents gave this response (Seymour, 1969).

As was the case with other genres of early diversity studies, investigators explored participation in activities typically pursued by the White middle class and paid less attention to those generally participated in by minorities and the poor. Predictably, the results indicated that Blacks and other minorities had lower rates of participation in outdoor activities such as camping, wilderness or national park visitation than Whites. Studies also found that minorities tended to recreate closer to home, using city parks and other local recreational facilities rather than distant national, state, or regional recreational sites (Mueller & Gurin, 1962; Washburne, 1978; Washburn & Wall, 1980; 1979 Yancey & Snell, 1971; Noe, 1974; O’Leary & Benjamin, 1982; Stamps & Stamps, 1985; Kelly, 1980; Craig, 1972; Burdge, 1969; Hartmann & Overdeest, 1989; Dwyer & Hutchison, 1988; Enosh, Staniforth, & Cooper, 1975; Kornegay, & Warren, 1969).

Unfortunately, these studies helped to foster the notion that minorities were not interested in the environment. Moreover, research of this nature continued into the new millennia as scholars and environmental activists often depict ethnic minorities as disinterested in the environment and ignorant of environmental affairs. These studies also enshrined the idea that minorities were neither qualified for environmental jobs nor wanted such jobs (Taylor 2000a, 2007; 2008). This logic partly explains why racial diversity has been such a low priority for environmental organizations. If minorities are not interested in the environment, lack knowledge of it, are not qualified, and do not want to work in environmental organizations, why recruit and hire them?

Lost in the fray were arguments made by environmental activists such as Charles Little who argued that national park tourism policies tended to exclude the poor. Little also contended that simplistic assessments of minority leisure behavior led to erroneous conclusions. He argued that because “Central Park...is virtually deserted at its northern end... The conclusion is therefore drawn that Blacks have no interest in, or need for, community space. Such a simple conclusion fails to differentiate between green space and social space” (Little, 1974: 75, 78).

## Reframing the Early Research on Minorities and the Environment

A new wave of diversity research emerged during the 1980s as social justice-oriented scholars questioned such assumptions and conclusions. The second-wave researchers put forth new models and ideas that changed the way we view the relationship between minorities and the environment. The second wave of research not only challenged how environmental attitudes and behaviors of minorities had been studied and interpreted, it also questioned the perceptions of minorities that had been fostered (Mohai, 1985; Mohai & Bryant, 1998; Taylor, 1992; 1989).

In contrast to the early studies, the second-wave studies argued that minorities were interested in the environment, were concerned about environmental issues, participated in environmental affairs, and were desirous of jobs in the environmental field. This scholarship shifted the blame from minorities; researchers identified how biases in the types of environmental activities studied and the way samples were drawn could lead to the erroneous conclusion that minorities were disinterested and under-participating in environmental affairs. The second wave of research also focused on institutional barriers (Mohai, 1985; Mohai & Bryant, 1998; Taylor, 1992; 1989; ECO, 1992).

ECO conducted a “Minority Opportunities Study” in 1989 and found the following:

- Most environmental employers surveyed indicated that they were searching for “qualified” minority workers but were unsuccessful in finding any.
- Ethnic minorities lacked access to jobs and careers in the environmental field.
- There was a lack of educational and career pipelines to encourage minorities to embark on careers in the environmental field.
- Students of color were less likely to have internship experiences than White students.
- There was a limited supply of ethnic minority environmental professionals.
- Ethnic minorities were interested and enthusiastic about the environmental field when presented with opportunities to enter it (ECO, 1992).

Despite the fact that ECO had been involved in diversity programming for several years before conducting the study, the authors succumbed to stereotypes about minorities at times. For instance, they noted in their findings that: “People of color and their communities lack sufficient exposure to environmental issues” (ECO, 1992: 25). What environmental justice activists and minority scholars were arguing for some time before the ECO study was that minority communities cared about their environment, although they framed the issues and approached activism differently than middle class White communities did (Hare, 1970; United Church of Christ, 1987; Hurley, 1995; Keller & Turek, 1998; Taylor, 1989; 1992; 2009).

Though some of the first-wave studies examined the demographic characteristics of environmental organizations and barriers to participation in environmental activities, the analysis and explanations focused on minority ineptitude and their deviations from the expected norm. The first-wave studies did not seek to understand how institutional policies and practices were related to recruiting, hiring practices, the work environment, and how the general perception of minorities held by environmental leaders and activists affected diversity. Consequently, second-wave researchers highlighted the significant role that institutional factors played in the understanding of diversity.

## Minorities Attempt to Incorporate Diversity and Social Justice into Environmental Discourses

From the 1960s on, Blacks and other minorities critiqued the demographic composition of the environmental movement and the actions of environmental activists that were divorced from the environmental issues common in minority communities. This led some minorities to refer to environmental activism as a “White thing.” Statements like these were often construed as signs of disinterest in the environment (see Kreger, 1973). Scholars and activists did not recognize the reference as a call for environmentalists to broaden their framing of the environment, collaborate more with minorities, or to make a more concerted effort to incorporate social justice issues into their campaigns. When Black students at San Jose State College picketed an Earth Week 1970 event at which a student environmental group purchased and buried a brand-new \$2,500 car, environmental activists missed the point that Black students were making when Blacks claimed the money spent on the car could have been spent more effectively improving conditions in poverty-stricken areas (Commoner, 1971).

Prominent African American activists argued that the environmental discourse of the 1960s did not resonate with the social justice concerns of Blacks. Hence, Black activists used the high-profile activities related to Earth Day 1970 as opportunities to challenge the discourse of White environmentalists but also to raise consciousness amongst people of color (Hare, 1970; Hurley, 1995; Gary Info, 1972).

Nathan Hare’s 1970 article in *The Black Scholar* made explicit connections between racial and environmental inequality. Calling attention to the lack of opportunities for Blacks to participate in environmental affairs, he argued that the environmental movement had “blatantly omitted” Blacks and their environmental interests and that there was little exchange between Blacks and Whites. He also noted that Blacks and White environmentalists had different opinions about what caused environmental problems and how to solve them. Hare contended that the reformist approach to solving environmental problems fell short of the social and political revolutionary environmental changes that Blacks sought. As a result, Blacks were alienated from the environmental discourse.

Richard Hatcher, the first Black mayor of Gary (Indiana), voiced a similar sentiment while speaking to a group of White middle class environmentalists from the Community Action to Reverse Pollution in May 1970. He argued that Blacks did not define ecology in the same way as White environmentalists. Like Hare, Hatcher told his audience that for Blacks, relevant environmental issues were poor sanitation, overcrowding, substandard housing, and vermin. Hatcher rejected what he considered to be the false dichotomy between environmental change and social justice. He argued that a nation wealthy enough to send spaceships to the moon could combat poverty and pollution if there was a will to do so. Hatcher also called on Blacks to become more involved in environmental affairs (Hurley, 1995; Gary Info, 1972).



Native Americans also disrupted Earth Day proceedings in 1970 to challenge the policymaking process by White environmentalists that left tribes out of decision-making processes related to Indian affairs. Gaylord Nelson, one of the sponsors and key supporters of the event, was greeted by Indian demonstrators who threw garbage on the stage and accused him of sponsoring legislation that would take land away from the Chippewa tribe to facilitate the creation of a national park. Though Senator Nelson assured the crowd that Indian lands would not be appropriated to create a national lakeshore, he had spent a decade working on a plan to incorporate two small reservations (Red Cliff and Bad River) into the proposed Apostle Island National Lakeshore in Michigan. The tribes were resisting attempts by the NPS to encroach on Indian lands by converting them to national parks. The impasse was settled later that year when the park was created without taking Indian land (Ironwood Daily Globe, 1970; Keller & Turek, 1998; Fox, 1981).

Some White environmentalists perceived Native American attempts to link social justice with environmental affairs to prevent the conversion of parts of their reservation into public parks as anti-environmental. Park advocates did not understand the significance of tribal sovereignty or the reasons why tribes insisted on control of their homelands.

The question of how environmentalists should deal with social justice issues was on the minds of enough activists that it was brought to a vote in some environmental organizations.

- Attendees at a 1967 Conservation Foundation conference estimated that between 1% and 15% of the environmental movement would be interested in expanding their agenda to include social justice issues (Howe, 1974).
- In 1972 when Sierra Club members were asked to vote on the question, “Should the Club concern itself with the conservation problems of such special groups as the urban poor and ethnic minorities?” the membership was strongly opposed to it.
  - About 40% of the membership strongly opposed it while 15% strongly agreed that the Sierra Club should be concerned.
  - But there was a generational divide—the younger the members, the more likely they were to agree that the Sierra Club should concern itself with the conservation issues of the urban poor (Coombs, 1972).

These polls as well as other documentation from the period indicates that many environmentalists resisted attempts to link environmentalism with social justice thought and activism (see for example, Smith, 1974; Fox, 1981).

So while there was steady progress on gender diversity in environmental organizations by the 1960s, there was greater resistance to the idea of racial diversity and blending environmental and social concerns. Hence, progress on racial diversity in environmental organizations moved at a snail’s pace and, at times, had to be nudged along by federal legislation. Before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Blacks found it exceedingly difficult to find employment in federal land management agencies such as the Soil Conservation Service (now Natural Resources Conservation Service) and the remainder of the USDA. This continued even after Kennedy put diversity on the agenda and the NPS began its diversification program. The passage of the Civil Rights Act forced agencies to hire Blacks and other minorities and even close segregated offices that were not in compliance with the act (Helms, 1991).

Federal mandates notwithstanding, the nonprofit sector marched to its own beat, and organizations initiated diversity programs at their own pace. The incorporation of minorities in in any capacity was such a rare—and contentious—event that in 1970 the Audubon Society announced the appointment of two Blacks of “impeccable credentials” to their board of directors (Fox, 1981: 356). But as criticism grew louder and became more commonplace in the 1980s, some environmental organizations began to institute internship and other diversity programs.

## THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Around the same time the second-wave scholars began questioning the portrayal of minorities in the literature and identifying institutional factors that impeded minority participation in environmental affairs, grassroots activists in minority communities began to focus more intensely on what they referred to as the “whiteness” of the environmental movement. That concern about lack of diversity in the environmental movement was articulated in the United Church of Christ (UCC) 1987 report, *Toxic Wastes and Race*.

The widely read report pointed to the marginality of people of color in the mainstream environmental movement and their alienation from it. The report brought the issue of the demographic characteristics of the environmental movement into the spotlight and implicitly raised the question of whether an upper-middle class, predominantly White, movement would or could have the best interests of people of color and their communities at heart (United Church of Christ, 1987).

### An Inconvenient Topic Resurfaces

As was the case with Earth Day 1970, minorities used the events leading up to Earth Day 1990 as opportunities to draw attention to issues related to people of color and the poor and the environment. Once again, environmental inequality and diversity were at the top of the agenda. As environmental activists began unveiling a slew of activities to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the first Earth Day, two events occurred in January 1990 that ushered in the modern discourse on diversity in the environmental field. On January 16, several environmental justice activists and organizations sent a letter to the heads of the nation’s largest environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) claiming that the organizations hired few minorities and that said organizations were alienated from minority communities—the chief victims of pollution (Shabecoff, 1990).

- At the time the letter was sent, an informal poll found that only 14 (1.9%) of the 745 workers of the Audubon Society, Friends of the Earth, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Sierra Club were minorities (New York Times, 1990).

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**“...THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT... HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN WHITE MIDDLE AND UPPER-CLASS IN ITS ORIENTATION. THIS DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT RACIAL AND ETHNIC COMMUNITIES DO NOT CARE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON THEIR LIVES.”**

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Source: United Church of Christ, *Toxic Wastes and Race*, 1987: xi-xii.

Representatives of the targeted organizations responded to the letter by saying that though the organizations had a poor track record of hiring minorities, racism played no role in their hiring decisions. The spokespersons also hastened to assure reporters that they were trying to rectify the situation (Shabecoff, 1990).

Leaders of the environmental organizations offered several explanations for the lack of minorities on their staff. For the most part, minorities were blamed for the lack of diversity in the environmental organizations.

Environmental leaders contended that:

- Minorities were not applying for jobs in environmental organizations.
- There was a scarcity of minorities among the pool of trained environmental specialists.
- Minorities did not want to work for the low salaries being offered by environmental organizations (Shabecoff, 1990).

Environmental leaders admitted that environmental groups did not recruit minorities consistently and that lackluster recruitment efforts played a role in lack of diversity (Shabecoff, 1990).



In a telling statement, Frederic Krupp, executive director of EDF, argued that minorities are “cause-oriented,” attracted to issues such as discrimination and poverty rather than to environmental issues (Shabecoff, 1990: A20). Here Krupp makes what minority activists such as Hare, Hatcher, and those behind the commissioning of the UCC report called a false dichotomy between environment and social justice (Hare, 1970; Gary Info, 1972; Hurley, 1995; United Church of Christ, 1987). Environmental justice activists call this a false dichotomy too.

The timing of the January 16 letter was significant. It was printed in the New York Times in early February, about two and a half months before Earth Day 1990. The letter called for increased hiring of minorities and framed the demographic characteristics of the environmental workforce in terms of racist hiring practices (rather than lack of interest, inaction or greed on the part of minorities). The letter generated a lot of attention and, in response, the Green Group announced that as part of a “concerted effort” to change their hiring practices, they had formed TEC (Shabecoff, 1990: A20).

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**“WE ARE NOT PROUD OF OUR RECORD — WE ARE TERRIBLE... I CAN’T BELIEVE IT IS RACISM.  
WE ARE NOT GETTING THE CANDIDATES FROM THE MINORITY COMMUNITY.”**

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Bob Norman, 1990  
National Audubon Society Director of Human Resources.

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**“THE TRUTH IS THAT ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS HAVE DONE A MISERABLE JOB OF REACHING  
OUT TO MINORITIES.”**

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Fred Krupp, 1990  
Executive Director of the Environmental Defense Fund.  
Source of Norman and Krupp quotes: Shabecoff, 1990: A20.

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The letter also coincided with two important conferences—the University of Michigan’s conference on race and the incidence of environmental hazards and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry’s National Minority Health Conference. The University of Michigan’s conference was particularly significant in that it examined the relationship between race and the exposure to environmental hazards. In addition to highlighting the problems of racial disparities in the exposure to environmental hazards, the Michigan conference focused on several other pressing issues. Conferencees focused on the lack of diversity in both environmental NGOs and government environmental agencies, the lack of funding for minority environmental activists to work in the field, and lack of effective policies to combat environmental inequalities (Bryant & Mohai, 1992; Institute of Medicine, 1999; Taylor, 2000a; 1992).

The issue of diversity also took center stage at the 1991 First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit (Taylor, 2000a). Since then, diversity has remained a part of the environmental discourse with a host of conferences, workshops and other events focused on increasing diversity in environmental organizations.

## New Approaches to Studying Diversity in Environmental Institutions

The emergence of the environmental justice movement in the early 1990s also stimulated new waves of research on minority attitudes and perceptions of the environment. Despite the growth in the environmental justice movement and the formation of hundreds of environmental justice organizations founded and led by minorities, questions still persisted about whether minorities were interested in the environment (Taylor, 1999).

Consequently researchers continued to focus on this area of inquiry. Their findings reinforced the findings in the second-wave studies that minorities were aware of environmental issues, interested in them, and perceived environmental risks at rates equal to or exceeding that of Whites. Studies tracking changes in attitudes over time also found that minorities supported higher levels of spending on the environment than Whites (Mohai, 2003; Adeola, 2004; Whittaker, Segura & Bowler, 2005; Ard & Mohai, 2011). Notwithstanding, there are still studies concluding that minority students are less concerned about the environment than White students (see for example, Quimby, Seyala & Wolfson, 2007).

### THE STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND ACTIVISTS IN MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

By the late 1980s, studies emerged that probed institutional diversity in environmental organizations. A 1988 Conservation Fund study of 265 leaders of environmental organizations nationwide found that:

- 79% of them were male
- 3% were under 30 years old
- 99% had at least a bachelor's degree
- 20% had a doctorate or other professional degree
- 14% earned \$60,000 or more annually (Snow, 1992a).

The Conservation Fund also studied 180 environmental volunteers nationwide in 1988. The study found that:

- 61% were male
- 7% were younger than 35 years of age
- 79% had a bachelor's degree
- 53% had a graduate degree
- 71% had a professional or managerial job
- 3% worked as skilled laborers (Snow, 1992a).



A 1992 study of activists in the state of Washington found that environmentalists tended to be more educated and had higher incomes than labor activists (Rose, 2000).

ECO also released a study in 1992. The study of 63 mainstream environmental organizations found that:

- 32% of the organizations had no minorities on their staff
- 19% had no volunteers who were people of color
- 22% had no board members who were people of color
- 16% had no minorities in their membership
- More than half of the organizations reported that diversity was a high priority in their organizations
- Most organizations indicated they wanted to diversify in order to work better with communities of color
- 40% of the organizations claimed they had changed their recruiting practices to attract more minorities
- 17% had established affirmative action plans
- 14% had begun networking in minority communities (ECO, 1992).

When asked to explain why there were few people of color on their staff, leaders of these environmental organizations parroted the arguments environmental leaders made in response to the letter environmental justice activists sent to the Green Group. Interviewees claimed that they lacked racial diversity because:

- Minorities didn't apply for environmental jobs
- The salaries being offered by environmental organizations were too low
- There was a paucity of qualified minority applicants (ECO, 1992).

Most of the environmental organizations did not see any issue in their organization that could hamper the retention of minority workers. Only a small percentage thought the organizational culture, lack of awareness of minority issues, lack of group support for minority workers, and the inability of organizations to make minorities feel comfortable could make it difficult to retain people of color (ECO, 1992).

The results of more recent institutional diversity studies still indicate that the percentages of minorities on the staff and boards of environmental organizations is increasing but is still low.

- A 2002 report that examined diversity in 61 organizations in the Natural Resources Council of America found that 11.5% of the 6,347 staff and 9.6% of the 1,324 board members of these organizations were minorities (Stanton, 2002).
- A 2003 report sponsored by the North American Association for Environmental Education of state-affiliated environmental education associations found that only 17 minorities were on the boards of the 21 responding state associations. The percentage of minorities in state membership ranged from zero to about 20% (Clavijo & Chandler, 2003a; 2003b).
- Taylor collected data on 166 mainstream organizations from 2004 to 2006 and found that minorities comprised 14.6% of their staff.
  - She studied 39 environmental justice organizations over the same time period and found that minorities made up 77.8% of their staff (Taylor, 2008).

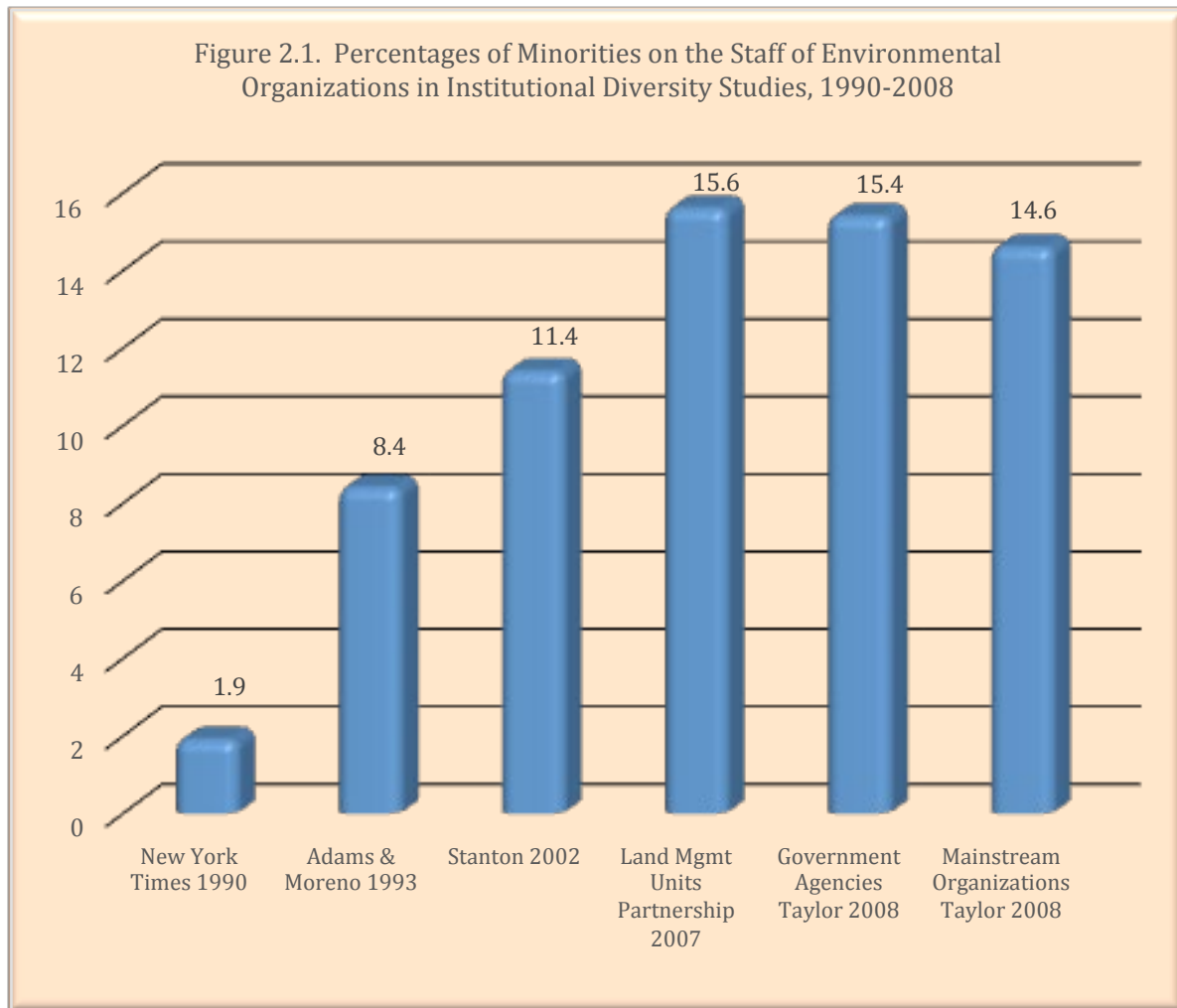
## THE STAFF OF STATE AND FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES

Researchers have also been collecting and analyzing data on the staff composition of state and federal environmental agencies. Adams and Moreno (1998) analyzed the racial composition of the staff of state natural resources agencies in 1993 and found that minorities constituted 8.4% of the workers employed in such departments in 16 southeastern states and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Taylor (2008) studied 38 government environmental agencies between 2004 and 2006 and found that minorities made up 15.4% of the staff.

Has all the talk about staff diversity mattered? Has it resulted in increased hiring of minorities in environmental organizations? Though the percentage of minorities working in environmental organizations is still low, the proportion of minorities working in environmental organizations today is greater than it was two decades ago. Although the number of studies examining minority hiring in environmental organizations is limited, the data presented earlier and graphed in figure 2.1 does indicate an upward trend. As the figure shows, minorities constituted 1.9% of the 745 staff of the four environmental organizations surveyed in 1990, 8.4% of the 12,245 staff in state natural resources agencies in the Southeast in 1993, and 11.5% of 6,347 staff in 61 organizations affiliated with the Natural Resources Council of America (*New York Times*, 1990: 41; Adams & Moreno, 1998: 971-1981; Stanton, 2002).

Taylor (2008) found that minorities constituted 15.4% of the government environmental agencies and 14.6% of the staff of mainstream environmental organizations. She also examined the number of minorities on the staff of land management units (such as the Park Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and the Fish and Wildlife Service) of federal agencies and found 15.6% of the staff were minorities. Overall, minorities constituted 23.7% of 187,000 workers in all federal agencies that have environment as small part or all of their portfolio in 2007 (Partnership for Public Service, 2007; Taylor, 2011a; 2008).



## DIVERSITY IN GRANTMAKING FOUNDATIONS

Though many foundations have a long history of promoting equality and funding social justice causes, such foundations have been reluctant to turn the spotlight inwards and analyze their own progress on institutional diversity. This shifted in the early 1980s when the Council on Foundations reported that the staff and boards of foundations were predominantly White. In 1982 more than 98% of the chief executive officers of the foundations were White and less than a third were women. Moreover, 96% of the trustees were White and 77% were male (Kasper, Ramos & Walker, 2004).

A recent study of institutional diversity in philanthropic organizations found that ethnic minorities comprise 21% of the management or professional workforce in foundations. They occupy 37% of the program officer positions but only 10 to 17% of the chief executive officers and board leadership positions. In contrast, women made up 70% of the executive staff, 73% of the program officers, and 38% of the trustees (D5 Coalition, 2012).

## STUDENT DIVERSITY IN COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Despite the lingering perception that ethnic minorities with the relevant background and skills to work in environmental organizations are rare, a 1991 ECO study of its interns found a sizeable pool of minority students with appropriate backgrounds to work in the environmental field. Minority study participants expressed a strong desire to work in nonprofits and government; 59% indicated they would work in a national nonprofit and 65% would work in a grassroots nonprofit after graduation (ECO, 1992).

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### **MINORITY STUDENTS HAVE THE SKILLS AND ARE INTERESTED IN WORKING IN NGOS. MINORITY STUDENTS ARE ALSO INTERESTED IN WORKING IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD.**

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Sources: ECO, 1992; Taylor, 2007a; 2007b; 2008.

Valdez (1995) conducted a study of Hispanic students in wildlife and fisheries sciences programs in 10 universities in seven western states from 1982-1994. He found that:

- The programs enrolled low numbers of students and graduated less than five per year.
- New Mexico State had the best record; Hispanics constituted about 24.5% of its program.
- Hispanics constituted only about 3% of the Texas A & M program over the same period.

However, minority students with environmental degrees tended to work within the environmental field. Maughan, Bounds, Morales & Villegas (2001) found that of the 26 minority students graduating from University of Arizona's natural resources program between 1988 and 2001, 54% were employed in natural resources professions while 46% went on to graduate school.

Fraser (2005) corroborated this finding. He conducted a longitudinal study of African American forestry students in the Alabama A & M forestry program and found that of 85 African Americans graduating from the program between 1995 and 2004, 75% went into forestry professions.

Black and other minority students graduating with graduate degrees in environmental sciences from Florida A & M University's School of the Environment also work at NOAA and other government agencies. The school's Environmental Cooperative Science Center, which has been funded by NOAA as a diversity pipeline program since 2001, focuses on ecological and coastal research and management (FAMU, 2014).

## FACULTY DIVERSITY IN COLLEGE ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

Very little attention has been paid to faculty diversity in college environmental programs. Taylor (2010b) collected data on 2,074 White and 264 minority faculty between 2004 and 2005. Minority faculty comprised 11% of the faculty studied. However, Hispanics, Blacks, and Native Americans were underrepresented in the departments studied. In addition, minority females were more likely to be underrepresented than minority males.

## WAGE DIFFERENTIALS AMONGST ENVIRONMENTAL WORKERS

Researchers have also examined another aspect of diversity and equity—wage differentials. Do workers of different gender and race earn similar wages? Studies have examined salary differentials in the environmental workforce by looking at the wages of graduates of agricultural programs.



There is a gender gap in wages where women earn lower starting salaries than men. Furthermore, women's wages do not catch up as their current wages were also lower than that of their male counterparts. Researchers studied the wages of University of Georgia alums who graduated between 1970 and 1981 and found \$4,003 salary differential between males and females (Broder & Deprey, 1985).

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### **THERE IS A GENDER GAP IN WAGES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD. WOMEN TEND TO EARN LOWER WAGES THAN MEN.**

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Sources: Broder & Deprey, 1985; Preston, Broder & Almero, 1990;  
Barkley, 1992; Barkley, Stock & Sylvius, 1999; Taylor, 2011a.

A similar gender wage gap was also found when Virginia Tech alums were studied (Preston, Broder & Almero, 1990).

Barkley (1992) also found a wage differential of \$2,218 in starting salaries and \$8,126 in current salaries of male and female Kansas State agricultural alums.

Barkley, Stock & Sylvius (1999) found that women earned an average of \$3,828 less than men in their initial salaries and \$7,717 less in current salaries.

Taylor (2011b) studied 265 environmental professionals (115 women and 150 men) and found that women were more likely to earn lower starting salaries than men, but the difference was insignificant. When current wages were examined, women were significantly more likely than men to have lower wages.

Results are mixed when racial differences in earnings in the environmental field are studied. Barkley, Stock & Sylvius (1999) found that the starting salaries Black agricultural graduates were on average \$2,843 higher than that of Whites, while the starting salaries of Hispanics were \$1,677 higher than Whites, and the starting salaries of Native Americans were \$2,180 higher than that of Whites. Asians had starting salaries that were \$5,704 lower than that of Whites; this difference was significant.

When current wages were considered, the researchers found that Blacks earned \$7,350 and Hispanics \$3,622 more than Whites but Asians earned \$2,221 and Native Americans \$1,443 less than Whites (Barkley, Stock & Sylvius, 1999).

Adams & Moreno's (1998) study of 938 White and 955 minority natural resources professionals found that minorities were more likely to report starting salaries in the lowest salary range than White respondents. Whites were more likely than minorities to report starting salaries in the highest salary bracket. These differences were significant.

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### **SOME STUDIES FIND A RACIAL GAP IN WAGES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD WHILE OTHERS DO NOT.**

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Sources: Barkley, Stock & Sylvius, 1999; Adams & Moreno, 1998; Taylor, 2011b.

The racial wage gap carried over to current wages. Minorities were significantly more likely than Whites to report current wages in the lowest income categories while Whites were more likely than minorities to report incomes in the highest income bracket.

Taylor's (2011b) study of 153 Whites and 112 minority environmental professionals found that minorities were significantly more likely than Whites to report starting salaries in the lowest range. However, there was virtually no difference in the wages earned by Whites and minorities when current salaries were considered.

## SALARY EXPECTATIONS

As the above discussion indicates, there is widespread feeling among leaders of environmental organizations that they cannot afford to hire minorities because minorities want higher wages than environmental NGOs can afford to pay. Is there a basis for this assumption?

An informal poll of environmental organizations that was conducted in 1990 found that starting salaries tended to range from \$14,000 to \$25,000 (New York Times, 1990). Data collected by ECO a year later found that 54% of the minority students surveyed said they expected to earn \$25,000 or less when they graduated (ECO, 1992). This provides evidence that, contrary to popular belief in the environmental field, the salary expectations of minority students were not inflated.

Taylor (2007a; 2008) corroborates ECO's findings. She studied 871 White students and 348 minority students and asked them to indicate the lowest salary they would accept upon graduation. Taylor found that the mean salary expectation for minority students was somewhat higher than that of White students. However, the salaries most minority students indicated they expected to earn upon graduation were within the range of salaries being paid by environmental NGOs and government environmental agencies.

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### **STUDIES SHOW THAT MINORITY STUDENTS HAVE SALARY EXPECTATIONS THAT ARE WITHIN THE RANGE OF WHAT IS BEING PAID BY ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS AND GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES.**

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Sources: New York Times, 1990; ECO, 1992; Taylor, 2007a; 2008.

## JOB MOBILITY

Though research has been conducted on job mobility in many sectors of the labor market, only Taylor (2011b) has examined this phenomenon among environmental workers. Job mobility is an important dimension of the diversity conversation because there is much skepticism about minority workers and whether they are a good fit in the environmental workplace. If an environmental employer hires and invest in minorities, will those workers stay in the organization?

Taylor (2011b) studied 265 environmental professionals and found that Whites and minorities have distinct job mobility patterns. While 58% of minority study participants indicated that they had worked for their current employers for 10 or more years, only 38.6% of Whites had such a lengthy tenure in the organizations they were currently

Taylor (2011b) also found that women had shorter job tenure than men. The study found that 61.7% of the women and 46.7% of the male respondents were working in their current organizations for less than 10 years. Further analysis indicated that this disparity might be due to the fact that women were hired into environmental organizations at a later time period than men.

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### **ONCE HIRED IN A JOB, ETHNIC MINORITIES TEND TO STAY LONGER IN THE ORGANIZATION THAN WHITES.**

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Source: Taylor, 2011b.



## INTRODUCING UNCONSCIOUS BIASES THROUGH FILTERING, NETWORKS, AND HOMOSOCIAL REPRODUCTION IN WORKFORCE

Workforces that lack diversity arise by a variety of means. In addition to factors like stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, homogeneous workplaces arise because of adherence to particular cultural norms, filtering, network structure, and recruitment practices. These are forms of unconscious or inadvertent biases that can lead to or perpetuate institutional homogeneity. Ross (2008) argues that we should pay attention to unconscious bias as it has a profound impact on the workplace.

Filtering is one process that introduces unconscious bias into the workforce. Filtering occurs through the practice of hiring staff who originate from the same social and professional networks, i.e., hiring from the same firms or among people trained in the same institutions, by employing similar promotion practices (such as promoting top executives only from specific departments in an organization), or from the skill requirements for particular jobs. These employees have similar orientations and dispositions that may override variations in tradition and control that might otherwise foster diversity (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991; 1983; Perrow, 1974).

Filtering promotes reliance on homophilous networks, using practices such as word-of-mouth recruitment or insider referrals to recruit from among networks of similar people. Reliance on such networks results in the homosocial reproduction of the workforce— a replication of the demographic and social characteristics of the existing workforce—because people tend to refer others similar to themselves for jobs. Such practices allow race and class to influence recruitment and hiring practices either consciously or unconsciously (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Granovetter, 1995; Braddock & McPartland, 1987; Model, 1993).

Research has shown that social and professional networks play critical roles in recruitment, finding employment, being retained, and getting promotions. Networks allow people to maximize their social leverage and gain a competitive edge in job-seeking and promotions. People who are not acquainted or connected to others in a particular organization or in a sector of the workforce are less likely to be employed or promoted to leadership positions than those who have extensive connections (Gabbay and Zuckerman, 1998; Fligstein, 1990; Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1974; 1973; Katz and Tushman, 1981; Coleman, 1990).

Social and professional networks help to build such ties. Networks also provide contacts for job seekers, timely information about jobs that may not be widely known, and an opportunity for contacts to sponsor or recommend job seekers, thereby increasing the chances of getting employment (Elliott, 2001; Aponte, 1996; Cohn and Fossett, 1996; Kasinitz and Rosenberg, 1996; Sassen, 1995; Waldinger, 1997). Researchers argue that employers favor insider (network) referrals because this is an effective way of leveraging employees' social ties to the advantage of an organization (Kalleberg, et al., 1996; Fernandez, et al. 2000; Fernandez and Weinberg, 1997; Schwab, 1982; Braugh and Mann, 1984). However, insider referrals introduce unconscious or inadvertent biases that allow race and class to affect hiring decisions and thus institutional diversity.



## Mentoring

Mentoring is seen as a critical component of diversity initiatives. So much so that by the late 1980s, a third of all major corporations reported having formal mentoring programs (Bragg, 1989). Mentoring is often viewed as a way of facilitating diversity efforts (Kalev, Dobbin & Kelly, 2006). College environmental programs have developed formal mentoring programs or are affiliated with professional development associations (Talbert, Larke & Jones, 1999). Studies have found that mentoring helps to address the social isolation that might hamper the progress of women and minorities in many institutional settings (Kalev, Dobbin & Kelly, 2006).

Studies have also found that mentoring is positively related to more frequent promotions, higher incomes, and greater satisfaction with wages and benefits. Mentoring works because it builds networks that help protégés to bridge the structural holes in institutions, provides role models, increases communication, identifies leaders early on, helps to familiarize protégés with workplace norms, increase productivity, and reduce turnover. Mentoring is also associated with protégés reporting more positive attitudes towards work than nonmentored individuals (Eshner & Murphy, 1997; Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fagenson, 1989; Wallace, 2001).

## Understanding the Efficacy of Diversity Approaches

Over the years employers have tried three broad approaches to promoting institutional diversity. Programs have been developed to clarify and establish organizational responsibility for diversity, other programs try to reduce the biases of managers through diversity training and feedback, and a third set seeks to reduce the alienation and social isolation of female and minority workers (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006). How effective are these approaches in enhancing diversity?

Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly examined this question in 2006 when they studied the employment practices of 708 private sector establishments from 1971 to 2002. The researchers found initiatives that focused on decreasing managerial bias through diversity training and providing feedback on evaluations were least effective in increasing the number of White women, Black women, and Black men in the management ranks. Initiatives that focused on reducing social isolation of women and minorities had modest impacts. The greatest increases in managerial diversity came about through initiatives that established organizational responsibilities for diversity. Entities that established organizational responsibilities for diversity also saw improved results from diversity training, evaluations, networking, and mentoring. The study also found that organizations that had to abide by federal affirmative action laws usually assigned staff to oversee and monitor compliance; these organizations saw stronger impacts of their diversity programs.

### WHY DOES WORKFORCE DIVERSITY MATTER?

#### The Contemporary Picture

The environmental workforce is growing rapidly, and all indicators are that the demand for environmental workers will increase in the coming years. In 1970 there were about 700,000 environmental jobs, and by 2005 there were approximately 5.3 million such jobs (Bezdek, Wendling, & DiPerna, 2007; Center for American Progress, 2007). Bezdek (2007) estimates that about 40 million green jobs could be created by 2030. More recently, the United States Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook 2010-11 predicted a 28% increase in the number of environmental scientist and specialist positions between 2008 and 2018. This growth rate exceeds the average predicted for all occupations (U.S. Department of Labor, 2012).

As the demand for environmental workers grows, environmental organizations and agencies must utilize the full spectrum of talent available to them to fill these positions. There is already a debate over whether there will be a shortage of

American workers who can meet the demand (see for example Copulsky, 2013; Salzman, Kuehn, & Lowell, 2013).

Regardless of the availability of workers, one thing is clear—environmental organizations and agencies cannot continue to bypass minority workers. Ethnic minorities comprise a substantial part of the population now, and those percentages are projected to rise. Ethnic minorities also comprise a significant segment of the workforce and will play an even more important role in the American labor force in the future. The 2010 Census shows that Hispanics comprise 16.3% of the population, Blacks 12.6%, Asians 4.8%, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders 1.1%, and mixed race 2.9% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). To ignore this segment of the population means that employers are ignoring roughly 38% of the talent pool.

### The Future Outlook

What does the future portend? According to the U.S. Census, the American population is aging and will be considerably more racially diverse by 2060. The population will be around 420.3 million by then. The Census Bureau predicts that over the next half century, the U.S. will become a “plurality nation.” Though Whites will remain the largest single group, no one group will be a dominant majority (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012).

The census projects that (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012):

- The non-Hispanic White population will increase from 197.8 million in 2012 to 199.6 million in 2024.
  - This population will decline by almost 20.6 million between 2024 and 2060.
- The Hispanic population will more than double—going from 53.3 million in 2012 to 128.8 million in 2060.
- The Black population will increase from 41.2 million in 2012 to 61.8 million in 2060.
- The Asian population will increase from 15.9 million in 2012 to 34.4 million in 2060.
- The American Indian and Alaska Native population will increase from 3.9 million in 2012 to 6.3 million in 2060.
- The Native Hawaiian population will increase from 706,000 in 2012 to 1.4 million in 2060.
- The number of people who belong to two or more races will increase from 7.5 million in 2012 to 26.7 million in 2060.

If the census projections hold true, by the year 2060 ethnic minorities and people of multi-racial backgrounds will comprise roughly 57% of the population. This is an important demographic shift with significant implications for the environmental field. Environmental organizations will have to hire more ethnic minorities to meet their workforce needs.

What is the current state of diversity in environmental organizations? Chapter 3 will examine the status of diversity in environmental NGOs today.



**Chapter 3.**  
**Diversity in**  
**Conservation and**  
**Preservation**  
**Organizations**



## Study Description and Methodology

This chapter reports the findings obtained from a national study of institutional diversity in 191 conservation and preservation organizations. Employees described these organizations as primarily focusing on conservation or preservation issues. Though the organizations work on a range of issues such as population growth, pollution, and urban issues, their primary focus is on conservation and/or preservation, and they describe themselves as such. This report is part of a larger study examining diversity in a range of institutions including government environmental agencies (chapter 4) and environmental foundations (chapter 5).

### DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected through an online survey designed in Qualtrics and administered through MailChimp. The survey was designed in Qualtrics to take advantage of enhanced features such as skip patterns in questions, anonymity, and tracking. No personal information was collected for the individual who filled out the survey, and Qualtrics automatically assigns a random number to each survey so that individuals cannot be traced. Potential respondents were sent an email containing a brief description of the study and a request to participate in it through MailChimp. The email also contained a hyperlink that respondents could click on to start the survey. Those not wishing to get further correspondence about the survey could unsubscribe. Through MailChimp, the researcher could track the distribution of surveys and send automatic reminders every five days to those who had neither unsubscribed nor opened the survey. Reminders ceased after a respondent opened the survey link. Once a respondent opened a survey and logged off, they could not access the survey again. After five reminders, if a potential study participant did not open the survey, no additional reminders were sent.

The survey — which took between 30 minutes and 45 minutes to complete—was administered over a five-month period from November 15, 2013 to April 8, 2014. The names of organizations and contact information of conservation and preservation organizations was gathered from websites, environmental directories (such as the Conservation Directory, National Directory of River and Watershed Conservation Groups, and Wildlife Conservation Environmental Directory), the Leadership Directory, and from databases this author developed as part of earlier studies. Multiple sources were used to find email addresses in order to overcome the problem of “churning.” Churning occurs when email addresses change because of a change in Internet service providers, institutional reorganization, or workers changing organizations, etc. (Bradley, 1999). Key personnel (for example, an executive director, associate director, or human resources director) in each institution were asked to complete the survey on behalf of the organization.

## RESPONSE RATE

Initially, 350 respondents from conservation and preservation organizations answered the survey, but 155 of these responses had to be dropped from the sample because too few questions were answered. Diversity is a sensitive topic for many working in environmental organizations. Though respondents read through the study consent form that described the survey and agreed to take the survey, some respondents stopped taking the survey when they were asked about the diversity of the organization's leadership.

The response rate for this study is 20 percent. This rate is similar to that obtained by Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine in their 2004 study. The response rate for Internet surveys has been falling steadily since 1986 (when the first surveys of this kind began). Sheehan (2006) found that the response rate for electronic surveys conducted in 2000 was 24 percent. Baruch & Holtom (2008) studied response rates in organizational research and also report falling response rates over time.

Despite concerns that the "spam" and "junk mail" cluttering recipients' inboxes might dampen response rates (Sills & Song, 2002), Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine (2004) obtained similar response rates for their electronic survey and certain forms of mail surveys.

Cook, Heath, & Thompson (2000) argue that the representativeness of the sample is more important than the response rate. The surveys analyzed in this chapter are representative of conservation and preservation organizations across the U.S. The sample contains organizations from 37 states in all regions of the country and includes large, mid-sized, and small organizations engaged in a wide range of conservation and preservation activities.

## DATA ANALYSIS

The survey responses were downloaded from Qualtrics into SPSS 21. All the data cleaning, coding, and statistical analysis was conducted in SPSS. Graphs, charts, and tables were prepared in both SPSS and Excel.

## Leadership Positions in Conservation/Preservation Organizations

Examining who occupies what leadership positions in organizations can provide important clues about the status of diversity in institutions. This study examined 25 leadership or senior staff positions in the organizations to determine the extent of gender and racial diversity in the leadership hierarchy. As table 3.1 shows, there were varying degrees to which these positions are filled in the 191 organizations studied. The most common positions were treasurer, secretary, executive director, president, chair of the board, vice-president, and program director. Between 51% and 69% of the organizations had these positions.



Table 3.1. Leadership Positions in Conservation/Preservation Organizations

Leadership Positions	Number of Organizations with Specified Leadership Position (n=191)	Percent of Organizations with Leadership Position
Treasurer	133	69.6%
Secretary	117	61.3%
Executive Director	116	60.7%
President	115	60.2%
Chair of the Board	101	52.9%
Vice President	101	52.9%
Program Director	97	50.8%
Vice Chair of the Board	88	46.1%
Accountant	80	41.9%
Fundraiser	74	38.7%
Web Designer/Manager	70	36.6%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	67	35.1%
Community Organizer	59	30.9%
Legal Counsel	56	29.3%
Project Coordinator	55	28.8%
Public Relations Manager	54	28.3%
Information Technology Manager	54	28.3%
Business Manager	52	27.2%
Human Resources Director	52	27.2%
Assistant/Associate Director	50	26.2%
Grants Manager	44	23.0%
Lobbyist	30	15.7%
Spokesperson	29	15.2%
Investment Manager	11	5.8%
Diversity Manager	9	4.7%

The table also shows that the leadership position that was least likely to be found in conservation and preservation organizations was that of the diversity manager.

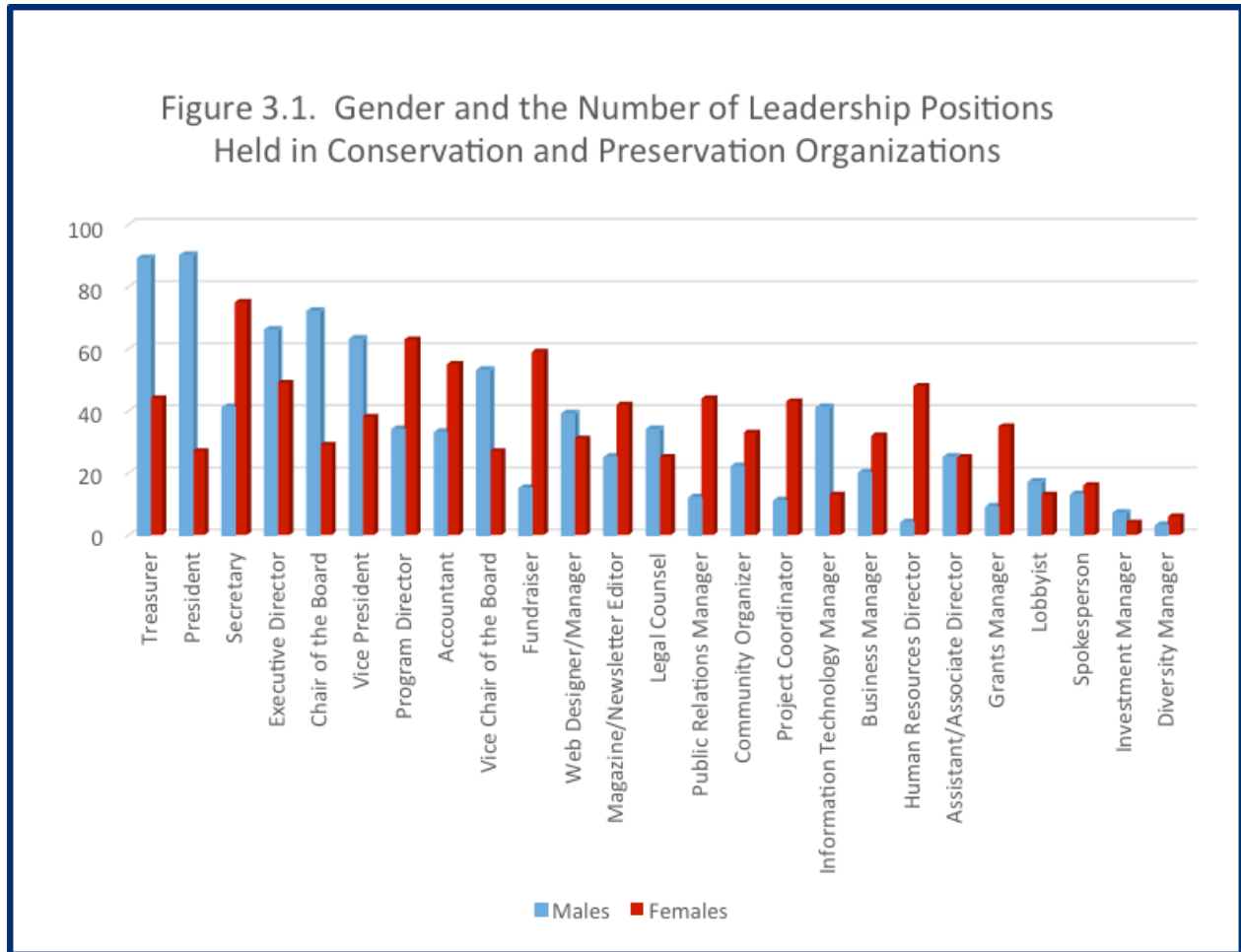
Gender information was available for the diversity managers of nine organizations but as the racial diversity information shows later on, 12 organizations reported having diversity managers. This means that 6.3% of the organizations actually had a diversity manager. This is important as the presence of a diversity manager signals whether organizations are willing to put financial resources into a paid position to facilitate diversity efforts. The diversity manager's position is also an indicator of an organization's willingness to promote and institutionalize diversity practices.

## GENDER DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP

Respondents could indicate whether positions in their organization were occupied by males, females, or both. The study found that several leadership positions were occupied primarily by males while the reverse was true for other positions (see table 3.2 and figure 3.1).

Table 3.2. Gender and Leadership in Conservation/Preservation Organizations

Leadership Positions Examined	Number of Organizations with Leadership Position	Number of Organizations with Males in Leadership Position	Number of Organizations with Females in Leadership Position	Percent of Males in Leadership Position	Percent of Females in Leadership Position
Treasurer	133	89	44	66.9%	33.1%
President	117	90	27	76.9%	23.1%
Secretary	116	41	75	35.3%	64.7%
Executive Director	115	66	49	57.4%	42.6%
Chair of the Board	101	72	29	71.3%	28.7%
Vice President	101	63	38	62.4%	37.6%
Program Director	97	34	63	35.1%	64.9%
Accountant	88	33	55	37.5%	62.5%
Vice Chair of the Board	80	53	27	66.3%	33.8%
Fundraiser	74	15	59	20.3%	79.7%
Web Designer/Manager	70	39	31	55.7%	44.3%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	67	25	42	37.3%	62.7%
Legal Counsel	59	34	25	57.6%	42.4%
Public Relations Manager	56	12	44	21.4%	78.6%
Community Organizer	55	22	33	40.0%	60.0%
Project Coordinator	54	11	43	20.4%	79.6%
Information Technology Manager	54	41	13	75.9%	24.1%
Business Manager	52	20	32	38.5%	61.5%
Human Resources Director	52	4	48	7.7%	92.3%
Assistant/Associate Director	50	25	25	50.0%	50.0%
Grants Manager	44	9	35	20.5%	79.5%
Lobbyist	30	17	13	56.7%	43.3%
Spokesperson	29	13	16	44.8%	55.2%
Investment Manager	11	7	4	63.6%	36.4%
Diversity Manager	9	3	6	33.3%	66.7%



Two-thirds or more of presidents, information technology managers, chairs of the board, treasurers, and vice chairs of the board were male. Women dominated four positions— human resources directors, fundraisers, public relations managers, and grants managers.

- Men still dominated two of the most powerful positions in conservation and preservation organizations: 76.9% of the presidents and 71.3% of the chairs of the board were male.

**ALMOST 77% OF THE PRESIDENTS AND ABOUT 71% OF THE CHAIRS OF THE BOARD OF CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS ARE MALE.**

Still, the study found progress in gender diversity of leadership. When Snow (1992) examined this topic more than two decades ago, he found that males comprised 79% of his sample of 248 organizational leaders.

This 2014 study examined the gender characteristics of a total of 1,714 leadership positions. Males occupied 838 or 48.9% of those, while females occupied 876 or 51.1% of the positions.

- While there is parity in the number of males and females occupying general staff positions in conservation and preservation organizations, there is still significant gender inequity when it comes to occupying the most powerful and high-profile positions. Men are still far more likely to occupy those positions than women.

## RACIAL DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP

Women may have closed some of the gender gap vis-à-vis holding positions of leadership in conservation and preservation organizations but can the same be said for minorities and the racial gap? Not exactly. Table 3.3 shows that Whites held the vast majority of the leadership positions in reporting organizations. Moreover, the discrepancy between the percentage of Whites holding leadership positions and the percentage of minorities holding similar positions is greatest when the top, most powerful positions are considered. There is only one position—diversity manager—that minorities are more likely to hold than Whites. In all other leadership positions, a White person dominated the position by at least two to one.

This study identifies a racial gulf as Whites hold the vast majority of the staff positions studied. The racial backgrounds of people holding leadership positions were identified in 1,723 instances.

- Whites held 1,528 or 88.7% of the leadership positions.
- Ethnic minorities occupied only 195 or 11.3% of the leadership positions.
  - Blacks held 80 or 4.6% of the positions.
  - Hispanics/Latinos held 40 or 2.3% of the positions.
  - Asians occupied 32 or 1.9% of the positions.
  - Native Americans held 16 or 0.9% of the positions.
  - Arabs/Muslims occupied 17 or 1.0% of the positions.
  - Other non-Whites held 10 or 0.6% of the positions.

Table 3.3. Race/Ethnicity and Leadership in Conservation and Preservation Organizations

Leadership Positions Examined	Number of Organizations in which Race/Ethnicity of the Leadership was Identified	Number of Organizations with Whites in this Position	Number of Organizations with Blacks in this Position	Number of Organizations with Hispanics in this Position	Number of Organizations with Asians in this Position	Number of Organizations with Native Americans in this Position	Number of Organizations with Arabs/Muslims in this Position	Number of Organizations with Others in this Position	Percent of Organizations with Whites in this Leadership Position	Percent of Organizations with Minorities in this Leadership Position
Treasurer	127	122	2	2	1	0	0	0	96.1%	3.9%
President	114	113	0	0	0	0	0	1	99.1%	0.9%
Secretary	113	107	4	2	0	0	0	0	94.7%	5.3%
Executive Director	112	108	3	1	0	0	0	0	96.4%	3.6%
Chair of the Board	102	96	3	1	0	1	1	0	94.1%	5.9%
Vice President	98	92	2	3	1	0	0	0	93.9%	6.1%
Program Director	94	86	4	1	2	1	0	0	91.5%	8.5%
Vice Chair of the Board	87	78	3	1	1	2	1	1	89.7%	10.3%
Accountant	81	70	5	0	5	0	1	0	86.4%	13.6%
Fundraiser	76	65	4	1	2	1	2	1	85.5%	14.5%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	72	65	2	1	1	1	1	1	90.3%	9.7%
Web Designer/Manager	70	61	1	1	3	1	2	1	87.1%	12.9%
Community Organizer	64	43	6	5	3	3	3	1	67.2%	32.8%
Legal Counsel	62	52	3	2	2	1	1	1	83.9%	16.1%
Project Coordinator	57	45	4	2	3	1	1	1	78.9%	21.1%
Public Relations Manager	55	53	1	1	0	0	0	0	96.4%	3.6%
Information Technology Manager	53	41	7	4	0	0	1	0	77.4%	22.6%
Business Manager	52	46	3	3	0	0	0	0	88.5%	11.5%
Human Resources Director	51	36	11	3	1	0	0	0	70.6%	29.4%
Asstant/Associate Director	47	45	0	0	2	0	0	0	95.7%	4.3%
Grants Manager	43	37	2	1	3	0	0	0	86.0%	14.0%
Lobbyist	35	25	3	2	1	1	2	1	71.4%	28.6%
Spokesperson	34	26	1	1	1	3	1	1	76.5%	23.5%
Investment Manager	12	11	0	1	0	0	0	0	91.7%	8.3%
Diversity Manager	12	5	6	1	0	0	0	0	41.7%	58.3%

Analyzing both race and gender shows that the closure of the gender gap in leadership positions in conservation and preservation organizations is really a reflection of the ability of White women to secure and hold on to those positions. Women of color are still on the outside looking in when it comes to occupying leadership positions in these organizations. Neither men nor women of color are being incorporated into the leadership ranks of these organizations at rates that will result in parity any time soon, creating a racial gulf.

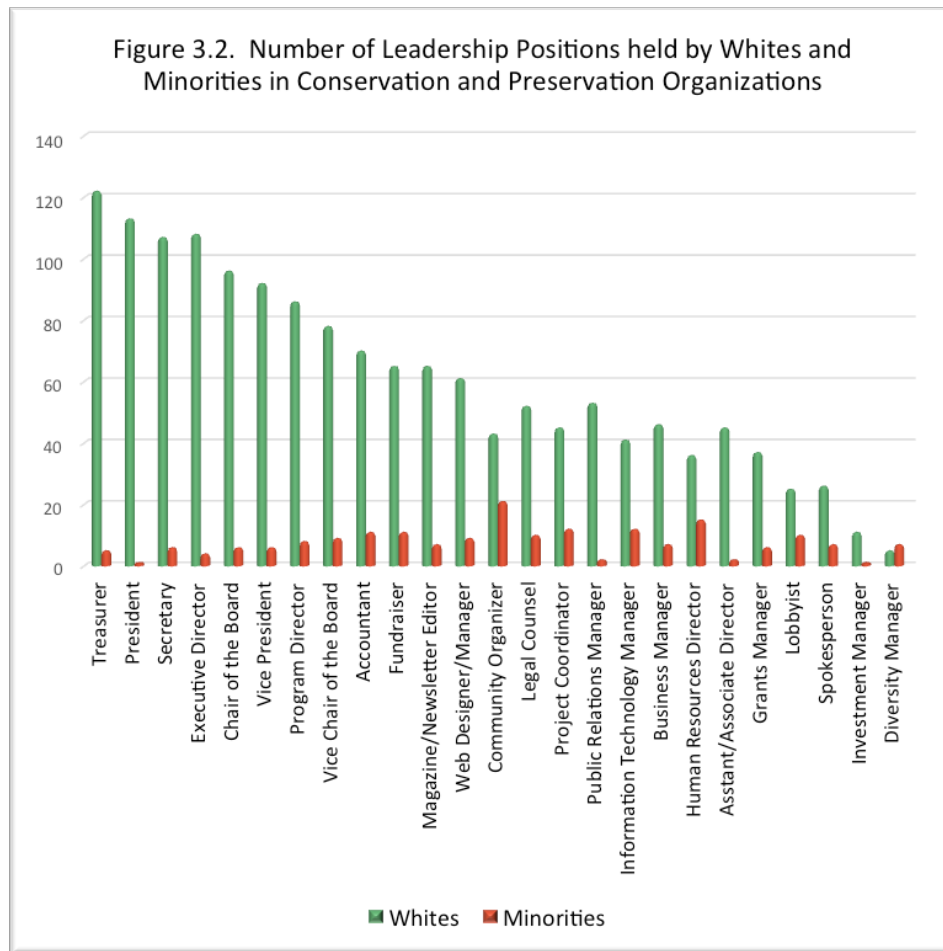


Figure 3.2 shows how these positions were distributed amongst Whites and minorities. Not only are there relatively few minorities in leadership positions, minorities are very unlikely to be the “face” of the conservation and preservation organizations. That is, they were least likely to be the president. As survey respondent #24 explains below, if minorities are hired, they are most likely to be hired into “general/back-off [back office] positions (accounting, administration, etc.)” Minorities are also most likely to be hired into “out-of-office” positions such as community organizer or outreach director.

## Board Members, Staff, and Interns

### GENDER DIVERSITY

Males not only dominate the position of chair of the board in conservation and preservation organizations, they are far more likely to be board members than females. The 191 organizations in the study had 1,781 board members (table 3.4). Of those, 1,119 (62.9%) were males and 666 (or 37.1%) were females (figure 3.3).

**Table 3.4. Male and Female Board and Staff Members**

Organizational Role	Total	Males		Females	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Member of the board	1,781	1,127	62.9	666	37.1
Number of paid staff	3,268	1,454	44.5	1,814	55.5
Staff hired in the last three years	503	204	40.6	299	59.4
Interns hosted in the last three years	738	289	39.2	449	60.8

In contrast to the boards, females occupy more of the 3,268 paid staff positions in conservation and preservation organizations. Females held 1,814 or 55.5% of the staff positions in these organizations while males constituted 44.5% of the workforce (figure 3.4).

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**"YOU ARE WAY OFF BASE. FORGET YOUR RESEARCH."**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #514

Figure 3.3. Gender and Board Membership in Conservation/Preservation Organizations

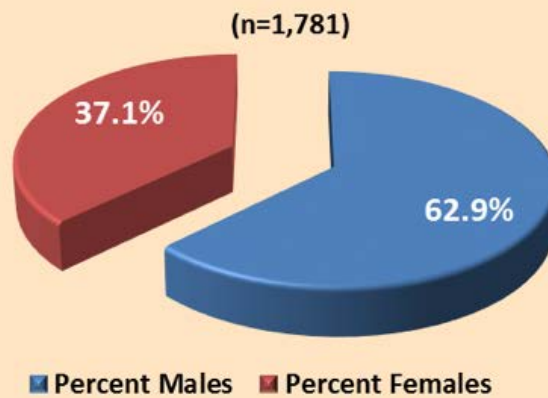
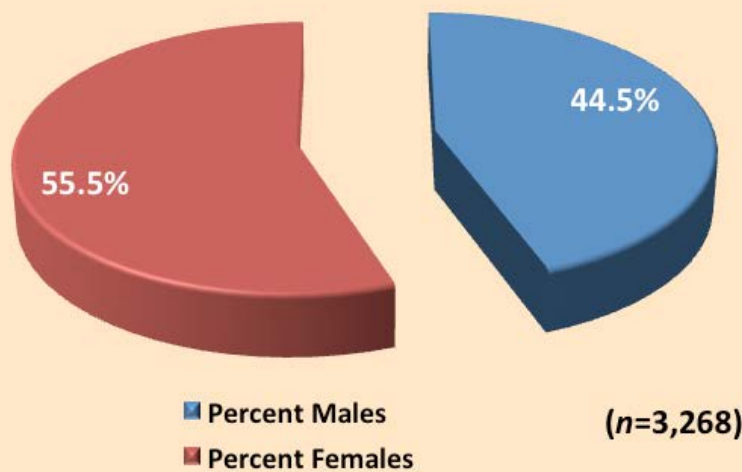


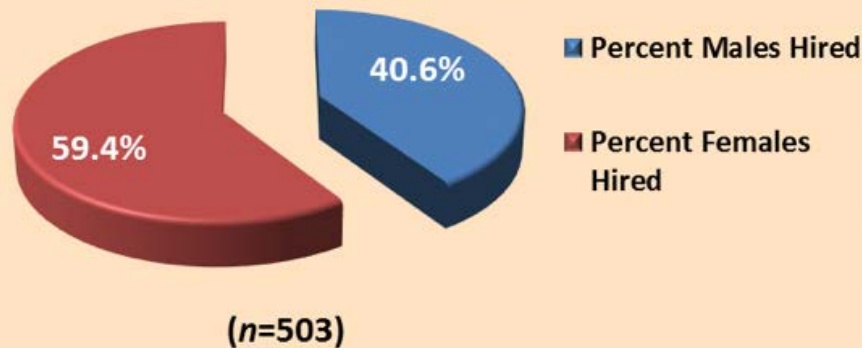
Figure 3.4. Percent of Males and Females on the Staff of Conservation/Preservation Organizations



Respondents were asked how many people had been hired in their organizations over the past three years. Females dominate the new hires. A total of 503 employees were hired, and of that number, 204 or 40.6% were males and 299 or 59.4% were females (figure 3.5).



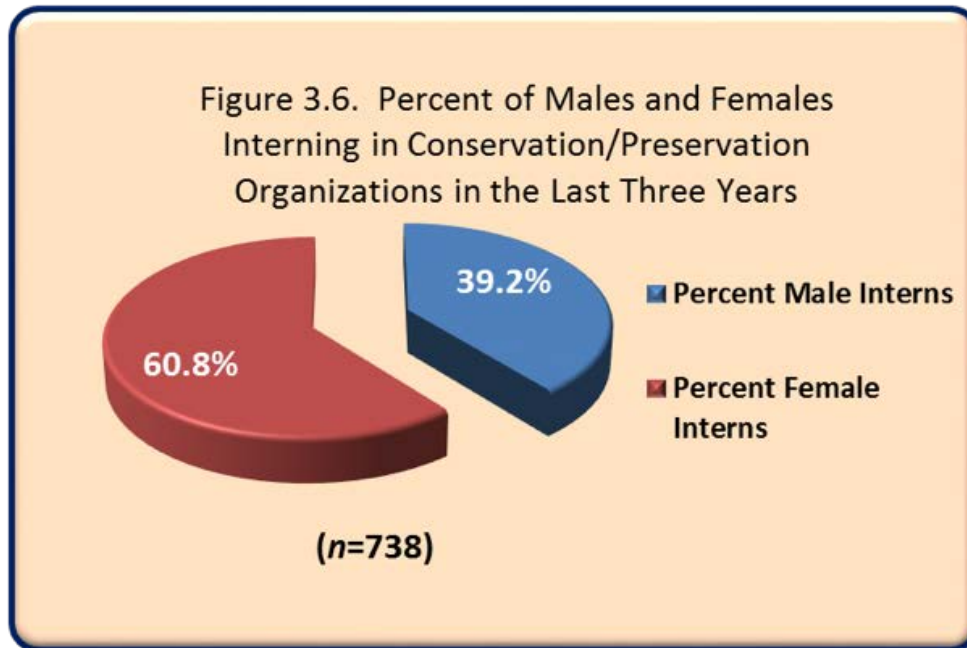
Figure 3.5. Percent of Males and Females Hired in Conservation/Preservation Organizations in the Last Three Years



**“OUR ORGANIZATIONS DOES DO WORK IN URBAN AREAS AND THINKS ABOUT DIVERSITY WHEN RECRUITING FOR POSITIONS. OUR BOARD IS ALSO FOCUSED ON DIVERSITY. EVEN WITH THAT EFFORT IT IS REALLY HARD TO FIND (ETHNIC) MINORITY CANDIDATES FOR OUR CONSERVATION WORK. WE’D GET APPLICANTS FOR OUR MORE GENERAL/BACK-OFF POSITIONS (ACCOUNTING, ADMINISTRATION, ETC.) BUT IT IS HARD TO KEEP THEM AS THEY ARE LESS INTERESTED IN THE MISSION OF THE ORGANIZATION AND OFTEN LEAVE FOR BETTER PAYING POSITIONS. AS FAR AS GENDER DIVERSITY WE ARE DOING WELL AND HAVE MORE FEMALE EMPLOYEES THAN MALES AND MANY ARE IN EXECUTIVE/LEADERSHIP POSITIONS. I THINK OUR PROBLEMS ARE THE SAME FOR MOST ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY/CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS. THANK YOU FOR RESEARCHING THIS AND I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE RESULTS.”**

Quote from Survey Respondent #24

The same goes for interns. Females dominate this important pipeline of potential employees. Of the 738 people who interned in conservation and preservation organizations, the 289 males comprised 39.2% and the 449 females 60.8% of the pool (figure 3.6).



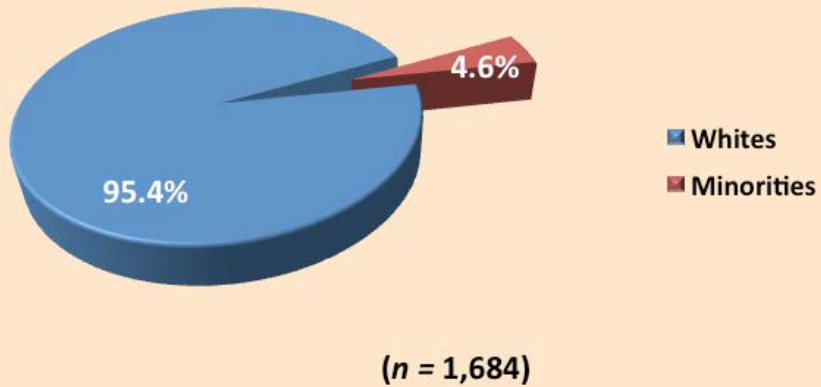
**RACIAL DIVERSITY**

Significant disparities are evident when the racial composition of the boards and staff of conservation and preservation organizations are analyzed. Hence, the racial diversity observed in these is much lower than that of gender diversity. Racial diversity was lowest on the boards of these organizations and highest amongst interns. As table 3.5 shows, the racial characteristics of 1,684 members of the boards of conservation and preservation organizations were obtained. Of that number, 95.4% (1,607) of the board members were White while only 77 or 4.6% were minority (figure 3.7).

**Table 3.5. Race/Ethnicity, Board and Staff in Conservation and Preservation Organizations**

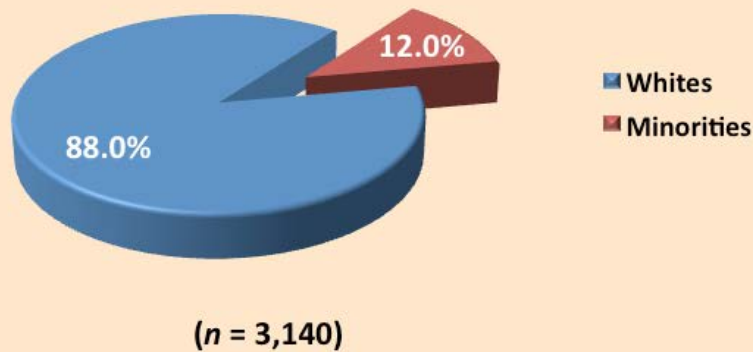
Organizational Role	Total	Number							Percent	
		Whites	Blacks	Hispanics	Asians	Native Americans	Arabs/Muslims	Others	Whites	Minorities
Member of the board	1,684	1,607	32	21	15	0	8	1	95.4%	4.6%
Number of paid staff	3,140	2,763	158	100	95	4	3	17	88.0%	12.0%
Number of staff hired in last three years	493	430	27	19	16	0	1	0	87.2%	12.8%
Number of interns hosted in last three years	559	433	34	39	34	2	1	16	77.5%	22.5%

Figure 3.7. Percent of Whites and Minorities on Boards of Conservation/Preservation Organizations



The racial characteristics of 3,140 paid staff were identified. Analysis showed that 88% (2,763) of the staff was White and 12% or 377 were minority (figure 3.8). To put this in context, Taylor’s (2008) study of mainstream environmental groups found that 14.6% of the staff were minorities. Taylor’s 2008 study also found that the more senior the leadership position, the lower the percentage of ethnic minorities found occupying them.

Figure 3.8. Percent of Whites and Minorities on Paid Staff of Conservation/Preservation Organizations



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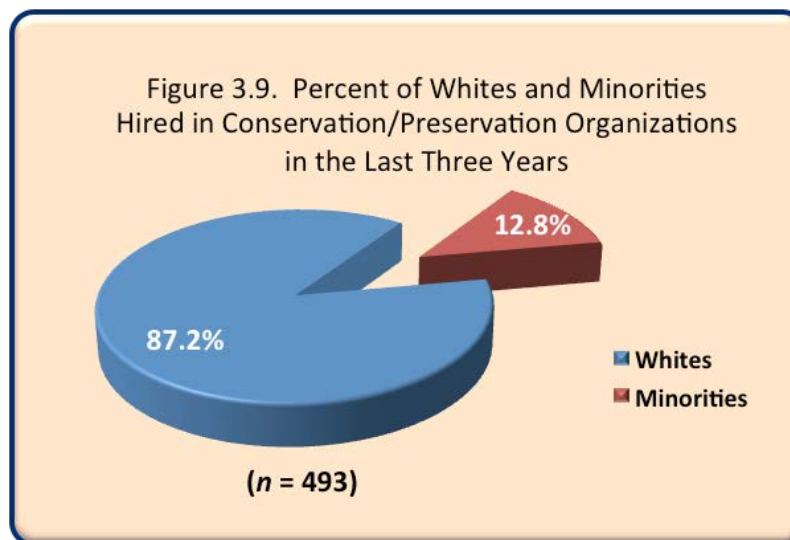
**“DIVERSITY IS NOT REALLY AN ISSUE THAT NEEDS ADDITIONAL PROMOTION. IT IS ENCOURAGED. WOMEN AND MINORITIES ARE THE FASTEST GROWING GROUPS WITHIN THE SPORTING COMMUNITY. THERE ARE GROUPS OUT THERE THAT SUPPORT WOMEN IN THE OUTDOORS ALL OTHER RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES ARE ACROSS THE BOARD IN WHO WE TRY TO GET INVOLVED. ALL ARE WELCOMED AND NEEDED.”**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #442

Even in the economic downturn, conservation and preservation organizations are hiring new staff. Figure 3.9 shows that 12.8% of the 493 people hired in these organizations were minorities.

Of the 599 people offered internships in conservation and preservation organizations, 126 or 22.5% were minorities (figure 3.10). This is an important pipeline indicator as some organizations recruit staff from their interns. Later discussion will examine the extent to which ethnic minority interns are hired into environmental organizations.



## Volunteers and Members

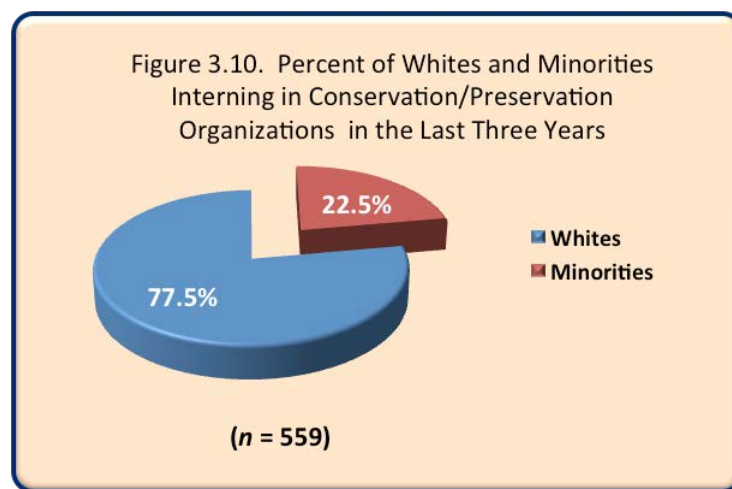
### VOLUNTEERS

Though conservation and preservation organizations track and report on the number of volunteers they have in their organizations, they are less likely to track and report on the gender and racial characteristics of their volunteers.

Respondents were asked to report on the number and demographic characteristics of their regular volunteers over the three years.

- 117 organizations reported a total of 25,561 volunteers.
- 62 organizations reported on the gender of their volunteers; 50.5% of the volunteers are males.

- o There were 1,348 male volunteers.
- o There were 1,327 female volunteers.
- 58 organizations reported that they had a total of 2,524 White volunteers.
- Only 7 organizations reported having minority volunteers—they had a total of 132 such volunteers.



## MEMBERS

Organizations tend to track how many members they have, but relatively few keep records that contain the gender and racial characteristics of the membership. Respondents were asked to say how many members their organization currently had and to describe the gender and racial characteristics of the membership.

- 103 organizations reported that they had a total of 3,200,636 members.
- 13 organizations reported on the gender of their membership; 59.3% of the members were male.
  - o There were 3,587 male members.
  - o There were 2,461 female members.
- Only 7 organizations reported having minority members. They reported 212 minority members.

It will be very challenging to assess diversity of organizations if organizations do not keep demographic data on their volunteers and members.

## THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

How do these data compare to the national context? It is appropriate to compare the percentage of minorities working in conservation and preservation organizations to the percentage of workers in the science and engineering workforce

as workers for these organizations are also often drawn from the sciences.

- Women account for half of the college-educated workforce in 2010 but only 28% of the individuals employed in science and engineering occupations.
  - Women employed in science and engineering occupations are concentrated in different sectors than men. Women account for:
    - 58% of those employed in the social sciences.
    - 48% of those in the life sciences.
    - 13% of those in engineering.
    - 25% of those in computer and mathematical sciences.

The National Science Foundation study indicates that ethnic minorities are employed in science and engineering fields at rates higher than that found in conservation and preservation organizations. The National Science Foundation (2014) report found that:

- About 70% of the science and engineering workforce is White.
- Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans comprise 29% of the science and engineering workforce.

Asians are the ethnic minority group most likely to be employed in science and engineering fields.

- Asians comprise 5% of the U.S. population age 21 and older, but they hold 19% of the science and engineering jobs.
- In contrast, Asians hold only 3% of the staff positions in conservation/preservation organizations.

Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans are underrepresented in science and engineering occupations.

- Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans make up 26% of the U.S. population who are 21 years of age or older. They occupy only 10% of the jobs in the science and engineering sector.
  - Nonetheless, there is still a higher percentage of Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans employed in science and engineering nationwide than in conservation and preservation organizations.
    - Only 8.3% of the staff of conservation and preservation organizations were of these racial or ethnic backgrounds.

## Coalitions, Collaborations, and Networks

Conservation and preservation organizations recognize the value of joining coalitions, collaborating with others, and networking. Over half of the organizations participated in these activities. Respondents were asked to report on the frequency with which their organizations participated in these activities in the past three years.

Frequency of interactions was indicated on a five-point Likert scale with “not at all” being scored as a 1, “seldom” scored as a 2, “sometimes” scored as a 3, “frequently” scored as a 4, and “very frequently” scored as a 5.

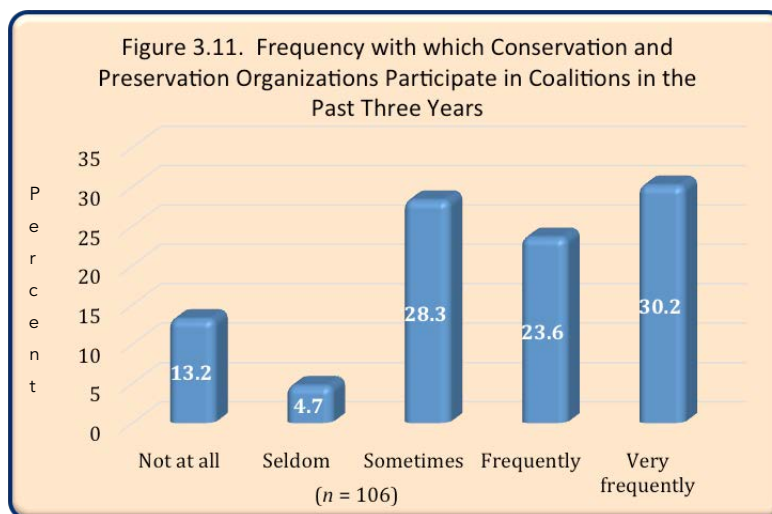
Means were calculated for all the activities. This allows for easier comparison between activities. The higher the mean, the more likely the organization is to engage in a particular activity.

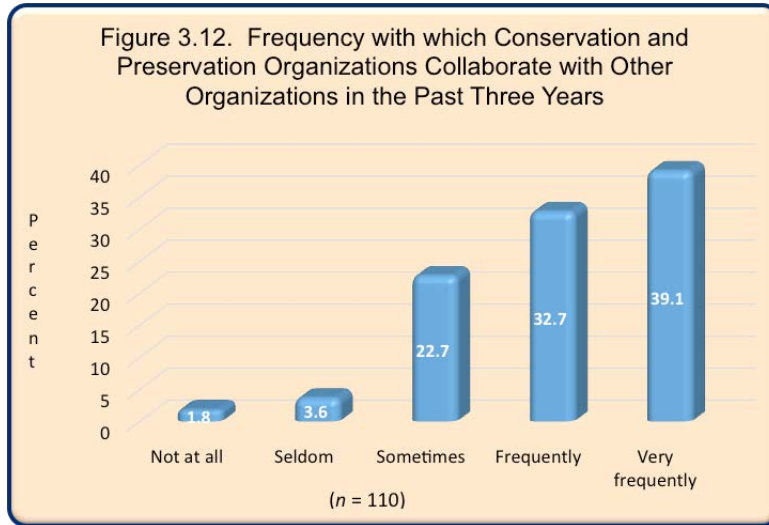
Table 3.6 and figure 3.11 show that 53.8% of the organizations participated in coalitions either frequently or very frequently. The mean score for this activity was 3.53.

**Table 3.6. Interactions Between Conservation/Preservation Organizations and Other Groups**

Interaction with Other Organizations	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Not at all (1)	Seldom (2)	Sometimes (3)	Frequently (4)	Very Frequently (5)	Mean
Participated in Coalitions	106	14	5	30	25	32	3.53
Collaborated with Others	110	2	4	25	36	43	4.04
Participated in Networks	105	6	8	33	29	29	3.64
Collaborated with Low-income Groups	107	43	22	29	10	3	2.14
Collaborated with Ethnic Minority Groups	107	39	26	22	16	4	2.25

Collaboration was even more popular—almost 72% of the organizations reported collaborating with other organizations frequently or very frequently in the last three years. Less than 2% of the organizations reported not collaborating at all in that time period. Collaboration with other organizations had the highest mean score, 4.04 (figure 3.12).





Roughly 55% of the organizations said they were frequently or very frequently part of a network in the past three years. The mean network participation score was 3.64 (figure 3.13).

However, the coalition-building, collaborating, and networking activities of conservation and preservation organizations decline drastically when race and class are taken into consideration. This is important as it could signal the existence of cross-race, cross-class barriers that conservation/preservation organizations have difficulty navigating. The inability to reduce these could make it more difficult to achieve diversity. Coalition-building, collaborating, and networking are activities that can help to lower racial and class barriers and facilitate diversity efforts.

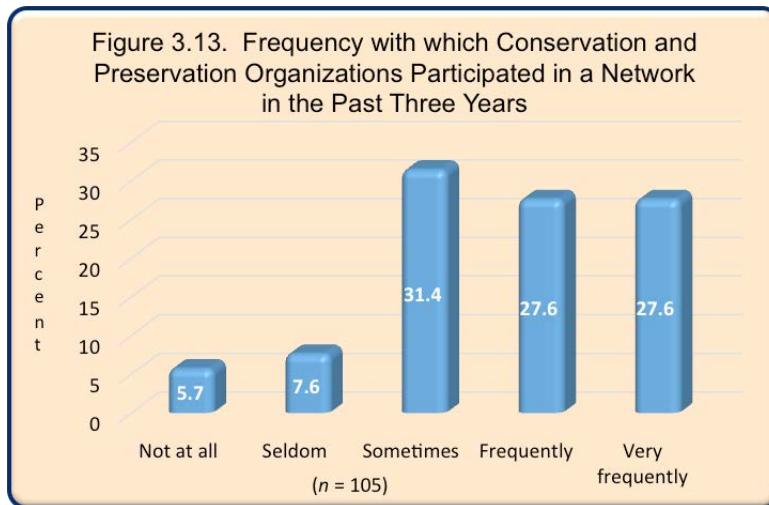
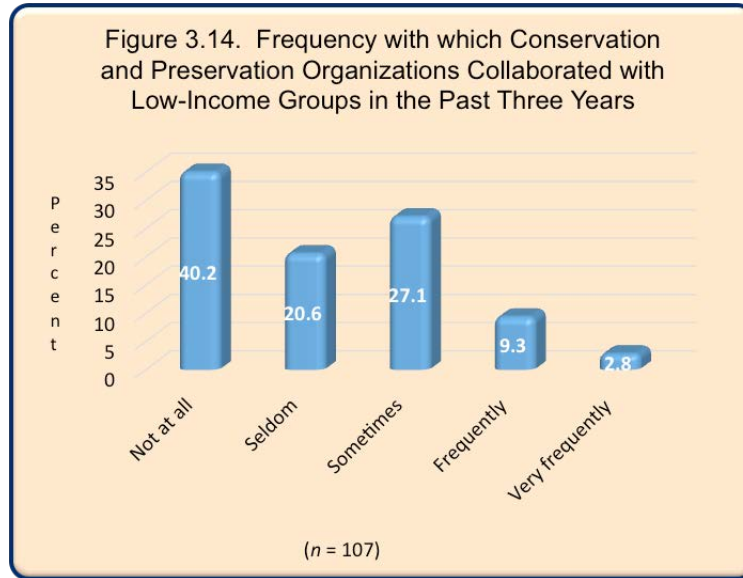


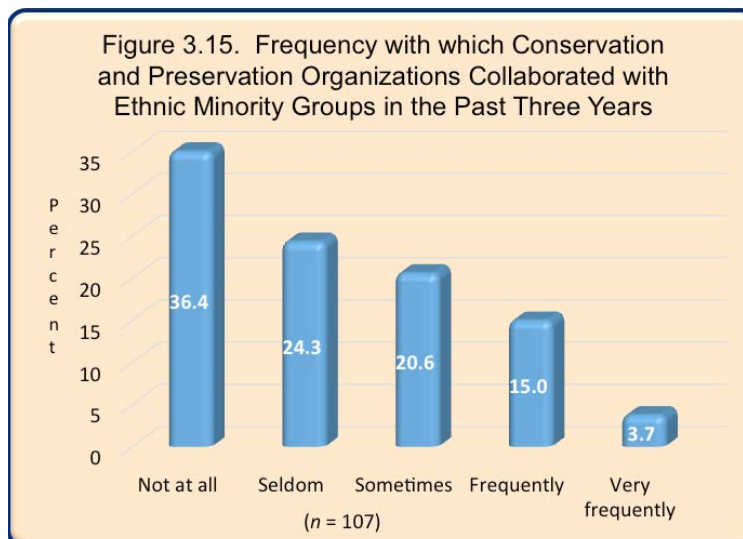
Figure 3.14 shows that 40.2% of the conservation and preservation groups report that they did not collaborate with any low-income group in the previous three years and another 20.6% report they seldom collaborated with such groups. Less than 3% of the organizations reported collaborating with low-income organizations or groups very frequently. The mean collaboration score was 2.14.





Similarly for race, most of the conservation and preservation organizations reported that they collaborated with ethnic minority organizations and groups rarely or not at all in the past three years (figure 3.15). That is, 36.4% of the groups did not collaborate with ethnic minority groups at all while another 24.3% of conservation and preservation organizations seldom collaborated with such groups. Only 3.7% of the conservation and preservation groups collaborated with ethnic minority groups very frequently. The mean score for collaborating with ethnic minority groups or organizations was 2.25.

This indicates that the conservation and preservation organizations find it more difficult to work across class lines than racial lines. Figures 3.14 and 3.15 shows that conservation and preservation organizations were more likely to say they worked with low-income groups not at all or rarely than they did for ethnic minority groups. Conversely, a higher percentage of conservation and preservation organizations indicated that they worked with ethnic minority groups frequently or very frequently than they do with low-income groups.



## Strategies Used to Recruit New Staff

Conservation and preservation organizations use a variety of strategies to recruit new staff (Taylor, 2008; 2011b). Twenty recruitment strategies were listed and respondents were asked to say how frequently their organizations used each of those strategies to find new staff.

Frequency with which recruitment strategies were used was indicated on a five-point Likert scale with “not at all” being scored as a 1, “rarely” scored as a 2, “sometimes” scored as a 3, “frequently” scored as a 4, and “all the time” scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for each strategy. This allows for easier comparison between strategies. The higher the mean, the more likely it was that the organization used a particular strategy. The strategies are listed from the highest to the lowest mean score in the table below.

Table 3.7 shows that the two most commonly used strategies rely on the organization’s internal network to facilitate recruiting. Though some conservation and preservation organizations make their job postings public, some don’t. Organizations can use an Intranet to make information accessible to an internal audience but not the wider public. Reliance on word-of-mouth to find new staff is a form of filtering that often results in the information about jobs reaching primarily those in a narrowly prescribed network, leading to the replication of already homogenous workforces. This is the case because it is unlikely that someone who is not already on the staff or board of such an organization, isn’t a volunteer or member, isn’t a collaborator or network ally, or isn’t a friend or family member of someone affiliated with the organization will hear about jobs advertised this way.

As table 3.7 shows, the seven search strategies with the lowest means were out-of-network methods that required organizations to cast a wide net for applicants. That is, these techniques for finding new staff did not rely on informal ties and networks. Hence, the least common methods used to search for new staff are conducting national searches, recruiting from minority-serving colleges and universities, recruitment at minority environmental professional associations or meetings, hiring those who make cold calls to find out about jobs, use of unemployment or temporary agencies, recruitment at job fairs, or hiring those who walk into the office to find out about jobs. Most of the organizations reporting did not use any of these methods. Yet these are some of the channels through which an environmental employer is most likely to find minority and low-income recruits.

In the case of environmental organizations, filtering and recruitment through informal networks will result in White employees referring or selecting other Whites for jobs. In this way, race inadvertently plays a role in the selection process as the predominantly White workforce replicates itself.

Broad, multi-faceted recruitment activities help make contact with diverse job seekers and facilitate the building of a diverse workforce. But despite professed interest in workforce diversity, many environmental organizations do not cast a broad net when recruiting. An indicator of this comes from students in college and university environmental programs who report low levels of recruitment from environmental organizations. Taylor (2008) studied 1,224 students in college environmental programs and found that only about 32% report being recruited to work in an environmental organization in the five years prior to being surveyed. The percentage of students who report being recruited are as follows:

- 53% of Native Americans
- 35% of Asians
- 33% of Blacks
- 32% of Hispanics, and
- 31% of Whites.

Past studies also found that informal networks played an important role in recruiting new workers. Taylor (2008) also found that 22.6% of mainstream environmental organizations recruited from within environmental networks, and 20.0% used word-of-mouth to find new staff.

Table 3.7. Strategies Used by Conservation and Preservation Organizations to Recruit New Staff

Techniques Used to Recruit New Staff	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Not at All (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Frequently (4)	All the Time (5)	Mean
Post jobs on organization's website	97	32	6	15	11	33	3.07
Rely on word-of-mouth	97	15	15	32	19	16	3.06
Recruit in local community	95	20	12	23	24	16	3.04
Post jobs on other Internet sites	95	31	9	14	14	27	2.97
Recruit from amongst members and volunteers	97	23	16	32	13	13	2.76
Recruit from within environmental networks	97	27	18	20	16	16	2.75
Recruit from local colleges and universities	96	25	14	29	19	9	2.72
Recruit those recommend by current staff	93	24	15	32	15	7	2.63
Use Listservs	95	39	12	20	14	10	2.41
Recruit from other environmental organizations or agencies	94	36	13	29	12	4	2.31
Recruit from amongst interns	94	38	10	33	10	3	2.26
Advertise in own newsletters and magazines	95	45	16	18	7	9	2.15
Advertise in newspapers	93	50	16	11	10	6	1.99
Conduct national searches	93	54	11	14	9	5	1.92
Recruit from minority-serving colleges and universities	93	52	16	16	8	1	1.82
Recruit at minority environmental professional associations and meetings	93	67	9	11	6	0	1.53
Recruit those making cold calls to ask for jobs	93	62	21	8	2	0	1.46
Use unemployment or temporary agencies	93	66	16	7	4	0	1.45
Recruit at job fairs	87	63	15	6	1	2	1.44
Recruit those walking in to ask for jobs	93	66	20	5	1	1	1.40



The results of this study point to both a strategic and spatial mismatch. That is, conservation and preservation organizations are not seeking out potential minority workers in the places they are most likely to be found. Few organizations report recruiting from minority-serving colleges or universities, and they are not routinely recruiting at any of the several minority environmental professional associations that hold annual meetings around the country. Low-income and ethnic minority job seekers who tend to look for jobs in the newspapers, at unemployment or temporary employment agencies, and at job fairs will be unlikely to encounter conservation and preservation organizations at these job-matching venues. Low-income and ethnic minority job seekers not privy to the formal and informal environmental networks, therefore, are unlikely to find out about jobs this way. Yet, many conservation and preservation organizations search for new staff through these channels. These mismatches also hold true for government environmental agencies as well as environmental grantmaking foundations.

An employer or recruiter cannot always expect the talent to come to them. The recruiter has to go to the talent. Stewart Udall understood this in 1961, hence the reason he sent recruiters to find talented ethnic minority students in “places where Interior has never gone before.” By doing this, Udall team ended up recruiting a future director of the National Park Service (McDonnell, 2006: 5).

## Factors Hindering the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which a list of 22 factors hindered their organization’s hiring of ethnic minorities (table 3.8). A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the extent of the hindrance. “Never” was scored as a 1, “rarely” scored as a 2, “sometimes” scored as a 3, “most of the time” scored as a 4, and “always” scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for each factor. This allows for comparison between the factors. The higher the mean, the more likely a particular factor hindered the organization from hiring ethnic minorities.

The three factors most likely to inhibit minority hiring were: organizations having very few positions available— about 69% of the organizations reported that this was hindrance most of the time or always. This factor had a mean of 3.73.

Another very salient factor was lack of minority applicants (mean of 3.64). A third factor —the lack of a diversity manager—was also mentioned as hindering the hiring of minorities.

Table 3.8. The Extent to which Factors Hinder the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities in Conservation and Preservation Organizations

Factors Hindering the Hiring of Minorities	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Frequency					Mean
		Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Most of the Time (4)	Always (5)	
Very few positions are available	86	12	4	11	27	32	3.73
Lack of minority applicants for jobs	83	13	2	11	33	24	3.64
The organization does not have a diversity manager	71	30	1	5	7	28	3.03
There are few minorities in our recruiting networks	77	23	5	25	19	5	2.71
Few minorities live in local community	86	33	11	11	18	12	2.60
Rural location	85	41	5	11	12	16	2.49
Minorities are unaware of job openings	74	31	8	25	9	1	2.20
Lack of role models in the organization	72	40	8	11	5	8	2.07
Lack of mentors in the organization	72	42	6	11	7	6	2.01
The organization has not made any effort to hire or recruit minorities	81	45	11	13	7	5	1.96
We do not know how to recruit minorities	74	46	6	13	8	1	1.81
The organization does not have a diversity policy	71	54	6	2	4	5	1.59
The organization lacks the funds to hire minorities	74	58	3	6	2	5	1.55
Minorities lack the necessary educational qualifications	79	56	12	9	2	0	1.46
Minorities desire higher wages than we can pay	81	59	10	11	1	0	1.44
Minorities do not want to work for organizations like ours	73	56	6	7	4	0	1.44
Minorities do not stay long if they are hired	71	64	5	1	2	1	1.23
Minorities want to focus on racial and other social issues; this is not the focus of our organization	73	56	8	5	4	0	1.23
The organization prefers to hire from certain universities	77	66	6	4	1	0	1.22
Minorities do not have the skills we are looking for	74	65	4	4	1	0	1.20
Minorities may not be well received in the organization	81	76	4	1	0	0	1.07
The organization does not hire minorities	75	75	0	0	0	0	1.00



The factors that were least likely to be mentioned as interfering with the hiring of minorities were: the perception that minorities do not have the skills being sought, minorities would not be well received in the organization, and the organization did not hire minorities. Few organizations indicated these factors were barriers to hiring ethnic minorities. There seems to be a reduction in the salience of these perceptions of ethnic minorities.

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**“DIVERSITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT. AS WE DO NOT HAVE A LOT OF STAFF POSITIONS, THE TOOL WE FEEL BEST EQUIPPED TO USE IS TO TRY TO HAVE DIVERSITY REPRESENTED IN THE LEADERS OF OUR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING. WE ARE VERY INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING AN INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND TRAINING A DIVERSE NEXT GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS. LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR NEXT STEPS!”**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #505

## Diversity Initiatives Currently Being Undertaken

Respondents were also asked to indicate which diversity initiatives, if any, their organization had undertaken in the past five years. Respondents were provided with 22 diversity options; they reported whether or not their organizations had participated in these initiatives. The initiatives included options that were no-cost, low-cost, and ones requiring significant investment of funds.

Table 3.9 shows that cost isn't always an overriding factor when it comes to which diversity initiatives organizations embrace. As the table shows the diversity initiative that was undertaken by the highest percentage of organizations was a high-cost one that fostered gender diversity. That is, 69.9% of the reporting organizations indicated that they had promoted women already working in the organization to top leadership positions. In contrast, only 29% of organizations promoted minorities already working in those institutions to top leadership positions. In other words, conservation and preservation organizations were more than twice as likely to use this high-cost option to promote women to leadership positions as they were to use it to promote ethnic minorities.

Table 3.9. Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in Conservation and Preservation Organizations in the Past Five Years

Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in the Past Five Years	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Number	Yes Percentage	Potential Cost of Initiative
Promote women already working in the organization to top leadership positions	73	51	69.9	Significant cost
Take steps to broaden applicant pool for jobs	72	44	61.1	No or low cost
Organize outreach activities to diverse constituents	74	43	58.1	Low cost
Develop partnerships with minority institutions	74	31	41.9	Low cost
Consult with minority environmental professionals	73	28	38.4	Low to moderate cost
Advertise in media (magazines, newspapers, television, websites) serving minority audiences	73	26	35.6	No or low cost
Have targeted searches to meet diversity goals	74	26	35.1	Low cost
Develop internship program to provide work experience for minorities	73	25	34.2	Significant cost
Hire ethnic minority employees	77	25	32.5	Significant cost
Recruit from minority institutions	72	22	30.6	No or low cost
Promote minorities already working in the organization to top leadership positions	69	20	29.0	Significant cost
Hold diversity training and staff meetings to discuss diversity	73	20	27.4	No or low cost
Develop training/leadership programs for women	73	20	27.4	No to moderate cost
Hire interns participating in diversity programs	71	19	26.8	Significant cost
Develop mentoring programs	72	19	26.4	No or low cost
Develop training/leadership programs for minorities	72	13	18.1	No to moderate cost
Develop training/leadership programs for low income residents	72	11	15.3	No to moderate cost
Hire consultants or use job-placement companies to find minority workers	73	11	15.1	Low to moderate cost
Provide funds to facilitate diversity efforts	74	11	14.9	Low to significant cost
Create a diversity committee	74	7	9.5	No or low cost
Promote diversity manager to any other positions of leadership in the organization	65	3	4.6	Moderate to significant cost
Have a diversity manager	71	2	2.8	Significant cost



Social class continues to be more challenging for conservation and preservation organizations to navigate than gender or race. This is evident in their programming. The table shows that while 27.4% of the reporting organizations developed training or leadership programs targeted towards women, 18.1% developed similar programs targeted towards ethnic minorities, and only 15.3% developed such programs for low-income residents.

One of the no-cost/low-cost options was embraced by a majority of the reporting organizations. Most of them, 61.1%, reported taking steps to broaden the applicant pools for jobs. More than half of the organizations (58.1%) also reported organizing outreach activities to diverse constituents.

However, less than half of the organizations undertook other no-cost or low-cost initiatives.

- 41.9% advertised in media serving minority audiences.
- 35.6% developed partnerships with minority institutions.
- 35.1% had targeted searches to meet diversity goals.
- 30.6% recruited from minority institutions.
- 27.4% held diversity training or staff meetings where diversity issues are discussed.
- 26.4% developed a mentoring program.
- 9.5% created a diversity committee.

The initiatives that are least likely to be undertaken by the reporting organization are related to the diversity manager's position. Only 2.8% of the organizations had a diversity manager in the past five years. Only 4.8% reported promoting the diversity manager to other positions of leadership in the organization. These options could involve significant outlays of funds.

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**"IT'S NOT ABOUT DIVERSITY, IT IS ABOUT WILLINGNESS TO HELP."**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #321:





## Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future

Respondents were provided with a list of 13 diversity initiatives and were asked to indicate which ones they thought should be undertaken in their region in the future. They were also asked to indicate how likely their organization was to participate in the initiatives. Table 3.10 lists percentage of organizations that would like to see particular diversity initiatives developed in their region. The table also lists the percentage of organizations that were likely or very likely to support in the initiatives if they were developed.

The table indicates that 50% or more of the reporting organizations would like to see all but two of the initiatives developed in their region. Enthusiasm was greatest for the idea of developing a pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, or boards of organizations.

- 73.6% of the organizations said such an initiative should be developed.
- 50% of the organizations indicated they would be likely or very likely to participate in such an initiative.

Almost 70% of the organizations would like to see a training program for low-income and minority residents interested in working in or participating in organizational activities. This initiative would be supported by just over a third of the organizations—36.7% indicated they would be likely or very likely to support such an initiative.

There was also strong support for the idea of creating a web portal to identify ethnic minorities for jobs, consultancies, speakers, expert testimonies, board positions, etc. Roughly two-thirds of the organizations would like to see an initiative like this developed and more than half (54.2%) indicated they would be likely or very likely to support the initiative.

Twenty organizations held diversity training for their staff in the last five years, however, 44.6% of the organizations indicated that such a diversity initiative should be undertaken in the future. A smaller percentage of the organizations (42.3%) indicated that a diversity conference should be held in their region. If such a conference were organized, only 34% of the organizations indicated they would be likely or very likely to support it.

Table 3.10. Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future in the Region

Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future	Number of Orgs. Reporting			Number of Orgs. Reporting		
	Number	Yes	Percentage	Number	Likely/Very Likely to Support it	Percentage
Develop a pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, or boards of organizations like yours	53	39	73.6	50	25	50.0
Develop training program for low-income and ethnic minority residents interested in working in or participating in activities in organizations like yours	53	36	67.9	49	18	36.7
Create a web portal for identifying ethnic minority environmental professionals for jobs, consultancies, speakers, expert testimonies, board positions, etc.	49	33	67.3	48	26	54.2
Create a regional diversity working group to help facilitate diversity initiatives	50	32	64.0	47	17	36.2
Use social media to keep track of diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	48	29	60.4	45	21	46.7
Include more issues of interest to low-income communities and ethnic minorities on the agenda of organizations like yours	48	29	60.4	44	18	40.9
Use social media to participate remotely in diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	47	27	57.4	44	18	40.9
Organize job fairs in ethnic minority and low-income communities	49	28	57.1	45	11	24.4
Expand the agenda of organizations like yours to include more issues affecting ethnic minority and low-income communities	51	28	54.9	45	17	37.8
Organize workshops on diversity	53	28	52.8	49	21	42.8
Create Listservs and email groups for the purpose of focusing on diversity issues and activities	48	24	50.0	44	12	27.3
Hold diversity training for staff in organizations like yours	56	25	44.6	47	17	36.2
Organize a diversity conference	52	22	42.3	47	16	34.0



Conservation and preservation organizations indicate that they would like to see a pipeline of minority talent in the future. However, data presented earlier in this chapter indicates that these organizations are not using current pipelines effectively.

The next chapter examines diversity in government environmental entities. It highlights similarities and differences between diversity in the nonprofit and government sectors.

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**"THE LAND TRUST MOVEMENT...HAS PUSHED HARD OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS TO INCREASE URBAN INITIATIVES. THIS HAS HELPED CONNECT LOW-INCOME/MINORITY GROUPS TO THE OUTDOORS AND LAND CONSERVATION (WHICH INCREASES PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR LAND CONSERVATION AND INCREASES FUNDRAISING ABILITY), BUT IN A DIRECT SENSE, IT IS ALSO TAKING AWAY LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN FAVOR OF SMALL 'POCKET' CONSERVATION IN URBAN SETTINGS.**

**THE URBAN WORK IS IMPORTANT, BUT IT MAY BE SACRIFICING THE MISSION OF SOME ORGANIZATIONS OF PROTECTING NATURAL RESOURCES AND ECOSYSTEMS, IN FAVOR OF SMALL 'FEEL-GOOD' PROJECTS THAT HAVE HIGH VISIBILITY AND IMPACT TO A LOCAL COMMUNITY, BUT LACK MEANINGFUL NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION FOR THE LARGER REGION.**

**THE QUESTION IS, WHEN SHOULD AN ORGANIZATION'S MISSION BE CHANGED TO INCREASE DIVERSITY, AND IS THAT THE BEST WAY TO DO SO, OR SHOULD WE LOOK AT WHY MINORITIES ARE NOT LANDOWNERS/FARMERS AND LOOK TO CHANGE THAT THROUGH SOME LARGER SOCIETAL CHANGE.**

**WE WOULD LOVE MORE DIVERSITY IN OUR ORGANIZATION'S BOARD AND MEMBERSHIP, BUT THE POTENTIAL JUST DOESN'T EXIST WITH OUR MISSION AND OUR SERVICE AREA."**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #379



**Chapter 4.**  
**Diversity in**  
**Government**  
**Environmental**  
**Agencies**

## Leadership Positions in Government Environmental Agencies

The study examined institutional diversity in 74 federal, state, and local government environmental agencies. The most common leadership positions were that of the executive director, public relations manager, associate director, human resources director, and information technology manager. The diversity manager's position is more common in government environmental agencies than in conservation and preservation organizations. Fifteen agencies reported having diversity managers, constituting 20.3% of the sample (table 4.1 and figure 4.1).

### GENDER DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP

Males dominated several leadership positions. Seventy percent or more of the investment managers, chairs of the board, executive directors, information technology managers, program directors, associate directors, and presidents were male. Four of these seven positions (chair of the board, executive director, associate director, and president) are among the most visible and powerful decision-making positions in the organizations.

Percentage male in leadership positions:

- 100% of the investment managers
- 86.7% chairs of the board
- 76.1% executive directors
- 74.3% information technology managers
- 71.9% program directors
- 71.1% associate directors
- 70% of the presidents

A higher percentage of females than males were found in some positions. More than 70% of community organizers, secretaries, human resources directors, fundraisers, and accountants were female. None of these are face-of-the-organization positions.

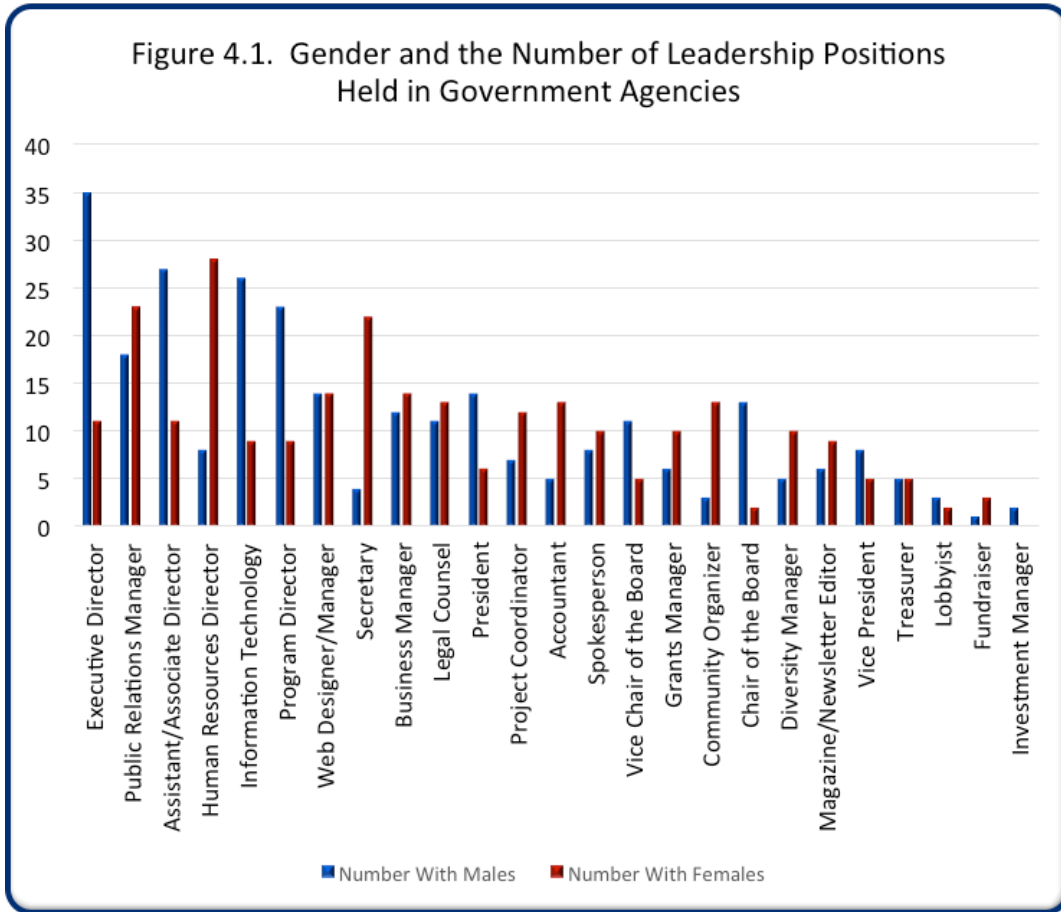
Percentage female in leadership positions:

- 81.3% community organizers
- 84.6% secretaries
- 77.8% human resources directors
- 75% fundraisers
- 72.2% accountants

The executive director's position is the most common in these government entities. Males in government agencies occupy a much higher percentage of this position than they do in conservation/preservation organizations (76.1% versus 57.4%). When there is a president, the position is most likely to be occupied by a male in both types of institutions, but the percentage of males occupying this position is higher in conservation/preservation organizations than in government agencies (76.9% versus 70.0%).

Table 4.1. Gender and Leadership in Government Agencies

Leadership Positions	Number of Organizations with Specified Leadership Position ( <i>n</i> =74)	Number With Males in Specified Leadership Position		Number With Females in Specified Leadership Position	
		Position	Percent	Leadership	Percent
Executive Director	46	35	76.1%	11	23.9%
Public Relations Manager	41	18	43.9%	23	56.1%
Assistant/Associate Director	38	27	71.1%	11	28.9%
Human Resources Director	36	8	22.2%	28	77.8%
Information Technology Manager	35	26	74.3%	9	25.7%
Program Director	32	23	71.9%	9	28.1%
Web Designer/Manager	28	14	50.0%	14	50.0%
Secretary	26	4	15.4%	22	84.6%
Business Manager	26	12	46.2%	14	53.8%
Legal Counsel	24	11	45.8%	13	54.2%
President	20	14	70.0%	6	30.0%
Project Coordinator	19	7	36.8%	12	63.2%
Accountant	18	5	27.8%	13	72.2%
Spokesperson	18	8	44.4%	10	55.6%
Vice Chair of the Board	16	11	68.8%	5	31.3%
Grants Manager	16	6	37.5%	10	62.5%
Community Organizer	16	3	18.8%	13	81.3%
Chair of the Board	15	13	86.7%	2	13.3%
Diversity Manager	15	5	33.3%	10	66.7%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	15	6	40.0%	9	60.0%
Vice President	13	8	61.5%	5	38.5%
Treasurer	10	5	50.0%	5	50.0%
Lobbyist	5	3	60.0%	2	40.0%
Fundraiser	4	1	25.0%	3	75.0%
Investment Manager	2	2	100.0%	0	0.0%



Though more government agencies have diversity managers than conservation/ preservation organizations, the percentage of males occupying the diversity manager’s post is 33.3% in both types of institutions.

**RACIAL DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP**

As was the case with the conservation and preservation organizations, environmental agencies had greater gender diversity than racial diversity. All of the vice chairs of the board, lobbyists, and investment managers in government environmental agencies were White. So were more than 90% of the program directors, web designers/managers, legal counsels, business managers, and vice presidents (table 4.2 and figure 4.2).

Table 4.2. Race and Leadership in Government Agencies

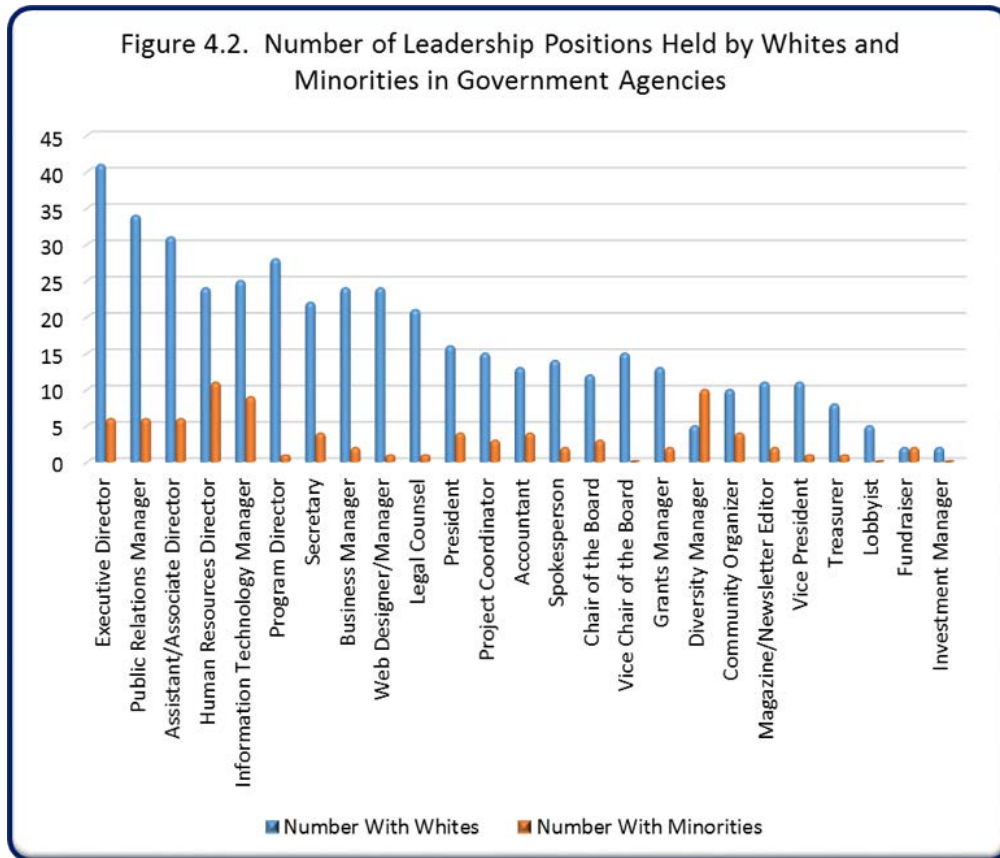
Leadership Positions	Number of Organizations with Specified Leadership Position ( <i>n</i> =74)	Number With Whites in Specified Leadership Position		Number With Minorities in Specified Leadership Position	
		Position	Percent	Position	Percent
Executive Director	47	41	87.2%	6	12.8%
Public Relations Manager	40	34	85.0%	6	15.0%
Assistant/Associate Director	37	31	83.8%	6	16.2%
Human Resources Director	35	24	68.6%	11	31.4%
Information Technology Manager	34	25	73.5%	9	26.5%
Program Director	29	28	96.6%	1	3.4%
Secretary	26	22	84.6%	4	15.4%
Business Manager	26	24	92.3%	2	7.7%
Web Designer/Manager	25	24	96.0%	1	4.0%
Legal Counsel	22	21	95.5%	1	4.5%
President	21	17	81.0%	4	19.0%
Project Coordinator	18	15	83.3%	3	16.7%
Accountant	17	13	76.5%	4	23.5%
Spokesperson	16	14	87.5%	2	12.5%
Chair of the Board	15	12	80.0%	3	20.0%
Vice Chair of the Board	15	15	100.0%	0	0.0%
Grants Manager	15	13	86.7%	2	13.3%
Diversity Manager	15	5	33.3%	10	66.7%
Community Organizer	14	10	71.4%	4	28.6%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	13	11	84.6%	2	15.4%
Vice President	12	11	91.7%	1	8.3%
Treasurer	9	8	88.9%	1	11.1%
Lobbyist	5	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Fundraiser	4	2	50.0%	2	50.0%
Investment Manager	2	2	100.0%	0	0.0%

However, ethnic minorities occupied more than a quarter of the following positions:

- 66.7% of the diversity managers
- 50% of the fundraisers
- 31.4% of the human resources directors
- 28.6% of the community organizers
- 26.5% of the information technology managers

Ethnic minorities are rarely the face of the agency: they comprised only 20% of the chairs of the board, 19% of the presidents, 12.8% of the executive directors, 8.3% of the vice presidents, and none of the vice chairs of the board.





**“THERE ARE MINORITIES WORKING ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS. THEY MAY NOT BE PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTED IN “TRADITIONAL” ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS. RATHER THAN TRYING TO GET MINORITIES INTO EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, I THINK IT WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE FOR MAJORITIES TO JOIN THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS THAT ALREADY HAVE LARGE PERCENTAGES OF MINORITIES. IN OTHER WORDS RATHER THAN HAVING THE “THEM” JOIN “US” WE SHOULD BE JOINING “THEM.”**

Quote from Survey Respondent #536

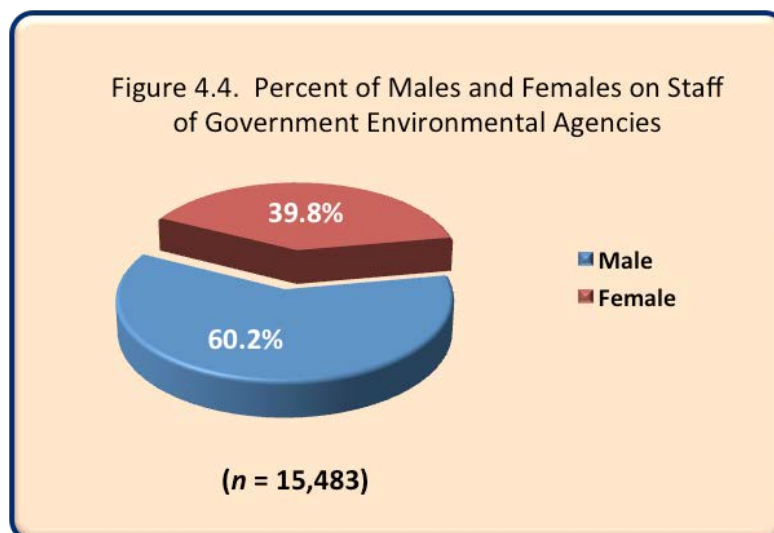
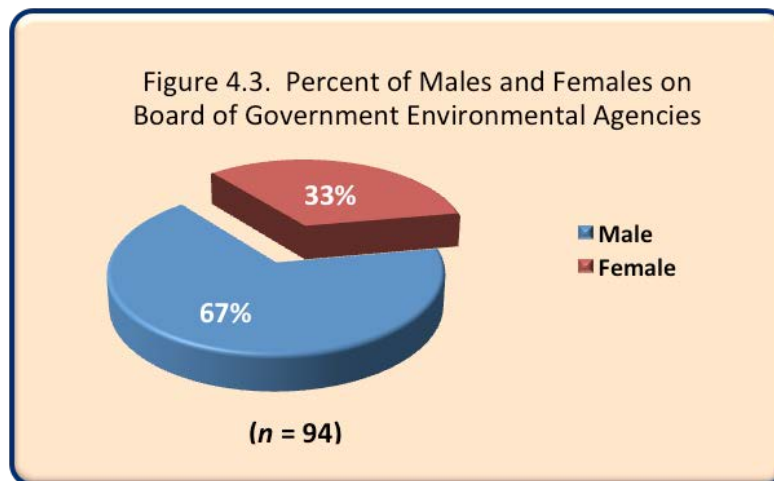
## Board Members, Staff, and Interns

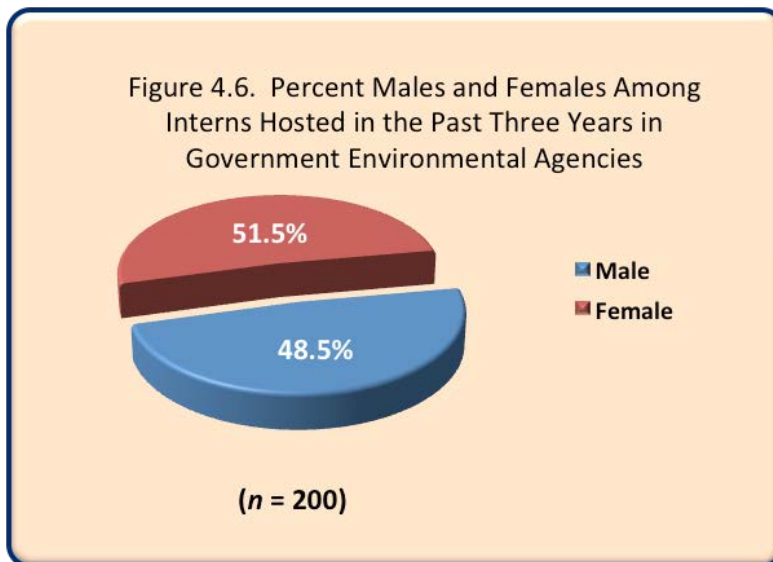
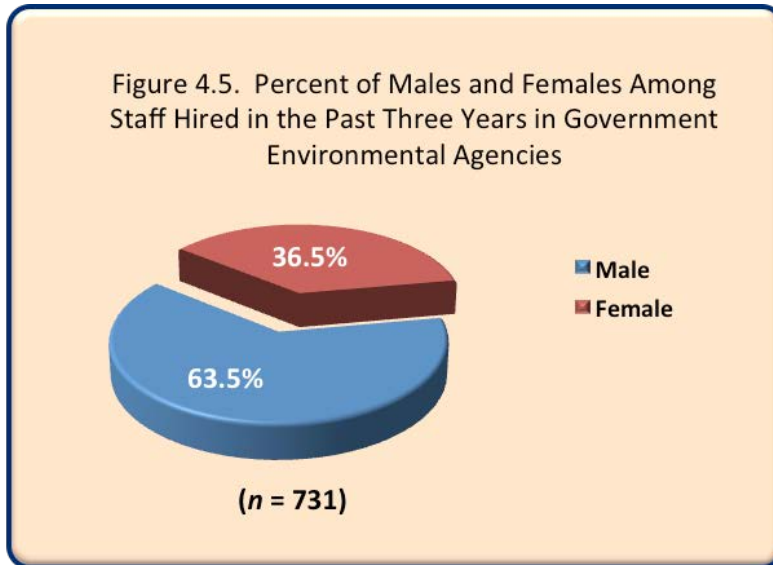
### GENDER DIVERSITY

Males dominated the board positions of government environmental agencies even to a greater extent than they did on the boards of conservation and preservation organizations (table 4.3). That is, 67% of the 94 board positions in government environmental agencies were held by males (figure 4.3). Males also held 60.2% of the 15,483 paid staff positions in government environmental agencies (figure 4.4). In conservation/preservation organizations, they held only 44.5% of the staff positions. Males accounted for 63.5% of the 731 staff hired in the government environmental agencies over the last three years (figure 4.5). In contrast, they accounted for only 40.6% of such positions in conservation and preservation organizations. Regarding internships held in the past three years, males were slightly less likely than females to have interned in government environmental agencies (48.5% versus 51.5%) (Figure 4.6). The vast majority of the people interning in conservation and preservation organizations were females.

Table 4.3. Male and Female Board and Staff Members

Organizational Role	Total	Males		Females	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Member of the board	94	63	67.0	31	33.0
Number of paid staff	15,483	9,319	60.2	6,164	39.8
Staff hired in the last three years	731	464	63.5	267	36.5
Interns hosted in the last three years	200	97	48.5	103	51.5





**“THE \_\_\_\_\_ HAS A DIVERSITY PROGRAM AND MANDATORY TRAINING. WE WORK TO SEEK MORE MINORITIES HIRED IN OUR ORGANIZATION. IRRESPECTIVE OF DIVERSITY, THERE SEEMS TO BE A DECLINING INTEREST IN DOING OUTDOOR FIELDWORK. PERMANENT JOBS ARE BY DEFAULT ADVERTISED NATIONALLY THROUGH USAJOBS WEBSITE. LOCAL AND NATIONAL LISTSERVS ARE BEST FOR HIRING SEASONAL AND CONTRACTUAL EMPLOYEES.”**

Quote from Survey Respondent #196

## RACIAL DIVERSITY

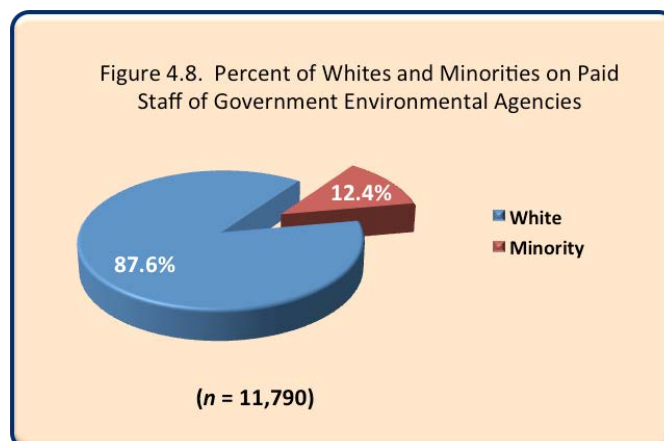
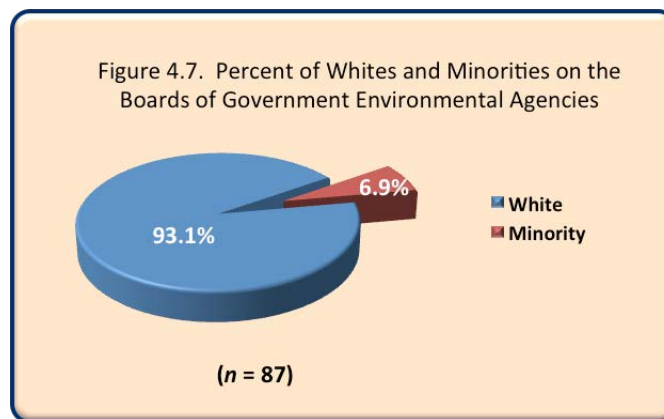
As was the case with conservation and preservation organizations, racial diversity lagged far behind gender diversity in government environmental agencies. The six ethnic minorities on the boards of government environmental agencies occupied only 6.9% of the board positions (table 4.4 and figure 4.7).

- Nonetheless, that percentage was somewhat higher than in conservation and preservation organizations where ethnic minorities comprised a mere 4.6% of the board positions.

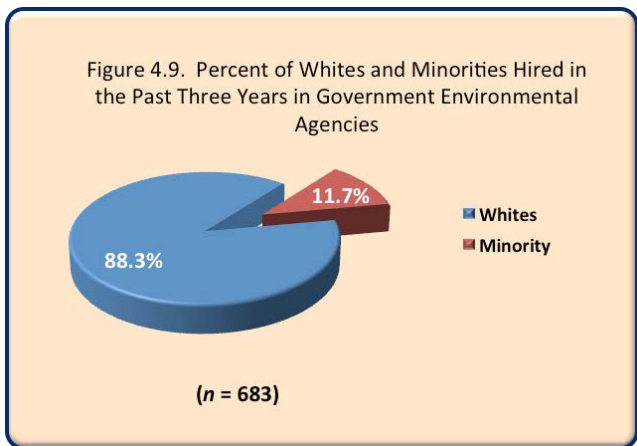
The percentage of ethnic minorities on the paid staff of government environmental agencies was 12.4% or 1,467 employees. This was only slightly higher than the 12% on the staff of conservation and preservation organizations (figure 4.8).

Table 4.4. White and Ethnic Minority Board and Staff Members

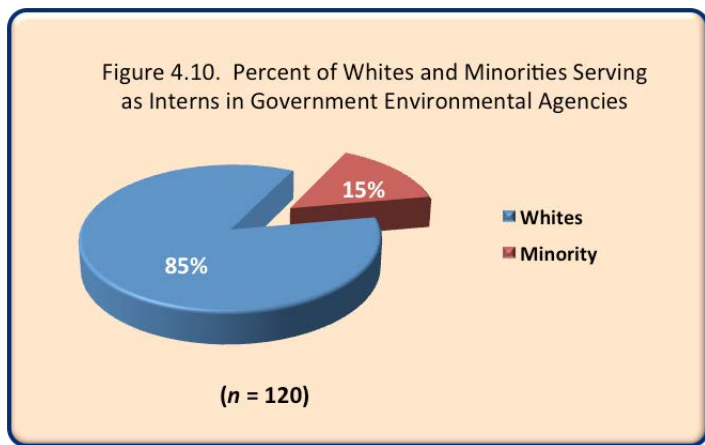
Organizational Role	Total	Whites		Minorities	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Member of the board	87	81	93.1	6	6.9
Number of paid staff	11,790	10,323	87.6	1,467	12.4
Staff hired in the last three years	683	603	88.3	80	11.7
Interns hosted in the last three years	120	102	85.0	18	15.0



Only 80 or 11.7% of the 683 employees hired in the last three years in government environmental agencies were ethnic minorities (figure 4.9). This percentage is lower than the 12.8% of ethnic minorities found among hires made in the last three years in conservation and preservation organizations.



Over the past three years, government environmental agencies were much less likely to host ethnic minority interns than conservation/preservation organizations. Of the 120 interns hosted in government environmental agencies, 18 or 15% were ethnic minorities (figure 4.10). In comparison, conservation and preservation organizations hosted 126 ethnic minority interns; this amounted to 22.5% of the total interns hosted by these organizations.



**“I’M SURE MY AGENCY IS RECRUITING FROM MINORITY SCHOOL[S] AND IS TRYING TO BE INCLUSIVE. [T]HEY ARE LIGHT YEARS BEHIND THE NPS IN SEVERAL WAYS: STAFF RARELY IF EVER GET IN-PERSON DIVERSITY EXPERIENCE/EXPOSURE/LESSONS, ETC. MANAGEMENT IS DIRECTED TO HAVE US TAKE WEB-BASED CLASSES ON DIVERSITY/DISCRIMINATION/ETC. NATIONALLY, THEY TRY TO BE INCLUSIVE, BUT NO ONE HERE HAS HEARD OF THE MOSAIC CONF, EEO EMPHASIS MONTHS, ETC. HAVE YOU? ... SEEMS TO WANT TO STAY AWAY F[ROM] EMBRACING DIVERSITY. MY BEING AMERICAN INDIAN DOESN’T INSPIRE THEM TO ASK FOR MORE ENLIGHTENMENT DURING AMERICAN INDIAN SPECIAL EMPHASIS MONTH. UNTIL WE GET MORE LIKE THE NPS, WE’LL NEVER GET MUCH MORE DIVERSITY.”**

Quote from Survey Respondent #8

## Coalitions, Collaborations, and Networks

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which government environmental agencies interacted with other organizations or groups. They also indicated whether their agency was involved in any coalitions, collaborations, and networks. Frequency of interaction was indicated on a five-point Likert scale with “not at all” being scored as a 1, “seldom” scored as a 2, “sometimes” scored as a 3, “frequently” scored as a 4, and “very frequently” scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for all the activities. This allows for easier comparison between activities as well as between other types of institutions. The higher the mean, the more likely the agency is to engage in a particular activity.

The pattern of collaboration between government environmental agencies mirrors that observed in conservation and preservation organizations. Table 4.5 shows that government environmental agencies were most likely to collaborate with other organizations (mean 4.03). See figures 4.11 and 4.12 also.

Table 4.5. Interactions Between Government Environmental Agencies and Other Groups

Interaction with Other Organizations	Number of	Not at all	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Very Frequently	Mean
Participated in Coalitions	30	9	0	6	10	5	3.07
Collaborated with Others	34	2	1	6	10	15	4.03
Participated in Networks	31	4	2	6	9	10	3.61
Collaborated with Low-income Groups	31	13	5	8	3	2	2.23
Collaborated with Ethnic Minority Groups	31	10	3	9	7	2	2.61

Government environmental agencies also participated in networks at a high rate (figure 4.13). The government agency rate of participation was very similar to that of conservation and preservation organizations (mean of 3.61 versus 3.64).

Government environmental agencies were much less likely to collaborate with ethnic minority groups (mean of 2.61) and low-income groups (mean of 2.23) than in other kinds of collaborations. See figures 4.14 and 4.15).

- Despite these low means, the government environmental agencies collaborated with these two groups at higher rates than the conservation/preservation organizations.
- Social class seems to be the most challenging divide to bridge for government environmental agencies.
  - o These agencies had the lowest rate of interactions with low-income groups. In all, 41.9% of government agencies indicated that they did not work with any low-income groups..

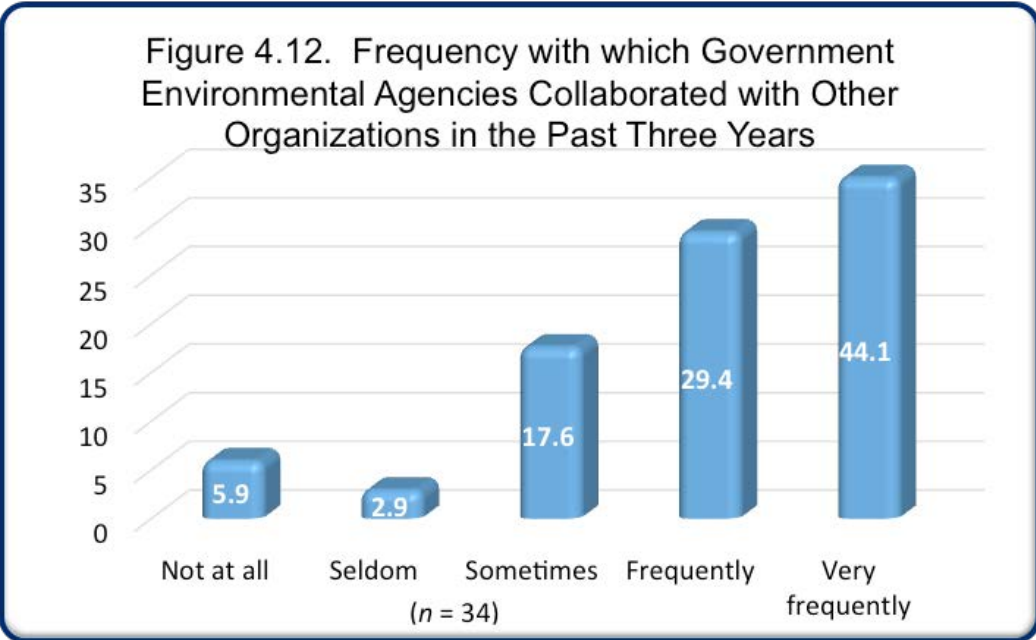
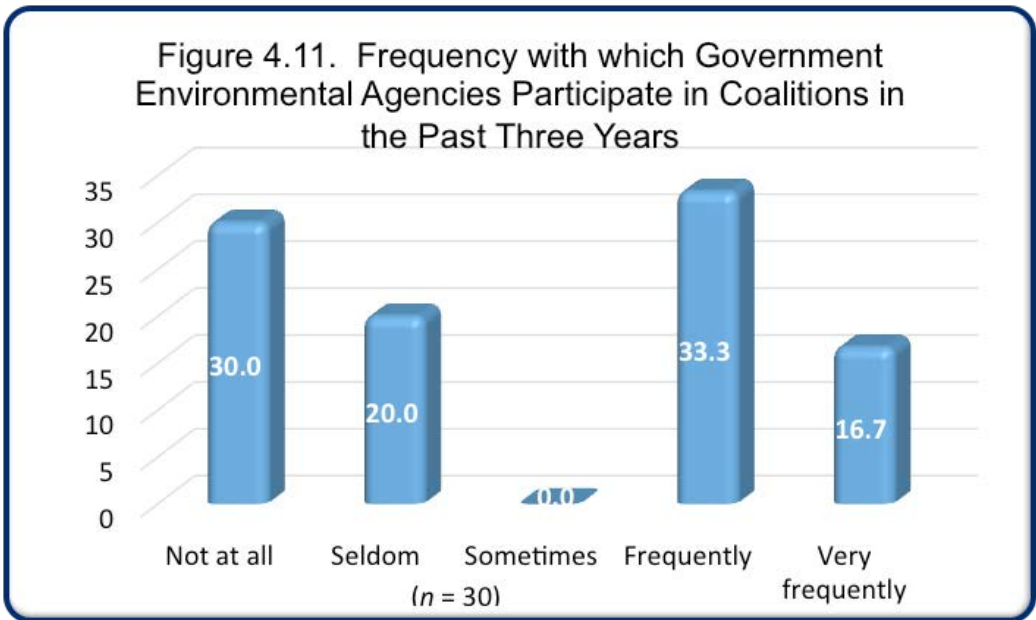


Figure 4.13. Frequency with which Government Environmental Agencies Participated in a Network in the Past Three Years

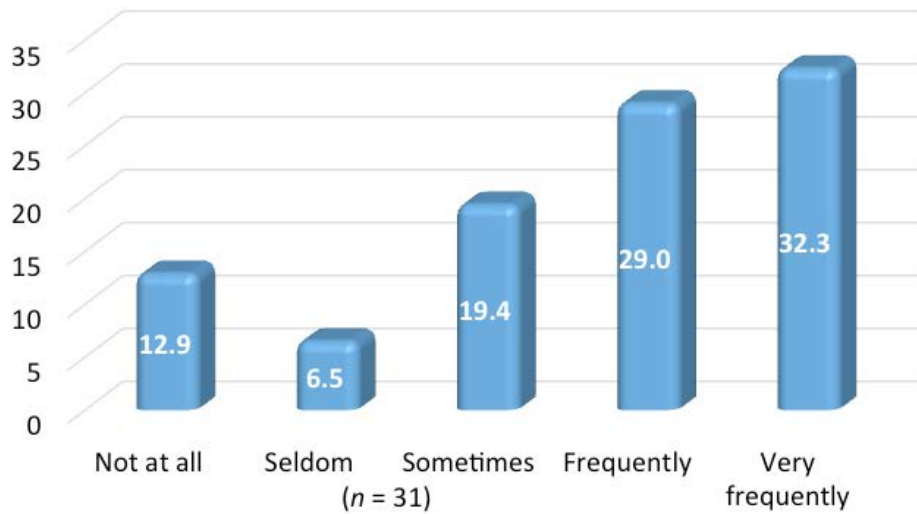
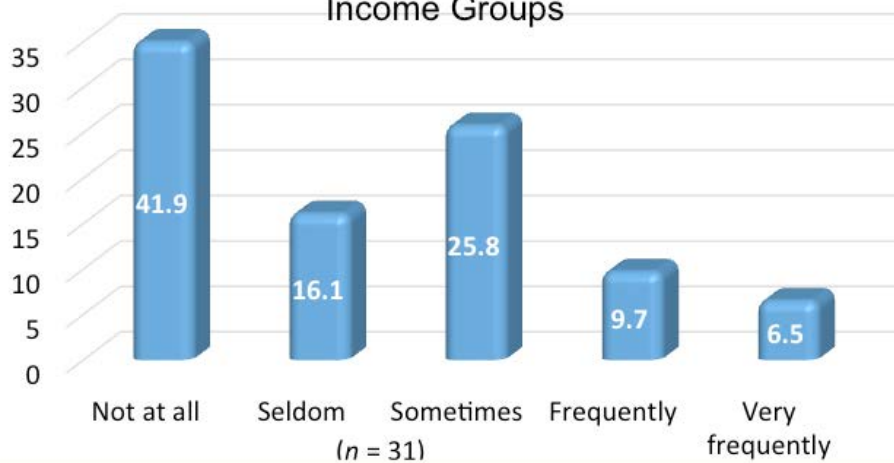
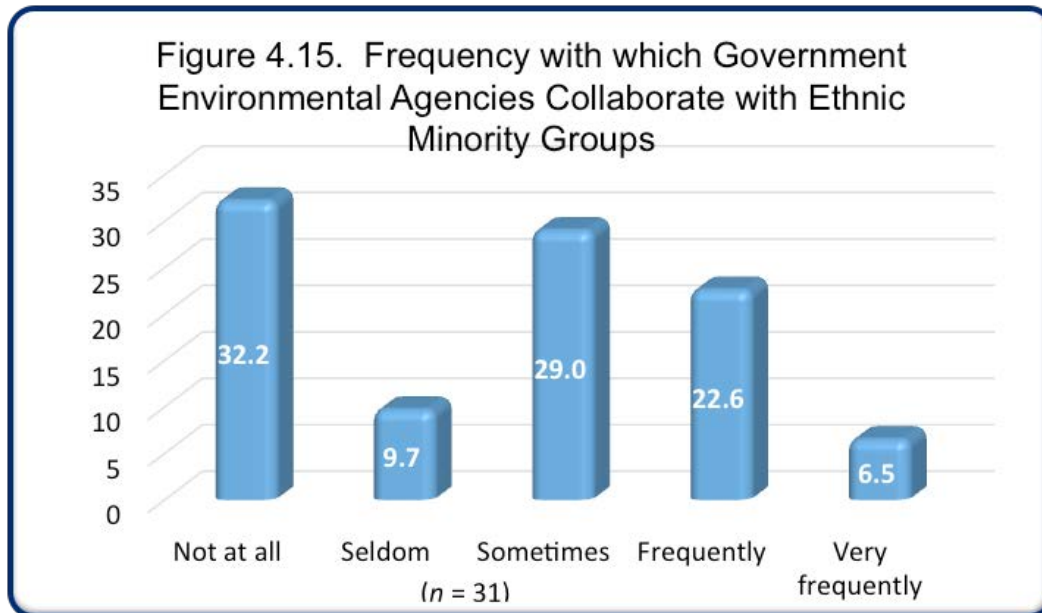


Figure 4.14. Frequency with which Government Environmental Agencies Collaborate with Low-Income Groups







## Strategies Used to Recruit New Staff

Government environmental agencies use several techniques to recruit new staff. Twenty recruitment strategies were listed and respondents were asked to say how frequently their organizations used each of those strategies to find new employees.

Frequency was indicated on a five-point Likert scale with “not at all” being scored as a 1, “rarely” scored as a 2, “sometimes” scored as a 3, “frequently” scored as a 4, and “all the time” scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for each strategy. This makes it easier to compare strategies across institutional types. The higher the mean, the more likely the agency used a particular strategy.

As table 4.6 shows, posting job listings on the agency’s website is the most commonly used recruitment strategy. This strategy is relied on more heavily in government environmental agencies than in conservation and preservation organizations (mean of 4.0 vs. 3.07). Moreover, the government-wide database (<https://www.usajobs.gov>) makes it easy to post and view federal employment opportunities, creating greater access to information about jobs as the public can view postings.

Table 4.6. Strategies Used by Government Environmental Agencies to Recruit New Staff

Techniques Used to Recruit New Staff	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Not at all (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Frequently (4)	All the Time (5)	Mean
Post jobs on organization's website	33	4	1	3	8	17	4.00
Post jobs on other Internet sites	31	4	4	10	5	8	3.29
Recruit in local community	31	6	3	8	8	6	3.16
Recruit from local colleges and universities	31	5	3	10	9	4	3.13
Recruit from within environmental networks	29	6	3	12	3	5	2.93
Recruit those recommend by current staff	31	6	6	12	5	2	2.71
Rely on word-of-mouth	30	10	1	12	3	4	2.67
Recruit from amongst interns	29	7	7	9	4	2	2.55
Recruit from amongst members and volunteers	30	12	1	11	6	0	2.37
Advertise in newspapers	30	14	3	5	4	4	2.37
Conduct national searches	31	12	7	4	5	3	2.35
Recruit from other environmental organizations or agencies	31	10	6	11	3	1	2.32
Use Listservs	28	12	6	4	2	4	2.29
Recruit from minority-serving colleges and universities	30	12	7	8	3	0	2.07
Recruit at job fairs	31	13	6	11	1	0	2.00
Advertise in own newsletters or magazines	28	16	2	7	2	1	1.93
Use unemployment or temporary agencies	30	14	9	5	2	0	1.83
Recruit those walking in to ask for jobs	32	19	7	4	1	1	1.69
Recruit at minority environmental professional associations and meetings	29	19	5	3	2	0	1.59
Recruit those making cold calls to ask for jobs	30	21	7	1	1	0	1.40

There were some other important differences between the recruitment strategies of government environmental agencies and conservation/preservation organizations. Government environmental agencies relied on recruitment in local communities (mean of 3.16) and from local colleges and universities (mean of 3.13) more heavily than do conservation/preservation organizations.



On the other hand, conservation/preservation organizations still rely much more heavily on advertising job opening through word-of-mouth channels. While this strategy had a mean of 3.06 in conservation/preservation organizations and was the second most frequently used strategy, it was the eighth most commonly used strategy in government environmental agencies (mean of 2.67).

Though government environmental agencies were more likely than conservation and preservation organizations to recruit from minority-serving colleges or from minority environmental professional association gatherings, these two recruitment strategies were amongst the least utilized strategies for agencies.

## Factors Hindering the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which a list of 22 factors hindered their agency's hiring of ethnic minorities. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the extent of hindrance. "Never" was scored as a 1, "rarely" scored as a 2, "sometimes" scored as a 3, "most of the time" scored as a 4, and "always" scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for each factor. This facilitates comparisons between the factors and between different types of institutions. The higher the mean, the more likely a particular factor impeded the agency's efforts to hire ethnic minorities.

The two factors most frequently cited as encumbrances to the hiring of ethnic minorities was the lack of minority applicants for jobs and very few positions available (table 4.7). These factors had means of 3.59 and 3.17 respectively. These were the same two factors—in reverse order—that conservation and preservation organizations indicated stymied the hiring of ethnic minorities in their institutions.

Lack of diversity managers was seen as a bigger impediment in conservation and preservation organizations than in government environmental agencies. Conservation and preservation organizations ranked this factor third with a mean of 3.03 while government environmental agencies ranked it seventh with a mean of 2.15. The diversity manager might be seen of less of an impediment in government environmental agencies because a higher percentage of these entities already have a diversity manager on staff.

Table 4.7. The Extent to which Factors Hinder the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities in Government Environmental Agencies

Factors Hindering the Hiring of Minorities	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Frequency					Mean
		Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Most of the Time (4)	Always (5)	
Lack of minority applicants for jobs	29	3	2	5	13	6	3.59
Very few positions are available	30	6	3	9	4	8	3.17
There are few minorities in our recruiting networks	29	8	3	8	7	3	2.79
Minorities are unaware of job openings	26	9	2	10	4	1	2.46
Few minorities live in local community	30	13	6	3	6	2	2.27
Rural location	30	14	6	4	3	3	2.17
The organization does not have a diversity manager	27	18	1	0	2	6	2.15
Minorities lack the necessary educational qualifications	27	13	5	5	3	1	2.04
We do not know how to recruit minorities	26	14	3	5	3	1	2.00
Lack of mentors in the organization	27	14	3	8	1	1	1.96
Lack of role models in the organization	27	15	3	6	2	1	1.93
The organization has not made any effort to hire or recruit minorities	27	18	2	4	2	1	1.74
Minorities do not want to work for organizations like ours	26	18	1	5	1	1	1.69
Minorities do not have the skills we are looking for	28	18	5	3	2	0	1.61
The organization does not have a diversity policy	28	22	1	1	3	1	1.57
The organization prefers to hire from certain universities	29	21	4	3	1	0	1.45
Minorities want to focus on racial and other social issues; this is not the focus of our organization	26	21	3	0	2	0	1.35
Minorities may not be well received in	29	22	5	1	1	0	1.34
The organization lacks the funds to hire minorities	27	23	1	2	0	1	1.33
Minorities do not stay long if they are hired	26	22	2	1	1	0	1.27
Minorities desire higher wages than we can pay	27	21	5	1	0	0	1.26
The organization does not hire minorities	29	26	2	0	0	1	1.21

As was the case with the conservation/preservation organizations, factors (such as minorities will not stay long if they are hired, minorities desire wages that are too high for organizations to pay, and that minorities are not qualified) that have been cited in the past as issues impeding minority hiring do not have much salience in either type of institution (see for example ECO, 1992; Taylor 2008; 2011b). Relatively few organizations reported that these factors obstructed their efforts to hire minorities, indicating that the climate for hiring ethnic minorities could be improving.

## Diversity Initiatives Currently Being Undertaken

Respondents were asked to indicate what kinds of diversity initiatives their agencies had undertaken in the last five years. Generally speaking, government environmental agencies were more likely to undertake diversity initiatives than conservation and preservation organizations. The initiative undertaken most frequently by the agencies was a low-cost activity—holding diversity training and staff meetings to discuss diversity issues. While 80.8% of government environmental agencies undertook this initiative, only 27.5% of conservation and preservation organizations did the same (table 4.8).

The second most popular diversity initiative in government environmental agencies was promoting women already working in the organization to top leadership positions. Even though this was the most commonly undertaken initiative in conservation and preservation organizations, a much higher percentage of government environmental agencies undertook this initiative. That is, 80% of government environmental agencies opted to use this strategy. In comparison, 69.9% of conservation and preservation organizations undertook this initiative.

Hiring ethnic minorities was the third most popular initiative undertaken by government environmental agencies—74.1% of them indicated they used this strategy. This is in stark contrast to conservation and preservation organizations where only 32.5% of those institutions undertook this initiative.

Government environmental agencies were also much more likely to say they took steps to broaden the applicant pool than conservation and preservation organizations; 73.1% of the agencies indicated they did this. In comparison, 61.1% of conservation and preservation organizations utilized this strategy.

Similarly, government environmental agencies were much more likely to promote ethnic minorities already working in the organization to top leadership positions than conservation and preservation organizations. While 60.9% of the agencies employed this strategy, only 29% of conservation and preservation organizations did likewise.

It is interesting to note that despite being public entities, government environmental agencies were more likely to promote women than minorities. That is, 80% of the agencies promoted women already working in the organization to top leadership positions while only 60.9% promoted ethnic minorities to top leadership positions. The gap in this type of promotion was larger in conservation/preservation organizations than it was in government agencies. While 69.9% of conservation/preservation organizations promoted women to top leadership positions, only 29% promoted ethnic minorities to similar positions.

Table 4.8. Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in Government Environmental Agencies in the Past Five Years

Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in the Past Five Years	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Yes Number	Percentage	Potential Cost of Initiative
Hold diversity training and staff meetings to discuss diversity	26	21	80.8%	No or low cost
Promote women already working in the organization to top leadership positions	25	20	80.0%	Significant cost
Hire ethnic minority employees	27	20	74.1%	Significant cost
Take steps to broaden applicant pool for jobs	26	19	73.1%	No or low cost
Promote minorities already working in the organization to top leadership positions	23	14	60.9%	Significant cost
Develop internship program to provide work experience for minorities	24	14	58.3%	Moderate to significant cost
Develop training/leadership programs for women	25	14	56.0%	No to moderate cost
Advertise in media (magazines, newspapers, television, websites) serving minority audiences	24	13	54.2%	No or low cost
Have targeted searches to meet diversity goals	26	14	53.8%	Low cost
Recruit from minority institutions	25	13	52.0%	No or low cost
Develop mentoring programs	24	12	50.0%	No or low cost
Provide funds to facilitate diversity efforts	26	13	50.0%	Low to significant cost
Organize outreach activities to diverse constituents	25	12	48.0%	Low cost
Develop partnerships with minority institutions	25	12	48.0%	Low cost
Develop training/leadership programs for minorities	25	12	48.0%	No to moderate cost
Consult with minority environmental professionals	24	11	45.8%	Moderate cost
Hire interns participating in diversity programs	24	10	41.7%	Significant cost
Promote diversity manager to any other positions of leadership in the organization	24	10	41.7%	Moderate to significant cost
Create a diversity committee	25	10	40.0%	No or low cost
Have a diversity manager	25	9	36.0%	Significant cost
Develop training/leadership programs for low income residents	24	8	33.3%	No to moderate cost
Hire consultants or use job-placement companies to find minority workers	25	2	8.0%	Low to moderate cost

The government environmental agencies were much more likely to develop pipeline programs targeting ethnic minorities than conservation and preservation organizations. Such initiatives include developing internship programs to provide work experience for minorities, developing partnership with minority-serving institutions, developing training and leadership programs for minorities, and developing training and leadership programs for low-income residents.

## Diversity Initiatives that Should Be Undertaken in the Future

Respondents were presented with a list of 13 diversity initiatives and asked to indicate which they thought should be undertaken in their region in the future as well as the likelihood of their agency supporting such activities. As was the case in conservation and preservation organizations, the strongest support was shown for pipeline development activities (table 4.9).

Such pipeline initiatives include:

- 73.9% of the agencies wanting to develop a pipeline program to include more minorities in the activities, workforce, and on the boards of organizations.
  - Though there was strong interest in developing this initiative; there was more caution in participating. Only 40% of the organizations would be likely or very likely to support this activity.
- 69.6% of the agencies would like to see the development of training programs for low-income and ethnic minority residents who are interested in working in or participating in the activities of the agencies.
  - 42.9% of the organizations would be likely or very likely to support this activity.

More than 60% of the government environmental agencies would like to see job fairs organized in ethnic minority and low-income communities. They would also like to have diversity training for staff in the agencies. The likelihood that agencies would support these activities was rated among the highest.

In all cases, agencies were more likely to indicate that they wanted to see the initiative developed rather than support them. Government environmental agencies were least likely to say they would support the initiatives that involved the inclusion of more issues of interest to low-income communities and ethnic minorities on the organization's agenda.

Table 4.9. Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future in the Region

Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future	Number of Orgs. Reporting			Likely/Very Likely to Support it		
	Number	Percentage	Yes	Number	Percentage	Support it
Develop a pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, or boards of organizations like yours	23	17	73.9	20	8	40.0
Develop training program for low-income and ethnic minority residents interested in working in or participating in activities in organizations like yours	23	16	69.6	21	9	42.9
Organize job fairs in ethnic minority and low-income communities	23	15	65.2	18	9	50.0
Hold diversity training for staff in organizations like yours	22	14	63.6	18	11	61.1
Include more issues of interest to low-income communities and ethnic minorities on the agenda of organizations like yours	23	13	56.5	18	4	22.2
Create a web portal for identifying ethnic minority environmental professionals for jobs, consultancies, speakers, expert testimonies, board positions, etc.	21	11	52.4	18	5	27.8
Create a regional diversity working group to help facilitate diversity initiatives	23	12	52.2	19	10	52.6
Expand the agenda of organizations like yours to include more issues affecting ethnic minority and low-income communities	23	12	52.2	19	6	31.6
Organize workshops on diversity	23	11	47.8	19	9	47.4
Use social media to participate remotely in diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	22	10	45.5	17	5	29.4
Organize a diversity conference	23	10	43.5	19	6	31.6
Create Listservs and email groups for the purpose of focusing on diversity issues and activities	23	9	39.1	17	5	29.4
Use social media to keep track of diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	22	8	36.4	17	4	23.5





The study indicates that government environmental agencies have made greater progress on gender diversity than they have on racial or class diversity. This is similar to the finding that emerged from the analysis of conservation and preservation organizations.

The next chapter will examine another important type of institution in the environmental field — environmental grant-making foundations. Despite the important role these organizations play in environmental affairs, they have not been included in analyses of institutional diversity in the sector.



## **Chapter 5.** **Diversity in Environmental** **Grantmaking Foundations**

**Environmental grantmaking foundations are important actors in the environmental arena. Though environment and animal grants account for only 7% of the total number of foundation grants awarded and 6% of the total grant dollars disbursed, these grants are critical to work in the environmental arena. According to the Foundation Center, 686 foundations gave out environmental and animal grants in 2011. The 9,971 grants awarded amounted to \$1,480,237,258 (Foundation Center, 2013).**

**Therefore, it is not surprising that as the pressure on environmental organizations to diversify their workforce mounted, the workforce of environmental grantmaking foundations was also scrutinized—and they have tried to respond. In 2003, an article in the Environmental Grantmakers Association Newsletter reported that 75% of the more than 250 foundations in its membership thought that increasing diversity in the field of philanthropy was either somewhat important or very important (Goldstein, 2003). So what is the state of diversity in environmental grantmaking foundations today?**

## Leadership Positions in Environmental Grantmaking Foundations

A modified version of the diversity survey was sent to roughly 220 foundations that funded environmental activities. Foundation contact information was obtained from the Web, GuideStar, as well as from the Leadership Directory. In addition, the Environmental Grantmakers Association collaborated with the researcher and sent the survey link to its members. The survey was administered over a four-month period from December 12, 2013 to April 9, 2014.

Responses were received from 45 foundations. The response rate was 20.5% (see Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004; Sheehan, 2006; Baruch & Holtom, 2008 for discussions of electronic survey response rates). This report analyzes the responses of 28 foundations. The remaining responses were dropped as respondents did not complete enough of the survey to make it possible to include them.

### GENDER DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP

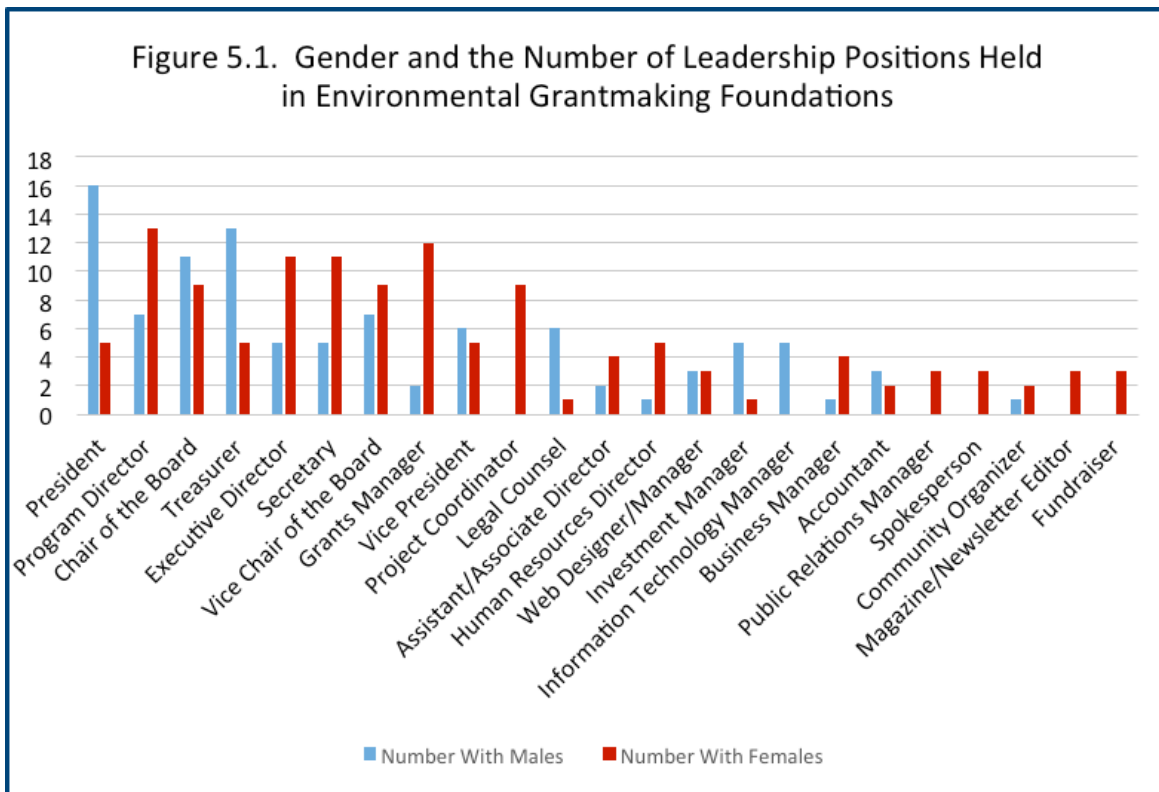
Since the diversity studies of the 1980s (Kasper, Ramos & Walker, 2004), environmental grantmaking foundations have continued to make significant progress on gender diversity though there are still some positions that are held primarily by males. For instance, 76.2% of the presidents are male as are 55% of the chairs of the boards. This is noteworthy as these are two of the most senior and high-profile leadership positions in the foundations. Women dominate a third critical leadership position, that of executive director. Women hold 68.8% of the executive directorships in the foundations (table 5.1 and figure 5.1).

Table 5.1. Gender and Leadership in Environmental Grantmaking Foundations

Leadership Positions	Number of Organizations with Specified Leadership Position	Number With Males in Specified Leadership Position		Number With Females in Specified Leadership Position	
		Position	Percent	Leadership	Percent
President	21	16	76.2%	5	23.8%
Program Director	20	7	35.0%	13	65.0%
Chair of the Board	20	11	55.0%	9	45.0%
Treasurer	18	13	72.2%	5	27.8%
Executive Director	16	5	31.3%	11	68.8%
Secretary	16	5	31.3%	11	68.8%
Vice Chair of the Board	16	7	43.8%	9	56.3%
Grants Manager	14	2	14.3%	12	85.7%
Vice President	11	6	54.5%	5	45.5%
Project Coordinator	9	0	0.0%	9	100.0%
Legal Counsel	7	6	85.7%	1	14.3%
Assistant/Associate Director	6	2	33.3%	4	66.7%
Human Resources Director	6	1	16.7%	5	83.3%
Web Designer/Manager	6	3	50.0%	3	50.0%
Investment Manager	6	5	83.3%	1	16.7%
Information Technology Manager	5	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Business Manager	5	1	20.0%	4	80.0%
Accountant	5	3	60.0%	2	40.0%
Public Relations Manager	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
Spokesperson	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
Community Organizer	3	1	33.3%	2	66.7%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%
Fundraiser	3	0	0.0%	3	100.0%

Females are far more likely to hold positions as executive directors and chairs of the board in environmental grantmaking foundations than they are in conservation and preservation organizations or in government environmental agencies.

Males held all information technology manager positions. Females held all project coordinator, public relations manager, spokesperson, magazine or newsletter editor, and development/fundraiser positions.



The results of this study are supported by findings from a 2011 study of 910 foundations. The study of philanthropies found that women comprised roughly 75% of the program officers and 55% of the chief executive officers or chief grant-making officers (Cohen, 2012).

Despite the stated interest in diversifying environmental grantmaking foundations, none of the organizations studied had a diversity manager on staff.

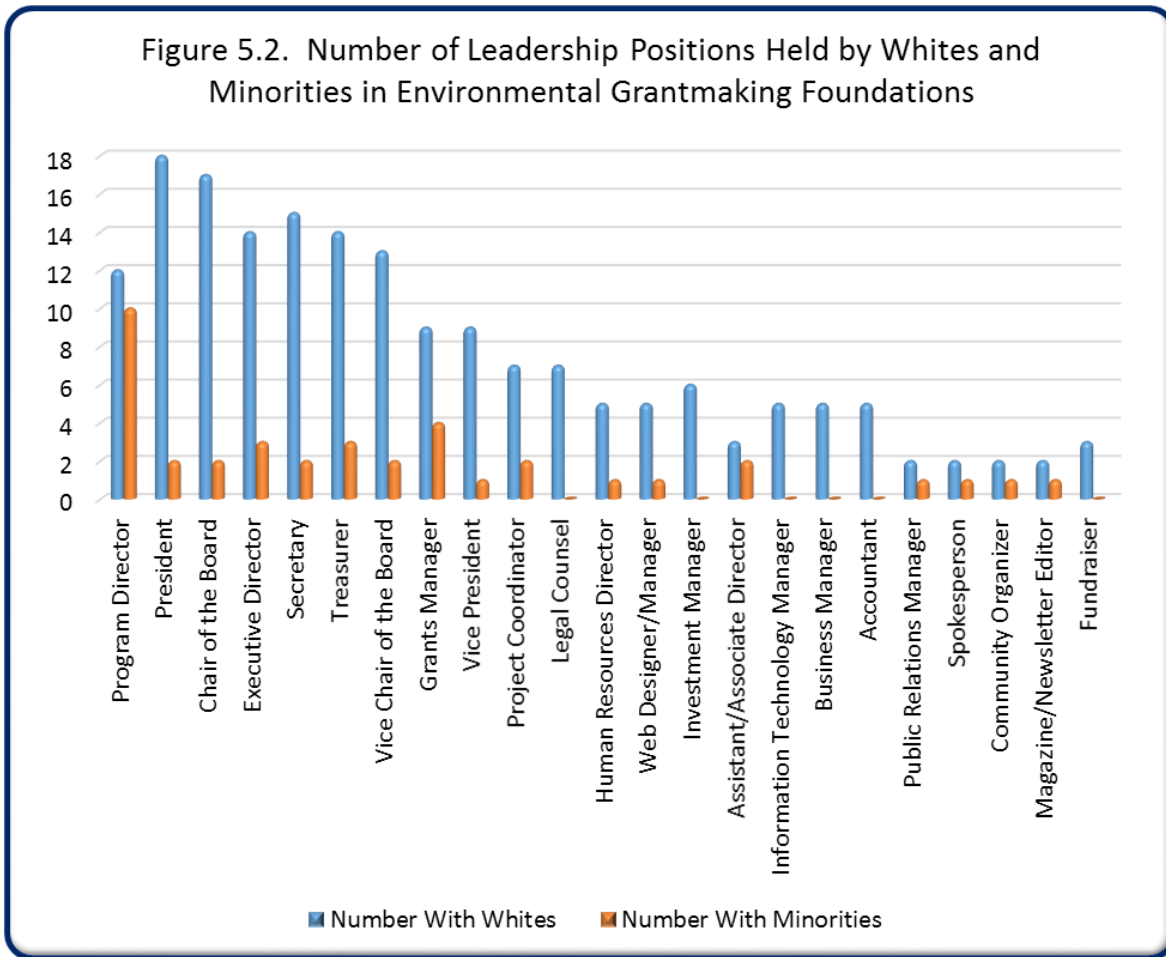
**RACIAL DIVERSITY AND LEADERSHIP**

As was the case with the conservation/preservation organizations and the government environmental organizations, less progress has been made on racial diversity than gender diversity in environmental grantmaking foundations. For instance, minorities hold only 10% of president positions, 10.5% of chairs of the board positions, and 17.6% of executive director positions in environmental grantmaking organizations (table 5.2 and figure 5.2). Not only are these powerful, decision-making positions, but the people occupying these positions are often the face of the organization

Table 5.2. Race and Leadership in Environmental Grantmaking Foundations

Leadership Positions	Number of Organizations with Specified Leadership Position	Number With Whites in Specified Leadership		Number With Minorities in Specified Leadership	
		Position	Percent	Leadership	Percent
Program Director	22	12	54.5%	10	45.5%
President	20	18	90.0%	2	10.0%
Chair of the Board	19	17	89.5%	2	10.5%
Executive Director	17	14	82.4%	3	17.6%
Secretary	17	15	88.2%	2	11.8%
Treasurer	17	14	82.4%	3	17.6%
Vice Chair of the Board	15	13	86.7%	2	13.3%
Grants Manager	13	9	69.2%	4	30.8%
Vice President	10	9	90.0%	1	10.0%
Project Coordinator	9	7	77.8%	2	22.2%
Legal Counsel	7	7	100.0%	0	0.0%
Human Resources Director	6	5	83.3%	1	16.7%
Web Designer/Manager	6	5	83.3%	1	16.7%
Investment Manager	6	6	100.0%	0	0.0%
Assistant/Associate Director	5	3	60.0%	2	40.0%
Information Technology Manager	5	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Business Manager	5	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Accountant	5	5	100.0%	0	0.0%
Public Relations Manager	3	2	66.7%	1	33.3%
Spokesperson	3	2	66.7%	1	33.3%
Community Organizer	3	2	66.7%	1	33.3%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	3	2	66.7%	1	33.3%
Fundraiser	3	3	100.0%	0	0.0%

The positions most likely to be occupied by ethnic minorities are those of program director (45.5%) and associate director (40%). None of the legal counsels, investment managers, information technology managers, business managers, accountants, or fundraisers were minorities.



**“THE SIZE OF THE ORGANIZATION IS GOING TO HAVE BEARING ON HOW MUCH IT IS ABLE TO PARTICIPATE IN DIVERSITY ORIENTED ACTIVITIES.”**

Quote from Survey Respondent #22

The percentages of ethnic minorities reported in this study as holding top executive positions in environmental grantmaking foundations are similar to those reported in the D5 Coalition study (D5 Coalition, 2012).

Despite the low percentages, minorities were more likely to hold top leadership positions such as the president, chair of the board, and executive directorship in environmental grantmaking foundations than in conservation/preservation organizations. Ethnic minorities were also more likely to hold positions of president and chair of the board in environmental grantmaking foundations than in government environmental agencies.

Other studies corroborate the findings of this study. The 2011 Council on Foundation study also found the staff of philanthropic organizations was much less diverse when race was considered rather than gender. Of the 910 foundations studied:

- 76% of the full-time staff was White.
- 11% of the full-time staff was Black.
- 6% of the full-time staff was Hispanic.
- 4% of the full-time staff was Asian
- 2% were multi-racial, Native American, or other (Cohen, 2012).

Cohen's (2012) study also identified a phenomenon of racial steering. That is, there was a tendency to hire ethnic minorities into some positions more than others. So while 22.5% of the professional staff was comprised of ethnic minorities, minorities constituted:

- 9% of the chief financial officers
- 9.2% of the chief executive officers
- 10% of the chief investment officers
- 12.9% of the executive vice presidents
- 30.4% of the human resources directors
- 34.7% of the accountants
- 36.5% of the computer/information technology professionals
- 36.7% of the program officers
- 40.7% of the human resources professionals

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**“OUR FOUNDATION IS FOCUSED LESS ON JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINORITIES AND MORE ON DIRECTLY RESOURCING MINORITY LED ORGANIZATIONS AND EFFORTS THAT ARE LIKELY TO BETTER INFORM AND INFLUENCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY DIALOGUE. WE THINK THAT BUILDING A MORE ROBUST INCLUSION AND EXCHANGE OF IDEAS RELATED TO ISSUES OF CONCERN FOR MINORITIES IS NEEDED IN ORDER FOR THERE TO BE MORE INTEREST FROM DIVERSE APPLICANTS FOR JOBS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR.”**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #17

## Board Members, Staff, and Interns

### GENDER DIVERSITY

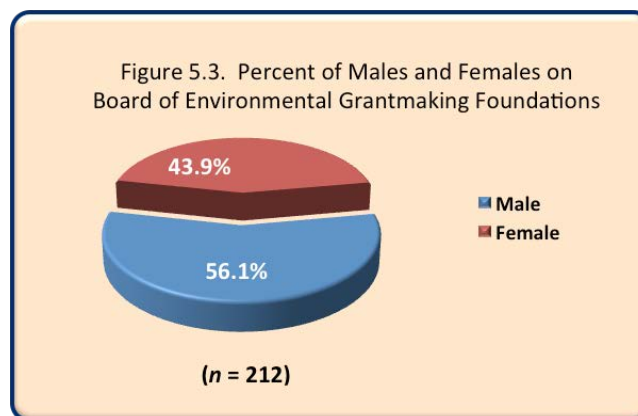
More than half (56.1%) of the board members on environmental grantmaking foundations studied were males. This is consistent with Cohen’s (2012) analysis of national philanthropic data. He found that only 38% of foundation board members were female.

However, females comprised 77.7% of the staff, 88.6% of employees hired in the past three years, and 80% of the interns hosted in the last three years (table 5.3 and figures 5.3 – 5.6).

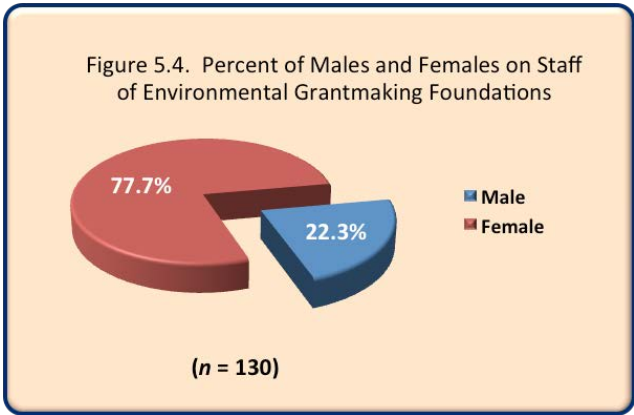
Table 5.3. Male and Female Board and Staff Members

Organizational Role	Total	Males		Females	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Member of the board	212	119	56.1	93	43.9
Number of paid staff	130	29	22.3	101	77.7
Staff hired in the last three years	35	4	11.4	31	88.6
Interns hosted in the last three years	50	10	20.0	40	80.0

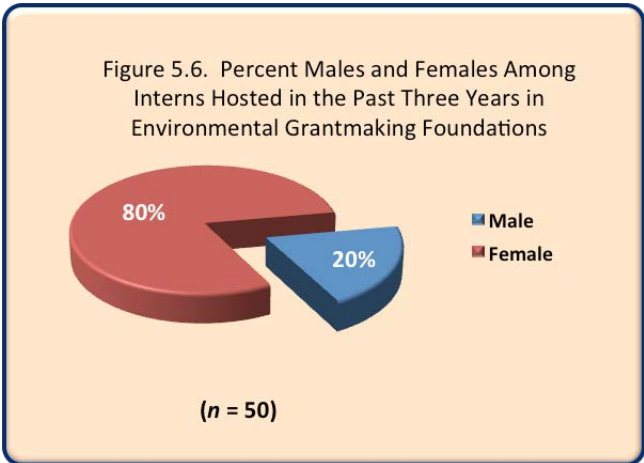
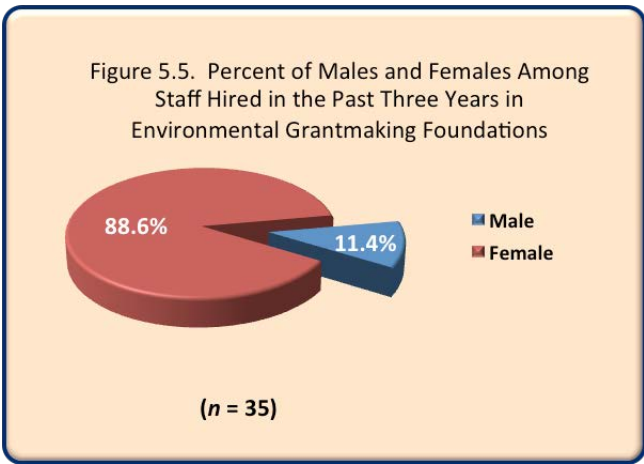
Though 56.1% of the board members of environmental grantmaking foundations were male, this percentage was lower than that found in conservation/preservation organizations (62.9%) and government environmental agencies (67%).







Females make up a much larger percentage of the paid staff, staff hired in the last three years, and interns in environmental grantmaking foundations than in conservation/preservation organizations or government environmental organizations.



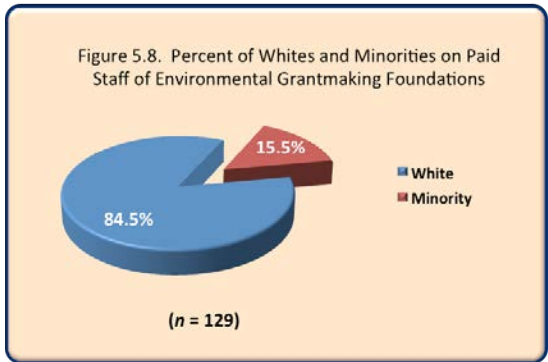
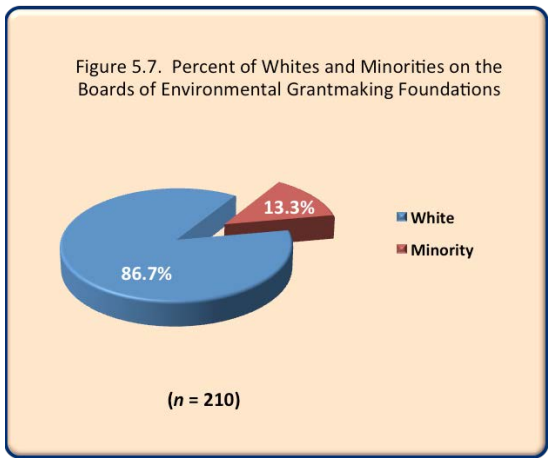
## RACIAL DIVERSITY

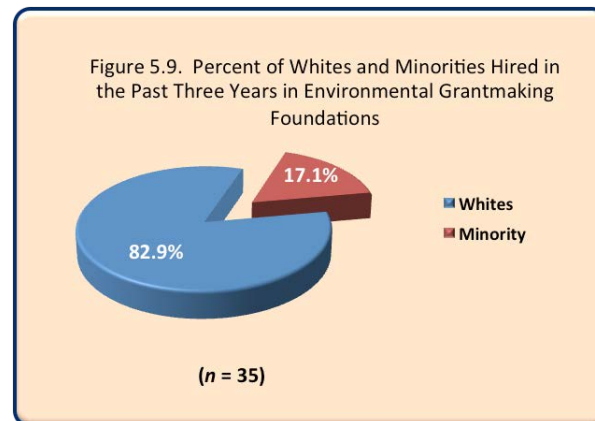
Racial diversity still lags far behind gender diversity in environmental grantmaking foundations. As table 5.4 shows, only 13.3% of the members of the foundation boards were ethnic minorities (see also figure 5.7). This finding is similar to what Cohen (2012) found when he analyzed the racial diversity of philanthropic organizations. Only 15% of the board members in the 2011 study were ethnic minorities.

Ethnic minorities made up a small percent of the staff and recent hires, constituting 15.5% of the paid staff (figure 5.8) and 17.1% of the staff hired in the last three years (figure 5.9).

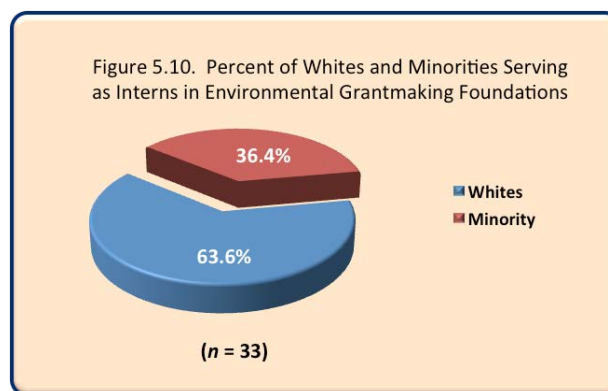
**Table 5.4. White and Ethnic Minority Board and Staff Members**

Organizational Role	Total	Whites		Minorities	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Member of the board	210	182	86.7	28	13.3
Number of paid staff	129	109	84.5	20	15.5
Staff hired in the last three years	35	29	82.9	6	17.1
Interns hosted in the last three years	33	21	63.6	12	36.4





One pipeline indicator — interns hosted — shows greater diversity than other indicators discussed above. Ethnic minority interns constituted 36.4% of the interns hosted by environmental grantmaking foundations in the past three years (figure 5.10). However, as later discussion will show, interns are not usually hired into staff positions by the environmental grantmaking foundations.



Despite the low numbers, the percentage of ethnic minorities on the boards of environmental grantmaking foundations is 2.9 times higher than it is in conservation/preservation organizations and 1.9 times higher than it is government environmental organizations.

The percentage of ethnic minority interns hosted by environmental grantmaking foundations is 2.4 times higher than it is in government environmental agencies and 1.6 times higher than it is in conservation and preservation organizations.

## Grantmaking and Diversity

Respondents were asked to say how many grants their foundations awarded in 2012. In all, 1,618 grants were awarded. Of those, 180 or 11.1% went to ethnic minority organizations. Minority organizations were defined as institutions in which the leadership and/or membership were primarily minorities. A larger percentage of the grants went to organizations in which the leadership or membership were primarily low-income. Such organizations received 21.1% of the grants (table 5.5).

How about funding for ethnic minority organizations that are environmentally focused? How did they fare with environmental funders? Ethnic minority environmental organizations and low-income environmental organizations were the least likely to receive funding. Only 5.7% of the awards went to minority environmental organizations and 5.3% went to low-income environmental groups.

**Table 5.5. Number of Organizations funded in 2012**

Characteristics	Number	Percent
Total number of organizations funded	1,618	100.0
Ethnic minority organizations funded	180	11.1
Low-income organizations funded	342	21.1
Ethnic minority environmental organizations funded	93	5.7
Low-income environmental organizations funded	85	5.3

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**“WE ARE WORKING TO ENCOURAGE OUR CURRENT GRANTEES TO BE MORE DIVERSE AND AWAR[E] OF SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES. THIS INCLUDES WORKING TO BE MORE INCLUSIVE OF PEOPLE OF COLOR WITHIN THEIR ORGANIZATION, AND WITH COMMUNITIES OF COLOR THEY MAY WORK WITH OR TRY TO REACH OUT TO. WHILE THIS IS IMPORTANT TO US AS A FUNDER, IT MAY NOT BE A PRIORITY OF THE ORGANIZATIONS WE FUND, SO THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH WE CAN PUSH IF THE LEADERSHIP IS NOT READY, OR DOES NOT SEE THIS AS AN ISSUE. WE CAN PUSH ORGANIZATIONS TO THINK MORE BROADLY ABOUT THESE ISSUES, BUT IF THEY DON’T WELCOME TRAINING AND/OR THEIR PARTICIPATION, THE EFFORTS COULD BE WASTED.”**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #21

## Strategies Used to Recruit New Staff

Environmental grantmaking foundations used a variety of strategies to recruit new staff. Twenty recruitment strategies were listed, and respondents were asked to say how frequently their foundations used each of those strategies to find new staff.

Frequency was indicated on a five-point Likert scale with “not at all” being scored as a 1, “rarely” scored as a 2, “sometimes” scored as a 3, “frequently” scored as a 4, and “all the time” scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for each strategy. This allows for easier comparison between strategies. The higher the mean, the more likely the foundation used a particular strategy.

Environmental grantmaking foundations were most likely to employ the strategy of posting their job openings on other Internet sites than any other method. This scored a mean of 4.13. The second most widely used strategy in foundations is to rely on word-of-mouth to advertise job openings. This strategy had a mean of 4.00. Recruiting from within foundation networks—with a mean of 3.93—was also widely used (table 5.6).

Two of the top three strategies used to advertise job openings in foundations rely on informal ties and networks that those who are not “inside the loop” or “in the know” are unlikely to have access to. Foundations continue to recruit heavily through these informal channels despite the 2008 report on philanthropy that noted that ethnic minorities are unlikely to be exposed to or know about careers in the field (Chao, Parshall, Amador, Shah, & Yañez, 2008).

Relying heavily on internal and informal networks can produce homosocial workforces that replicate themselves and retard diversity efforts (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Granovetter, 1995; Braddock & McPartland, 1987; Model, 1993).

To compound this, foundations are quite unlikely to recruit from minority environmental professional associations (mean = 1.86) or from minority-serving colleges and universities (mean = 1.46).

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**ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTMAKING FOUNDATIONS WERE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO RELY ON WORD-OF-MOUTH TO ADVERTISE JOB OPENINGS THAN EITHER CONSERVATION/PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS OR GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES.**

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Though environmental grantmaking foundations are providing internships for a robust number of ethnic minorities, they are unlikely to recruit their interns into staff positions (mean = 1.54). This means that foundations are under-utilizing three of the existing pipelines (minority professional associations, minority-serving colleges and universities, and minority interns) of ethnic minority talent.

Table 5.6. Strategies Used by Environmental Grantmaking Foundations to Recruit New Staff

Techniques Used to Recruit New Staff	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Not at all (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Frequently (4)	All the Time (5)	Mean
Post jobs on other Internet sites	15	1	0	3	3	8	4.13
Rely on word-of-mouth	14	1	1	1	5	6	4.00
Recruit from within foundation networks	14	1	1	2	4	6	3.93
Recruit in local community	14	2	0	2	7	3	3.64
Post jobs on organization's website	15	3	1	2	2	7	3.60
Recruit those recommend by current staff	14	2	1	3	5	3	3.43
Recruit from environmental organizations	14	3	2	5	1	3	2.93
Recruit from other foundations	14	2	5	2	2	3	2.93
Use Listservs	15	3	2	3	2	5	2.38
Recruit from local colleges and universities	14	6	2	3	1	2	2.36
Advertise in own newsletters or magazines	14	7	1	3	1	2	2.29
Use unemployment or temporary agencies	13	5	4	2	1	1	2.15
Advertise in newspapers	14	7	2	3	1	1	2.07
Conduct national searches	14	6	4	2	1	1	2.07
Recruit at minority environmental professional associations or meetings	14	8	2	3	0	1	1.86
Recruit those making cold calls to ask for jobs	13	8	3	1	1	0	1.62
Recruit from amongst interns	13	8	3	2	0	0	1.54
Recruit from minority-serving colleges or universities	13	8	4	1	0	0	1.46
Recruit those walking in to ask for jobs	13	11	0	1	1	0	1.38
Recruit at job fairs	13	10	3	0	0	0	1.23

## Factors Hindering the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which a list of 22 factors hindered their foundation's hiring of ethnic minorities (table 5.7). A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the extent of hindrance. "Never" was scored as a 1, "rarely" scored as a 2, "sometimes" scored as a 3, "most of the time" scored as a 4, and "always" scored as a 5.

Means were calculated for each factor. This allows for comparison between the factors. The higher the mean, the more likely a particular factor prevented the foundation from hiring ethnic minorities.

Overwhelmingly, environmental grantmaking foundations indicated that having very few job openings available was the biggest factor interfering minority hiring. This factor had a mean score of 4.33. The absence of a diversity manager in the foundation was also seen as a huge impediment to hiring minorities. This factor had a mean score of 3.71. These two factors were seen as far more salient than any of the other factors.

Factors such as lacking the funds to hire minorities, minorities wanting to focus on racial and social issues, minorities not being well received in the foundation, minorities having no desire to work in foundations, or minorities not staying long if they are hired seem to have very little salience in the hiring process of environmental grantmaking foundations.

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**"THIS WAS A CHALLENGING SURVEY BECAUSE OUR FOUNDATION SPANS MULTIPLE AREAS OF INTEREST (ONLY SOME OF THEM "ENVIRONMENTAL") AND AT ALL LEVELS - LOCAL, STATE, REGIONAL, NATIONAL. WE ARE ALSO A SMALL STAFF IN A SMALL CITY THAT IMPACTS SOME OF OUR EFFORTS. HOWEVER, THERE ARE MULTIPLE COALITIONS, NETWORKS, AND ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON DIVERSITY ISSUES IN THE CITY IN WHICH WE LIVE, MANY OF WHICH ARE SUPPORTED BY OUR LOCAL HUMAN SERVICES AND ENVIRONMENT WORK. ALL THAT BEING SAID, MUCH MORE COULD BE DONE TO ENGAGE WITH ETHNIC MINORITY ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AT THE STATE AND NATIONAL LEVEL THROUGH OUR ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM AREA."**

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Quote from Survey #11

Table 5.7. The Extent to which Factors Hinder the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities in Environmental Grantmaking Foundations

Factors Hindering the Hiring of Minorities	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Never (1)	Rarely (2)	Sometimes (3)	Most of the Time (4)	Always (5)	Mean
Very few positions are available	15	0	4	0	2	9	4.33
The organization does not have a diversity manager	14	3	3	8	0	0	3.71
Lack of minority applicants for jobs	15	5	2	5	3	0	2.40
Minorities are unaware of job	15	4	3	7	1	0	2.33
The organization does not have a diversity policy	14	8	1	1	3	1	2.14
The organization has not made any effort to hire or recruit minorities	15	5	5	4	1	0	2.13
Lack of mentors in the organization	13	7	1	3	1	1	2.08
There are few minorities in our recruiting networks	14	5	4	4	1	0	2.07
Minorities lack the necessary educational qualifications	15	9	2	2	1	1	1.87
We do not know how to recruit minorities	14	10	1	1	1	1	1.71
Few minorities live in local community	15	9	3	3	0	0	1.60
Rural location	15	11	1	3	0	0	1.47
Lack of role models in the organization	11	9	0	2	0	0	1.36
Minorities do not have the skills we are looking for	15	11	3	1	0	0	1.33
Minorities desire higher wages than we can pay	15	11	3	1	0	0	1.33
The organization does not hire	14	12	0	2	0	0	1.29
The organization prefers to hire from certain universities	15	13	1	0	1	0	1.27
The organization lacks the funds to hire minorities	13	11	1	1	0	0	1.23
Minorities want to focus on racial and other social issues; this is not the focus of our organization	14	11	3	0	0	0	1.21
Minorities may not be well received in the organization	15	13	1	1	0	0	1.20
Minorities do not want to work for organizations like ours	14	12	2	0	0	0	1.14
Minorities do not stay long if they are hired	14	13	1	0	0	0	1.07



## Diversity Initiatives Currently Being Undertaken

When asked what diversity initiatives had been undertaken in the past five years, environmental grantmaking foundations were most likely to say they had taken steps to broaden the applicant pool. Of the 14 foundations reporting, 92.9% had undertaken this activity (table 5.8).

Table 5.8. Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in Environmental Grantmaking Foundations in the Past Five Years

Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in the Past Five Years	Number of Orgs. Reporting	Yes		Potential Cost of Initiative
		Number	Percentage	
Take steps to broaden applicant pool for jobs	14	13	92.9%	No or low cost
Organize outreach activities to diverse constituents	14	11	78.6%	Low cost
Consult with minority environmental professionals	13	9	69.2%	Moderate cost
Hire ethnic minority employees	14	9	64.3%	Significant cost
Recruit from minority institutions	14	9	64.3%	No or low cost
Develop partnerships with minority institutions	14	9	64.3%	Low cost
Promote women already working in the organization to top leadership positions	13	7	53.8%	Significant cost
Promote minorities already working in the organization to top leadership positions	13	7	53.8%	Significant cost
Advertise in media (magazines, newspapers, television, websites) serving minority audiences	13	7	53.8%	No or low cost
Have targeted searches to meet diversity goals	14	7	50.0%	Low cost
Develop training/leadership programs for minorities	14	5	35.7%	No to moderate cost
Develop internship program to provide work experience for minorities	13	4	30.8%	Moderate to significant cost
Develop training/leadership programs for women	14	4	28.6%	No to moderate cost
Develop training/leadership programs for low income residents	14	4	28.6%	No to moderate cost
Develop mentoring programs	13	3	23.1%	No or low cost
Provide funds to facilitate diversity efforts	13	3	23.1%	Low to significant cost
Hire consultants or use job-placement companies to find minority workers	13	3	23.1%	Low to moderate cost
Hire interns participating in diversity programs	13	2	15.4%	Significant cost
Hold diversity training and staff meetings to discuss diversity	14	2	14.3%	No or low cost
Promote diversity manager to any other positions of leadership in the organization	12	1	8.3%	Moderate to significant cost
Create a diversity committee	13	1	7.7%	No or low cost
Have a diversity manager	13	1	7.7%	Significant cost

Almost 79% of the reporting foundations also indicated that they had organized outreach activities to diverse constituents. Though this and broadening the applicant pool are two low-cost diversity activities that foundations had undertaken, most did not embrace other low-cost activities. For instance, only 7.7% of reporting foundations had created a diversity committee, and only 14.3% had held diversity training and staff meetings to discuss diversity issues.

Interns participating in diversity programs are unlikely to be hired onto the staff of the reporting environmental grantmaking foundations. Only 15.4% indicated they hired such interns.

Unlike government environmental agencies or conservation/preservation organizations, environmental grantmaking foundations were equally likely to promote women and ethnic minorities already working in the foundation to top leadership positions.

## Diversity Initiatives that Should Be Undertaken in the Future

Only a small number of environmental grantmaking foundations reported on what kinds of diversity initiatives they thought should be undertaken in the future (table 5.9). One respondent (#5) commented that the foundation would not undertake the diversity activities listed unless it was directly related to their funding priorities. Other comments (#11, #17, and #21) implied that foundations fund diversity and social justice work, but it was not necessarily their role to engage in these actions themselves.

Foundations were most enthusiastic about creating a web portal for identifying ethnic minority professionals for jobs, consultancies, board positions, etc. Eighty percent of the reporting foundations would like to see this initiative undertaken. Despite wanting to see such an initiative, only 27.3% were likely or very likely to support it.

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**“DIVERSITY IS NOT A STAND-ALONE ISSUE FOR US. WE WOULD NEVER UNDERTAKE THE ACTIVITIES LISTED IN THE LAST SCREEN [SEE TABLE 5.9] ON OUR OWN, UNLESS IT HAD DIRECT RELEVANCE TO A PROGRAM FUNDING AREA.”**

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Quote from Survey Respondent #5:

Almost as many (77.8%) would like to see the development of a pipeline for greater inclusion of minorities and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, and boards of foundations. This initiative would get greater support from the foundations—half indicated they would be likely or very likely to support it.

Table 5.9. Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future in the Region

Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future	Number of Orgs. Reporting			Number of Orgs. Reporting		
	Yes Number	Percentage	Likely/Very Likely to Support it Number	Percentage		
Create a web portal for identifying ethnic minority environmental professionals for jobs, consultancies, speakers, expert testimonies, board positions, etc.	10	8	80.0	11	3	27.3
Develop a pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, or boards of organizations like yours	9	7	77.8	10	5	50.0
Develop training program for low-income and ethnic minority residents interested in working in or participating in activities in organizations like yours	10	7	70.0	10	2	20.0
Use social media to keep track of diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	10	7	70.0	11	4	36.4
Hold diversity training for staff in organizations like yours	10	6	60.0	10	3	30.0
Include more issues of interest to low-income communities and ethnic minorities on the agenda of organizations like yours	10	6	60.0	9	6	66.6
Create a regional diversity working group to help facilitate diversity initiatives	9	5	55.6	10	3	30.0
Organize workshops on diversity	11	6	54.5	10	4	40.0
Organize job fairs in ethnic minority and low-income communities	10	5	50.0	9	1	11.1
Expand the agenda of organizations like yours to include more issues affecting ethnic minority and low-income communities	10	5	50.0	8	5	62.5
Organize a diversity conference	10	5	50.0	10	4	40.0
Create Listservs and email groups for the purpose of focusing on diversity issues and activities	10	5	50.0	11	4	36.4
Use social media to participate remotely in diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	10	4	40.0	11	4	36.4

While environmental grantmaking foundations have made great strides on gender diversity, there is much work to be done to increase the racial diversity of these institutions. Chapter 6 will compare the three types of institutions—conservation/preservation organizations, government environmental agencies, and environmental grantmaking foundations—more systematically to assess the status of diversity in each.



## **Chapter 6.** **Inter-institutional** **Comparisons**

**This chapter continues the comparisons made in earlier chapters of the three types of institutions studied — conservation and preservation organizations, government environmental agencies, and environmental grantmaking foundations. A series of tables with side-by-side comparisons allow readers to discern the similarities and differences between the institutions more readily.**

## Gender and Leadership

Table 6.1 compares the demographic characteristics of the leadership of the three institutions. For each leadership position, the institutional type that has the highest percentage of females in that position is highlighted in blue. In which type of institution and in which positions do we find the highest percentage of women?

Females seem to fare best in the environmental grantmaking foundations. Of the 25 positions studied, women in environmental grantmaking foundations were found in the highest percentages in 13 of those positions. This includes top-ranking positions such as chair of the board, vice-chair of the board, executive director, and vice president. Moreover, environmental grantmaking foundations were the only institutions that reported having only women occupying particular positions (spokesperson, newsletter/magazine editor, public relations manager, project coordinator, and fundraiser). This could be a function of the small sample size, although high percentages of females occupy these positions in the other two types of institutions also.

Government environmental agencies came next—there were seven positions in which females occupied the highest percentage of those positions. This includes community organizer, accountant, and secretary. In only three instances—investment manager, lobbyist, and human resources director—were the percentages of females occupying these positions the highest in conservation/preservation organizations when the three institutions were compared.

Table 6.1. Gender and Leadership in the Three Types of Institutions

Leadership Positions Examined	Conservation/Preservation		Government Agencies		Grantmaking Foundations	
	Males in Leadership Position	Females in Leadership Position	Males in Leadership Position	Females in Leadership Position	Males in Leadership Position	Females in Leadership Position
President	76.9%	23.1%	66.7%	33.3%	76.2%	23.8%
Information Technology Manager	75.9%	24.1%	74.3%	25.7%	100%	0%
Chair of the Board	71.3%	28.7%	86.7%	13.3%	55.0%	45.0%
Treasurer	66.9%	33.1%	50.0%	50.0%	72.2%	27.8%
Vice Chair of the Board	66.3%	33.8%	68.8%	31.3%	43.8%	56.3%
Investment Manager	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%	0.0%	83.3%	16.7%
Vice President	62.4%	37.6%	61.5%	38.5%	54.5%	45.5%
Legal Counsel	57.6%	42.4%	45.8%	54.2%	85.7%	14.3%
Executive Director	57.4%	42.6%	76.1%	23.9%	31.3%	68.8%
Lobbyist	56.7%	43.3%	60.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Web Designer/Manager	55.7%	44.3%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%
Assistant/Associate Director	50.0%	50.0%	71.1%	28.9%	33.3%	66.7%
Spokesperson	44.8%	55.2%	44.4%	55.6%	0.0%	100.0%
Community Organizer	40.0%	60.0%	18.8%	81.3%	33.3%	66.7%
Business Manager	38.5%	61.5%	46.2%	53.8%	20.0%	80.0%
Accountant	37.5%	62.5%	27.8%	72.2%	60.0%	40.0%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	37.3%	62.7%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Secretary	35.3%	64.7%	15.5%	84.6%	31.3%	68.8%
Program Director	35.1%	64.9%	71.9%	28.1%	35.0%	65.0%
Diversity Manager	33.3%	66.7%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Public Relations Manager	21.4%	78.6%	43.9%	56.1%	0.0%	100.0%
Grants Manager	20.5%	79.5%	37.5%	62.5%	14.3%	85.7%
Project Coordinator	20.4%	79.6%	36.8%	63.2%	0.0%	100.0%
Fundraiser	20.3%	79.7%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Human Resources Director	7.7%	92.3%	22.2%	77.8%	16.7%	83.3%

## Race and Leadership

Of the three institutional types, ethnic minorities were found in the highest percentages in environmental grantmaking foundations in 13 of the 25 leadership positions studied. They were most likely to be executive directors, public relations managers, associate directors, vice presidents, and program directors in environmental grantmaking foundation than in the other two types of institutions.

It should also be noted that there were several positions in grantmaking foundations in which there were no minorities reported in those positions. No ethnic minorities were reported working as investment managers, business managers, accountants, fundraisers, legal counsels, or information technology managers in the foundations. The foundations were not asked about lobbyists and none reported having either a White or ethnic minority diversity manager.

Table 6.2. Race and Leadership in the Three Types of Institutions

Leadership Positions Examined	Conservation/Preservation		Government Agencies		Grantmaking Foundations	
	Whites in Leadership Position	Minorities in Leadership Position	Whites in Leadership Position	Minorities in Leadership Position	Whites in Leadership Position	Minorities in Leadership Position
President	99.1%	0.9%	81.0%	19.0%	90.0%	10.0%
Executive Director	96.4%	3.6%	87.2%	12.8%	82.4%	17.6%
Public Relations Manager	96.4%	3.6%	85.0%	15.0%	66.7%	33.3%
Treasurer	96.1%	3.9%	88.9%	11.1%	82.4%	17.7%
Asstant/Associate Director	95.7%	4.3%	83.8%	16.2%	60.0%	40.0%
Secretary	94.7%	5.3%	84.6%	15.4%	88.2%	11.8%
Chair of the Board	94.1%	5.9%	80.0%	20.0%	89.5%	10.5%
Vice President	93.9%	6.1%	91.7%	8.3%	90.0%	10.0%
Investment Manager	91.7%	8.3%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Program Director	91.5%	8.5%	96.6%	3.4%	54.5%	45.5%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	90.3%	9.7%	84.6%	15.4%	66.7%	33.3%
Vice Chair of the Board	89.7%	10.3%	100.0%	0.0%	86.7%	13.3%
Business Manager	88.5%	11.5%	92.3%	7.7%	100.0%	0.0%
Web Designer/Manager	87.1%	12.9%	96.0%	4.0%	83.3%	16.7%
Accountant	86.4%	13.6%	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%	0.0%
Grants Manager	86.0%	14.0%	86.7%	13.3%	69.2%	30.8%
Fundraiser	85.5%	14.5%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Legal Counsel	83.9%	16.1%	95.5%	4.5%	100.0%	0.0%
Project Coordinator	78.9%	21.1%	83.3%	16.7%	77.8%	22.2%
Information Technology Manager	77.4%	22.6%	73.5%	26.5%	100.0%	0.0%
Spokesperson	76.5%	23.5%	87.5%	12.5%	66.7%	33.3%
Lobbyist	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Human Resources Director	70.6%	29.4%	68.6%	31.4%	83.3%	16.7%
Community Organizer	67.2%	32.8%	71.4%	28.6%	66.7%	33.3%
Diversity Manager	41.7%	58.3%	33.3%	66.7%	0.0%	0.0%

Regardless of how few, ethnic minorities were employed in all 25 positions in conservation/preservation organizations. At government environmental organizations, there were three positions that no ethnic minorities occupied—investment manager, vice chair of the board, and lobbyist.

## Board Members, Staff, and Interns

Of the three types of institutions, the environmental grantmaking foundations had the highest percentages of females serving on boards, as paid staff, staff hired in the last three years, and as interns (table 6.3). The same pattern was observed when race was considered—ethnic minorities were found in the highest percentages in these roles in environmental grantmaking foundations (table 6.4).

Table 6.3. Male and Female Board and Staff Members

Organizational Role	Conservation/Preservation		Government Agencies		Environmental Foundations	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Member of the board	62.9	37.1	67.0	33.0	56.1	43.9
Number of paid staff	44.5	55.5	60.2	39.8	22.3	77.7
Staff hired in the last three years	40.6	59.4	63.5	36.5	11.4	88.6
Interns hosted in the last three years	39.2	60.8	48.5	51.5	20.0	80.0

Table 6.4. Race/Ethnicity, Board and Staff in the Three Types of Organizations

Organizational Role	Conservation/Preservation		Government Agencies		Environmental Foundations	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
	Whites	Minorities	Whites	Minorities	Whites	Minorities
Member of the board	95.4	4.6	93.1	6.9	86.7	13.3
Number of paid staff	88.0	12.0	87.6	12.4	84.5	15.5
Staff hired in the last three years	87.2	12.8	88.3	11.7	82.9	17.1
Interns hosted in the last three years	77.5	22.5	85.0	15.0	63.6	36.4

## Strategies Used to Recruit New Staff

The two most widely used recruitment strategies in all three institutions are posting jobs on the organization's website (in government agencies) and relying on word-of-mouth in grantmaking foundations. Table 6.5 shows that environmental grantmaking foundations rely on informal networks to recruit new staff more heavily than conservation/preservation organizations and government environmental agencies. In addition to having the highest mean score for reliance on word-of-mouth for recruiting new staff, the foundations also had the highest mean scores for recruiting from within their own networks, using recommendations of current staff to recruit new employees, and recruiting from organizations like their own.

Though foundations are the most likely to say they recruit from minority environmental professional associations, they are the least likely to indicate they recruit from minority-serving colleges and universities.



Table 6.5 Strategies Used by the Three Types of Institutions to Recruit New Staff

Techniques Used to Recruit New Staff	Conservation/ Preservation Mean	Government Agencies Mean	Grantmaking Foundations Mean
Post jobs on organization's website	3.07	4.00	3.60
Rely on word-of-mouth	3.06	2.67	4.00
Recruit in local community	3.04	3.16	3.64
Post jobs on other Internet sites	2.97	3.29	4.13
Recruit from amongst members & volunteers	2.76	2.37	0
Recruit from within own networks	2.75	2.93	3.93
Recruit from local colleges and universities	2.72	3.13	2.36
Recruit those recommend by current staff	2.63	2.71	3.43
Use Listservs	2.41	2.29	2.38
Recruit from other orgs. or agencies like ours	2.31	2.32	2.93
Recruit from amongst interns	2.26	2.55	1.54
Advertise in own newsletters/magazines	2.15	1.93	2.29
Advertise in newspapers	1.99	2.37	2.07
Conduct national searches	1.92	2.35	2.07
Recruit from minority-serving college/univ.	1.82	2.07	1.46
Recruit at minority env. prof. assoc./meetings	1.53	1.59	1.86
Recruit those making cold calls to ask for jobs	1.46	1.40	1.62
Use unemployment or temporary agencies	1.45	1.83	2.15
Recruit at job fairs	1.44	2.00	1.23
Recruit those walking in to ask for jobs	1.40	1.69	1.38

## Factors Hindering the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities

In both conservation/preservation organizations and environmental grantmaking foundations, the factor most likely to be identified as hindering the hiring of ethnic minorities is very few positions being available. For environmental grantmaking foundations, this was a very frequent occurrence (table 6.6).

Government environmental agencies were the most likely to recognize and report that there were few minorities in their recruiting networks. Despite the fact that grantmakers relied more heavily on recruiting through networks than the other two types of institutions, foundations were the least likely to indicate that they had few minorities in their recruiting networks and that might be a barrier to hiring ethnic minorities.

**Table 6.6. The Extent to which Factors Hinder the Hiring of Ethnic Minorities in Three Types of Institutions**

<b>Factors Hindering the Hiring of Minorities</b>	<b>Conservation/ Preservation Mean</b>	<b>Government Agencies Mean</b>	<b>Grantmaking Foundation Mean</b>
Very few positions are available	3.73	3.17	4.33
Lack of minority applicants for jobs	3.64	3.59	2.40
The organization does not have a diversity manager	3.03	2.15	3.71
There are few minorities in our recruiting networks	2.71	2.79	2.07
Few minorities live in local community	2.60	2.27	1.60
Rural location	2.49	2.17	1.47
Minorities are unaware of job openings	2.20	2.46	2.33
Lack of role models in the organization	2.07	1.93	1.36
Lack of mentors in the organization	2.01	1.96	2.08
The organization has not made any effort to hire or recruit minorities	1.96	1.74	2.13
We do not know how to recruit minorities	1.81	2.00	1.71
The organization does not have a diversity policy	1.59	1.57	2.14
The organization lacks the funds to hire minorities	1.55	1.33	1.23
Minorities lack the necessary educational qualifications	1.46	2.04	1.87
Minorities desire higher wages than we can pay	1.44	1.26	1.33
Minorities do not want to work for orgs. like ours	1.44	1.69	1.14
Minorities want to focus on racial and other social issues; this is not the focus of our organization	1.23	1.35	1.21
Minorities do not stay long if they are hired	1.23	1.27	1.07
The organization prefers to hire from certain universities	1.22	1.45	1.27
Minorities do not have the skills we are looking for	1.20	1.61	1.33
Minorities may not be well received in the organization	1.07	1.34	1.20
The organization does not hire minorities	1.00	1.21	1.29

Grantmakers were the least likely to indicate that there were few minorities living in their local communities and that was a hindrance to hiring. This could be due to the fact that many foundations are in large cities or suburban locales. This being the case, foundations would have access to ethnic minorities in their local labor pool. This is corroborated by the reporting on whether a rural location limits minority hiring. The environmental grantmaking foundations were much less likely than the other two types of institutions to indicate that a rural location interfered with the hiring of minorities.

Conservation and preservation organizations were hampered the most because some are located in rural areas. These organizations were much more likely to report that there were few minorities living in their local communities and that being in a rural location limited their ability to hire ethnic minorities.

## Diversity Initiatives Currently Being Undertaken

Government environmental agencies are more likely to undertake diversity initiatives than the other two types of institutions (table 6.7). A higher percentage of government environmental agencies reported that they promoted women already on staff to top leadership position as a diversity initiative than conservation/preservation organizations or environmental grantmaking foundations. That is, 80% of the agencies, 69.9% of the conservation/preservation organizations, and 53.8% of the foundations utilized this strategy.

About 93% of environmental grantmaking foundations reported taking steps to broaden the applicant pool as a diversity effort, but only 73% of government environmental agencies and 61% of conservation/preservation organizations undertook this initiative.

Fewer than half of the conservation/preservation organizations and government environmental agencies reported that they developed partnerships with minority institutions or consulted with minority environmental professionals. While these two types of institutions underutilized these potential pipelines of minority talent, 69.9% of the environmental grantmaking foundations engaged these talent pools in the last five years.

Environmental grantmaking foundations stand out for underutilizing some kinds of diversity strategies. For instance, only 14.3% of the foundations reported having diversity training or holding staff meetings to discuss diversity issues. The percentage of conservation and preservation organizations practicing this strategy was almost twice as high. Government environmental agencies utilized this much more than the other two types of institutions. More than 80% of the government agencies reported undertaking this initiative.

The conclusion that government agencies were more likely to undertake diversity initiatives than conservation/preservation organizations and environmental grantmaking foundations is consistent with the findings of Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly (2006). Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly found that institutions that established clear responsibilities for oversight, monitoring, and implementing diversity activities had broader impacts from the initiatives. The researchers also found that compliance with affirmative action laws forced organizations to institutionalize diversity initiatives, which resulted in increased impacts from the programs. As later discussions will show, environmental practitioners report that government agencies establish institutional oversight of diversity programs and monitor compliance with affirmative action laws.

Table 6.7. Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in Three Types of Institutions in the Past Five Years

Diversity Initiatives Undertaken in the Past Five Years	Conservation/ Preservation Percentage	Government Agencies Percentage	Grantmaking Foundations Percentage
Promote women already working in the organization to top leadership positions	69.9	80.0	53.8
Take steps to broaden applicant pool for jobs	61.1	73.1	92.9
Organize outreach activities to diverse constituents	58.1	48.0	78.6
Develop partnerships with minority institutions	41.9	48.0	64.3
Consult with minority environmental professionals	38.4	45.8	69.2
Advertise in media (magazines, newspapers, television, websites) serving minority audiences	35.6	54.2	53.8
Have targeted searches to meet diversity goals	35.1	53.8	50.0
Develop internship program to provide work experience for minorities	34.2	58.3	30.8
Hire ethnic minority employees	32.5	74.1	64.3
Recruit from minority institutions	30.6	52.0	64.3
Promote minorities already working in the organization to top leadership positions	29.0	60.9	53.8
Develop training/leadership programs for women	27.4	56.0	28.6
Hold diversity training and staff meetings to discuss diversity	27.4	80.8	14.3
Hire interns participating in diversity programs	26.8	41.7	15.4
Develop mentoring programs	26.4	50.0	23.1
Develop training/leadership programs for minorities	18.1	48.0	35.7
Develop training/leadership programs for low income residents	15.3	33.3	28.6
Hire consultants or use job-placement companies to find minority workers	15.1	8.0	23.1
Provide funds to facilitate diversity efforts	14.9	50.0	23.1
Create a diversity committee	9.5	40.0	7.7
Promote diversity manager to any other positions of leadership in the organization	4.6	41.7	8.3
Have a diversity manager	2.8	36.0	7.7

## Diversity Initiatives That Should Be Undertaken in the Future

The environmental grantmaking foundations were the most enthusiastic about diversity initiatives that should be undertaken in the future. For six of the 13 initiatives listed, environmental grantmaking foundations recorded the highest level of support of the three types of institutions studied. However, the foundations tended to be the least likely to say they would support such activities if they were developed (table 6.8).

Table 6.8. Institutional Comparison of Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future in the Region

Diversity Initiatives that should be Undertaken in the Future	Percentage Saying Yes			Percent Likely/Very Likely to Support it		
	Conservation /Preservation	Government Agency	Grantmaking Foundations	Conservation /Preservation	Government Agency	Grantmaking Foundations
Develop a pipeline for greater inclusion of minority and low-income residents in the activities, workforce, or boards of organizations like yours	73.6	73.9	77.8	50.0	40.0	50.0
Develop training program for low-income and ethnic minority residents interested in working in or participating in activities in organizations like yours	67.9	69.6	70.0	36.7	42.9	20.0
Create a web portal for identifying ethnic minority environmental professionals for jobs, consultancies, speakers, expert testimonies, board positions, etc.	67.3	52.4	80.0	54.2	27.8	27.3
Create a regional diversity working group to help facilitate diversity initiatives	64.0	52.2	55.6	36.2	52.5	30.0
Use social media to keep track of diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	60.4	36.4	70.0	46.7	23.5	36.4
Include more issues of interest to low-income communities and ethnic minorities on the agenda of organizations like yours	60.4	56.5	60.0	40.9	22.2	66.6
Use social media to participate remotely in diversity activities in the region and elsewhere	57.4	45.5	40.0	40.9	29.4	36.4
Organize job fairs in ethnic minority and low-income communities	57.1	65.2	50.0	24.4	50.0	11.1
Expand the agenda of organizations like yours to include more issues affecting ethnic minority and low-income communities	54.9	52.2	50.0	37.8	31.6	62.5
Organize workshops on diversity	52.8	47.8	54.5	42.8	47.4	40.0
Create Listservs and email groups for the purpose of focusing on diversity issues and activities	50.0	39.1	50.0	27.3	29.4	36.4
Hold diversity training for staff in organizations like yours	44.6	63.6	60.0	36.2	61.1	30.0
Organize a diversity conference	42.3	43.5	50.0	34.0	31.6	40.0

Government environmental agencies are already undertaking diversity initiatives to a greater extent than the other two types of institutions. Yet, the greatest support for diversity initiatives if they were developed in their region in the future came from government agencies. In five of the 13 instances, they were the most likely to say they would support a given initiative if it were developed.

Chapter 6 shows that the three types of institutions have embraced diversity efforts to varying degrees. In all three, much more progress has been made on gender diversity than on racial diversity.

Chapter 7 will examine if and how the size of the organization is related to diversity in conservation/preservation organizations and government environmental agencies. There was not enough data to conduct this analysis for environmental grantmaking organizations.





## **Chapter 7.** **Organizational** **Size and Diversity**

**This chapter examines whether size can be associated with the demographic characteristics of two of the three types of institutions studies—conservation/preservation organizations and government environmental agencies. Though the environmental grantmaking sample has 28 organizations with operating budgets that range from about half a million dollars to more than \$100 million, the overall sample size is too small to conduct analysis of this nature.**



## Size and Diversity in Conservation and Preservation Organizations

Does size matter? That is, how is size related to the demographic characteristics of organizations? Respondents from conservation and preservation organizations were asked to report the size of their institution's operating budget for 2012. This was used as an indicator of size. Operating budget sizes ranged from zero to \$100,000,000. The 191 conservation/preservation organizations were divided into three groups for further analysis—organizations with budgets of a million dollars or more, organizations with budgets of less than a million dollars, and organizations that reported zero for the budget question or did not answer the question at all.

- 90 organizations (51.3%) reported either zero for their 2012 operating budget or did not report any budget at all.
- 73 organizations (38.2%) had 2012 operating budgets of \$1 to \$999,999.
- 20 organizations (10.5%) had operating budgets of \$1 million to \$100 million.

## LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

### Gender Diversity

Analysis of the gender of the people in each position and the organization’s budget size found that emerging patterns depended on the level of organizational leadership. To make the tables clear and easier to understand and to avoid repetition, only the percentage of people occupying the specified positions are recorded below. The number of organizations and the number of males and females in these positions have been reported earlier in table 3.1.

Table 7.1 shows that females were much less likely to be the president of the largest organizations (those with budgets of \$1 million or more) than organizations with smaller budgets. Hence, 25.9% of the conservation/preservation organizations that had or reported no budget had a female president and so did 22.9% of those with budgets of \$1-\$999,999. Only 10% of the organizations with a budget of a million dollars or more had a female president.

**Table 7.1. Budget Size and Gender Diversity in Conservation/Preservation Organizations**

Leadership Position	Operating Budget for 2012								
	No Budget Reported			\$1-999,999			A Million or more		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
President	74.1%	25.9%		77.1%	22.9%		90.0%	10.0%	
Vice President	69.4%	24.5%	6.1%	59.0%	41.0%		12.5%	62.5%	25.0%
Executive Director	55.4%	41.1%	3.6%	55.8%	44.2%		64.3%	37.5%	
Assistant/Associate Director	57.7%	38.5%	3.8%	33.3%	66.7%		33.3%	50.0%	16.7%
Chair of the Board	69.6%	28.3%	2.2%	75.7%	24.3%		64.7%	35.3%	
Vice Chair of the Board	61.1%	38.9%		75.8%	24.2%		54.5%	45.5%	
Business Manager	52.2%	43.5%		22.2%	77.8%		22.2%	77.8%	
Human Resources Director	9.4%	87.5%	3.1%		100.0%			100.0%	
Secretary	33.3%	66.7%		37.9%	62.1%		30.8%	69.2%	
Treasurer	66.0%	34.0%		66.2%	32.3%	1.5%	69.2%	30.8%	
Accountant	35.9%	56.4%	7.7%	37.9%	58.6%	3.4%	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%
Program Director	23.3%	67.4%	9.3%	22.6%	77.4%		60.0%	26.7%	13.3%
Project Coordinator	16.0%	80.0%	4.0%	28.6%	71.4%			100.0%	
Community Organizer	51.9%	44.4%	3.7%		100.0%		22.2%	22.2%	55.6%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	53.1%	46.9%		18.2%	81.8%		25.0%	66.7%	8.3%
Public Relations Manager	20.7%	79.3%		14.3%	85.7%		30.8%	69.2%	
Spokesperson	25.0%	58.3%	16.7%	70.0%	30.0%			75.0%	25.0%
Lobbyist	56.3%	31.3%	12.5%	100.0%			14.3%	42.9%	42.9%
Legal Counsel	42.3%	50.0%	7.7%	77.8%	22.2%		45.5%	45.5%	9.1%
Diversity Manager	42.9%	57.1%						100.0%	
Information Technology Mgr.	65.5%	34.5%		81.8%	18.2%		92.9%	7.1%	
Web Designer/Manager	54.8%	45.2%		57.7%	42.3%		45.5%	36.4%	18.2%
Fundraiser	16.2%	81.1%	2.7%	17.6%	82.4%		6.7%	80.0%	13.3%
Investment Manager	40.0%	60.0%		75.0%	25.0%		100.0%		
Grants Manager	20.0%	76.0%	4.0%	22.2%	77.8%		11.1%	88.9%	

Three interesting patterns emerged from studying the gender distribution of the leadership of three of the most powerful and visible positions (president, executive director, and chair of the board), and the assistant positions associated with them.

1. Women were least likely to be president, executive director, or chair of the board in the largest conservation/preservation organizations (those with budgets of a million or more).
2. Women were more likely to be the vice president, assistant or associate director, and vice chair of the board.
3. Women were more likely to be the vice president, assistant or associate director, and vice chair of the board in the largest conservation/preservation organizations than in smaller ones.

This could reflect promotion patterns in which women are promoted up the ranks but promotions stop shy of the top leadership positions—a glass ceiling. However, this could also be an indicator of the fact that women may have shorter employment tenure in the organizations and fewer have risen through the ranks because they are not as senior as their male colleagues.

It should be noted that none of conservation/preservation organizations with budgets of \$1-\$999,999 had a diversity manager on staff. As later discussion will show, this has important implications for the racial diversity in the organizations.

### Racial Diversity

A similar exercise was performed for race. An examination of the top three leadership positions (president, executive director, and chair of the board) and the assistant positions associated with them (vice president, assistant/associate director, and vice chair of the board) did not reveal the same patterns found when gender was analyzed.

As table 7.2 shows, none of the organizations with the largest budgets (\$1 million or more) had a president, vice president, or assistant/associate director who was an ethnic or racial minority.

The progress on gender diversity and the lack of such on racial diversity is very evident when these top positions are examined. While 10% of the largest conservation/preservation organizations had female presidents and 87.5% had female vice presidents, none had ethnic minority presidents or vice presidents.

This study illustrates women's increased mobility while at the same time revealing the absence of racial minorities in those top spots.

Despite the challenges of obtaining positions of top leadership in conservation and preservation organizations with the largest budgets, table 7.2 shows that **the largest conservation/preservation organizations provide more opportunities for ethnic minorities to occupy other staff positions than do their smaller brethren.**

Table 7.2. Budget Size and Racial Diversity in Conservation/Preservation Organizations

Leadership Position	Operating Budget for 2012								
	No Budget Reported			\$1-999,999			A Million or more		
	White	Minority	Both	White	Minority	Both	White	Minority	Both
President	100.0%			97.8%	2.2%		100.0%		
Vice President	89.8%	6.1%	4.1%	100.0%			100.0%		
Executive Director	96.4%	1.8%	1.8%	100.0%			84.6%	15.4%	
Assistant/Associate Director	100.0%			93.3%	6.7%		100.0%		
Chair of the Board	97.9%	2.1%		94.4%	5.6%		94.1%	5.9%	
Vice Chair of the Board	100.0%			97.0%	3.0%		81.8%	18.2%	
Business Manager	95.8%	4.2%		94.4%	5.6%		75.0%	25.0%	
Human Resources Director	68.8%	28.1%	3.1%	80.0%	20.0%		69.2%	30.8%	
Secretary	93.2%	4.5%	2.3%	94.6%	5.4%		100.0%		
Treasurer	96.2%	3.8%		96.8%	3.2%		92.3%	7.7%	
Accountant	92.1%	7.9%		92.3%	7.7%		84.6%	15.4%	
Program Director	90.9%	4.5%	4.5%	100.0%			86.7%	6.7%	6.7%
Project Coordinator	84.6%	11.5%	3.8%	90.0%	10.0%		83.3%	16.7%	
Community Organizer	75.0%	17.9%	7.1%	100.0%			50.0%	12.5%	37.5%
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	100.0%			95.5%	4.5%		91.7%		8.3%
Public Relations Manager	100.0%			100.0%			83.3%	8.3%	8.3%
Spokesperson	92.3%		7.7%	90.0%	10.0%		75.0%		25.0%
Lobbyist	88.2%	5.9%	5.9%	100.0%			71.4%		28.6%
Legal Counsel	96.2%		3.8%	94.1%	5.9%		81.8%	9.1%	9.1%
Diversity Manager	33.0%	66.7%					66.7%	33.3%	
Information Technology Mgr.	73.3%	26.7%		90.0%	10.0%		76.9%	23.1%	
Web Designer/Manager	96.7%	3.3%		95.8%	4.2%		80.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Fundraiser	91.9%	8.1%		100.0%			86.7%		13.3%
Investment Manager	83.3%	16.7%		100.0%			100.0%		
Grants Manager	84.6%	15.4%		100.0%			85.7%	14.3%	

## BOARD MEMBERS, STAFF, AND INTERNS

Further analysis was conducted to find out how the percentages of males and females on the boards, staff, or who were interns varied by the size of the budget of conservation and preservation organizations. A similar analysis was conducted to see how race was related to the percentages of Whites and minorities in these organizational roles when the operating budget was taken into consideration. Respondents were asked to say how many males or females and Whites and minorities were in each organization role in their institution. The responses were collapsed and coded into two categories—none and one or more.

### Gender Diversity

Table 7.3 reports the percentages of organizations that had one or more males and females in each role in each type of organization. Size mattered; the organizations with the largest operating budgets had virtually identical rates at which males and females were found in the four roles examined below. In the other two size categories of conservation/preservation organizations examined, there was greater variation in the percentages of males and females in the roles studied, and females were more likely than males to be in those roles.

More than 94% of the conservation and preservation organizations in the study reported having both males and females on their boards. There was more variation in percentages of males and females in other organizational roles. For instance only 61.3% of the organizations that reported no budget had one or more males on their staff, while 72.2% of those same organizations had one or more females on staff.

**Table 7.3. Percent of Organizations with One or More Males and Females in Specified Roles**

Organizational Role	Operating Budget for 2012					
	No Budget Reported		\$1-999,999		A Million or more	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Member of the board	100.0%	97.4%	98.6%	98.6%	94.7%	94.7%
Have on paid staff	61.3%	72.2%	66.0%	72.7%	100.0%	100.0%
Staff hired in the last three years	52.4%	76.7%	52.5%	66.7%	100.0%	100.0%
Interns hosted in the last three years	70.4%	76.9%	55.3%	62.0%	81.8%	83.3%

The table also shows that while all the organizations with budgets of a million dollars or more had hired male staff in the past three years, only slightly more than half of the remaining conservation and preservation organizations did likewise.

When it came to the hosting of interns, the conservation and preservation organizations with the largest budgets are the most likely to host interns.

- In these organizations there was very little difference in the percentages of organizations that hosted male and female interns (81.8% versus 83.3%).

Organizations with smaller budgets were more likely to have female than male interns. For example, while 55.3% of the organizations with budgets of \$1-\$999,999 hosted male interns, 62% of those same organizations hosted female interns. In addition, 70.4% of those organizations reporting no budget had male interns; 76.9% of them had female interns.

## Racial Diversity

Table 7.4 reveals some important findings about race and organizational size. The analysis shows that the conservation and preservation organizations with the largest budgets (\$1 million or more) are considerably more diverse than smaller ones on all four dimensions. The organizations with the largest budgets were much more likely to have minorities on their boards, on paid staff, among those hired in the last three years, and as interns.

The data shows compelling reasons to scrutinize the smaller conservation/ preservation organizations and advocate for increasing their diversity. None of the conservation/preservation organizations with budgets of \$1-\$999,999 have diversity managers on staff. In these organizations, the percentage of minorities on the paid staff is significantly lower than in the other two categories of organizations. While 84.2% of the organizations with a budget of a million or more have minorities on staff and 27.6% of those that had no budget or did not report one had minority staffers, only 16.7% of organizations with \$1-\$999,999 had minorities on staff.

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### THE CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE LARGEST BUDGETS ARE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE DIVERSE THAN CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION ORGANIZATIONS WITH SMALLER BUDGETS.

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**Hiring is another area where ethnic minorities fare worse in the smaller organizations.** More than 95% of all the conservation and preservation organizations reported hiring staff in the last three years. Yet only 13.2% of the organizations with budgets of \$1-\$999,999 hired any minorities.

- Significantly higher percentages of organizations with budgets of a million or more hired minorities than those that either had no budgets or did not report one. That is 58.3% of the largest organizations compared to 30.3% of the smaller ones hired minorities in the last three years.

**The diversity manager matters.** The data shows that even in organizations that had no budget or did not report one, the presence of diversity managers in these organizations is associated with higher rates of having minorities on the paid staff, hiring minorities in the last three years, and hosting minority interns. Organizations with no diversity managers (those having a budget of \$1-\$999,999) had the lowest minority presence on their staff, in hires made in the last three years, and in the percentage of interns hosted in the last three years.

**These findings are significant because the largest conservation/preservation organizations have been under the spotlight when it comes to inquiries and criticism about diversity for several decades.** One could argue that the increased scrutiny might have nudged these organizations to undertake diversity efforts. There is no question that the scrutiny and spotlight should remain on the largest conservation/preservation organizations. But **the findings of this report suggest that scrutiny should be widened to encompass smaller conservation/ preservation organizations.** **Smaller organizations are less diverse but thus far have escaped scrutiny.** Regardless of size, conservation/preservation organizations should be held more accountable for progress on diversity.

## Size and Diversity in Government Environmental Agencies

The relationship between size and institutional diversity was also examined in government environmental agencies. Respondents from government entities were asked to indicate whether their organization was a federal, state, or local (county or city) agency. For the purposes of this analysis the agencies were grouped into two categories—federal and state/local. These two groupings were used as an indicator of size. The federal agencies tend to have larger budgets,

staff, and overall scope of operations. While all the respondents indicated whether their agencies were federal or state/local, several did not report the size of their institution's operating budget for 2012. Since there wasn't enough information on budgets to categorize the agencies by budget for this analysis, the categories of federal and state/local were used as a proxy for size in this analysis.

Of the 74 government environmental agencies studied:

- 45 agencies (60.8%) were federal agencies.
- 29 agencies (39.2%) were state/local agencies.

## LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

### Gender Diversity

For the sake of simplicity and clarity and to avoid repetition, only the percentage of males and females occupying the specified positions are recorded below. The number of organizations and the number of males and females in these positions have been reported earlier in table 4.1.

In both federal and state/local agencies, males dominate the president's position. That is, 71.4% of the presidents of federal agencies and two-thirds of those in state/local agencies are males. Half of the ten vice presidents in federal agencies were men, and all of the three found in state/local agencies were also men (table 7.5).

There was only a slight difference in the percentage of males and females occupying the executive director's position in the federal versus state/local agencies. Males dominated this position in both—76.9% of the 26 executive directors in the federal agencies and 75% of the 20 executive directors reported in the state/local agencies were males.

Only 15 agencies reported having chairs of the boards. Of those only two were federal— one of the chairs was male and the other was female. The story was different for the state/local agencies. Thirteen reported having chairs of the board and 12 (93.2%) of the chairs were males.

- The state/local agencies were the ones most likely to have vice-chairs of the board, and 84.6% (11 out of 13) of these were males.

Females dominated the following positions in both federal and state/local agencies:

- Human resources director – 75% or more
- Secretary – more than 80%
- Accountant – more than 70%
- Community organizer – 75% or more
- Diversity manager – more than 60%.

Table 7.5. Jurisdiction and Gender Diversity in Government Environmental Agencies

Leadership Position	Agency Jurisdiction					
	Federal Agencies			State or Local Agencies		
	Male	Female	Both	Male	Female	Both
President	71.4%	28.6%		66.7%	33.3%	
Vice President	50.0%	50.0%		100.0%		
Executive Director	76.9%	23.1%		75.0%	25.0%	
Assistant/Associate Director	73.9%	21.7%	4.3%	61.5%	30.8%	7.7%
Chair of the Board	50.0%	50.0%		92.3%	7.7%	
Vice Chair of the Board		100.0%		84.6%	15.4%	
Business Manager	31.3%	68.6%		70.0%	30.0%	
Human Resources Director	20.8%	79.2%		25.0%	75.0%	
Secretary	13.3%	86.7%		18.2%	81.8%	
Treasurer	100.0%			44.4%	55.6%	
Accountant	27.3%	72.7%		28.6%	71.4%	
Program Director	62.5%	31.3%	6.3%	71.4%	14.3%	14.3%
Project Coordinator	44.4%	44.4%	11.1%	22.2%	77.8%	
Community Organizer	25.0%	75.0%		12.5%	87.5%	
Magazine/Newsletter Editor		100.0%		50.0%	50.0%	
Public Relations Manager	46.2%	53.8%		40.0%	60.0%	
Spokesperson	25.0%	62.5%	12.5%	55.6%	44.4%	
Lobbyist				60.0%	40.0%	
Legal Counsel	42.9%	28.6%	28.6%	35.7%	57.1%	7.1%
Diversity Manager	37.5%	62.5%		28.6%	71.4%	
Information Technology Manager	63.2%	31.6%	5.3%	86.7%	13.3%	
Web Designer/Manager	42.9%	50.0%	7.1%	53.8%	46.2%	
Fundraiser	100.0%			50.0%	50.0%	
Investment Manager	100.0%			100.0%		
Grants Manager	16.7%	83.3%		44.4%	44.4%	11.1%



Women were significantly more likely to occupy the position of business manager in federal agencies than they were in state/local agencies: 68.6% of the business managers in the federal environmental agencies were women. Only 30% of the business managers in state/local agencies were women.

Women were also much more likely to be spokespersons, information technology managers, and grant managers in federal agencies than in state/local agencies.

### Racial Diversity

The racial diversity of federal and state/local environmental agencies was also analyzed. Table 7.6 contains the percentages of agencies that had Whites and minorities occupying various leadership positions. The actual number of organizations with these positions are presented in table 4.2.

As table 7.6 shows, there is a higher percentage of minorities occupying the positions of president, vice president, and executive director in federal agencies than in state/local agencies. In fact, none of the state/local agencies have any minorities occupying the posts of president or vice president. However, 26.7% of the federal agencies had an ethnic or racial minority in the president's position.

Further analysis of the staff positions in federal versus state/local agencies found that:

- There were 10 positions in federal agencies and seven positions in state/local agencies with no minority occupants.
- There were only four positions (diversity manager, president, human resources director, and secretary) in which minorities occupied 20% or more of the positions in federal agencies.
- In contrast, there were 10 positions in which minorities occupied 20% or more of the positions in state/local agencies.
- Minorities were significantly more likely to be assistant/associate directors, chairs of the board, human resources directors, accountants, project coordinators, community organizers, spokespersons, and fundraisers in state/local agencies than in federal agencies.

Table 7.6. Jurisdiction and Racial Diversity in Government Environmental Agencies

Leadership Position	Agency Jurisdiction					
	Federal Agencies			State or Local Agencies		
	White	Minority	Both	White	Minority	Both
President	73.3%	26.7%		100.0%		
Vice President	88.9%	11.1%		100.0%		
Executive Director	84.6%	11.5%	3.8%	90.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Assistant/Associate Director	87.0%	13.0%		78.6%	21.4%	
Chair of the Board	100.0%			76.9%	23.1%	
Vice Chair of the Board	100.0%			100.0%		
Business Manager	93.8%	6.3%		90.0%	10.0%	
Human Resources Director	77.3%	22.7%		58.3%	41.7%	
Secretary	80.0%	20.0%		90.9%	9.1%	
Treasurer	100.0%			87.5%	12.5%	
Accountant	90.9%	9.1%		50.0%	50.0%	
Program Director	93.8%	6.3%		100.0%		
Project Coordinator	100.0%			66.7%	33.3%	
Community Organizer	85.7%	14.3%		57.1%	42.9%	
Magazine/Newsletter Editor	100.0%			81.8%	18.2%	
Public Relations Manager	88.0%	8.0%	4.0%	78.6%	21.4%	
Spokesperson	100.0%			77.8%	22.2%	
Lobbyist				100.0%		
Legal Counsel	85.7%		14.3%	100.0%		
Diversity Manager	37.5%	62.5%		28.6%	71.4%	
Information Technology Manager	77.8%	16.7%	5.6%	92.3%	7.7%	
Web Designer/Manager	100.0%			91.7%	8.3%	
Fundraiser	100.0%				50.0%	50.0%
Investment Manager	100.0%			100.0%		
Grants Manager	83.3%	16.7%		88.9%	11.1%	

## BOARD MEMBERS, STAFF, AND INTERNS

Analysis was conducted to find out how the percentages of males and females on the boards, staff, or who were interns varied by the jurisdiction of the agency. A similar analysis was also conducted to see how race was related to the percentages of Whites and minorities in these organizational roles when agency jurisdiction was taken into account. Respondents were asked to say how many males or females and Whites and minorities were in each organization role in their agency. The responses were collapsed and coded into two categories—none and one or more. The two tables below (7.7 and 7.8) report on the percentages of agencies that had one or more people in each organization role.

### Gender Diversity

Table 7.7 shows that there was a higher percentage of females in the four organizational roles in state/local agencies than in federal agencies. While half of the federal environmental agencies had one or more males on their boards, all of the state/local agencies did. More than 90% of the state/local agencies also had one or more females as members of their boards.

All the state/local agencies had one or more females on their staff. In comparison, 81.3% of the state/local agencies had males on their staff. All the federal agencies had males on their staff and roughly 95% of them had female staffers.

State/local agencies were more likely to hire females than federal environmental agencies in the last three years.

- It should be noted that females had a higher chance of being hired into both types of agencies than males.
- However, females had a better chance of being hired in local or state agencies than federal agencies.
  - 80% of state/local agencies hired females in the last three years. In comparison, 73.3% of federal agencies hired females over the same time period.

**Table 7.7. Percent of Environmental Agencies with One or More Males and Females in Specified Roles**

Organizational Role	Agency Jurisdiction			
	Federal Agencies		State or Local Agencies	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Member of the board	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	91.7%
Have on paid staff	100.0%	94.7%	81.3%	100.0%
Staff hired in the last three years	60.0%	73.3%	66.7%	80.0%
Interns hosted in the last three years	80.0%	63.6%	86.7%	72.2%

State or local agencies were more likely to have hosted interns in the last three years than federal agencies. Both federal and state/local agencies were more likely to host male interns than female interns. However, a higher percentage of state/local agencies hosted female interns than federal agencies.

- 72.2% of state or local agencies hosted female interns.
- 63.6% of federal agencies hosted female interns.

**Racial Diversity**

Ethnic minorities found greater opportunities to sit on state/local boards than on federal boards. As table 7.8 shows, all of the federal agencies had one or more Whites on their boards but none had minorities. Though all of the state/local agencies had White board members, 40% of them also had minorities on their boards.

All the agencies—federal and state/local—had Whites on their staff. A significantly higher percentage of federal agencies had at least one minority on staff than state/local agencies. That is:

- 80% of federal environmental agencies had one or more minorities on their staff compared to only 46.2% of state/local agencies that had one or more minorities on their staff.

But the reverse was true for staff hired in the last three years. While 60% of state/local agencies hired minorities onto their staff in the last three years, only 46.2% of federal environmental agencies did the same.

**Table 7.8. Percent of Environmental Agencies with One or More Whites and Minorities in Specified Roles**

Organizational Role	Agency Jurisdiction			
	Federal Agencies		State or Local Agencies	
	White	Minority	White	Minority
Member of the board	100.0%		100.0%	40.0%
Have on paid staff	100.0%	80.0%	100.0%	46.2%
Staff hired in the last three years	92.3%	46.2%	100.0%	60.0%
Interns hosted in the last three years	91.7%	33.3%	100.0%	16.7%

More than 90% of both federal and state/local agencies hosted interns in the past three years, however, ethnic minorities were twice as likely to obtain internships in federal agencies than in state/local agencies.

- A third of the federal environmental agencies hosted minority interns in the past three years.
- Only 16.7% of state/local environmental agencies hosted minority interns in the past three years.

In fact, the percentage of state/local environmental agencies hosting minority interns is lower than the percentage found in any of the three types of conservation/preservation organizations or environmental grantmaking foundations discussed above.

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**STATE AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES ARE THE LEAST LIKELY  
OF ANY OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL TYPES ANALYZED IN THIS STUDY  
TO HAVE HOSTED MINORITY INTERNS IN THE LAST THREE YEARS.**

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Overall, size mattered—in restricting access to leadership and in providing opportunities—in conservation/preservation organizations as well as in government environmental agencies when it came to gender and racial diversity.

Chapter 8 of this report will contain some reflections of environmental practitioners as they ponder the state of institutional diversity in the environmental field.



## **Chapter 8.** **Reflections of** **Environmental** **Practitioners**

**Interviews were conducted with environmental practitioners familiar with environmental nonprofits and environmental agencies to discover how they perceived the status of diversity in the environmental movement generally and in mainstream environmental organizations and government environmental agencies more specifically. The study didn't ask about environmental grantmaking foundations because many people are not familiar with the inner workings of these organizations or their demographic characteristics. Interviewees were asked to think of diversity in broad terms as it relates to race, gender, sexual orientation, class, culture, urban-rural, religion, etc. These reflections are important as they provide an additional qualitative dimension to the analysis. The reflections also provide a context in which to view the findings discussed above. The insights that the practitioners shared corroborated many of the findings reported above.**

## Methodology

An interview schedule was drafted, pre-tested, and revised in February 2014. Interviews were conducted from March 19 to April 30, 2014. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours. The interview schedule was developed in and administered through Qualtrics. The Qualtrics platform allows for the tracking of interviews, the placement of automatic time stamps on the interviews indicating when each started and ended, the assignment of anonymous markers to each interview, and the collection of background information on each interviewee. Using an interview schedule also ensured that all the interviewees were asked the same core questions. Though deviations occurred—to probe responses or elicit new information—all respondents answered the same basic questions. The responses to the core set of questions will be used to make comparisons later on in the chapter.

All the interviews were digitally recorded and then transcribed. All interviewees agreed to participate on condition that they would remain anonymous. The topic of diversity is a sensitive one in the environmental field, and granting anonymity to respondents was the only way to get respondents to participate in the study and provide candid responses.

All names used below to identify interviewees are pseudonyms. Though pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of interviewees, all the corresponding information about the about the interviewee is true.

A multi-method approach was used to identify interviewees. Environmental professionals who were known to have worked in environmental organizations, have experience with diversity programs, have been diversity advocates, have participated in diversity conferences, or have been in top leadership positions in environmental organizations were identified as potential interviewees. A snowball sampling technique was also used to help build the sample. Staff in environmental organizations as well as interviewees were asked to provide names of people who were knowledgeable about environmental organizations and diversity issues. These people were contacted and asked to participate in the study.

Potential interviewees were first contacted by email to briefly introduce the project and to request an interview. A specific interview time was established either by email or by a short telephone call. The interviews were then conducted over the telephone. If a potential interviewee did not respond to the request for an interview after five attempts to make contact, no further attempts were made to reach that individual.

The response rate was very high. Only one person with whom contact was made refused to participate in the study, and she refused because she thought she wasn't the best person in her organization to answer the questions.

## Sample Description

This chapter reports on interviews conducted with 21 respondents. Over the course of their careers, all the interviewees were affiliated with one or more of the following institutions: environmental agencies, conservation and preservation organizations, environmental consulting organizations, environmental grantmaking foundations, environmental justice organizations, schools, and university environmental programs.

They served in the following capacities in these organizations: founders, chief executive officers, executive directors, presidents, board members, program directors, consultants, faculty, policy analysts, legal counsels, project directors or coordinators, and community organizers. Respondents worked in environmental organizations anywhere from one year to 46 years. They came from all over the country and were from a variety of racial and ethnic and religious backgrounds; multiple sexual orientations; rural, peri-urban, and urban; and were male and female.

# The State of Diversity in the American Environmental Movement

Interviewees were asked, “How would you describe the state of diversity in the American environmental movement today?” Their responses are summarized in table 8.1. The responses are grouped into five major thematic areas that are discussed in more detail below.

## Table 8.1. Reflections on the Status of Diversity in the Environmental Movement

### 1. ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP NEEDS TO BE MORE PROACTIVE ON DIVERSITY ISSUES.

- Diversity lacking in the leadership of the movement.
- The top leaders are still predominantly White.
- Diversity champions are in non-decision-making roles.

### 2. INADEQUATE GRASSROOTS PARTICIPATION.

- The environmental movement is top down not bottom up the way a true movement should be.
- The movement could be more representative of the grassroots.
- Organizations try to work in low-income and minority communities but don’t have staff from those communities or who are reflective of those communities.

### 3. MOVEMENT FRAGMENTATION.

- The whole movement is not as organized as it could be — it is fragmented.
  - However, there was some evidence of a convergence in interest and activities being undertaken in the movement.
- There is a divide in the movement that must be bridged.
- There is diversity of issues being tackled, diversity of people involved in environmental issues, and diversity of locations in which environmental work is being done.
- We are not talking to or working with communities that are most heavily impacted by disasters, etc.

### 4. EXCLUSIONARY FRAMING AND A BROADER BASE.

- Terminology and labeling sometimes excludes groups that are doing environmental work but do not think of it in those terms and do not label it as such.
  - A broad definition of environment will expand the number of people included under the “environmentalist” umbrella and help diversify the movement.
  - More people of color would feel included if the definition were broadened.
- The environmental work of ethnic minorities is invisible and goes largely unrecognized.
  - Not everyone feels this is currently the case.
- The Millennials offer hope as they have grown up in a more diverse society and are more comfortable working in diverse settings.

### 5. BRIDGE-BUILDING.

- The demographic shift underway in the country is forcing the movement to consider diversity more seriously.
- There has been a rollback of diversity efforts in the last two decades.
- The infrastructure to mount effective efforts is inadequate.
- The culture of the environmental movement has to change.



## RELUCTANT LEADERS COUPLED WITH DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS IN NON-DECISION-MAKING ROLES

Several interviewees expressed the view that the environmental movement lacks diversity because the leadership of the environmental movement is reluctant to champion the cause of diversity—especially racial diversity—in ways that will bring about widespread changes. Interviewees point to the fact that some of the movement’s senior leaders have held their leadership positions for decades. While the aging-in-place of the leadership provides great stability and experience to draw on, it can also make it difficult to bring about changes that the leadership neither supports nor is comfortable with.

Parker Henderson, who has been on the staff and board of conservation organizations for 15 years, describes the challenges he sees with this model of movement leadership. Henderson says, “Movement-wide it seems like there’s kind of a holding on of the old guard of mainstream environmental movements which is usually like 50-, 60-something White males that are in positions of leadership in the mainstream environmental organizations, and they continue to set the agenda without having real sensitivity or awareness to the lived experiences of other folks in particular to people of color and so my read on the overall movement [is] ...that [it] still remains steeped in the traditional messaging around protecting places and wildlife...[They are]...not linking those efforts to protecting people, or protecting health, or creating jobs...the kind of issues that communities of color in particular are addressing on a frontline basis [is not being seriously considered].”

Luke Carter, who has been on the staff and boards of environmental nonprofits for about seven years and before that worked in the government as a policymaker, also commented on the age of the leadership of the environmental movement. He describes the leadership as “very old, White, probably upper middle [class].” He juxtaposes these activists with the “young students to 25 year olds, low income, [who have] a bigger worldview” who are also a part of the movement.

Felicia Madison, a Millennial, asserts that diversity implies a radical power and cultural shift. She argues that “Diversity for me is two-handed and complex sort of equation because on the one hand we not only just want different types of ethnicities and different...forms of cultural experiences within the environmental movement including understandings of power that extend to different forms of identity as well—sexual orientation, gender identity, etc...But also [we] want that People of Color leadership and the forms of identity that they’re coming from in environmentalist communities. And also that they’re understanding power and structural inequality in a way that will result in the complete overhaul of why that injustice started in the first place.”

Respondents also contend that the movement lacks diversity because the activists who do want to promote diversity are often in mid-level positions—typically not key decision-making positions—and therefore find it difficult to effectuate the changes they seek. Gail Swanson, who has spent the last 26 years working in environmental nonprofits and foundations, explains that “it is not always easy for people who are not [in] decision-making positions to...well let me put it this way, it’s harder for people in non-decision-making positions to take a very, maybe public or strong stand because of the potential consequences.” She goes on to say, “I think people that are in leadership positions have to...set different expectations of themselves as well as their organizations.”

Joanne Hughes, who has 16 years of experience in environmental nonprofits and before that worked for several years in community-based organizations, says she sees a “lack of diversity within...mainstream organizations.” However, she believes the focus on diversity “while it’s a lofty goal, isn’t the answer.” She thinks focusing on diversity is limiting. Instead she prefers to move “towards dismantling racism.” Despite her skepticism, Hughes hastens to say that diversity is very important. She says, “I mean, it’s the critical issue. It’s the big issue, it’s the elephant in the room. Without having a diverse um...movement or having a diverse staff within these environmental organizations, it’s quite likely that there will be very little progress in the area of environment that directly affects People of Color.”

## INADEQUATE GRASSROOTS INPUT AND PARTICIPATION

Jacob Maxwell, who has 46 years of experience working in government environmental agencies and conservation organizations, argues that the environmental movement could be more representative of the grassroots, “in terms of who is in the organizations, who is leading the organizations, [and] who the staff are.”

Maxwell points out that even when some environmental organizations are working in minority communities, their staff is all White and the organizations seem oblivious to the effects of this. He provides an example of the Rock Creek Conservancy in Washington, D.C. The group has five staff members. There are no ethnic minorities on the staff yet they operate in a park in a city in which 65% of the residents are people of color.

Alexis Traver, who has been working in conservation organizations for about nine years and prior to that in the public sector, says of the environmental movement, “Is it really a movement?” She asks this question because when she contemplates the structure of a movement she thinks “about the people, the grassroots.” She explains further, “a movement comes from the people on up, and not from the top on down. The environmental...movement appears to be from the top down and...this is the traditional...I wonder because, you don’t see a groundswell of people coming out around environmental issues.” Traver also questions the notion of a movement because she thinks of a movement as a community, and she does not see a cohesive community manifested in the environmental movement. She says, “We use the term movement; I use the term interchangeably with community.”

Another interviewee, Zoe Edmon—who had worked in environmental and community-based organizations for about a decade—also questions the notion of an environmental movement. Edmon says, “I don’t think there is an American environmental movement... The way American Indians have been treated with abhorrence and so the American Indian movement to me is very much an American environmental movement, and it feels like a very honest and very real and truthful environmental movement considering the history of America... I don’t know that I’ve seen any other environmental movement be as targeted to the actual problem and not a symptom of the problem. I feel like the environmental justice movement is evolving but it also doesn’t address a fundamental issue when it comes to why we schlep environmental impact on the most vulnerable communities and why we’ve done that since the beginning.”

## DIVERSE BUT FRAGMENTED MOVEMENT

Parker Henderson identifies what he calls a “green divide” that he thinks fragments the movement. Says Henderson, “I still see a green divide of both where the efforts to protect the environment are focused, what issues are focused on, and the kind of outcomes that are being derived from those efforts that don’t produce benefits for low-income people and people of color explicitly.”

Alexis Traver believes that broadly speaking the environmental movement is diverse, but because the movement is splintered into several factions and the different sectors of the movement do not work together, the lack of collaboration undercuts what diversity there is. Traver argues, “It [the environmental movement] is diverse. I think there’s a great deal of diversity out there. [But], are we organized in a way that we all work together? No, we’re not, we’re splintered. So work must be done to bridge the divide.”

Sabrina Downing, who has been affiliated with environmental nonprofits for the past eight years, echoes Henderson and Traver’s points. She says, “The problem is that we have so many...people [who] oftentimes can’t see the connections that they’re all actually working on very similar things. And so we’ve unfortunately in the environmental [field]—at least in my opinion—the environmental movement in the United States is, it’s very fragmented, fractured and it’s very siloed.”

Traver clarifies her claim that the environmental movement is diverse by explaining that the movement is diverse if one considers the wide range of issues activists work on, by the variety of people involved in environmental affairs, and by

the communities and locations in which environmental activism occurs. She hastens to add that the divide that splinters the movement is not just ideological; it is socioeconomic. Hence it is not just a matter of deciding which species to work on, or balancing the protection of animal or plants with human health and well-being, it is also the impact of socioeconomic status on environmental outcomes. She points to some socioeconomic realities that make it difficult to bridge the divide and work together. As Traver argues, “Those that have, have better areas to play, better space, it’s more beautified... those that don’t end up struggling. Those that have eat organic food, those that don’t are on canned food.” The movement hasn’t figured out yet how to bring these groups together to work in a unified way. However, “when woven together [and] if addressed properly then I think America would be ahead of the game.”

Rachel Langstone, an environmental consultant, founder and board member who has been working in the environmental field for more than 40 years, is encouraged by the emergence of environmental justice organizations. However, she notes that they are woefully underfunded and that limits their capacity to effectuate change vis-à-vis the diversity in the larger environmental movement. She opines, “There are a few of those [environmental justice organizations] that is encouraging, where that’s happening. They’re not terribly well-funded, you know they’re operating on a shoestring, they started with a shoestring and they’re operating on a shoestring. So I don’t know how long they’ll last unless they get ample financial and other support... I think it’s a miniscule...fraction, percentage of the money that goes to the environmental movement as a whole [goes to these environmental justice organizations]. Felicia Madison agrees, saying, “I think the funding of small environmental justice organizations is poor and is inequitable.”

Data presented above in chapter 5 supports the perception of environmental practitioners that the environmental justice organizations receive a small portion of the environmental funding from grantmakers.

Felicia Madison, who has worked in environmental nonprofits and community-based organizations for the past seven years, is encouraged by the growth in the number of environmental justice (EJ) organizations and their potential to diversify the movement. She argues that, “I would say that it’s...that the EJ movement is growing exponentially. And that people who are invested in EJ are beginning to understand what EJ activists are asking for and building a little bit more of accountability structures around allowing People of Color leadership [to] take over. So you know, in my experience, I would say that it’s been improving. But that we still have a long way to go.”

Henderson feels that in order to bridge the divide, “There needs to be sweeping change in who is setting the agenda for the movement or movements and that change needs to involve women, people of color, low-income people, being at the table and setting the agenda for environmental protection efforts.”

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### **“IT’S A BIG BOAT AND WE’RE ALL IN IT AND IT’S [IN] ROUGH WATERS.”**

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Jude Driscoll, 2014.

Jude Driscoll, who has 42 years of experience in the environmental nonprofit and for-profit sectors as well on boards and in the policy arena, has seen increasing diversity in the movement in the past 15 years. She looks for this in the top echelon of leadership. She argues, “Certainly if you look at the boards of directors, and obviously I have served on a number of them...[they have] become increasingly more inclusive... Is it all the way there yet? Not by a long shot.” She expresses caution in her assessment of the state of diversity in the movement. She says the pace of diversity is slow because “there are still people...[in the movement]...who still speak with a we-they mentality.” However, she is certain “that at this point none of the...heads of any major environmental organization[s]...would say oh those folks don’t matter or they aren’t part of what we are concerned with.”

Phillip Greene, a staffer in a government environmental agency for the past 15 years, declares that he has not seen much progress in the environmental movement as a whole. For him the effectiveness of the movement rests on “whether we address diversity or not.”

## EXCLUSIONARY FRAMING AND THE NEED TO BROADEN THE BASE

Elliott Payne believes that a large number of people are engaged in environmental protection and conservation work. Others are trying to expand what “environment” is. Payne, who has worked in environmental nonprofits for the past 19 years, thinks that expanding the definition of environment is very important “especially for groups that are doing this work, but they may not call it environmentalism, they may not call it conservation, they may not call it sustainability, but they are still taking care of nature, the outdoors, [and] what’s around us in meaningful ways.”

Jude Driscoll notes that ethnic minorities are involved in more than activism. She says that “when people did not find overwhelming welcoming or open inclusion inside ‘mainstream organizations,’ communities that have very specific problems often started local or regional [organizations].” She refers to groups such as WE ACT and Jesus People for the Environment as examples.

Payne contends that though people of color are not usually considered environmentalists, “People of color are, have been [environmentalists], and will continue to do environmentalism and conservation, they may not always call it that, it may just be part of what we do and how we approach the work, but we’re doing it.” He says that the lack of visibility and recognition of the contributions of people of color to environmental protection is a manifestation of how power and privilege is distributed in “the mainstream environmental movement.” Because the movement is “very White dominated” and reflects a “White approach to environmental protection...the power and privilege” of such activists often blind them to the realities around them.

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**“WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ME IF WE’RE MORE DIVERSE, EQUITABLE, AND INCLUSIVE?  
...IT MEANS THE WORLD TO ME. IT MEANS A LOT. IT MEANS THAT MY KIDS CAN GROW UP IN  
A PLACE THAT’S WELCOMING AND THEY CAN ENGAGE IN ALL OF THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL,  
AND NATURE AND WILDLIFE PROTECTION PURSUITS THAT THEY WANT TO WITHOUT BEING  
INTIMIDATED IN QUESTIONING WHO THEY ARE.”**

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Elliott Payne, 2014.

Payne provides an example. He says that some community groups “are doing a lot of really...good work and actually are...innovating and leading because they’re providing multiple benefits to environmental protection... [They are] connecting... health issues, economic development, [and] community-building to environmental protection. So you get more bang for your buck if you invest in them, in those places.” Parker Henderson also identifies “a different narrative that’s starting to be written” that connects social justice to environmentalism.

Cameron Bishop has worked in government environmental agencies and environmental nonprofits for 30 years. He has also been on the board of several environmental nonprofits. Bishop disagrees with the argument that the work of people of color is not currently being recognized. “I think American environmentalism has become more diverse in that there is more recognition that the environmental activities of different groups are recognized as environmental,” says Bishop. He does agree with one aspect of Payne’s argument about the invisibility and lack of recognition of the work of people of color. Like Payne, Bishop posits that historically people of color have been involved in environmental affairs, but their participation and contributions were not recognized. Bishop argues, “There has always been the team of organizations thinking about environmental issues of concern to the Latino community or Chinese-American groups or African-American groups, those have always existed, they just weren’t recognized.” However, Bishop’s argument diverges from that of Payne’s when Bishop declares, “I think now they’re recognized, and there is more cross-fertilization between the different groups.”

Bishop is convinced that the environmental movement in general recognizes that the base of activism has broadened. He supports his claim by saying that there is “greater recognition...that the environmental movement is broader than it used

to be. So if it used to be focused on conservation and on hunting organizations now I think it has gotten broader. I think people do recognize the legitimacy of environmental justice organizations as part of the American environmental movement... That's huge and that is a sharp shift. Twenty years ago people would fight about that, now I don't think people would fight and say that environmental justice is not about environmentalism, I don't think they'd say that anymore. They may disagree about how important it is, but I think they recognize that it is part [of the movement]."

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**"I WENT TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ABOUT 16 YEARS AGO AND THEN I WENT TWO YEARS AGO [AGAIN]. AT THE CONFERENCE BOTH TIMES THERE WERE ABOUT 1,000 PEOPLE. WHEN I WENT 16 YEARS AGO — I KID YOU NOT — YOU COULD COUNT ON TWO HANDS THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE OF COLOR AMONG THOSE 1,000 PEOPLE. NOW IF YOU GO TO THE NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AMONG THOSE 1,000 PEOPLE MAYBE THERE'S 100-200 PEOPLE OF COLOR. IT'S BETTER, IT'S NOT WHERE WE WANT TO BE NECESSARILY, BUT IT'S BETTER. I'D SAY THAT NUMBER IS CLOSER TO 100 OUT OF 1,000 BUT STILL THAT IS BETTER THAN 10. SO IT IS HAPPENING, IT IS JUST SLOW."**

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Cameron Bishop, 2014.

Elliott Payne thinks that if we consider the broad spectrum of people who are doing environmental work, then the American movement is "pretty healthy." Graeme Nivens thinks that diversity is increasing in the movement because of the influx of people making connections between "environmental equity and environmental racism." Nivens, a faculty member of 33 years, believes the focus on environment and social justice piqued the interest of many students and brought them into the movement in the early 1990s. Bishop also thinks that diversity is increasing in the movement. He opines, "My sense would be that it is getting better, it is slow, it is incremental, it is not nearly as quick as the change of pace in diversity in the society at large, but I do think it's happening."

Joanne Hughes thinks very little has changed vis-à-vis diversity because the movement has been exclusionary. She argues that "There's no other way around it. It's been very restrictive, very limited, little I would say. I think that the movement itself needs to do some self-reflection and some observation upon themselves; ask themselves some very serious questions, you know. And, you know, like, where are we at? Some years ago a letter was sent around by Richard Moore [and other environmental justice activists], uh...accusing the top 10 environmental organizations of being racist. And since then—and that was about 20 years ago... And since then what has changed? I'm gonna say very little."

Payne is optimistic about the youth. He argues that "more young people, young people of color are getting involved in environmentalism." Payne thinks there is a correlation between "our young people [who] are Millennials and the generation following them... [being] the most... racially diverse generation we've ever seen in this country... It's exciting to see young people...of all different backgrounds engaging in environmentalism." Another interviewee also sees hope in the Millennials and thinks that engaging them will be a boon for the environmental movement. Rochester contends that, "I've been in the...local Audubon chapter but...with the last three years with the new CEO of Audubon he's come in and really brought a different touch, touched the Millennials, and touched the GenXs, and touched you know even the baby boomers. In a way...you know they're looking at so many different ways of connecting with that constituency or their members."

Sabrina Downing is one of those Millennials whom Payne and Rochester pin their hopes on. Downing began taking on leadership roles as an undergraduate. She says, "I was part of environmental leadership programs targeted for minority students, so I did do that work." She continues, "And honestly I mean probably my, my selection, being on the three boards that I've participated in is because a lot of the effort of a lot of people who've been acting for diversity... A big one isn't just about ethnic diversity or racial diversity, but also it's about the younger generation and so bringing in people that are Millennials, bringing in people who represent anyone that's like younger than 40 or even 50, is it's something

that they're, the environmental organizations are trying to really consider because building that next generation of leadership is extremely important for their longevity and the future of these organizations."

Payne also reasons that the biggest challenge lies in creating a unified environmental movement. Including a broader set of values, paying more attention to equity, and including the environmental achievements of everyone will help to facilitate this process.

### BRIDGE-BUILDING EFFORTS UNDERWAY

With the loss of the ECO internships and the disappearance of other diversity programs, Phillip Greene believes that there has been a deliberate retrenchment in the efforts to diversify the environmental movement and this is not mere happenstance. He contends that, "Twenty years ago we had deliberate programs in place that were designed specifically to address diversity of the environmental movement. Many of those programs don't exist today. In some ways there have been deliberate efforts to roll back...and...dismantle programs." As Greene sees it, "if you don't have the infrastructure in place, then certainly you can't be diversifying your environmental movement."

In contrast, Gail Swanson is reassured about the state of the environmental movement because she sees "a lot of convergence of effort." She says she is witnessing "multiple conversations [and] multiple parallel efforts to grapple with how to get... mainstream organizations to embrace and embody...diversity inclusion principles."

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#### **"YOU CAN'T ENLIST ALL HUMANITY IF YOU ONLY SPEAK TO HALF OF THE POPULATION."**

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Gail Swanson, 2014.

Swanson agrees with other respondents that there is a need to broaden the base of the environmental movement and build bridges between the different segments. However, unlike others who see fragmentation and a void, Swanson thinks the bridge-building efforts are already underway. She argues that there is "an emerging discussion about the need to also think about how you build bridges and bring equity and alignment to this movement because...there is an imbalance in the mainstream organizations again with resources and balance of resources that needs to be addressed as we think about how we lift all boats in this work."

Parker Henderson agrees with Swanson that bridge-building efforts are underway. He reports that "in the last five years or so that there's been a growing awareness of the need to figure out how to be more effective as organizations given demographic change [in the American population that is becoming increasingly evident]." Dylan Houghton, who has been on the staff and boards of environmental nonprofits for the past six years, also believes that the demographic changes underway in the U.S. is providing a powerful imperative for the environmental movement to become more diverse.

Sabrina Downing views the demographic shift in the country and the environmental movement as a whole as an urgent issue that environmental organizations have to pay attention to. She argues that, "The diversity component ties into the generational one... I...think they're really struggling with that and a lot of them [environmental leaders] don't have a clue on how to even begin to tackle it. We've been kind of passing it, we keep pushing it off and we're starting to realize that you know there is the selection pool, at least they feel that the selection pool of top leadership that represents the new demographics just isn't there. But it's oftentimes because they don't know where to look and because they've become so disconnected from the new...networks that have emerged, or I don't know if it's new, but it's just the networks that they're not familiar with."

As Houghton sees it, "in order to be relevant politically they [environmental organizations] sort of need to have a more diverse presence."



Terry Rochester, who has served on the board of a national environmental organization for about eight years, thinks that efforts are being made to broaden diversity. He argues, “Actually, I can say that with the downturn in the economy it’s forced those organizations to be more collaborative with some of those nonprofit organizations and main groups... I’ve seen those organizations over the past eight years collaborate and get involved in the urban environment to get them out to the bigger world of environmental impacts that the cities have on the overall environment.”

Both Swanson and Henderson temper their enthusiasm. Swanson asserts that “we have a long way to go, we have a lot of work [to do].” She thinks that environmental disparities won’t be properly addressed “until we really tackle systemic racism and institutional racism” in the movement. She argues that the disparities have become “almost invisible because we assimilate as opposed to confront those disparities. I think those have to be outed and addressed.” Henderson argues that despite the increased efforts to build bridges between disparate groups, the benefits of such efforts are not reaching low-income and minority communities—especially when it comes to jobs and environmental protection.

In short, Cameron Bishop thinks that “some cultural shifts” have to be made in the environmental movement “to be more respectful of the different values that different people bring in their thinking about environmentalism.” He is mindful of the fact that this will require a “transition” period to allow those with “traditional environmental training” to get on board fully.

Analise Harrow also discusses the homogenous culture of the environmental movement. Harrow, who has had 15 years of experience in environmental nonprofits, argues that, “The majority culture operates...[so] that it defaults and or prefers to work with people who are in their personal and professional and geographical network... [They] do not have comfort with or commitment to understanding the damage this default or preference does.” She contends that “the practice is certainly not going to go away until people recognize what they’re doing. It seems there’s a certain level of blindness. White privilege is invisible for them. And without awareness and a specific commitment, they’re certainly not going to change.”

Chad Findlay, who spent more than two decades in the private sector before becoming involved in environmental organizations as a member, board member, and consultant for the past 23 years, feels that overall, the environmental movement is becoming more diverse. He says, “There is some diversity but it’s still not enough. We’ve come...a ways but we haven’t come far enough.”

Dylan Houghton hopes that as the environmental movement continues to diversify, interactions with minorities are respectful, sustained, deep, and genuine, not merely symbolic. He points to shallow and deceptive interactions of the past that result in photographs of minorities being placed on environmental organizations’ brochures or websites, yet minorities are either not hired in the organizations or work in out-of-sight, back-office positions. There is a history of these practices dating back to the CCC programs that minorities recognize and are wary of. Commentary on surveys and analysis face-of-the-organization staffing discussed in earlier chapters also lend credence to this view.

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**“I DON’T WANT TO WORK AT A PLACE THAT IS JUST GOING TO USE ME ON THEIR BROCHURE AND THEN KIND OF STICK ME SOMEWHERE OBSCURE. THAT HASN’T BEEN MY EXPERIENCE...IN ANY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL... ORGANIZATIONS THAT I’VE WORKED FOR. I APPRECIATE THAT VERY MUCH. IT’S BEEN A VERY POWERFUL EXPERIENCE FOR ME.”**

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Dylan Houghton, 2014.

Houghton also reports on the non-reciprocal relations that sometimes characterize the interactions with environmental organizations. He says that many environmental organizations call his group only when they want something. Houghton says, “They only called us when they needed something. They would only call us and say we need 100 of your members to sign off on this. To sign off on this piece of policy that says we are going to do XYZ. And so obviously that’s very off-putting to advocates and the community itself who might feel sort of used.”

## The State of Diversity in Mainstream Environmental Organizations

Respondents also reflected on the state of diversity in mainstream environmental organizations and government environmental agencies today. Though this section focuses on mainstream environmental organizations, it is still relevant to this discussion as conservation and preservation organizations are a significant component of what's typically considered as mainstream organizations. Government environmental agencies are also major actors in this sector of the environmental movement. Table 8.2 summarizes how interviewees thought about diversity in these types of institutions.

### Table 8.2. Reflections on the Status of Diversity in the Mainstream Environmental Organizations

#### 1. DIVERSITY LACKING AND NEEDS URGENT ATTENTION.

- Diversity is still lacking.
- It is an issue that needs addressing.
- Lack of retention.
- Many people in environmental organizations think their organizations have already addressed the issue.
- There is a perception that American society is an equitable, post-racial one.
- Organizations do not know how to go about the task of achieving diversity.
- There is an ebb and flow to diversity efforts.

#### 2. DIVERSITY EFFORTS ARE IMPACTED BY CHANGES IN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION POLICIES.

- Anti-affirmative action rules limits diversity hiring.

#### 3. FEW ETHNIC MINORITIES IN LEADERSHIP.

- Very few people of color are in leadership positions in these organizations
- Ethnic minorities have leaders who are doing environmental work but they do not describe themselves as environmentalists.
- Gender diversity is much greater than racial diversity.

#### 4. INADEQUATE STAFFING OF DIVERSITY POSITIONS.

- Too few people in charge of diversity efforts in large organizations.

#### 5. THE GREEN GROUP CONTROLS THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

- A group of large, powerful, environmental organizations control the agenda.

#### 6. THE SHIFT CHANGE.

- The demographic changes in society are affecting mainstream environmental organizations.

#### 7. IMPROVEMENTS ARE EVIDENT.

- Diversity is improving over time.



## DIVERSITY LACKING

Most of the respondents felt that mainstream environmental organizations were lacking in diversity. Jacob Maxwell, for instance, asserts that there is an urgent need to address issues in mainstream environmental organizations, and Elliott Payne refers to the state of diversity as “embarrassing,” Alexis Traver describes it as “absolutely horrible,” and Rachel Langstone thinks it is “atrocious.” Langstone elaborates on her assessment by saying that, “I got into the environmental movement and the environmental profession at its very...early stages, back in the 1970s and... you know at that time it was an all-White profession and field... I was hopeful and at that time...the ironic thing is that they kept talking about diversity, using the term diversity, talked about needing to bring more people into the field and today...40 years later you hear, I hear, the very same call.”

Maxwell thought that efforts to address diversity are anemic because “many of the people that are in these organizations and [on the] boards [of them]...think they’ve addressed this issue sometime in the past. Or that we live in a post-racial, -gender, equity-type of society. I don’t think we are there yet.” He says that government agencies try to give the impression that they are successful in their diversity efforts. Maxwell says, “I still see it in government. Government tries to...have this...air of—we are good at doing this. But if they were, the Park Service wouldn’t still be struggling with this issue.”

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**“I NEVER SIGNED UP, I NEVER WANTED TO DO ENVIRONMENTAL WORK TO FOCUS ON DIVERSITY WORK. BUT I SAW IT AS A HUGE GAP AND A HUGE AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT... IF WE DO IT AND DO IT WELL WE’RE GOING TO BE BETTER OFF AS A MOVEMENT, WE’RE GOING TO BE BETTER OFF AS A SOCIETY, AND WE’RE GOING TO PROVIDE THE ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE IN THIS COUNTRY. I MEAN OUR FOCUS IS IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT YOU KNOW IF WE COULD SPREAD THAT LOVE AND THAT APPROACH ACROSS THE GLOBAL LEVEL, WE’LL ALL BE BETTER.”**

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Elliott Payne, 2014.

Maxwell explains further that some environmental activists “have the sense that I don’t need that” but “the other person does. Or that we’ve not done what we need to do to address that issue. Or even they just don’t know what to do, which is probably more the case than not. And many of these groups and organizations that I have talked to, they sometimes just don’t know what to do and what steps to take with any element of this in their organization.”

Analise Harrow believes that groups are reluctant to undertake diversity initiatives because “We are not accepting of diversity as important. We’re not comfortable implementing plans. We don’t have skill in experiencing attraction to people [who are] different from ourselves.” Drew Westley, who has been working for a government environmental agency for the past ten years, agrees with Harrow. He contends that, “Much of our environmental policy that’s being promoted or advocated for within this country, just does not have a diverse, that diversity in lens. So you know, their campaigns kind of show that they don’t have, they don’t reflect a diversity lens.” Joanne Hughes agrees. She contends that, “There’s limited diversity in developing campaigns, planning around certain issues, or total lack of any of that.”

Driscoll cautions that achieving diversity will take time and a lot of work. She argues that if someone has “racist,” sexist,” or “homophobic” tendencies while operating in the broader society, then these attitudes and behaviors will carry over to their involvement “in the environmental community.”

While Driscoll’s analysis implies that efforts should be made to create cultures in which the racist, sexist, classist, or homophobic, etc., elements are subdued, Payne makes an argument that implies the opposite. Payne calls for an open and accepting culture in environmental organizations in which “people...[can] bring their whole selves, their whole diversity to the fore.” Payne argues that though environmental institutions recruit and hire “people of color, those from local backgrounds, LGBTQ, [and] women,” many don’t stay because they are alienated from the organizational culture. These two

views highlight the need to reconcile and balance how diversity is defined and nurtured in environmental organizations in the coming years.

Interviewees note that though the gender gap has narrowed in terms of percentage of males and females on the staffs of environmental organizations, there is still a significant gender gap in the senior leadership—the percentage of women in senior leadership is still low. The racial gap is much more severe as there are few ethnic minorities in senior leadership. Gail Swanson estimates that the percentage of people of color on the boards of mainstream environmental organizations usually does not exceed 20%. She reports that she sits on the board of one small environmental organization where 50% of board members are ethnic minorities.

Phillip Greene is clear when he says that, “I primarily focus on racial diversity.” He thinks diversity efforts are not consistent. As Greene sees it, “the focus on diversity tends to ebb and flow. From my optics it’s been ebbing for the past 10-12 years, which means it hasn’t really been progressing.” Shaun Somers, who has been affiliated with two environmental nonprofits for several years, feels that diversity “seems like it’s sort of ebbed and flowed with certain laws that have passed.”

The **ebb and flow or cyclical nature of diversity activities** could have a detrimental impact on the environmental workforce. Greene argues that there will be a problem of attrition in his government agency because of retirement or workers looking elsewhere for jobs.

## DIVERSITY EFFORTS IMPACTED BY CHALLENGES TO AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

When asked about the state of diversity in mainstream environmental organizations and government environmental agencies, Cameron Bishop says, “It sucks.” Bishop elaborates to make an important point not frequently articulated in discussions about diversity. He indicates that though “there is an interest in increasing the racial diversity of the organizations the processes for doing that are very limited.” He argues that this is particularly true in federal government agencies. He explains that, “It is very difficult to explicitly consider race in your hiring practices.” He thinks it might be easier to do this in a private nonprofit as such an organization has “a lot more flexibility in...[its] hiring practices. There is also a lot less tracking of personnel decisions in such organizations also.”

Phillip Greene also analyzes the impact of the new wave of affirmative action policies. He argues that, “In the 1990s, there were deliberate initiatives in place that were focusing specifically on... racial/ethnic diversity in terms of having a workforce that looks like America. Affirmative action was still an accepted policy. From 2000 to present affirmative action was basically rejected as public policy. Diversity of the environmental movement has decreased as a priority, and when I say that I mean racial/ethnic diversity in terms of having a representative workforce. And from 2000 to present, particularly around the first four years of the decade, deliberate efforts were in place to shift the focus of the diversity conversation to really looking at diversity of all stripes: age, gender, sexual orientation, geography, discipline...and it was done in order to shift the focus or the prioritization away from the conversation on racial diversity.”

Sabrina Downing feels that President Obama made a major statement about diversity when he appointed people of color to lead government environmental agencies. She says, “I thought that one of the most promising decisions was when President Obama elected minorities into top, into the directorship level of the major environmental agencies, I mean Ken Salazar was [at] the Department of Interior, Lisa Jackson at EPA, [and] Steve Chu [was] at the Department of Energy. I thought that was a major move. It was significant, and I really believe that it had a resonating effect on the NGO community in terms of how the leadership of these environmental agencies has shifted because Obama had made it a specific effort to make sure that diversity was a priority in these environmental agencies and yet our organizations [environmental NGOs] aren’t reflective of that.”

In August 2011, President Obama put the issue of diversity back on center stage when he signed Executive Order 13583 which established a government-wide initiative to promote diversity and inclusion (The White House Office of the Press

Secretary, 2011). This had an immediate impact on agencies. As one interviewee put it, “All of a sudden the agency [the EPA] and all other agencies were like ‘Oh hell we have this new priority, this initiative, we have to do something!’” To comply with the order, EPA created a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (DIAC). DIAC represents affinity groups such as the African American Male Forum, the Hispanic Advisory Council, the LGBT Organization, and the Asian-American/Pacific Islander Pacific Group.

Affirmative action is still at the forefront of discussions about hiring. Bishop recognizes the conundrum that federal agencies find themselves in with the way affirmative action policies are being challenged and implemented. He explains, “So the federal agencies are in an odd position where their progress is tracked, but they are not allowed to explicitly hire or target for hiring, it is difficult.” It is different for private organizations. Bishop continues, “If they say I want to bring in a person of color to hire into our organization they have the capacity to wait to find the candidate they want to do that.” But, waiting doesn’t necessarily benefit a government agency. This is the case because an agency can lose positions if they wait so there isn’t an incentive to do so.

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#### **PROGRAMS HAVE NOT BEEN PUT IN PLACE TO REPLACE ECO’S INTERNSHIP PROGRAM.**

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Some agencies respond to this by instituting internship programs. One interviewee described a disastrous attempt by the EPA to develop a new diversity internship program. “More recently at the US EPA we had a situation where there was a program for interns.” The decision was made to bring in interns rather than hiring people because hiring is a different process. The goal was to bring in interns who were predominantly African American through a partnership with the United Negro College Fund (UNCF). There was so much interest that “literally hundreds of candidates were lined up.” However, “at the last minute the money was pulled out from under the program.” How are communities of color expected to respond to something like this? The interviewee continues, “So when you do that, when you ask hundreds of people, hundreds of students, to apply, and they go through the process of applying and then no one is hired, not only is that a big waste of time for the students but it also makes the agency look terrible. I mean who is going to want to give another shot to work with an organization like that?”

#### **FEW ETHNIC MINORITIES IN SENIOR POSITIONS**

Traver proclaims that though “nine times outta ten times” the receptionist in environmental organizations is a person of color, ethnic minorities are “few and far between” in pivotal, decision-making, leadership positions in mainstream organizations. They are not “the face of” the organization, she argues. Traver continues, “You can count on one hand the number of CEOs that are of color... [Yet] there are many leaders of color out there that may not identify themselves as an environmentalist, but they are working in the field within the movement and are not being recognized or even sitting at any one of [the]...tables.” Dylan Houghton says that for him, diversity means seeing people of color represented at all levels of environmental institutions.

Though Payne argues that the percentage of racial and ethnic minorities in the country is about 36%, he estimates that the percentage of most environmental organizations will not reach double digits. As dire as these predictions are, Payne says the level of diversity in mainstream environmental organizations is increasing.

Luke Carter focuses on the slow development of Latino leadership. He argues that, “I would say that efforts to develop Latino leadership “is very poor but growing... The number of Latino employees is fairly low and their numbers in the leadership and...in the membership...of mainstream environmental organizations...is low... We’re not developing Latino professionals in the environmental policy or advocacy fields. We are not developing future leaders, national leaders in this area to the numbers that we need to in order to expand the circle.”

Carter believes that one of the reasons there are so few ethnic minorities in senior leadership positions in environmental organizations is that the organizations focus on hiring ethnic minorities who are junior staffers. They are not hiring minorities for the senior staff. Carter says, "I think they'll hire the junior employees, [but] unfortunately [there] hasn't historically [been]...much of a...support system around him or her and no opportunities to move up the ladder, and they eventually leave."

One of the obstacles minorities face when moving up the seniority ladder are "cliques." Drew Westley says, "These cliques...do what's comfortable for them. So for example in my experience every time I go to an office, there tends to be a clique dominated by White males and females. And they look out for each other; they give each other the primary [or] the high priority projects and management positions... I've participated in a few hiring processes, bringing in new people and what happens, typically in my experience is that the person who gets hired is the person that the clique feels comfortable with."

Bishop agrees that much of the hiring of ethnic minorities is occurring at the junior or mid-career levels. He argues that, "It is really about where the change is taking place, is it happening at the mid/entry level or is it happening at the upper levels? I would argue that while I think there has been pretty significant progress in the entry and mid-level positions certainly once you get past the mid-level, the progress has not occurred. And since those [top positions] are the positions where the decisions are being made, if you don't have a workforce that is very racially diverse [ethnic minorities will not be in place to make decisions]."

One interviewee uses Oregon—a state known for progressive environmental policies—as an example of how few minorities are in top leadership positions. The interviewee claims, "In Oregon it's pretty bad. We have 16 natural resource-related agencies, and we don't have a single person of color heading any one of those."

Alexis Traver refers to Lisa Jackson's tenure as Administrator of the EPA as an example of how having ethnic minorities in top leadership positions can change the face of the leadership. She argues, "I'll use EPA as the prime example. When Administrator Jackson was in office it seemed like everybody she was surrounded by was basically a POC. Once she transitioned out of her role and we had the new administrator things have changed at least in that front office. Whereas that beautiful array that was there when Administrator Jackson [was in office] is...there no longer. I guess it depends on who your leaders are, as to whether or not they're going to be surrounded by [people of color]."

Drew Westley also describes the changes that occurred at the EPA when the top administrator wanted a diverse workforce and expanded the environmental agenda. Westley reports that, "I was first hired by W. Bush...and...you saw little diversity within the mainstream organizations and within the EPA. When Administrator Jackson came, she came promoting environmental justice and kind of promoting the idea that we should be focused on reducing environmental impacts within where we live, work, play, and pray. She took pray out at the end because that was kind of religious. Yeah so...we don't necessarily want to just focus on the polar bears and ice caps and all that kind of stuff. We should be emphasizing where most of the people live, which are in cities and things like that. And, you know, by the way, that's where most of...that's also where most minorities live, in cities. So what I've seen in the last few years is that the green NGOs have recognized that and have kind of changed their campaigns a little bit and their perspectives—their focus a little bit."

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**“SO MY DREAM ORGANIZATION IS THAT WHEN YOU WALK INTO A[N] OFFICE BUILDING, REGARDLESS OF WHERE ITS LOCATED, YOU NOT ONLY SEE THE FRONT DESK PERSON WHO... IS PROBABLY A PERSON OF COLOR, BUT AS YOU MOVE THROUGHOUT THAT ORGANIZATION IN VARIOUS LEVELS AND WITHIN THEIR PRACTICES, THEY ARE ADDRESSING THE ISSUES THAT REALLY MEAN SOMETHING FOR THE PEOPLE THEY ARE SERVING OR THE COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY THE COMMUNITIES THAT ARE HARDEST HIT, [THAT] THEY ARE SERVING. IT WOULD BE NICE TO SEE UPPER MANAGEMENT, WHERE YOU HAVE NOT JUST WOMEN, BUT YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL ARRAY OF POC [PEOPLE OF COLOR] SITTING IN THOSE PIVOTAL ROLES, THE DECISION-MAKING ROLES. THEY ARE BEING THE SPOKESPEOPLE, THEY ARE THE ONES THAT ARE ‘THE FACE OF’ [THE ORGANIZATION] IT WOULD BE LOVELY TO SEE. SO THAT WOULD BE MY STATE OF DIVERSITY WITHIN MAINSTREAM ORGANIZATIONS.”**

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Alexis Traver, 2014.

Jackson insisted [on] an agency diversity dashboard, and the EPA generated quarterly data on diversity metrics—data that was publicly available. However, Westley identified problems with this and similar data coming from government agencies. He argues that the data can be manipulated to show that the agencies are doing better than the general workforce to which they are being compared to. Westley contends that if one look more carefully, it is obvious that most of the Blacks in the EPA are in the “lower grade levels, typically women [and] female administrative assistants.”

Westley also points out that some of the people of color who worked with Lisa Jackson and have left since Jackson departed are now in senior positions at other environmental organizations and have taken their environmental justice vision with them. For instance, Earthjustice hired Lisa Garcia as its Vice President of Litigation.

## INADEQUATE DIVERSITY STAFF

Interviewees recognize that instituting diversity requires oversight. They also know that it is not just a matter of whether the organization has hired a diversity manager or not but whether there are enough people in those positions to effectively monitor progress in the organization. Hence, Dylan Houghton argues that, “Massive organizations like the EPA... the Department of Energy... Department of the Interior...[will] have two people in the entire organization [who] work on diversity issues. These people have good intentions but their lament is always—‘But I’m one person in this massive organizations so I’m going to do the best I can but capacity-wise it’s hard.’”

## THE GREEN GROUP IS IN CONTROL

Though she argues that the conservation organizations have evolved from their nineteenth-century roots of being the domain of the “landed gentry,” Jude Driscoll still sees mainstream environmental movement as a “proxy for what is sometimes called the Green Group.” Driscoll describes the group as a collaborative of about 33 people who are formally organized. Representatives from organizations such as NRDC, NWF, Audubon, and Population Connection belong to the Green Group. The Green Group is very influential in setting the environmental agenda at the national and international level.

## DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT

Some observers of mainstream environmental organizations see a “shift change” underway (Taylor, 2000b). For instance, Gail Swanson describes the mainstream organizations as having “an older demographic...of European descent.” She expounds on the implications of this by saying that, “When the leadership or membership doesn’t look like the people

you are trying to reach out to, there's an additional challenge to trying to make those connections and to build those relationships." To be successful in cases like this, it means "fostering and cultivating those practices and behaviors that will resonate with the people you are trying...to engage with and include in your work."

Henderson takes Swanson's point a bit further. He says it isn't just a matter of trying to work with communities of color, that mainstream organizations must understand why it is important to work with ethnic minority communities.

Jacob Maxwell identifies another problem with the lengthy aging-in-place that some of the current leadership of environmental organizations has enjoyed. He argues that this may have inadvertently retarded the grooming of the next generation of leaders. Maxwell asserts that, "The grooming of the next generation...is moving for many reasons—quite, quite, quite slowly. The boomers have worked a lot longer than many people thought. I'm speaking of myself but certainly of the White males who were in many of...the Green Group, which is all of the big green conservation organizations like the Wilderness Society, NRDC, EDF and [organizations] like this."

Maxwell continues with his analysis of this aspect of environmental organization workforce dynamics as it has a direct impact on diversity. According to Maxwell, "Their leaderships are rotating [out] right now. A lot of folks are retiring and moving on or losing their jobs or whatever." Despite the openings this shift change create, "You don't see folks of color stepping into those jobs. You don't see a lot of [ethnic minority] folks in government moving to the top." Diversity is challenging because "I think...a lot of folks don't know how to do it or to build a pipeline to have folks be ready to step into those opportunities when they do open up."

Gail Swanson agrees that changeover at the top leadership levels has been slow. She says there are still many White males in those positions. But she says, "I think there is a... generational shift. [We are] starting to see with some [people in their] thirties [and] forties coming in to lead these organizations." Swanson discusses the implications. "That's a good thing but it's also going to be challenging, [because] they [the incoming generation of leaders] see a different way and have grown up [with] a different way of operating... We are furthest behind on seeing some balance of racial diversity in [the] top tiers of leadership."

## IMPROVEMENTS ARE EVIDENT

Parker Henderson sees signs of improvement in the level of diversity in mainstream environmental organizations. He noted that there are more people of color on the boards of such organizations now but hastened to say that there was a long way to go before such organizations could be considered truly diverse. Jacob Maxwell agrees with this assessment.

An interviewee affiliated with The Wilderness Society agrees that diversity is increasing. He noted that women were in executive positions in the organization, and people of color were on its board. However, the respondent noted that the organization did not have any ethnic minorities in top executive positions. Another interviewee from the same organization described the board as such, "On the board level for the Wilderness Society we've recently, I mean I would say in the sense of adding a few younger individuals, but in terms of racial diversity still relatively the same, and we [have]... supposedly one of the more diverse boards so I mean it's really only a handful of us. And then in terms of economic diversity it is pretty minimal, I mean it is predominantly the wealthiest one percent I would say."

Another respondent points to the emergence of the Board Members of Color (BMC) group as not only a sign of increasing racial diversity in environmental organizations but demonstrating that there is some diversity in the decision-making ranks of these organizations as well. The BMC is also an indicator that ethnic minorities in leadership positions in environmental organizations are beginning to recognize each other, network, organize, craft agendas, and learn how to work collaboratively with each other. According to Terry Rochester, "I think that groups like the Board Members of Color that I see have tremendous potential."

The BMC is very interested in the issue of succession in the pipeline. However, interviewees report that, “We even had a hard time getting Green Group organizations, that’s 85 plus organizations who are the big green groups here in Washington, to identify all of their board members of color historically and currently.” Interviewees report that the green groups were “hesitant” to reveal who their past and current board members of color were. They “wonder[ed] why we are asking, thinking that it was something negative, whereas we were just trying to see, you know, so we could reach out to them and to get them to join us in an activity that is trying to address the issues.”

Another group that is looking into the issue of diversity is the African American Male Forum. This group recognizes that White females hit a “glass ceiling” in environmental organizations that only allow a modest number to penetrate the top leadership stratum. However, ethnic minorities hit a “laminated glass ceiling” that is designed to hold together if pierced or broken and is, therefore, impenetrable to all but a few. One interviewee explains that, “I’m a member of the African American Male Forum, so one of the things that we’re doing is, we are creating our own data and dissecting the agency’s [EPA] data to tell the true story of what is going on in the agency. So for example, we just surveyed our membership here in D.C. and the story that we’re getting from our data is that we have highly experienced and educated...Black men with a lot of degrees and who have hit the...who have been here for 10-20 years but who have hit the glass ceiling for their jobs and are getting pushed —er—passed over when it comes to high-priority projects and management positions. That’s one thing that we’re doing. One of the things that does work, I think, within organizations is making sure that organizations like ours, I guess some would call them affinity groups, making sure that affinity groups do have a seat at the table when it comes to the diversity conversations. So the good thing about Administrator Jackson and Gina McCarthy, Administrator McCarthy, is that they have most recently ensured that affinity groups are sitting at the table when we talk about these diversity issues. So that our perspective gets heard.”

Chad Findlay also thinks diversity has improved, but hastens to add, “It’s nowhere where it ought to be.” He points out that, “There are now more minority environmental justice organizations. The EPA...and [other] government agencies have engaged in the conversation of environmental justice, but there still is nowhere near enough action taking place to eradicate the impacts on the poor people and the people of color that are disproportionately impacted by pollution and the lack of policies to protect them.”

Parker Henderson raises the question of whose interests are being served when mainstream environmental organizations try to work with ethnic minorities. He says, “I think the current tensions...arise from the perception that...most of the mainstream organizations [are] pretty self-serving about wanting to, you know, to do business as usual but with new people coming to the table to help out those organizations.”

Cameron Bishop makes a variant of this argument too. He says, “I think [environmental nonprofits] are still trapped in the model that the government is trapped in. Which is that they’ve created...environmental justice program[s] that are sort of a part of their work, but the commitment of the mainstream environmental organizations to actually be at the fore of pushing for changes in environmental policy so that Congress for example passes an environmental justice law—that is not happening.”

He argues that though “environmental organizations like NRDC, the Sierra Club, [and]... EDF...have been at the fore of getting a lot of environmental laws on the books, they have not been successful advocates for environmental justice laws. [Because]...while there is recognition that environmental justice is a significant issue, it is still not considered a core value so their ability to use their strength to push for law that will address environmental justice remains weak.” Bishop believes that environmental justice is not a core value of mainstream environmental organizations because “they don’t have people in leadership who reflect an understanding of environmental justice, they just don’t.”



## Diversity Training in Environmental Organizations

Interviewees discussed diversity training and its relevance to institutionalizing diversity in environmental organizations. All had been involved in diversity training in one or more of the environmental organizations they have been affiliated with.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF INEFFECTIVE DIVERSITY TRAINING PROGRAMS

The respondents felt that the diversity training they participated in were at times ineffective. They cited various deficiencies:

1. Diversity training was too spotty and inconsistent.
2. The training did not delve deep enough into the topics tackled.
3. Formal cultural competency training, analysis of privilege, equity and justice, gender bias for males, and sexual orientation are not usually a part of the agenda.
4. Analysis of one's own behavior or that of the institution's is rarely or never analyzed in depth.
5. Diversity training often focuses on specific problems that arise in an institution, not on the larger dynamics and issues that should be covered.
6. The length of time allotted for diversity training exercises is often too short.
7. Too many people participate in the exercises at the same time.
8. Facilitators are not knowledgeable or are too inexperienced.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE DIVERSITY TRAINING PROGRAMS

Respondents identified effective diversity training as ones that had the following characteristics:

1. The training has extensive analysis of power and privilege, multiple identities, and socioeconomic status.
2. Training that helps participants increase their tolerance for discomfort and having uncomfortable conversations and interactions.
3. Multi-stage training is developed to provide opportunities for all members of the organization to access appropriate training and build on past experiences.
4. In organizations with multiple offices, diversity training occurs at each location as well as across multiple locations so that employees at various branches or offices can work with and learn from each other.
5. Pre-, during, and post-workshop preparatory materials are made available to participants.



### Highlights of Effective Programs

Interviewees mentioned some specific training programs that they thought were successful as well as some that could be improved. These are listed below.

1. At the request of fellows and alumni, ELP lengthened its half-day diversity training to two days.
  - Fellows and alumni of the Together Green Program—a joint venture between Toyota and National Audubon Society—have requested that the diversity training be lengthened. The feedback has not been incorporated into the programming and the 40 or so people in attendance at the training still receive five hours of diversity training.
2. The three- to four-month Environment 2042 Leadership Program schedules eight day-long diversity training sessions.
3. The Sierra Club has a multi-level diversity training program with three tiers of training for entry-level, mid-level, and advanced staffers. The levels refer to the amount of training one has received. In addition, there is specific training directed at managers, such as managing for inclusion.
4. The Trust for Public Land has diversity training geared specifically to working with Native Peoples on tribal issues.
5. The NWF conducted multi-day diversity training sessions in 2013 that included several regional offices. The training included the board, employees and volunteers. Participants are provided with resources before attending the workshops and during them.

## Factors Preventing Environmental Organizations from Becoming More Diverse

Interviewees were asked to discuss why the specific environmental organizations they were affiliated with lack diversity. Eight major themes emerged from the discussion. These are summarized in table 8.3 and discussed in more detail below.

**TABLE 8.3. FACTORS PREVENTING ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FROM BECOMING DIVERSE**

1. Top-level management and donors impede diversity efforts.
2. Applying short-term fixes to long-term problems.
3. Unintentional exclusion of non-mainstream cultures.
  - Alienation from the culture of environmental organizations.
4. Misinformation and misperceptions about ethnic minorities.
5. Reluctance to broaden the missions of organizations.
6. Tendency to recruit and hire from the same talent pool repeatedly.
7. Inability to retain people of color in environmental organizations.
8. Lack of programming that inspires and motivates people of color.

## TOP-LEVEL MANAGEMENT AND DONORS IMPEDE DIVERSITY EFFORTS

Interviewees say that older, entrenched leaders who have aged in place over several decades are resistant to change. In addition, the call for greater diversity of the leadership is threatening as some Whites who occupy those positions reckon it means working themselves out of a job. Some employees currently working in environmental organizations see attempts to diversify the staff as lessening opportunities for the in-group who traditionally staffed such organizations. Graeme Nivens argues that affirmative action was definitely seen by some environmental employees as a threat to White job security. The call for greater diversity implies sharing power with people of color, and there is great resistance to such an idea. Hence, senior staff respond to these tensions and perceived threats by adhering to and protecting the status quo.

An interviewee indicated that even in the Sierra Club, an organization that has instituted a variety of diversity initiatives, there was and will continue to be resistance to the idea of increasing diversity. The interviewee said, "It's gonna be the resistance, for the Sierra Club I can only say resistance is gonna be [there], resistance from those that don't believe that race is an issue. And there's a lot of people that, in particular, White folks that simply don't believe it's an issue. They don't see themselves as being racist, so therefore there's no need [for diversity]. Some years ago, there was a discussion with the Sierra Club's Executive Board that we didn't need an environmental justice program simply –because.... Why? You know, everyone is the same; everyone is equal so there's no need for a program that only addresses People of Color. Yet, you had a whole idea of environmental justice, which says that there is a disproportionate impact on People of Color in low-income communities."

Another interviewee noted that top leaders who push their organization too hard on diversity can be ostracized, penalized, and in some cases ousted from the organization. She provides an example of a chief executive officer (CEO) to whom this had happened. She reports that, "There was one CEO who to his credit was so committed to inclusion and diversity that it actually cost him his job, I mean he was a White guy, still is a White guy. It cost him his job as the national executive...because his board wasn't there yet and that would have been around 94."

Funds are granted to undertake specific activities and though those allow the organizations to support certain things, it also constrains what they can do. The organizations have to be concerned with deliverables and if diversity is not an explicit deliverable their funding sources may prevent them from undertaking such initiatives.

## APPLYING SHORT-TERM FIXES TO LONG-TERM, DEEPLY ENTRENCHED PROBLEMS

Environmental organizations succumb to temptation and take a short-term view of the issue. Hence, organizations conceive and find funding for one-off or short-term programs. These are inadequate to resolve diversity issues; this is a problem that environmental organizations have been trying to solve for many decades now.

## UNINTENTIONAL EXCLUSION OF NON-MAINSTREAM CULTURES

Many White environmental activists talk and work only with others who are of similar backgrounds to themselves. As a result, they do not get out of their silos to connect with people who think differently or who are from different backgrounds. Gail Swanson argues that the fear of the "culture shift" drives a certain kind of paranoia that manifests itself in resistance to change. She says it is about "embracing change more than you fear change. It's about really valuing different perspectives, different viewpoints."

### **Alienation from the normative culture of environmental organizations**

Several interviewees felt like they were alienated from the culture of environmental organizations and did not feel like a part of the community even after working in the field for long periods of time. As Traver explains, “The barrier is the culture of the organization...the inner culture. It’s also if you don’t have the right supervisor, the right leadership that in itself becomes a hindrance and a barrier to things [such as advancement].”

Zoe Edmon spoke about how her discomfort and efforts to try to fit into a mainstream environmental organization she worked for overwhelmed her and led her to quit her job. Here’s how she described her experience, “At the organization that I mentioned that was mainstream there were a few people of color and I quit that job...In my last couple of weeks there I started dressing in a way that I never felt comfortable dressing and I cut my hair in a way that I wasn’t comfortable wearing... The level of response that I got that was positive was really good but what was more significant to me was that people noticed it all. That I could be in a group of my people and it would not have been so noticed and pointed out and I just felt like I was on stage or offering a performance just because I was different... It’s carrying that level of difference and that level of noticing takes a lot of energy... It’s an emotional experience that I think it’s hard to understand unless you’ve been through it and that affects your ability to participate in the group.”

### **MISINFORMATION AND MISPERCEPTIONS ABOUT ETHNIC MINORITIES**

Ethnic minorities are still perceived as being disinterested in the environment. If they are interested, they are seen as completely consumed with environmental justice issues. Since environmental justice is not always perceived as core environmental issues that environmental nonprofits should spend their time on, that marginalizes people of color.

Elliott Payne provides an example of how this type of logic results in the dismissal of issues impacting minority communities and in organizations refraining to collaborate with such communities. He describes an exchange with a former boss. “At a past organization I told my boss, we did wildlife conservation, and I said you know we should start working with communities of color, I even said I have some relationships, I can follow up with them and see where they land on it.... My boss said, ‘Oh, we don’t do environmental justice.’ [My]...reaction...first of all, why not? Second of all...he didn’t perceive the complexity of what people of color are interested in and support. He just thought people of color — a lot do support environmental justice, and we support a lot of other things as well.”

Rachel Langstone makes a similar point. She says, “Let’s stop putting the burden, all the time, a hundred percent of the burden, on the communities of color and the students, saying they’re just not qualified, they’re just not interested. Yes, they’re qualified and yes, they’re interested. But the minute they [the person of color] get in and I’ve seen this, I’ve seen this over and over again, where we’ve got young, enthusiastic, bright, energetic professionals of color coming in, wanting to do good and they’re not given the opportunity, they’re not given the exposure, and I have seen them crushed. I have seen them ridiculed. I have seen them, I mean literally ridiculed because they have a different accent.”

### **RELUCTANCE TO BROADEN ORGANIZATIONAL MISSIONS**

The staff of environmental organizations set priorities and goals, and they are sometimes unwilling to modify or change these. This prevents them from adapting to changes going on around them such as the broadening of the environmental discourse and the participation of a wide array of people in environmental affairs. There are no significant consequences for failure to address diversity effectively—yet.

## TENDENCY TO RECRUIT AND HIRE FROM THE SAME TALENT POOL REPEATEDLY

Langstone argues that there is strong sense of entitlement among Whites that jobs in environmental organizations are theirs so there is a tendency to hire Whites regardless of the qualifications of ethnic minority applicants. She says, "There's a very strong sense of entitlement that the White males are the ones who should first have those positions and power. Next are the White females and we [ethnic minorities] haven't gotten to the point yet, I haven't seen it or heard it that now it's time, I mean it shouldn't be [like] that, you know, it shouldn't be that way, sequential. Because if someone who is a person of color comes in who is way, way more qualified than you know, they should be able to compete and get the job. And they're not being given the job."

Sabrina Downing argues that recruitment techniques are outdated. She says, "So their [the environmental organizations] recruitment practices, and their thinking, and their logic models are literally still out of 20 or 30 years ago. I'm not even kidding when they continue to draw the diagram of the stakeholder base, and it's the same one that came out of my environmental textbook that was published 20 years ago."

## INABILITY TO RETAIN PEOPLE OF COLOR IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Jacob Maxwell explains, "A lot of times the talent is hired but not retained. It's because organizations don't know how to welcome these people; they are culturally different or they are racially different, or they are ethnically different. And because of that they [the environmental organizations] don't do a good job in the care and maintenance of them... [In addition]...the people oftentimes don't recognize [what] they are putting themselves [into]. People getting hired...are getting into organizations in which [there is]...a lack of sensitivity. That...makes them [the new hires]...[un]happy. These are successful people—because they will leave and go [on to be] very, very successful elsewhere. So what does that tell you?"

Even the Sierra Club which has incorporated environmental justice in its agenda and hired staff to work on these issues, had difficulty retaining ethnic minority staff at times. One interviewee who has a graduate degree from a top-ranked university worked in one of the organization's local offices for a few years before quitting. She says that she left the Sierra Club because, "I think diversity is one of the issues, I'll say that outright. But I also think top-down decision-making was the big issue for me. Decisions were being made in San Francisco about the directions and the tactics and the strategies of the \_\_\_\_\_ campaign. And then we were asked to implement those using the connections that we have; community-based organizing but towards the closure of \_\_\_\_\_ plants. And there was no robust discussion around that or the implications of it."

Two interviewees discuss challenges that arise with volunteers in organizations like the Sierra Club. The volunteers—some of whom have been affiliated with the organization for years and donate time generously—are a powerful force in the organization. Yet, they are not always as committed to diversity efforts, have not undergone diversity training, and do not always have the cultural competency needed to communicate and work effectively with low-income and minority communities. Hence, one interviewee talked about how difficult it was to work with White suburban volunteers who flocked to a predominantly minority city to work on projects. The volunteers, who felt they knew what was best for the city and its residents, often disagreed with Sierra Club staff stationed in the city over tactics and strategies.

One interviewee claimed he stopped working with NWF because he was frustrated with the slow pace of diversity. He reports that, "Definitely things have changed since I've worked for environmental organizations three years ago... It seems like things are in the same place as how I left them... It was the frustration of things not moving quick enough within the environmental advocacy world on bringing diverse voices to the forefront that was frustrating to me, and so I guess I would still be frustrated knowing that it still does not seem to be an area of focus and just still does not seem something that is driving environmental advocacy in this country. So I would say it's frustrating but also tiresome at this point... and still continues to be the reason why I get frustrated with incremental change within the environmental world... I like things to happen directly and I like to make a positive difference each and every day. I don't see that happening in the environmental world especially concerning diversity."

## LACK OF PROGRAMMING THAT INSPIRES AND MOTIVATES PEOPLE OF COLOR

Many environmental organizations do not have programming that excites people of color, particularly the youth. Terry Rochester believes that environmental organizations “avoid getting involved in the minority communities because they...don’t know how to do it. They don’t, they’re not equipped; they don’t have the will to do it. And they don’t truly take advantage of those they already have access to on their boards or in their local communities...by supporting them...you know, with resources.”

Shaun Somers agrees with Rochester. Somers described his search for an environmental organization to get excited about. He says, “Well, it meant frustration for me. I really enjoyed working on environmental issues; however, because I did not feel like there was a particular organization who was leading the way or that I was particularly drawn to how they were working on the issue, I feel like I found myself looking for other ways in which I could be helping more personally. So I looked away from national or even regional or state level changes and decided that the changes that I wanted to make were personal ones and ones I wanted to address by really throwing myself into the areas in which I was writing reports about, communities which are being affected by these things.”

## Personal Experiences Encountering and Overcoming Barriers in Environmental Organizations

Interviewees were asked to describe any barriers they encountered when they tried to gain access to the staff positions they’ve had in environmental organizations. They identified six major barriers that are summarized in table 8.4. Interviewees also discussed how they overcame these hurdles.

**TABLE 8.4. BARRIERS ENCOUNTERED IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

1. Obtaining good mentorship.
  - Networks.
  - Learning about the internal operations of organizations.
2. Being listened to and taken seriously.
3. Job mobility.
4. Volunteering can be cost prohibitive.
5. Inability to afford unpaid internships.
6. Going beyond diversity for White females.

## OBTAINING GOOD MENTORSHIP

Several interviewees attest to the importance of mentoring in navigating the environmental labor market. It is very important to have experienced people mentor you. It is just as important to learn and practice how to mentor others. As Maxwell sees it, mentoring is an effective way to “grow your talent.” Maxwell considers himself fortunate. “I’ve always had mentorship or at least friendship; folks who cared,” he says. “I have put a lot of my personal time into mentorship and to reaching out.... I figure that was my damn job.” Sabrina Downing agrees. She says, “I mean in general board members we do have mentors whenever new board members roll on, and so in the three boards I’ve served on I’ve always had a mentor.”

Mentorship can be formal or informal. Some of the minority professional associations, such as MANRRS and Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), make formal mentoring a centerpiece of their programming (Talbert, Larke, & Jones 1999). However, Maxwell’s experiences illustrate how much of the mentoring in environmental organizations is informal, and it is important to recognize that fact and take advantage of potential mentoring opportunities when they arise. Maxwell reports that he met \_\_\_\_\_ in a training program, and she became his mentor early on. She later hired him to work in her conservation organization. Over the years, he has cultivated a relationship with her as well as with others who help him to understand the nuances in the environmental field. As Maxwell points out, “People don’t just come up to you and say I want to be your mentor.” The process is similar to a courtship, and those who are not socialized into the customs and practices of environmental organizations can miss out on opportunities because they don’t know how to navigate the system. Gail Swanson puts it succinctly, “There is not as much transparency in how to navigate the ladder of engagement,” she says. Langstone agrees, saying she considers the “lack of transparency and secrecy in organizations” to be barriers that are hard to overcome.

Maxwell urges ethnic minorities to actively seek out mentors and to be proactive in networking and mentoring each other. He argues that the “old boys club” uses this practice to mentor and promote each other.

Swanson charted her path to leadership in her organization by growing up in the organization and becoming “visible by going through the leadership internally.” She built relationships and found people who shared her values to make connections to. However, Traver had a very different experience from Maxwell and Swanson. She says, “Nobody has really reached out to me—[well] one person has. Within the environmental community, nobody professionally. I don’t think my name ever comes up.” Her mentorship comes from outside of the environmental community. She has also been proactive in developing a support system she can be a part of. She says, “Being a Woman of Color and always the only woman of color in the room for a good while, I found[ed] my own informal network of PoC/WoC [people of color/women of color] that work within the environmental community.... But there hasn’t been anything that’s been formalized that I’ve connected with, I would love to, though.”

Rachel Langstone, who graduated from a prestigious liberal arts college and has a doctorate from a highly ranked university, had a similar experience to Traver. Langstone said when she worked in environmental organizations, “I was incredibly alone, I had nobody to talk to. I couldn’t get support, I looked for it, tried to find it, and it’s very, very difficult because people inside the agencies and organizations are afraid to provide support.” She continues, “I had all White professors and you know, I mean I was, I was a top student so that was not the problem, but I couldn’t find the support. I couldn’t get internships. [In graduate school] I couldn’t you know basically [get] things you need when you’re going through university. I finally found a professor of color and it was a huge turning point...in my life because I got the kind of moral support that I needed to be able to make it through.”

Shaun Somers left Washington, D.C. and the NGO he was working for because he couldn’t find a mentor to help him. He contends that, “I felt like I got pushed out because I did not know where to look as a young professional in D.C. who had worked on environmental issues but wanted to work in this area since there aren’t any leaders that I could identify. I didn’t know where to go so I started to look at what changes [I can] personally make.”

Dylan Houghton found that it wasn't till after he and others founded a group for Latino environmental professionals that he was asked to serve on boards. Now he is bombarded with requests to serve. Since the organization has been formed, Houghton says, "There has been a lot more interest and because I have this expertise that they are looking for I've been more readily brought on to these high level conversations either with the federal administration or internally within my own organization."

### Networks

Having strong or weak network ties are important as they facilitate information flows, collaborative efforts, and provide support structures that are vital to success and effectiveness. Cameron Bishop used two types of networks to help him gain a foothold in professional environmental circles. His job with a federal agency required him to provide technical assistance to environmental justice groups. He used the contacts he established through work to develop a network of people he could rely on. He was also embedded in a second network as an ELP fellow and was, therefore, a member of the network of several hundred fellows spread across the country.

### Learning about the Internal Operations of Organizations

Understanding the internal workings of environmental organizations can be a significant challenge to overcome. Jude Driscoll focused on this aspect of institutional culture as soon as she entered the field. She says, "One of the things that was an advantage for me was to understand organizational operations, which I think made it easier for me to be able to work in organizations."

## BEING LISTENED TO AND TAKEN SERIOUSLY

One interviewee spoke of the difficulty ethnic minorities have getting colleagues to listen to them or take them seriously. He noted that "'Of course, I come with White privilege. And you should record that, because that enabled me to do what I've done... There [are] certain assumptions out there; there was an assumption on competence... And it was just overlooking...[For example] \_\_\_\_\_ a scientist at \_\_\_\_\_ [one of the leading oceanographic institutes in the country]...he could say something and...nobody in the room...it would just go past them all—he's African American. I would come in and say the same thing, and it has that sugar-whiteness coating. 'It's good, it's good. We gotta listen to this guy!'" Other interviewees reported encountering similar situations.

## JOB MOBILITY

Many ethnic minorities and low-income people are place-bound. They have difficulties moving to where the jobs are or to places where get promotions more quickly. Moving up through the environmental leadership ranks might require relocations. Those who can't do this might find themselves locked out of leadership positions.

Dylan Houghton describes the challenges that moving to take a job can pose. He argues that to take advantage of opportunities, "I had to be able to get up and leave home and move to a different state for a year. I'm lucky enough to have some flexibility to do that because not everyone does. I made enough just to pay my bills but if I had to take care of mom or dad or brother or sister there was no way that I could have done that. I know that is certainly a barrier for some people who can't take these lower paying positions out of state."



## VOLUNTEERING CAN BE COST-PROHIBITIVE

Volunteering is an essential part of the environmental field, and a critical component of what's needed to be appointed to top leadership positions. Volunteering can be time contributed to organizations, service on boards, service donated to programs, etc. In many instances, the volunteer has uncompensated out-of-pocket costs to participate in these activities. In considering the role volunteering plays in promotions or consideration for leadership positions, environmental organizations should be cognizant of the fact that not everyone can afford to volunteer.

Maxwell, who has volunteered extensively from his earliest years in the environmental field, urges those embarking on environmental careers to volunteer. He argues that volunteering can provide contacts, expose one to mentors, networks, and long-term relationships that are beneficial throughout one's career. Maxwell sees volunteering as an investment. He says, "I'll be quite frank with you, the reason I've done work on boards in government and private sector [is that] I viewed it as professional development." He continues, "There is nothing that increased my effectiveness in \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ better than the fact that I wasn't insular or siloed in my thoughts and my process. I [was] always out there doing things that brought me knowledge, that gave me contacts that had me involved in other things that you know opened my eyes to ideas and concepts and best practices and other kinds of things."

Langstone, who has served on several boards, expresses caution about this kind of volunteering. She argues that she is sometimes brought onto boards for diversity purposes, but she is not expected to bring her own reasoning and opinion to board decision-making. She says, "But it is astounding where they do have people of color these days is on their volunteer boards and commissions. But again and I'm sorry to use the term, but it is token because when people are brought onboard, and again I speak from experience, people want me, you know desirable commodity because I have a brown skin, but they don't want your voice to be different. They want you onboard but they want you to then endorse, rubber-stamp what they're saying. And I say look, I thought you wanted me on because you really were looking for a different perspective, I'm coming from a different place, my associations are with a really broad spectrum of our population and I want to bring that perspective to you, but if you don't want to hear it then cut me off, shut me down. That really isn't helpful to your process; it doesn't enrich the environment, the learning environment."

One interviewee spoke about how expensive it was to be a board member of a national environmental organization and that his inability to finance his stay on the board led him to step down. He reported that, "My biggest barrier was financial. I'm a \_\_\_\_\_ and I have...children and I would travel to the most exotic places in the country [to board meetings]. Some of the most amazing places like Jekyll Island and Hog Island... We had board meetings in Costa Rica...but I had to pay for my air flights, I had to pay for my hotels, I had to pay for food.... It became very challenging to actually.... I would have stayed on the National Audubon Society board another three years easily if I had the financial resources or support. I just never felt comfortable. You know being a minority, I guess there is a little pride there...[but] I really can't afford these trips."

## UNABLE TO AFFORD UNPAID INTERNSHIPS

Internships provide invaluable experiences for young people to obtain work experience in environmental organizations. However, some of these are unpaid work opportunities. Though upper and middle class youth can afford to bypass wages to obtain those experiences, the same is not true for poor students. Hence, social class plays a role in who can accept and benefit from unpaid internships and who can't. Not everyone is aware of or are willing to work to reduce the biases that unpaid internships introduce into the workforce. One interviewee remembers that there was resistance in SCA as well as in government environmental agencies when it was suggested that internships should be paid in order to broaden the pool of people who can participate in them.



Today the SCA collaborates with the NPS on programs such as the National Park Academy. This diversity program not only provides paid internships, it has a long-term vision to help prime the pipeline. The collaborative places high school students (15-19 year olds) in its youth program, college students and recent graduates (18 years or older) in its young adult program, and those 21 years and older in its field leaders program. Interns do conservation work while they are building skills and are being mentored. This approach provides unprecedented opportunities to develop talent and train future environmental workers. The SCA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a similar partnership to help train diverse youth for positions in the agency (Student Conservation Association, 2014).

### GOING BEYOND DIVERSITY FOR WHITE FEMALES

As data from this and other studies have shown, White females have made tremendous progress in diversifying environmental organizations. The same progress has not been replicated with ethnic minorities. Interviewees believe this is the case because diversity efforts have focused on White females more so than on ethnic minorities. Maxwell reports that, "I talk to White women all the time about being the greatest beneficiary of equity and civil rights in the world. Boy when, when that door was open, the world didn't embrace people of color as the first people that they brought into the family, they brought in other Whites, they brought in White women... [As a result,] that number is up. The gender diversity is [still] not where it should be."

Rachel Langstone agrees. She argues that, "I've seen more White women come into the field. In fact, I've seen a lot of White women come into the field. And I feel there is a very strong sense of entitlement. People of color cannot get in if there are White people there who feel like they own those jobs and those positions. Yes, yes, that's a very strong powerful feeling. I actually know of one instance, and so there's probably others as well, where a person, a highly credentialed person of color in the environmental field...competed nationally for a position, got the job beating out an internal candidate who was a White woman. That White woman you know went on to make sure that this person was ejected and then she got the job after all. I mean that is incredible, but that actually happens."

One interviewee used the case of the Ecological Society of America (ESA) as an example of how the process unfolded in an environmental professional association. In the early 1990s, the ESA—wanting to develop diversity initiatives—created a Committee on Women and Minorities. The interviewee reported that "I pointed out to them that 'w' comes after 'm' in the alphabet, and that as long as they kept it as 'women and minorities' they were going to do all sorts of great things for women's issues and nothing for minorities. That's exactly what happened in the next five years. They did all sorts of great research on women's issues and glass ceilings and mommy tracks and all these really important things. But didn't do a damn thing for issues affecting people of color."

ESA eventually recognized that its diversity initiatives aimed at ethnic minorities were faltering so it developed a program called Strategies for Ecology Education, Diversity and Sustainability (SEEDS) to invigorate minority diversity efforts. SEEDS' mission is to diversify the ecological profession (Ecological Society of America, 2014). SEEDS is loosely modeled on a diversity program sponsored by another professional association, the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography (ASLO). ASLO created the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography Multicultural Program (ASLOMP) in 1990. Since that time, 830 students have participated in ASLOMP (Hampton University, 2014).

## Making Diversity Initiatives Successful

Interviewees considered diversity initiatives that were successful and identified six critical factors that led to their success. These are summarized below in table 8.5.

**TABLE 8.5. FACTORS THAT MAKE DIVERSITY INITIATIVES SUCCESSFUL**

1. Adequate and stable funding.
2. Adequate staffing and committed leadership.
3. Adequate organizational buy-in.
4. Ability to communicate across race, class, gender, and cultural lines.
5. Institutionalizing diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) goals.
6. Translate diversity training into action.

### ADEQUATE AND STABLE FUNDING

Interviewees identify stable funding as a critical component of developing and sustaining successful diversity initiatives. Many well-intentioned and potentially valuable diversity initiatives fail because of insufficient and unstable funding. Respondents mentioned recent examples of projects in which funding cuts resulted in great disappointment and frustration for hundreds of low-income youths.

One interviewee mentioned the EPA's venture with UNCF to provide internships that was scuttled at the last minute when funding fell through. Another discussed the impact the recent government shutdown had on youths seeking outdoor jobs in the SCA. He indicates that about 500 youths who had applied for summer jobs were not employed because the program was not funded. A third interviewee discussed an aborted National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) program that targeted faculty and scientists who wanted to start diversity programs at their institutions. "Like NOAA flew a bunch of us down to Charleston, this was like 12 years ago. Because they were gonna start some new program. And when you go through all of this and then... well then Bush came into the presidency and now the money's not there. So there's a lack of commitment from the tops of organizations. I see that happening."

Diversity initiatives are vulnerable in many organizations because, for the most part, they are unfunded mandates. They are typically not a line item in the budget. As long as this is the case, organizations scramble to put together short-term projects that are susceptible to funding cuts. The abrupt closure of a project or abandoning the project before it gets off the ground because of lack of funding fuels frustration, mistrust, and ill-will that fester for a long time in the target community as well as among the staff who worked to develop the programs.

### ADEQUATE STAFFING AND COMMITTED LEADERSHIP

Diversity initiatives are often understaffed. This is related to funding levels, but it is also a function of organizations miscalculating how much time and energy the programs will absorb. One interviewee gives an example of the Oceanography Society trying to copy a successful diversity initiative. He describes what happened. "The Oceanography Society... they tried to emulate.... They...had some money but it wasn't enough. It was [also] a lack of critical mass. They didn't have the focused leadership."

## ADEQUATE ORGANIZATIONAL BUY-IN

One interviewee comments, “I’ve heard this diversity conversation for forever.” Though many people might feel this way, it is a necessary conversation to have as (a) not everyone has been privy to conversations about diversity, and (b) even if they have been a part of the conversation, not everyone agrees with the idea of increasing diversity. As Swanson notes, diversity conversations “take a long time and it’s still new to some people. One interviewee indicates, “I still hear questions about why [is] the Sierra Club...talking about diversity and inclusion, so not everyone gets it.” In response, someone points out that part of the Sierra Club’s mission “is to enlist humanity.... This is not just some of humanity, you know, it’s humanity.”

## ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE ACROSS RACE, CLASS, GENDER, AND CULTURAL LINES

It is imperative that organizations wanting to engage people from a broad cross-section of society communicate effectively to a variety of audiences. Such organizations should have staff with high cultural competency to facilitate this process. This is particularly important when trying to collaborate with low-income and ethnic minority communities. Payne discusses youth programs that were organized but none of the organizers reached out to or engaged the parents of the children who were supposed to participate in the program. There was a disregard for the importance of family and the need to engage families as part of the community from which the youths—the target audience—came.

Zoe Edmon speaks about the need for cultural humility. She explains that, “‘Cultural humility is carrying your own assumptions in the world and knowing that they are valid while also always approaching others and their assumptions and experiences in the world [as] valid as well. So that you never get [full] ‘competence in your own culture’ or others, so you’re always learning and always curious.”

Payne also cautions against “arrogance” in the approach. He describes projects in which environmental organizations or groups presume to know what’s best for a community without engaging community members in decision-making or action plans. He explains, “I think a lot of the times it stems from the approach of oh we just go out and offer tree plantings or offer engaging in an outdoor activity, if we just reach out to them they will come. We’ve even seen, I won’t name the group...a national conservation group who built a lot of facilities around urban areas...near communities of color and low-income communities with the idea of if we build it they will come.... They built them and they [the community residents] didn’t come, even though they’re in the neighborhood or they’re like a block away, they didn’t really know [the facilities were there].”

One interviewee discusses how the Sierra Club responded to the 1990 letter that was sent to the Green Group—and how the letter provided the impetus for the organization to jumpstart diversity efforts. According to the interviewee, “Yeah and Sierra Club was one of those organizations that received that letter accusing it of being a racist organization by Richard Moore and the environmental justice movement at that time. And after receiving that letter—I can’t even remember the name of the president at the time—he acknowledged and admitted, ‘Yes, we are racists.’ And... he followed that up by creating the environmental justice program for the Sierra Club. And since then...when you compare Sierra Club to the other large environmental organizations, we’ve made tremendous progress. We now have a diversity and inclusion staff person. Her job is to train and to...address the issues of diversity and inclusion in the Sierra Club. Last year, I attended at least three dismantling racism trainings across the country because our staff is spread across the country. We have a diversity statement. We have a diversity committee. We have regular inclusion conference calls that are open to anyone.... We developed...I think it was seven environmental justice grassroots principles that were patterned after the original environmental justice principles.... One of those principles describes how we uh, move and participate in People of Color communities. And first of all, we have to be invited into that community. We don’t just go into a community. We don’t tell that community what their issues are. There’s a protocol for us working with People of Color communities. When we do media, the media isn’t for us, we don’t stand out front. We are very serious in making [sure] ...that issue [is] being owned by that community; so they’re the ones that are out front. They’re the ones who are being interviewed. They’re the ones whose pictures are being taken.”

## INSTITUTIONALIZING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION (DEI) GOALS

Diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) goals must be part of the core mission of the organization. DEI should be included in the mission statements and made a part of work plans, funding requests, etc. Projects with clear goals and tangible outputs and deliverables find it easier to obtain funding and have a higher likelihood of succeeding. Producing measurable results is also key. Organizations that have measurable diversity-related deliverables and staff who are accountable for these tend to develop more successful diversity initiatives. The Sierra Club was mentioned as an organization that is trying to implement this model wherein diversity is expected to be a part of the everyday work of the organization, and staff are expected to understand that it should be a routine part of their work.

The Sierra Club and several other organizations are part of a coalition working on a diversity statement that the group will use. The goal of the coalition is to identify and capture best diversity principles and practices. The coalition also hopes to use the statement to broaden awareness. Academic institutions, government agencies, and many corporations have used diversity statements to signal fairness and openness in the workplace for a long time now. The time has come for more environmental organizations to follow suit.

## TRANSLATE DIVERSITY TRAINING INTO ACTION

Some organizations have diversity training, but those exercises are not well connected to institutional routines and practices. Staff participating in diversity training should be provided with mechanisms and guidance to help them incorporate their training into the everyday operations of the organization.

For example, instead of having only one person in charge of hiring, establish a diverse hiring committee. One interviewee discussed how having a diverse hiring committee brought forward a lesbian candidate for a senior post. That candidate would not have been considered for such a high-profile position in the absence of such a committee. Not only does the group push the boundaries of what's considered acceptable, the group decision holds more sway in the organization and does not isolate and put one person out on a limb for what could be a controversial decision.

But Rachel Langstone warns that having a hiring committee without accountability and oversight can yield results that perpetuate homogeneity in the workforce. She tells of her experience on a hiring committee. According to Langstone, "I was on a hiring panel for one of the agencies that I worked for. I was a person of color with three White people who were on the panel. And you know we went through the [evaluation of] the applicants and there were five. We held five interviews. And this one person floated to the top, she was ranked highest by all...[the] panelists. She happened to be African American and she [was] just dynamite. She was sharp, she was just on the ball.... So obviously I knew she was going to get the job. Monday rolled around when she was supposed to show up and I looked around and said, 'Hey, where is she? I haven't seen her.' You know this was an organization that was pretty much all White so you would have noticed an African American. And I was told by the person who would have been her supervisor, 'Oh, I gave the job to so and so,' who is a White woman. I said, 'You did what? How could you do that?' So I think what I'm saying to you is these are reasons why our people of color are not getting in. This blatant, flagrant racism. I mean, I don't know how else to label an action like that."

Another interviewee uses the example of the NWF to illustrate how some environmental organizations are conducting broad searches for senior positions and are taking steps to obtain a diverse pool of applicants. According to the interviewee, when NWF uses a “head hunter” firm, they make it clear to the consultants that “we will not accept a pool that is not gender and ethnically diverse and don’t come back and say we can’t find [diverse applicants], that’s just not acceptable.”

Drew Westley discusses how having an EPA director who was insistent on a diverse applicant pool made a difference to the selection process. Westley describes what happened, “So... in one situation I was a participant in...you know we had interviewed a whole bunch of people from all across the country and you know, that evaluation or those interviews were summarized up to the director of the office. And the director said, ‘Look, there are no People of Color in this pool. I want you to go out specifically to make sure that you find some People of Color to put into this pool.’ And sure enough, because you’re dealing with a whole bunch of mid-managers who wanna make sure their careers are ok, they go out, they march out and pool some People of Color in and a few weeks later, we have two women, both of Color coming in to the office. So, the situation where the director of the office was really important to the process of making sure that diversity was considered and diversity was an important part of the process.”

Most of the interviewees felt that diversity had increased in the environmental movement and in mainstream environmental organizations over time, corroborating and adding context to the findings of the report. They argued that environmental organizations had made more progress on gender diversity than racial/ethnic diversity. In particular, they felt that White women had made the most progress in diversifying environmental organizations. Interviewees contended that rank was important in understanding progress on diversity. They claimed that ethnic minorities were not advancing to senior positions in the organizations at the rates they should be. Interviewees want to see more attention paid to the culture of environmental organizations as they felt it was homogenous, exclusionary, and needed to be broadened.

Chapter 9 will summarize the findings of the report and briefly discuss some implications.



## **Chapter 9.** **Implications** **and Conclusions**

**Questions have persisted about class, gender, and racial diversity in the environmental movement and in environmental institutions for the past five decades. Over this time, numerous studies have been conducted that generally find that while gender diversity has improved, much less progress has been made on race and class diversity.**

The lack of racial and class diversity in environmental institutions is not a trivial concern. First and foremost, it should be noted that the great strides environmental institutions have made in hiring women and promoting them to leadership positions cannot be substituted for class and racial diversity. That is, environmental organizations that have made significant progress on gender equity in the workplace cannot rest on their laurels and assume that even this work is complete—not by a long shot. Women bump up against the glass ceiling, finding it difficult to move beyond the assistant or associate levels of the top, most powerful and visible, positions in the organizations (i.e., president, executive director, chief executive officer, and chair of the board).

And as this study has shown, gender diversity is not synonymous with racial and class diversity. While gender diversity has improved in many environmental institutions, class and racial diversity remain elusive. Rank (entry-level, mid-level, senior) is important in understanding how ethnic minorities fare in environmental organizations. The higher the rank, the fewer ethnic minorities there are in environmental organizations. Ethnic minorities rarely occupy the top, most powerful, face-of-the-organization positions. To understand these dynamics, more work needs to be done. In addition, environmental organizations should invest more time in understanding other kinds of diversities related to LGBTQ experiences, gender identity, age, cultural inclusivity, religion, etc.



Environmental practitioners felt that one of the most important factors that will dictate how quickly environmental organizations increase the number of racial minorities in their workforce is population dynamics. Interviewees point to a shift change that is being brought on by two converging forces—old leadership who have aged in place for decades nearing retirement and the changing racial composition of the country. The demographic trends dictate that institutions that want to maintain a competitive edge and attract the best workers will be the ones that understand these trends and adjust to them. Ethnic minorities currently constitute about 38% of the population, and the census predicts that by the year 2060 ethnic minorities and people of multi-racial backgrounds will comprise roughly 57% of the population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012; Taylor, 2000b). It will be difficult for institutions that do not hire from such a large segment of the population and do not promote them once they are hired to be successful.

Environmental institutions must also consider stakeholders and their base of support. Environmental issues affect all people on the planet. A movement and the institutions that support it cannot appeal to and hire only or primarily the White middle class. For the environmental movement and organizations to continue to be successful, those in control have to recognize that ethnic minorities have agency and are a powerful advocacy and voting constituency that should not be ignored. Research has shown that minorities tend to favor environmental protection (Mohai, 2003; 1985; Mohai & Bryant, 1998; Adeola, 2004; Whittaker, Segura & Bowler, 2005) and that Black and Hispanic congressional delegates vote more pro-environmentally than their peers (Davis, 1992; Ard & Mohai, 2011; Mohai & Kershner, 2002).

Though the report finds that fewer respondents said their organizations did not hire minorities because they felt minorities lacked the requisite qualifications (the competency gap), there is still a remnant of this stereotype that clouds the interactions between minorities and Whites in the environmental field. Many of the environmental practitioners interviewed felt that misperceptions regarding ethnic minority knowledge of the environment, qualifications, and skills are still pervasive in mainstream environmental organizations. Several discuss the fact that there is a rift between mainstream environmental organizations and environmental justice groups. They argue that ethnic minority environmental leaders and groups are not considered to be a core part of the movement. Questions are raised about whether minorities are actually doing environmental work. In addition, ethnic minority professionals are not always taken seriously once they are hired into environmental organizations. Some point to limited or one-sided collaborations with environmental organizations. That is, minority environmental groups are contacted about collaborations only when mainstream organizations need their political support for campaigns. It is becoming clear that if the environmental movement and environmental organizations want to continue relying on the support of ethnic minorities, minorities have to be included in all sectors of the field—including the workforce.

The above findings show that even in the economic downturn of the past several years, there was hiring in the three types or institutions studied. Yet, in no instance did the percentage of ethnic minorities hired exceed 18%. That is, the ethnic minorities comprised 17.1% of the new hires in environmental grantmaking foundations, 12.8% of the hires in conservation and preservation organizations, and 11.7% of the hires in government environmental agencies. The report highlights several points in the recruitment and hiring process where conscious and unconscious biases as well as outright discrimination make it difficult for minorities to obtain employment and promotions in environmental organizations. Environmental organizations still rely strongly on informal networks to recruit new workers. Yet scholars have been warning for a long time that such recruitment and hiring processes introduce inadvertent biases into the workforce, allows race and class to play strong roles in the selection process, and often lead to homogenous workforces replicating themselves (Perrow, 1974; DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Granovetter, 1995; Braddock & McPartland, 1987; Model, 1993).

Reducing institutional biases can be challenging. Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly (2006) report that simply asking managers to participate in diversity training to reduce biases and providing feedback have limited impacts on increasing the diversity of women and minorities in the managerial ranks. This has important implications for environmental organizations as diversity training is a low-cost diversity initiative that organizations try to institute. However, it might not be very effective as an isolated strategy. Research suggests and environmental practitioners urge environmental organizations to undertake more comprehensive diversity strategies that have long-term vision, broad institutional buy-in, oversight and monitoring, accountability, stable funding, as well as tracking and evaluation. Several of the environmental practitioners discussed the unconscious biases that were prevalent in environmental organizations and the need for comprehensive institutional and movement-wide diversity initiatives to overturn them.



Despite the fact that the environmental institutions studied indicate that their efforts to hire ethnic minorities were hampered because they had few job openings and there was a lack of minority applicants, two trends point in directions that should make these claims less salient over time. First, the environmental field is a growth sector that is projected to produce large numbers of jobs in coming decades (Bezdek, Wendling, & DiPerna, 2007; Center for American Progress, 2007; Bezdek, 2007; U.S. Department of Labor, 2012). The increasing demand for environmental workers should create unprecedented opportunities for hiring ethnic minorities into the environmental workforce.

Second, the ethnic minority population is growing, which means a larger pool of people to draw from. It is inconceivable that such a large segment of the population won't apply for environmental jobs, will not have the skills or educational qualifications for the jobs, and won't stay in environmental organizations if they are hired.

As the report illustrates, some diversity efforts are short-lived while others barely get off the ground. The profiles included in chapter 1 provide some important clues to help us understand why some diversity efforts have limited success. As the case of Robert Stanton, former director of the National Park Service shows, Black students were eager to sign up for internships and leave segregated towns and all-Black college campuses in the South and Southwest to travel unchaperoned on segregated public transportation into parts of the country where anti-Black hostilities were commonplace. Some didn't make it to the internships. It is not because they lacked interest or the educational skills needed for the positions, it is because they couldn't afford the upfront cost of doing the internship. Those running the program seemed to be unaware that the start-up cost would be an insurmountable financial barrier for the recruits.

Still today, environmental organizations are attempting to diversify their institutions without committing the necessary funds or investing in the institutional changes needed to make such attempts successful and long-lasting. The findings of this study indicate that only a small percentage of environmental institutions have a diversity manager or a diversity committee. Many forego even low-cost approaches such as taking steps to broaden the applicant pool. Therefore, it isn't surprising that racial diversity is moving at a snail's pace in organizations that have invested limited resources in these efforts.

Environmental organizations have to recognize how some of their own institutional practices run counter to their attempts to enhance the racial diversity in their workforce. The long-held practice of relying heavily on word-of-mouth to advertise job openings and recruiting from informal networks can have the unintended effect of excluding many minorities and low-income people from the applicant pool. This is the case because ethnic minorities and low-income people are not well embedded in the networks that such advertising reaches. As a result, they often do not know about job openings, therefore, cannot apply for them. Even though access to the Internet is not equitable, at least this venue offers broader advertising and access to information on job openings than advertising through informal networks does.

There was enthusiasm in the study for building a pipeline of ethnic minorities who could be hired into environmental institutions. However, the study also found that environmental institutions were not utilizing the existing pipelines effectively or at all. For instance, relatively few organizations had developed collaborations with minority-serving colleges or universities, recruited from conferences of minority students specializing in environmental disciplines and gatherings of minority environmental professionals, or hired minority interns. There was also little consultation with minority environmental professionals. So, even though there is need for a more robust system to identify minorities and facilitate their movement into environmental careers, the infrastructure that currently exists is underutilized by environmental organizations.

Overall, this study finds willingness on the part of the environmental organizations studied to improve diversity in these institutions. Diversity advocates have focused on the large environmental organizations for several decades and have been pushing them to become more diverse. It is appropriate to continue to scrutinize the diversity efforts of the largest environmental organizations. However, the study also shows that equal attention should be paid to smaller environmental organizations as they are not as diverse as larger ones.

The study also points to areas of strength and weakness in past and current attempts to diversify the environmental workforce. Hopefully, the study can lead to actions that improve diversity in many environmental institutions in the near future.

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