

We are in troubling and uncertain times. The Trump Administration has called diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility (DEIA) programs illegal and issued executive orders to end those efforts within the federal government. As part of these executive orders, all federal DEIA employees have been placed on paid administrative leave, and widespread terminations of probationary federal staff are ongoing.

President Trump also declared that the official policy of the United States government is to recognize only two genders, male and female. This policy reverses previous progress that allowed for a distinction between gender and biological sex. A number of additional executive orders have targeted and discriminated against trans individuals, migrant populations, indigenous communities, and other historically marginalized identities.

The position of the Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society (ORTWS) remains unchanged in response to these federal actions and we remain committed to our core values. Our mission is to inspire, empower, and enable Oregon’s wildlife professionals and students to promote science-based wildlife conservation and management. Furthermore, we are committed to making the wildlife profession in Oregon more inclusive and equitable for everyone. We embrace a broad spectrum of identities reflective of the overall human population, including individuals from historically underrepresented backgrounds. The ORTWS Executive Board conducted a [Self Equity](https://www.awabybeloved.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)Audit in July 2021, to assess the governance, operations, programs, and culture of our chapter.  Using the feedback provided by this internal audit, we assembled a working group to review the ORTWS Operations Manual, Bylaws, and Strategic Plan, and propose changes to improve our chapter's effectiveness, diversity, equity, and inclusivity efforts. This work is ongoing, and we encourage any chapter members interested in aiding our efforts to contact and join the [ORTWS Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee](https://ortws.org/about/committees/).

The conservation of Northwest ecosystems is affected by the actions of all people, and participation in our profession must be broadened if we are to include the knowledge needed to meet current and emerging challenges ([The Wildlife Society’s Position Statement on Workforce Diversity within the Wildlife Profession](https://wildlife.org/tws-standing-position-workforce-diversity-within-the-wildlife-profession/)). By engaging a greater proportion of the population through diversifying the workforce, we can more effectively manage wildlife, the ecosystems they rely on, and the communities that also depend on those ecosystems. The Oregon Chapter has and will continue to support DEI efforts that value and actively support a culture of learning, belonging, and inclusion; create a culture of change, openness, and accountability; and integrate diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and environmental justice into the wildlife profession.

Please continue to treat others with respect and kindness as we work to conserve, research, and manage wildlife and ecosystems, and don’t hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

The Executive Board, ORTWS