Diversity in Conservation
MARC OPPERMAN

- Joined Capital Area Chapter (CAMN) in 2012
- Chapter Vice-President 2013-2014
- Chapter President 2014-2016
- Currently runs small landscaping company

Why did I want to create this talk?
MONICA RAMIREZ

• Joined CAMN in 2015
• New Class Co-Director 2016-2017
• Currently works in air quality regulation at TCEQ

Why did I want to create this talk?
CAROLINE TAYLOR

- Joined CAMN in 2015
- New Class Co-Director 2016-2017
- Currently work in IT at UT
- My household

Caroline

Why am I here? We’re not serving the whole community
Virginia Palacios

- Joined CAMN in 2013
- Currently works at South-Central Partnership for Energy Efficiency as a Resource (SPEER)
- Served on the City of Austin Mayors Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities
- Our collective mentor / Yoda

Just left EDF. Virginia Palacios has been a member of Capital Area Master Naturalists since 2013. Palacios was a Senior Research Analyst on the oil and gas team at Environmental Defense Fund (EDF). She is a Co-Chair on EDF's staff Diversity Committee, and helped to write EDF’s first-ever Diversity Strategy. Earlier this year, Palacios served on the City of Austin Mayors Task Force on Institutional Racism and Systemic Inequities, Health Working Group, and was an Austin Under 40 Awards Finalist in the category of Engineering, Energy, Mobility, & Systems Sciences. Palacios holds a Master's of Environmental Management from Duke University.
DISCLAIMER

• We’re not experts
• We’ve got some ground rules
• Write your question on a sticky note
• A note about our data

Caroline

Ground rules: we're all learning here, and we're discussing some really tough topics like race and inequality. If you are not interested in wrestling with these topics alongside us and your peers, you are welcome to slip out now. We expect everyone here is ready and willing to help us talk about these issues.

ALSO: lots of data exists for Latinx people, so we reference it a lot more than that of other groups.
TXMN MISSION

To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas _within their communities_ for the State of Texas.
WHAT WE’LL COVER TODAY

• Where are we now?
• What’s the problem?
• How did we get here?
• What can we do?
DEFINITIONS: DIVERSITY & EQUITY

• Diversity: all the ways in which people differ, encompassing the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

• Equity: the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Caroline
Diversity can mean any number of things! Eye color, gender, race, income level, home town... but today we're focused on racial diversity because racial inequality is SO prominent in the conservation movement. A group is DIVERSE
A system and actions provide EQUITY
Point out I-35, geographical reason for where it was built, historical implications, "Interracial Highway".
163 Active Members

Ethnicity:
- 0 American Indian/Alaskan - 0.0%
- 2 Asian or Pacific Islander - 1.7%
- 2 Black - 1.7%
- 7 Hispanic - 5.8%
- 108 White - 89.3%
- 2 Other - 1.7%
- 45 No Answer
TOTAL: 121

Age:
Average Age = 51.25

Gender:
Female = 103
Male = 59
No Answer = 5
Caroline

4,806 Active/Eligible Volunteers

Ethnicity:
- 23 American Indian/Alaskan: 0.6%
- 19 Asian or Pacific Islander: 0.5%
- 16 Black: 0.4%
- 206 Hispanic: 6.1%
- 3055 White: 90.6%
- 52 Other: 1.5%
- TOTAL: 3,371
- 1435 No Answer

Age:
- 575 = Volunteers have an invalid Age
- Average Age = 60.47

Gender:
- Female = 2977
- Male = 1660
- No Answer = 169
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE
DEPARTMENT VOLUNTEERS
Source: VMS

Caroline
23,018 Active Volunteers
Ethnicity:
91 American Indian/Alaskan - 0.7%
143 Asian or Pacific Islander - 1.1%
348 Black - 2.8%
1,493 Hispanic - 12.2%
9,952 White - 81.1%
241 Other - 2.0%
5 Unknown
1,108 Would Not Answer
5,937 No Data
TOTAL: 12,268

Age:
6,400 = Bad Age <17 or >1000
499 = No Age Recorded
50.99 = Average Age

Gender:
Female = 11,864
Male = 9,641
No Answer = 1,513
Since 2005, minorities have become the majority in Texas.

As of July 2016, non-hispanic/latino white people make up 43% of the population and hispanic/latino people make up 39%.

According to the Texas Office of State Demographer, Latino population expected to exceed white population by 2020.
Caroline
In many parts of the country, particularly Texas, the latino/Latina population is ever-growing.
**UNIV. OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF NAT. RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT**

**Green 2.0**
Formally the Green Diversity Initiative

**ALL NGOs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Type</th>
<th>People of Color</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fulltime</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Board Member</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40 organizations studied, including: Environmental Defense Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, WWF, League of Conservation Voters, National Audubon Society, National Parks Conservation Association, ClimateWorks Foundation + 32 more

Caroline N.R.D.C. president in 2014 attributes some of the misgivings to environmentalism’s history as an elite, white movement. Study found that whites occupied 89% of leadership positions in environmental organizations.

An initiative dedicated to increasing racial diversity across mainstream environmental NGOs, foundations, and government agencies.
THE STATE OF DIVERSITY IN ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS:
MAINSTREAM NGOS, FOUNDATIONS, AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES.”

- 191 NGOs
- 74 governmental agencies
- 28 leading environmental grant making foundations.

The result: an overwhelmingly white “green insider’s club”.

Caroline
This report is the most comprehensive study on diversity in the environmental movement. Studied 293 environmentally-related organizations.

The 3.2 million members and volunteers of environmental organizations are still predominantly white
What are some barriers or opportunities in your community?
( get some stickies)

Caroline
We now know that:
- Our org is not very racially diverse
- The state and country’s nonwhite populations are about to overtake the white population in numbers
- Environmental orgs are still comprised mostly of white people
How can diversity benefit TxMN?
DIVERSITY IS GOOD

• Diversity of perspectives, experience, culture, gender and age are key to a company’s growth and success.

• Studies have shown that diversity is good for:
  • Innovation
  • Problem solving
  • Creativity
  • The Bottom Line

Monica

  - [Forbes study](https://www.forbes.com) has identified workforce diversity and inclusion as a key driver of internal innovation and business growth.
  - Lu Hong and Scott Page [showed](https://www.scottpage.org) that groups of diverse problem solvers can outperform groups of high-ability problem solvers.
  - According to [McKinsey](https://www.mckinsey.com), companies with diverse executive boards enjoy significantly higher earnings and returns on equity.
  - According to [Harvard Business School](https://hbs.edu), multicultural networks promote creativity.”
ENVIRONMENT STILL NEEDS PROTECTING

• Rapid development: Texas has 5 out of 10 of the fastest growing cities in the U.S. according to recent Census data

• Climate change affects all of us!

Monica
https://www.texastribune.org/2017/05/25/texas-suburbs-are-once-again-among-fastest-growing-cities/

Texas suburbs made up half of the country’s 10 fastest growing cities with three cities outside Houston and Dallas topping the list, new census figures show. Rapid growth in Conroe, Frisco and McKinney made those suburbs the three fastest-growing cities in the country among those with a population larger than 50,000, according to population estimates released Thursday by the U.S. Census Bureau. 5/27/2017
Why is diversity important to TxMN?
HOW CAN THE NEXT GENERATION HELP IF THEY ARE EXCLUDED?

- Latinos are expected to exceed white population by 2020 in Texas

- What will their connection be to the environment?

Source
Texas Office of State Demographers
A GUIDING PRINCIPLE

• The first tenant of interpretation is key to involve new groups of people to develop a connection to the environment and outdoor space:
  First of Tilden’s Six Principles of Heritage Interpretation:
  Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile. (who’s the audience?)
IT’S IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND

- People interact with outdoor spaces in different ways.
- Latinos may have different expectations for outdoor spaces than the traditional American idea that untouched Nature in its purest form is best.
- Studies show that Latinos are more likely to prioritize environmental protection at the voting booth.
- Historical exclusion in black communities can lead to avoidance of outdoor spaces.
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

DIVERSITY IN THE CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

Marc
“ENVIRONMENTALISM’S RACIST HISTORY”
NEW YORKER MAGAZINE, AUGUST 13, 2015

- Early environmentalists aligned with Teddy Roosevelt espoused white supremacist and cultural superiority views.

- Conservation was often a manifestation of cultural privilege.

- 1916: Madison Grant wrote the *The Passing of the Great Race, or The Racial Basis of European History*.
  - Work praised by Roosevelt and other environmentalists.
  - Many did work on eugenics aimed at limiting the ability of the poor to reproduce.

Marc - emphasize the direct racism of these people. Also, the congratulations/thank you from Adolf Hitler to Grant for his work.

- Native Americans - forced removal from traditional lands to less hospitable lands in West.
“ENVIRONMENTALISM’S RACIST HISTORY”

• Early 20th C. conservationists view was shaped by their view of their society at the time, either as a refuge from civilization and its worst qualities, or as protection of a nobility of resources.

• 1950s: William Vogt’s 1948 *Road to Survival* shaped views on population control as a tool of environmental protection and embraced eugenics as solution to overpopulation.

• 1970s: Major national environmental acts – Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act – no attention to the unequal vulnerability of poor and minority groups.

Marc Vogt: Governments to offer cash to the poor for sterilization, which would have “a favorable selective influence” on the species.

CWA CAA legislation: Nixon: In his 1970 State of the Union address, in which he expended less than a hundred words on Vietnam, made no explicit reference to race, and yet launched a new racialized politics with calls for a “war” on crime and attacks on the welfare system, Richard Nixon spent almost a thousand words on the environment, which he called “a cause beyond party and beyond factions.” That meant, of course, that he thought it could be a cause for the white majority.
“ENVIRONMENTALISM’S RACIST HISTORY”

• 1972: Sierra Club polled its members: Should org “concern itself with the conservation problems of such special groups as the urban poor and ethnic minorities,” 40% strongly opposed, only 15% were supportive.

• 1987: United Church of Christ’s Commission for Racial Justice: The environmental movement “has historically been white middle and upper-class.”

• 1990: Activists letter to the heads of major environmental organizations: non-whites less than 2% of the combined seven hundred and forty-five employees of the Audubon Society, Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council (N.R.D.C.), and Friends of the Earth.

• N.R.D.C response: “Environmental groups have done a miserable job of reaching out to minorities.”
WHERE DOES THAT PUT US?
1987: United Church of Christ’s Commission for Racial Justice: hazardous waste facilities were disproportionately located in minority communities. This unequal vulnerability is “a form of racism.”

Marc
Reconstruction-era zoning laws (ended in 1917 Supreme Court), “redlining”, and other exclusionary municipal practices contributed.
LEGACY OF EARLY RACISM IN CONSERVATION

Conserved resources are still often associated with areas of wealthier influence, set apart from minority access (geography/transportation). Conservation of “pristine” land. NOT environmental justice.
Marc

BCP+WQPL = \{38,000\} acres in SW Travis and N. Hays County. Largest municipal preserve system. I-35 purple line on right almost doesn’t exist in map, as if to say nothing worth preserving over here.
AUSTIN ETHNIC DIVERSITY DISTRIBUTION

Source
Houston Chronicle
WHAT CAN WE DO?
(find a partner)
GREEN 2.0

- An initiative dedicated to increasing racial diversity across mainstream environmental NGOs, foundations, and government agencies.

- Funded by well-respected environmental foundations such The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and Walton Family Foundation among some of their biggest supporters.

- Publishes reports that examine practices among environmental NGOs and foundations that effectively increase diversity.
BEST PRACTICES

Recommended resources by Green 2.0

National Park Service’s Allies for Inclusion initiative:
“Dialogues that are centered on diversity and inclusion and sustained over time can strengthen teams by helping employees build skill in cross-cultural communication and minimize implicit bias.”

Sierra Club’s Multi-Year Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan:
“In pursuing a DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) plan, it is important that organizations assess where they are, what resources they have, and where opportunities for growth exist by engaging staff at all levels of the organization to share their insights.”
EXAMPLES OF INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATIONS

- Healthy Parks: Healthy Latinos
- Latino Outdoors
- Hispanic Access Foundation
- REMiX Ecology
- Coupla Guys and Gals Give Back
- Outdoor Afro
IS DIVERSITY ENOUGH?

• Diversity is a good start, but inclusion is necessary to retain folks and maintain a diverse organization.

• Inclusion: act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate

• Research shows that key factors to improve inclusion are having:
  • Inclusive leaders
  • Authenticity
  • Networking/visibility

“Diversity is being invited to the party.
Inclusion is being asked to dance.”

-Vernā Myers

Monica

Diversity is a start, but inclusion is necessary to retain folks and maintain a diverse organization. Key factors to improve inclusion are having inclusive leaders, authenticity, networking/visibility and clear career paths. The fourth is less applicable to CAMN, tho.

Great quote in the HBR article: “As noted diversity advocate Vernā Myers puts it, “Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance.” Laura Sherbin and Rupa Rashid. 2017, Harvard Business Review, Diversity Doesn’t Stick Without Inclusion
Beware of “Colorblind” Diversity

- Studies show “colorblind” diversity is not an effective inclusion strategy for engaging minority groups. Of course people notice differences and pretending otherwise can unintentionally lead to more biased behaviors.

- It’s better to adopt multiculturalism! Multiculturalism stresses recognition and inclusion of group differences and has been shown to benefit minority employees and organizations at large.

Monica

- “Colorblind” diversity is not an effective inclusion strategy for engaging minority groups. Of course people notice differences and pretending otherwise can unintentionally lead to more biased behaviors from white people. “Multiculturalism, the opposite of colorblindness, stresses recognition and inclusion of group differences and has been shown to benefit minority employees and organizations at large.” Joella Emerson. 2017, Harvard Business Review.

WHAT WE COVERED TODAY

• Where are we now?
• What's the problem?
• How did we get here?
• What can we do?
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
(find a partner)

Caroline
CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER’S PLANS

• Deliver this presentation (check!)
• Start the conversation of diversity/inclusion within CAMN
• Create a Diversity/Inclusion Committee
• Inspect and adjust our recruitment process
• Partner with local organizations serving populations we currently do not
• Write a diversity plan and include it in our Chapter Operating Handbook
• Present at next year’s Annual Meeting to show you our progress
SWOT ANALYSIS

• Strengths
• Weaknesses
• Opportunities
• Threats
THANK YOU

Caroline
QUESTIONS?

Caroline
FURTHERING THE CONVERSATION

Our team: diversity@camn.org
This presentation: camn.org/diversity
REFERENCES


• TPWD, TMN, and CAMN demographic data courtesy TMN State Program Office and VMS.