WELCOME! BEFORE WE BEGIN, PLEASE RESPOND TO

CHAT 1:
Where do you work?

What brought you to this webinar today?
(could be a question, an idea, an interest, a concern…)
A CASE FOR
A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE APPROACH

Presented by Josh Parker, M.A.Ed.
Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Advisor
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, WA

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Regional Public Involvement Coordinator
USFS Region 6 Office of Communication and Community Engagement, OR

Joined by Aleta Eng
Partnership Specialist
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, WA

Support from Brenna White
Regional Conservation Education Partnership Coordinator
USFS Region 6 USFS Region 6 Office of Communication and Community Engagement, OR
LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
GRATITUDE & CREDIT
HUMILITY
CHAT 1:
Where do you work?

What brought you to this webinar today?

(could be a question, an idea, an interest, a concern…)
ABOUT ME

White
Male
Able-bodied
English speaker
From Chicago
Public lands
Traveller
Educator
Social justice

Chicago Public Schools teacher

NPS Park Ranger

USFS EDI Advisor

2018 M.A.Ed. Graduate
WHY ARE WE HERE?

“...meet the needs of present and future generations.”

“...to serve people.”

The U.S. population is 61% WHITE

Forest visitors nationwide are 94.6% WHITE

In 2014 the United States is expected to be a majority minority nation. Promoting participation in outdoor recreation among racial and ethnic minority populations has long been a challenge facing the contemporary recreation manager. In this article, we compare data from the US Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring Program from 2013-2014 to US Census data from 2010 in order to examine whether there is disproportionate utilization of recreation resources by US Forest Service lands across the entire US Forest Service system. Our findings suggest an equity gap wherein racial minorities are still not utilizing Forest Service recreation opportunities at the same rate as their white counterparts. Black and other minority demographic data for US counties located within fifty miles of Forest visitors nationwide estimates to continue an equity trend in the contiguous United States. Results from these findings in light of recent January 2017 events public lands and the agencies that manage them

Recreation Equity: Is the Forest Service Serving Its Diverse Publics?

David Flores, PhD, Gennaro Falco, Nino S. Roberts, PhD, and Francisco P. Valenzuela III

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WITH MANY ONGOING “DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION” EFFORTS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD, HOW CAN RACIAL DISPARITY STILL BE SO STARK?
CULTURE AS A BARRIER OR A BRIDGE TO PUBLIC LANDS
WHAT IS CULTURE?

• All people have it
• Fluid and dynamic
• Observable and not observable, like an iceberg…
CULTURE AS A BARRIER OR A BRIDGE TO PUBLIC LANDS
**BARRIERS** to visitation to public lands for people of color:

1. Socialization
2. Lack of comfort or feeling “welcome”
3. Communication (e.g. signage, language, interpretation, messaging)
4. Access (e.g. transportation, cost)
5. Education/knowledge about the outdoors
6. Lack of information
7. Lack of marketing or outreach to people of color
8. Fear and safety concerns
9. Perceived discrimination
10. Historical context

(Burne & Wolch, 2009; Chavez, Winter & Absher, 2008; Dwyer, 1994; Finney, 2014; Floyd, 1999; Gramann, 1996; Johnson, 1998; Pease, 2011; Roberts, Chavez, Lara & Sheffield, 2009; Roberts, 2007; Roberts, 2014; Rodriguez & Roberts, 2002; Taylor, 1989; Washburne, 1978)

**SEEING CULTURE:**
Can you identify any barriers that are directly linked to culture?
CULTURE MATTERS IN OUR WORK.

OUR CULTURE AND THE CULTURE OF THOSE WE SERVE.
Point 1: “Our perceptions of **value** are deeply connected to our cultural lens.”

–Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, 2018

Source: Mt.Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, 2018
CHAT 2:
In what ways might the concept of solitude in nature be valued differently by different cultures?
Point 2: “Culture is responsible for producing the meanings we attribute to environment, nature, and place.”

Point 3: “Culture guides how we **process** information… All new information must be coupled with existing funds of knowledge in order to be **learned**.”

– Hammond & Jackson, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain*, 2015
OUR INSTITUTIONS ARE STEEPED IN SPECIFIC CULTURAL VALUES, MEANINGS, AND LEARNING STYLES.
“Whiteness is not acknowledged by white people, and the white reference point is assumed to be universal and is imposed on everyone.”

-Robin DiAngelo, *White Fragility*, 2018
SAMPLE OF MY RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM MT. BAKER-SNOQUALMIE NF
TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO PROGRAMS

Content

• Canned and planned by USFS alone

• Ecology-only content (Western science)

• No reference to culture or lived experiences

Instruction

• Ranger as “expert” and authority

• Lectures to passive listeners

Source: Mt.Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, 2018
“Teaching ecology alone…shows students only one way of knowing, and excludes the influence of culture in connecting to place.”

–Anna Cole, “Expanding the Field,” 2007
CANNED = COLORBLIND

“Color-blindness: An approach that claims to treat everyone the same regardless of their race...by refusing to acknowledge the significance of historic and contemporary race inequity, color-blind policies act to protect the status quo.”

“The Forest Service is coming in with good intentions, but needs help with how to do it.”

–Aleta Eng, Partnership Specialist, Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest
SO HOW CAN WE MOVE BEYOND GOOD INTENTIONS?

GLAD YOU ASKED!
and a culturally responsive approach

CULTURE AS A BARRIER OR A BRIDGE TO PUBLIC LANDS
Culturally responsive is “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective for them.”

–Geneva Gay, Culturally Responsive Teaching, 2018
CHAT 3:
What aspects of your work might be ripe for a more culturally responsive approach? Share an idea.

Culturally responsive is “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective for them.”
PREPARING TO DO
CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE WORK

1. Name and understand your own culture & racial identity
   - How has it shaped your values, meanings, and ways of learning about the environment?
   - How has it shaped the way you approach work?
   - How has it shaped your biases?

2. Expanding understanding about other cultures you engage with
   - How culture shapes a diversity of values, meanings, and ways of learning about the environment.
   - Showing up, listening, learning

Source: Mt.Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, 2018
TOOLS TO GUIDE YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY

Culturally Responsive FOREST PROGRAM PLANNING
Developed by Josh Parker, M.A.Ed, joshparker@gmail.com
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, WA

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE
Use this tool to guide the planning and development of more culturally responsive forest programs. If possible, first evaluate the last time this program was offered using the “Forest Program Evaluation” tool. Completing this planning process will require some communication with the community you’re working with, so it’s best to begin the planning process as early as possible and collaborate with teammates whenever possible.

Look for “CR Check” throughout the tool. They indicate an opportunity for program planners to pause and reflect on the cultural responsiveness of each portion of the program for the audience.

STEP 1: LEARNING ABOUT COMMUNITY
Think about who your program audience is and consider the questions below. It’s expected that you won’t know the answers to all of these questions - this is the work of being culturally responsive. To find answers, consider talking with the people you have a relationship with in the community, especially community leaders who are participating. Answer as many as you can.

What can you learn about the community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community demographics?</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Community assets?</td>
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<td>Community cultural characteristics? (may be more than one culture)</td>
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<td>Native language(s) spoken at home?</td>
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Culturally Responsive Forest Program Planning

Culturally Responsive FOREST PROGRAM EVALUATION
Developed by Josh Parker, M.A.Ed, joshparker@gmail.com
Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, WA

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE
A significant body of research has linked stronger learning outcomes for ethnically diverse participants to a more culturally responsive approach. Developing more culturally responsive programming is one way to operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion work by better connecting multicultural communities to the forest.

There are many characteristics of a culturally responsive approach, and below you’ll find 14 evaluation criteria that will be relevant to most programs. As you reflect during this process, it is important to remember that developing more culturally responsive programming is an ongoing journey, not a destination. Enter this work with humility and curiosity, ready to learn.

DEFINITIONS
1. **Culture** can be defined as “the language, traditions, history, and ancestry people have in common. People that share a common culture are “tribal” groups. All people have culture; it is fluid and dynamic” [Hollins et al., 2015].
2. **Culturally Responsive** is “using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse participants as conduits for teaching them more effectively” [Gay, 2010].
3. **Community** - A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common, a fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals. It’s very possible that multiple communities may be present during a single program.

14 EVALUATION CRITERIA
1. **Community, Forest, & Stewardship Goals**
2. **Outcomes: Skills & Connections**
3. **Ongoing Reflection & Learning**
4. **Learning about Community**
5. **Co-Development of the Program**
6. **Program Evaluation**
7. **Involving Culturally-Reflective Co-Leaders**
8. **Relatable Content for Participants**
9. **Cultural-Ecological Interconnections**
10. **Indigenous & People of Color’s Perspectives**
11. **Program Location**
12. **Group Size & Dynamics**
13. **Communication, Instruction, & Learning**
14. **Native Language Instruction**

STEPS
1. Choose one particular forest program to evaluate and think about who else might evaluate this program with you.
2. Read both ends of the spectrum for each criteria, circle where the program is, and jot down “strengths” and “ideas”
3. Review participant feedback to complete the “Positive & Constructive Feedback” section.
4. Take time to complete the “Personal Reflection”.
5. Discuss your notes and reflections with colleagues, community leaders, families, and students.
6. Complete the “Intentions for Future Program Development” and begin making changes to the program.

Culturally Responsive Forest Program Evaluation
A WALK THROUGH THE TOOLS
## STEP 1: LEARNING ABOUT COMMUNITY

Think about who your program audience is and consider the questions below. It's expected that you won't know the answers to all of these questions - this is the work of being culturally responsive. To find answers, consider talking with the people you have a relationship with in the community, especially community leaders who are participating. Answer as many as you can.

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Culturally Responsive Forest Program Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants' communication and learning styles?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group size &amp; dynamics? (any norms to be aware of?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backgrounds or skills of community leaders? (expertise they have)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*CR Check: Beware of generalizing cultural characteristics, especially if the information was gained second-hand or online. For example, there is great cultural diversity that exists within Latinx and Asian populations. Community leaders may be the best source of information to learn about the group.*
### 7. Involving Culturally-Reflective Co-Leaders

<table>
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<th>DEVELOPING</th>
<th>MINIMAL</th>
<th>NOT YET ADDRESSED</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The program included culturally-reflective co-leaders who could help bridge cultural differences.</td>
<td>Current strengths:</td>
<td>Ideas for growth:</td>
<td>No effort was made to include co-leaders who could help bridge cultural differences in the program. Participants saw no representation of their culture(s) in the program leaders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program made space for sharing related skills, contributions, and cultural knowledge during the program. Co-leaders could come from the community, families, partner organizations, universities or colleges, other state or federal agencies, or tribes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Program was designed for complete autonomy from community involvement.</td>
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### 8. Relatable Content for Participants

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants could see themselves in the program.</td>
<td>Current strengths:</td>
<td>Ideas for growth:</td>
<td>Participants could not see themselves in the program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants could relate the program content directly to their lives, identities, and cultures (as examples, references, or connections).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participants had trouble relating the program content to their lives, identities, or culture(s).</td>
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### 9. Cultural - Ecological Interconnections

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<td>The program interwove both cultural and ecological content, emphasizing the interconnections between the two.</td>
<td>Current strengths:</td>
<td>Ideas for growth:</td>
<td>The program content was overwhelmingly ecological with little/no cultural element.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Program perpetuated a separation of people and the environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, **but in having new eyes.**”

– Marcel Proust

Source: Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, 2018
KEY REFERENCES


QUESTIONS/EXERCISES FOR REFLECTION

• What are the racial/cultural dynamics where you work?

• What barriers for indigenous/POC to public lands seem most relevant to where you work? How do you know?

• Can you identify ‘colorblind’ policies, practices, or programs in your institution? What might it look like to try a culturally responsive approach?

• Have you openly discussed issues of race or culture at your workplace? If so, in what contexts? If not, why do you think that is?

• Can you identify ways that your own culture has influenced the values, meanings, and ways you’ve learned/connected to the environment? How might it affect your approach to your work?

• What might be the challenges of adopting a more culturally responsive approach to your work? How could you overcome them?

• Take a new or existing program and use the planning tool provided. What comes up?

• Take an existing program and use the evaluation tool provided. What comes up?
THANK YOU!
CHAT QUESTIONS?

LET’S TALK MORE:
JOSHDPRK@GMAIL.COM

FULL THESIS & TOOLS AVAILABLE HERE:
JOSHDPRK.WIXSITE.COM/PORTFOLIO