

Equity





Ecotrust is powered by the vision of a world where people and nature thrive together. Since 1991, we have partnered with local communities from California to Alaska to build new ways of living and doing business. From forestry to finance, food access to green building, we work to advance social equity, economic opportunity, and environmental well-being. Together, we are making this place we live a home that we love. Join us.

## Ecotrust Equity Statement

**At Ecotrust, we see equity as an integral component of our mission, vital to fostering resilient communities, economies, and ecosystems. Deep-rooted, systemic diversity is essential to our ability to survive and thrive. Yet, significant disparities persist in economic opportunity and environmental well-being in our region and beyond.**

Addressing these disparities means redressing the historic, systemic oppression against members of society based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation and other identities. It means understanding and actively shifting power and privilege toward disenfranchised communities. And it means embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion in our culture, operations, programs, and community partnerships.

To understand our role in unconsciously perpetuating inequities through our work and workplace culture, Ecotrust completed an organizational self-assessment on racial equity in 2016, identifying nine key areas for growth across the organization to more fully embed our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In 2017, we launched a Racial Equity Action Plan based on this assessment, and in 2018 we prioritized equity as one of our three organizational imperatives, recognizing that to achieve our vision of a world where people and nature thrive, we cannot leave anyone behind. Equity is an imperative for building a just and inclusive society.

Shifting culture inside and outside our walls is hard, often uncomfortable work, and a lifelong commitment. To do this, we are empowering staff at all levels to adopt an equity lens in all we do—at the hiring, spending, programmatic, and relational levels. We work to create a shared understanding of equity through trainings and professional development opportunities, we hold ourselves accountable to communities of color, and we work to create a culture of inclusion both within Ecotrust and as we engage externally in our work.



Ecotrust's founding story began on the banks of the Kitlope River in Northern British Columbia. That's where Spencer Beebe learned from Haisla First Nation members Charlie Shaw, councillor, Gerald Amos, elected chief of the Kitamaat Village Council, and Cecil Paul, a hereditary elder, and was inspired to help protect one of the last pristine rain forest watersheds in the world. For 26 years, Ecotrust has supported, partnered with, and elevated the voices of Native leaders and communities throughout the region.

## 2018 Equity Plan

### Goal 1: Center equity in our mission, vision, and strategy.

Develop board and leadership team membership diversity recruitment and retention plans so that our board and leadership reflect the populations we serve.

Explore either a senior-level hire or empower a current senior-level staff member with the bandwidth and training to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts internally and to lead on external equity work programmatically.

Add equity objectives to key job descriptions with Ecotrust's leadership to create ongoing accountability for both internal and external equity goals.

### Goal 2: Build cultural agility, empathy, and learning among staff and board.

Hold ongoing equity conversations to build cultural competency and create a shared language among staff. Follow current events regarding equity that intersect with our work.

Invite speakers from community based organizations and culturally-specific organizations to share about the work they do, focusing on organizations whose mission and work intersect with ours.

Provide training opportunities to all staff and board in cultural facility.

### Goal 3: Advance equity outcomes across the region.

Program and project managers apply a standard equity lens in all program and project design to actively reduce racial disparities and advance inclusive opportunities in our region.

Develop key metrics on equity, and formalize the collection of race and ethnicity data in a centralized location.

Prioritize projects that specifically target and benefit communities or color and/or low-income communities. Set a goal for number of funded projects in 2018 that have a significant equity component.

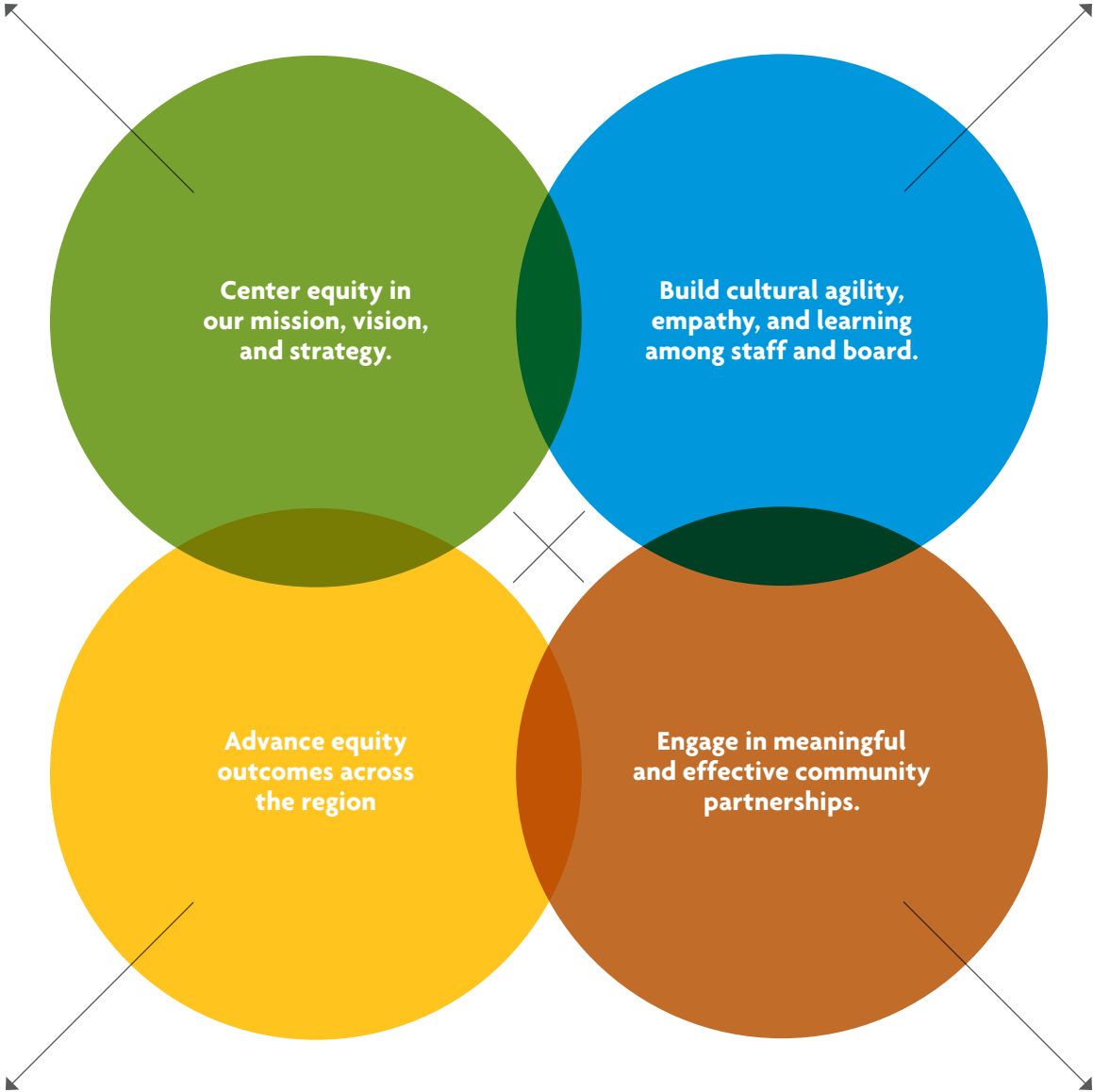
Leadership team advances a 2023 organizational equity imperative.

### Goal 4: Engage in meaningful and effective community partnerships.

Develop, build, and actively maintain long-term partnerships with a least 12 community based organizations in our region whose work intersects with ours.

Explore formal partnerships with national nonprofit organizations to find opportunities to build a national conversation on advancing equity.

Create a standardized process for collecting feedback related to our work in advancing equity across the region. Use process to continually and consistently request feedback from partners to assess our strengths and weaknesses in how we work to advance equity in our region.



**2018 Goals**

## 2017 Racial Equity Action Plan Progress Report

### Why race?

In 2017, we carried out an equity action plan focused specifically on racial equity. People of color represent a rapidly growing share of the region's population. Although people of color share similar barriers with other historically marginalized groups, such as low-income communities, people with disabilities, women, and rural communities, they experience worse outcomes in every indicator of social well-being due to the pervasive and systemic nature of racism. By addressing the barriers experienced by people of color, we will also identify solutions and remove barriers for other disadvantaged groups.

### Plan highlights

The Racial Equity Action Plan outlined nine top-level goals based on the key areas for growth we earlier identified in the organizational equity assessment. Staff members across all levels of the organization enthusiastically embraced the plan—attending meetings to learn more, working to increase personal cultural competency levels and developing a shared language, and learning how they might determine and maximize equity outcomes within projects. Staff report being more comfortable talking about race and are reaching out to develop or deepen relationships with representatives from community based organizations. A highlight from the past year were in advancing equity objectives within our human resources department, changing the way we recruit, hire, retain, and promote staff of color.

### **We have a clearly written equity statement and plan that is understood and endorsed by staff and board. Staff are held accountable to ensure racial equity within projects and programs.**

All staff members added equity objectives to their annual plans, and program leads consistently considered equity outcomes in project conceptualization and kickoff.

### **We have a policy to increase the recruitment, retention, and promotion of people of color.**

We deepened relationships with community based organizations, developed a hiring protocol to maximize equitable hiring practices, and now include job interview questions to evaluate cultural competency levels.

### **We use an equity lens when making decisions about programmatic priorities or specific projects.**

Using nationally recognized assessment tools, we developed and vetted an equity lens worksheet that will be rolled out in 2018.

### **Our leadership team and board provide leadership and commitment to racial equity.**

The leadership team formalized the role of the Equity Working Group, communicated equity work outcomes to the board, and focused on equity at a leadership team retreat.

### **We prioritize spending to eliminate racial disparities in our region, as relevant within our programmatic work.**

Seven key staff members were compensated for their time to operationalize the equity plan, and program leads examined annual budgets and shifted spending to prioritize equity outcomes.

### **We ask our partners and beneficiaries about how we are doing regarding racial equity. We share our programmatic findings with the communities of color impacted by our work.**

We retained a consultant to review our equity plan and provide feedback and recommendations, and we developed a protocol for requesting feedback from partners going forward.

### **We allocate resources for engagement and outreach in communities of color.**

We secured funding to fill a Native fellowship role in 2018, we successfully applied for funding to move forward on the Green Workforce Development work, and we invited 100 representatives from culturally specific organizations to our signature event.

### **We have staff policies and trainings to promote a culture of inclusion.**

We provided all staff with equity training at our annual retreat, and we held monthly equity conversations to increase staff cultural competency.



## Key Milestones of the Equity Working Group



