

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) concerns our organizational identity as we pursue our mission for restoring our watershed ecologies. Our members joined OLWC to fulfill aspirations and ideals centered on environmental justice. Yet our backgrounds in science and the humanities, along with our life experiences, inform us on the connectedness in natural systems. Yet we also see our understanding, ongoing learning and passion for responsiveness to the land intersecting and resonating with an historical awareness, a moral consciousness, and a logic of incorporating the wealth of perspectives that come from diverse inclusion. DEI is simply the logic of education conducive to our stewardship goals. As a form of knowledge and learning attached to actual restorative work, it informs our methodological approach and our personal sense of belonging. This is personally transformative. Our own awareness of the present conditions of these lands—and the fuller picture of the earth's struggle for health—depends on how we listen to many voices, past and present, as we engage our vision and goals. This learning deepens our commitment because it accompanies our own pursuit of “why care?” History and theory narratives link us in purpose and meaning, and even deeper—into a solidarity of justice whose ancestral roots have always nourished the evolving, vibrant sense of community and equitable, collaborative decision-making to make the world a better place.

Action is the outcome of meaningful intentions and more significant than words. Our land ethic is mere rhetoric unless we find restorative empowerment to envision, plan, and implement watershed health strategies. Such endeavors emanate from our shared love and gratitude that, like flowing tributaries, connect and bond us. We find our unity in devoted service to this fuller environment of life. Respect, reverence and reciprocity are the gauges of our enlightenment. A healthy watershed where all people are respected and cared for along with our natural gifts is the desired actuality.