

STAFF:

DANA PEREZ
Zone EEO Manager

ANGELA BUTSCH
Regional Accessibility
Coordinator

BRIAN LAWLER
Diversity Employment
Specialist
(serving Region 1)

BILL JOHNSON
Diversity Employment
Specialist
(serving Region 8)

CRIS STEMLER-ROSS
EEO Counselor

ANTHONY WYNN
Equal Employment
Specialist
DCR Digest Editor

CHARLES KITTAY &
BILL LORINZ
EEO Office Aide Interns

IN THIS ISSUE:

Refuge & Fishery Professionals Recognized	2
Events Help to Promote USFWS Today & Tomorrow	2
Special Emphasis Observances	2
Policy on Using Official Time for EEO Complaints	3
Dana's Discourse	3
Salmon in the Classroom Inspires	3
Training Due & De La Salle Intern	4

Diversity Digest

JULY — SEPTEMBER 2013

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3



DCR and Requests for Reasonable Accommodation

Managers and supervisors are required to provide reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of a qualified employee or applicant with a disability, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship.

A reasonable accommodation must apply to the essential duties of the job, and/or where job tasks are performed. The accommodation should enable the employee to successfully perform the essential duties of the position. A reasonable accommodation request can be made orally or in writing.

Individuals who need a reasonable accommodation must make their needs known to their supervisor. The supervisor and the individual must start the interactive process in order to clarify the individual's needs and identify the appropriate reasonable accommodation(s) that will meet those needs.

All reasonable accommodations are determined on a case by case basis, taking into consideration the needs of the individual, the specific disability, the essential duties of the position, the work environment, and the reasonableness of the proposed accommodation.

At the end of each fiscal year the Division of Diversity and Civil Rights (DCR) is required to prepare a reasonable accommodation report in accordance with the Department of the Interior's Departmental Manual 373 DM 15.12C.

Information needed for this annual report includes: Type of Accommodation; Accommodation Granted or Denied; Occupational Job Series and Grade; Region; Office Name; Date Accommodation was Requested; Number of Days to Grant or Deny Accommodation; Number of Days to Implement Accommodation; Cost of

Accommodation; and by whom the Cost was paid.

There are several examples of possible reasonable accommodations that a manager or supervisor may have granted to enhance the ability of a qualified person with a disability to perform the essential duties of the position that they encumber.

These include: Alternate work schedules; alternate work sites; purchase of ergonomic equipment; creating temporary light duties; and any specialized tools or equipment provided (i.e. voice recognition software or an ergonomic chair).

If DCR was not involved in a reasonable accommodation request, it is important for managers and supervisors to contact Angela Butsch, Regional Accessibility Coordinator, directly by phone at 503-736-4785 or via email at Angela_Butsch@fws.gov.

(More in "Dana's Discourse" on Page 3)

Using Official Time for EEO Complaints

Department of Interior employees are allowed to use official time to participate in the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Discrimination Complaint Process.

A reasonable amount of official time is allowed for an employee to present his/her EEO complaint, pursuant to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Management Directive 110, Chapter 6, Section VIII C and 29 Code of Federal Regulations 1614.605(b).

Managers and supervisors are, however, required only to grant an employee reasonable amount of official time consistent with the actual business necessities of the agency. If the employee is represented by another employee from the agency, the representative is entitled to a reasonable amount of official time to present the com-

plaint and to respond to agency requests for information, if otherwise on duty.

Employees are not required to prevail on discrimination claims in order to receive official time. The actual number of hours to which a complainant and his/her representative are entitled will vary depending on the nature and complexity of the complaint.

The supervisor must also consider the mission of the agency and the need to have employees available to perform their normal duties on a regular basis. Complainants, representatives, and managers or supervisors should arrive at a mutual understanding as to the amount of official time to be used prior to the complainant's or representative's use of time.

(Con't on Page 3)

Photo by Anthony Wynn, USFWS



During a visit to Portland, Oregon, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell announced an expansion of employment opportunities for more than 600 youth, ages 15-25, on public lands across the country. Grants totaling 4.2 million dollars have been made available to support conservation employment and mentoring opportunities to young people of diverse backgrounds.

On the same visit, the Secretary also spoke to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees at the Region 1 Regional Office.

“One of the things about equality is not just that you be treated equally to a man; but that you treat yourself equally to the way you treat a man .”

-Marlo Thomas
Actor and Activist



Women’s Equality Day
August 26, 2013

Hispanic Heritage Month
*September 15-
October 14, 2013*

Refuge and Fishery Professionals Recognized

Bob Flores of the National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS) and Larry Telles of Fishery Resources (AFR) volunteered to serve as mentors for the 4th Annual National Hispanic Environmental Council (NHEC) Minority Youth Training Institute taking place in Region 8.

During the week-long event, both Bob and Larry served as mentors to over 30 participants, engaging them while they were learning in the classroom and during visits to state and federal parks, and Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge near Maricopa, California. Through their combined efforts, students were able to meet with conservation professionals and learn about the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The efforts of Larry and Bob in identifying the best and brightest of this event will help allow the Service to continue its relationship with the students in



Dana Perez, Zone EEO Manager, presents Bob Flores, NWRS Refuge Supervisor, with a certificate recognizing his work as mentor for the NHEC Minority Youth Training Institute in Region 8.

future training opportunities within the Region and at the National Conservation Training Center. The dedication, effort, and hard work of both Bob

Flores and Larry Telles have directly contributed to the success of the Service and the important continuing partnership with NHEC.

Events Help Promote USFWS Today and Tomorrow

Employees of Region 1 coordinated the “Get Off the Couch” event that was held on Friday, April 12, 2013 in Portland, Oregon.

Miel Corbett, the Deputy Regional Director, External Affairs, and Gary Young, Special Agent-in-Charge, Office of Law Enforcement, both made presentations at the meeting.



Photo Courtesy: USFWS

Miel spoke about exploring the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, an urban green space near Portland, Oregon, available for anyone to connect with and learn about nature.

Gary Young spoke about the illegal trafficking of endangered species, plants, and animal parts. Exhibits of products made from endangered species parts that have been confiscated by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Inspectors. A second exhibit of numerous mammal pelts indigenous to the Willamette Valley were on display for group members to examine.

The Region 1 Regional Office celebrated “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day” on Thursday, April 25, 2013. Several dozen employees brought their daughters and sons to the office to expose the children to the important conservation work accomplished by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Photo by Anthony Wynn, USFWS

Brian Lawler, the Diversity Employment Specialist serving Region 1, was accompanied by his son Aidan for the day.

The theme for 2013 was “Work in Progress”. This year marked the 20th anniversary of the program and featured more than 37 million youth and adults participating at over 3.5 million workplaces.

Policy on Using Official Time for EEO Complaints



(Continued from Page 1)

Because EEO investigations are conducted by agency or EEO personnel, the regulations do not envision large amount of official time for preparation purposes.

Consequently, "reasonable", with respect to preparation (as opposed to time actually spent in meetings and hearings), is generally defined in terms of hours, not in terms of days, weeks, or months in the aggregate.

In order to receive official time to participate in the EEO complaint process, an employee must request advance approval from his/her supervisor *before* actually using such

time. Should a manager or supervisor deny the request of an employee, either in whole or in part, the manager or supervisor must provide a written statement fully noting the reasons for the denial to the Zone EEO Manager, Division of Diversity and Civil Rights. The statement will be included in the complaint file.

If you have any questions or need further assistance on using official time for EEO complaints, please contact Cris Stemler-Ross, the EEO Counselor serving both Region 1 and Region 8, directly at telephone number 503-231-2081, or via email at Cris_Stemlerross@fws.gov.

Dana's Discourse

Reasonable Accommodations Provide Equal Access

A reasonable accommodation is any change in the workplace or the way things are customarily done that provides equal employment opportunity to individuals with disabilities.

While there are some things that are not considered reasonable accommodations (i.e. removal of an essential job function or personal use items such as a hearing aid that is needed on and off the job), reasonable accommodations can cover most things that enable an individual to apply for a job, perform a job, or have equal access to the workplace.

Reasonable accommodations can be provided when: An applicant with

a disability needs an accommodation to have an equal opportunity to compete for a job; when an employee with a disability needs an accommodation to perform the essential functions of the job or to gain access to the workplace; and when an employee with a disability needs an accommodation to enjoy equal access to benefits and privileges of employment (such as details, trainings, office-sponsored events, etc.).

An individual's receipt or denial of an accommodation does not prevent the individual from making another request at a later time if circumstances change and the employee

believes that an accommodation is needed due to limitations from a disability (the disability worsens or an employee is assigned new duties that require an additional or different reasonable accommodation).

A request for a reasonable accommodation does not have to include any special words or phrases, such as "reasonable accommodation," "disability," or "Rehabilitation Act." A request is any communication in which an individual asks or states that they need the employer to provide or to change something because of a medical condition.

-Dana Perez

"A request for a reasonable accommodation does not have to include any special words or phrases..."



Salmon in the Classroom Project Inspires Young Student

The "Salmon in the Classroom" project, hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, was a big hit among the children of inner-city Boise-Eliot/Humboldt elementary school in Portland, Oregon during the 2012-2013 school year.

Fourth-grade student **Malachi Spinks** (pictured, center) was dubbed "Dr. Spinks" by his classmates because he has become inspired to be a fish biologist. The night before one of the lessons, Malachi found and completed an online fish dissection module to be better prepared. He then shared that online module with his teachers, who taught it to about other 150 students.



Photo Courtesy: USFWS



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Division of Diversity and Civil Rights
 911 NE 11th Avenue
 6th Floor, West
 Portland, Oregon 97232-4181

TEL: 503-231-2260

FAX: 503-231-2322

TTY: 503-231-6263

WEB: www.fws.gov/pacific/aba/dcr

Information in the DCR Diversity Digest is available in an alternative format upon request by calling toll-free 1-888-812-5759.

The Division of Diversity and Civil Rights (DCR) manages the Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity, Inclusion, and other Civil Rights-legislated programs for both Region 1 and Region 8 of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by consulting with and assisting management and employees to achieve the USFWS mission, including Equal Opportunity Employment (EEO), Non-Discrimination, Workforce Diversity, Inclusion, Recruitment, Accessibility, Environmental Justice, Limited English Proficiency, COREPLUS, and Pathways goals.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



DCR Inside FWS and Diversity Digest Archives:
<https://inside.fws.gov/go/post/R1-Diversity-and-Civil-Rights>

No Fear Act and EEO/Diversity Training Coming Due

The deadline to complete the 2013 Notification and Federal Employee Anti-Discrimination and Retaliation Act (No FEAR Act) training is **Wednesday, July 31, 2013.**

All employees must complete this mandatory training by the

deadline date. Supervisors of employees that do not have a government computer or laptop must request an alternative format of the No FEAR Act course from the Division of Diversity and Civil Rights (DCR) by calling 503-231-2260, or by sending an e-mail request to:

FW1_DCR@fws.gov. The on-line FY 2013 NO FEAR Act training can be accessed at <https://gm2.geolearning.com/geonext/doi/login.geo>.

Additionally, managers and supervisors are reminded that their EEO and Diversity Training Forms must be completed and returned to DCR no later than **Wednesday, July 31, 2013.**

A comprehensive listing of EEO and Diversity related training resources is available at: <https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/go/post/EEO-Training>

The FY 2013 EEO and Diversity Training Form in Word format is located at:

<https://inside.fws.gov/index.cfm/go/post/DCR-Forms>

Any questions about training should be directed to Cris Stemler-Ross in DCR at telephone 503-231-2081, or via mail to: Cris_StemlerRoss@fws.gov.

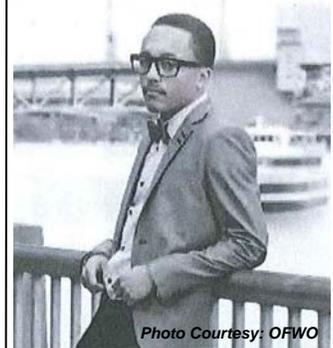


Photo Courtesy: OFWO

For the past four years, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office (OFWO) has employed **Taylor Ford** (pictured above) as a student intern working at OFWO's front desk.

In June 2013, Taylor graduated from Portland's inner-city De Le Salle North High School and is now preparing to begin his college journey in the fall. Taylor said, "Over the last four years I have gained invaluable work-related experience which I know will help me as I begin my career in a few years... this office will always hold a special place in my heart."

