



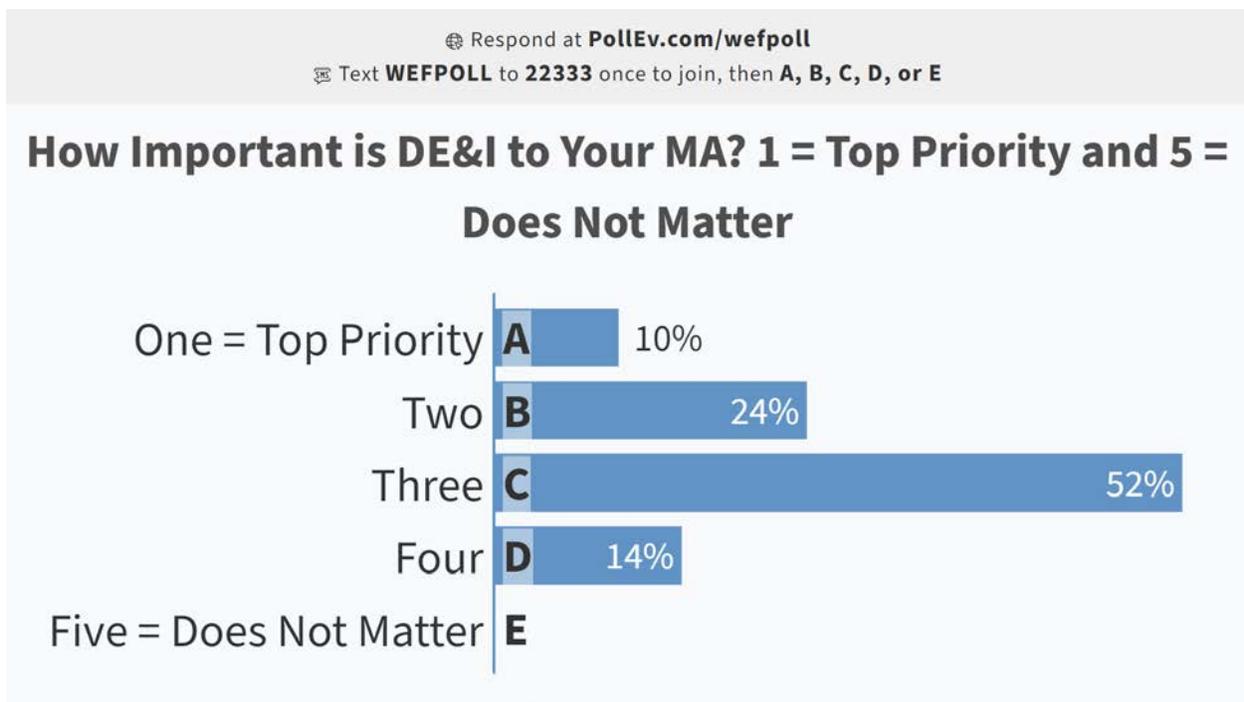
WEFMAX in Fargo June 1-3, 2022

WEFMAX Day I

DE&I POLL

How important is DE&I to your MA? 1=Top Priority | 5 = Does not Matter

RESULTS:



Responses from MAs:

- Picked One-(California) DE&I is very prominent in California and promoted in multiple public spaces.
- Picked One-(Virginia) Had a taskforce dedicated to DE&I. Priority is to bring people in the industry. Challenge is that they don't have another.
- Picked Two-Has committees in place but want to initiate more programming and implement engagement.
- Picked Three (Rocky Mt) DE&I was a hot topic during their conference.
- Picked Three- DE&I is important but they do not have a plan. Big state and would like to see more minorities on the board.

- Picked Four-Did not make a priority
- Nevada-Currently partners with another association. Challenges: They are a small MA but wishes to see what works and doesn't work for other MAs.

MA DE&I TOOLKIT ROLL OUT AND DISCUSSION

Moderator: Joe Navas

Presenters: Donnell Duncan & Nikita Lingenfelter

Deep Drive into DE&I Toolkit

- DE&I is not common knowledge.
- Purpose of the toolkit is to provide the common knowledge that various MAs can apply.
- Diversity committee was started in Georgia but only lasted a year due to the lack of leadership.
- Purpose is also to engage YP new to the field.
- Be realistic in your goals "What can you really accomplish in a year or two years".
- Active inclusion embraces and celebrates everyone's values.
- The year 2030 is when we will feel the effects of the "brain drain" on the industry due to the baby boomers exiting the workforce.
- The lack of diversity can impact your ability to be "creative".
- BOLD actions are needed to enforce DE&I.
- Share your challenges and successes with your WEF Delegates.

Discuss/Solicit Feedback from MAs

Which MAs have formed a DE&I Subcommittee/committee?

- Saki (Missouri)- Had a subcommittee already formed but used the toolkit to help them figure out where to start.
- Katie (Missouri)- The toolkit helped enforce ideas that their subcommittees were already formed
- Virginia- relied on the toolkit to form the Mission and Vision for Virginia WEA. Picked topics from the toolkit and assigned to subgroups. Challenge: The toolkit is a little overwhelming.

Who has formed a committee?

- Ohio- Has not formed a committee due to other priorities (conference, covid...) Feels DE&I is important to their MA and is currently working on forming a committee.
- Nebraska- Challenges: How to internally structure their committee. Overwhelmed with the possibilities.
- Iowa- Modified their strategic plan 6 years ago. Have not started a committee.
- Alabama- Two delegates and 500 members. Challenge: trying to get people engaged...looking for that "corporate leader".

DE&I Challenges Facing MAs

- Keeping the momentum up and assigning volunteers to projects.
- Biggest Challenge is developing events that are inclusive for all members.
 - Events MAs have hosted that have been inclusive:
 - Poker Tournament- Offer a “learners/beginners” table for members who do not know how to play.
 - Paint and Sip Event
- Keeping the momentum with assigned volunteers to projects.
- Shrimp and Bingo (Shrimp Broil and Bingo) YP organizers and the event is mostly attended by YPs.

Feedback on WEF’s Communication pertaining to tools like these:

- Toolkits are not easily accessible. Did not know where to find the toolkits.
- Have DE&I PowerPoints will help MAs present a common theme from the Federation to the MAs
 - Suggested a 25 minute presentation at a conference or a board meeting.
- Requiring a username and password to access information in the MA Resource Center.

EXPLORING DE&I EXERCISE

Brainstorming Exercise #1: Understanding DE&I

- What Does diversity Mean to You?
- Do you See Spaces within Your MA That May Not have Equal Access?
- What does it mean to feel INCLUDED?

Report Out & Discussion

What Does diversity Mean to You?

- Variety, various occupations. You want your MA to reflect your community.
- Having your MA reflect the industry as a whole.
- Different perceptions with different views.

Do you See Spaces within Your MA That May Not have Equal Access?

- Student groups
- Rural Communities
- Contractors (Nebraska)
- Young Professional
- Awards- Improve award titles within their MA
- Operators

- High School Students

What does it mean to feel INCLUDED?

- Lack of representation in your community.
- Provide different conferences with different focuses to target all members (Nebraska)
- Be intentional with your invitation.
- Being apart of a team.
- Listening to each other.
- Expand Communication and make everyone feel welcome.

Brainstorming Exercise #2: Identifying DE&I Barriers

Brainstorming Exercise 3: Removing DE&I Barriers

Barriers and resolutions identified:

- Size of the state and location (Alaska) makes it challenging to have active members from all over the state. 2/3 of the population is in South Central Alaska. Hopes to get a DE&I committee to incorporate more rural members.

Possible Solution:

- **Focus on making your in-person meetings “Hybrid” to incorporate members who are unable to attend.**

- Timing (Nebraska) Meets challenges when scheduling meetings.

Possible Solutions:

- **Frequently changed the location of meetings to accommodate members in varied locations.**
- **Host 30 minute meetings on Zoom to accommodate members who cannot join.**

- Political and Parenting (Alabama) Members view DE&I as an item on the “liberal agenda”. Education is Key.

Possible Solutions:

- **Host honest and open conversations within your MA to address the uncomfortable. Then group the concerns into themes. Identify if it is a fear of concern or just a fear of the unknown.**
- **Only focus on how DE&I can look like in a positive light.**
- **Identify the influencers (Plant managers, General Managers...) and focus your energy on them. Incorporate them in the conversation.**

- Lack of Discussion and Lack of meetings (North Dakota) Have Meetings that Focus on DE&I.

Possible Solution:

- **Include the influencers in the conversation.**

- Communication (Virginia) Figuring out how to engage members located in different parts of the state.

Possible Solution:

- **Study influencers/advocates and the way they connect to people.**
- **Diversify who is telling the story.**
- Managing Success- How do you know if you're succeeding?
- Age- Challenge is to get members who have personal commitments to volunteer and dedicate hours to the MA.
- MA Only Membership

NEVADA WEA'S DE&I JOURNEY

Presenters: Joe Navas

- **Why is diversity so low in STEM program?**

Solution:

- Present to local K-12 grade schools and Title/Tier 1 Schools. Teach about
- Prek-5-Classroom/Zoom, presentations, LOTS of Pictures, hands on activities and story time
- 6-8TH GRADE-Presentations and hands on activities
- 9-12th grade-presentations, hands on activities, site visits
- University Outreach- Partner with national societies

***Suggestion to bring community college representative to visit the high school.**

ORGANIZING RESIDENTS TO PRIORITIZE AND INFLUENCE INFRASTRUCTURE IN TARGETED COMMUNITIES

Presenter: Eboni Green (Communication professional that is passionate about water)

- Organizing Residents to influence and prioritize infrastructure in targeted communities
- Goal is to make sure everybody had access to and information about the water industry and raise the standards of communications
- Equity based projects:
 - Proctor Creek Watershed
 - Atlanta Brownfields to Atlantic Station
- Organizing Process- WHAT DO YOU WANT? Who can give it to you? How do you access it? Do you know what you don't know? What will you do with what you know?
- Building Infrastructure Collectively
 - Managing results
 - Proactive Preserving New trust
 - Infrastructure for all

- Inclusively collaborate>Identify and develop promising interventions> Engage and adapt to implement custom interventions>Scale interventions for medium impact>Sustain and continually improve engagement opportunities.
- What do your audiences have no idea they don't know?
 - Beneficial resources and how to access them
- Cool aspects of your MA?
 - Georgia started a program started H2 Opportunity (similar to Work for Water)
- Determine which social media platforms work best for certain communications

NEBRASKA WEA'S DE&I JOURNEY

Presenters: Garrett Lane & Scott Aurit

- Nebraska WEA
 - Volunteer Organization consisting of NWEA AND NWOD
 - Currently has 27 committees
 - Yearly publications outreach through various platforms
- Top down Approach - Engage membership, committees, student chapters
- 2022 Goals and expectations
 - Help people understand the NEWA and WEF Mission
 - Make it easier for members to get involved
 - Create an environment that welcomes open discussion
- In July, they plan to host a DE&I Workshop with their Board Members.

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- A lot of beneficial information was shared.
- WEF to provide a DE&I PowerPoint Slides to MAs that they can present at their meetings.
- WEF give an annual presentation to MAs to inform them on what WEF Provides (Updates on programs...new programs...How do you get involved in committees...)
- WEF to host a meeting for all DE&I Summit (or workshop) for MA DE&I Chairs.
 - First meeting-Review each MAs Website
 - Second meeting- Focus on conversations
- WEF to host a monthly call for all DE&I Chairs
- WEF should create a Rural Member Membership type for utilities.

WEFMAX Day 2

WEF Message

Presenter: Diego Rosso

- Water professionals provide a service to EVERYONE.
- A majority of environmental engineers graduate and have employment arranged; this has created challenges in academia.
- WEF recognizes the challenges of small Treatment Plants. Most of them are being managed by one person.
- Evolve the way you operate and encourage engagement.
- Develop a proactive approach to “change”.

HOD UPDATE

Presenter: Donnell Duncan

- The HOD provides monthly updates to WEB Members
- HOD Workgroups- Water Communications, Federal Advocacy, Emerging Leaders
- HOD Standing Committees- Steering, Nominating, Budget, MEFMAX, Diversity Equity and Inclusion
- WEFTEC – New Orleans October 10-12

HOD COMMITTEE AND WORKGROUP UPDATED

Presenters:

- Budget: Donnell Duncan
 - Administer FY22 Grant Program
 - \$100,00 allocated by WEF for distribution
 - 2 rounds of grant distribution
 - \$47K available for distribution for round 2 (Round 2 Deadline is June 24th)
 - How are applications evaluated?
 - Application aligns with WEFs strategic plan
 - Impact on industry or membership
 - Conduct MA Survey
 - Survey is emailed to MAs
 - 2022 survey focused on the Covid Relief Fund

Emerging Leaders: Matt Alpaugh

- Working with the SYPC Committee to identify roadblocks.
- Create examples of outcomes
- Reason leaders are overlooked
 - Lack of awareness
 - Lack of support
 - Lack of resources to support success

Water Communications: Elizabeth Wick

- Future meeting topics “Social media and how to have fun with it”

- Plan to survey MAs to find out what social media platforms they use. They plan to create a toolkit to accommodate the social media needs of the platform

Federal Advocacy Workgroup: Diane Grossenheider & Jon Koch

- Main goal is to get everyone sign up and become a Water Advocate.
- The Federal Advocacy Workgroup now has a water advocate in every state.
- State advocates are encouraged to contact their state representatives and notify them of the current needs of the water community. The Federal Advocacy Workgroup provides email templates to each advocate.
- Current Calls of Action:
 - FY23 Water Infrastructure Appropriations
 - Co-sponsor Wipes Labeling Legislation
 - PFAS Liability Exemptions
- The workgroup is currently working on a toolkit.

Nominating Committee – Donnell Duncan

- Encourage members to volunteer for a committee they are passionate about.
- Delegate-at-Large- Represents a constituency but not a MA (Ex, Construction, manufacturing...)
- Currently encouraging member to apply to for the HOD Speaker Elect position

MA CODE OF CONDUCT

Presenter: Kathleen Waugh

- Toolkit launched in March 2022
 - How the toolkit was developed
 - Developed WEF's Member Discipline Policy and WEF Board approved it in 2020
 - WEF Board of Ethics Subcommittee formed in 2020
 - Developed WEF Member Code of Conduct with Stakeholder involvement and WEF Board approved in 2021
 - Implemented Code in WEF membership join/renewal process in 2021
 - Toolkit developed in 2021
- Goal- Ensure a professional, safe and welcoming environment for all
- Purpose- To provide sample templates/backgrounds to assist MAs in developing MA policies and procedures relating to MA Conduct.

MA SHARING SESSION

Moderator: Diego Rosso

NORTH DAKOTA WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION

Presenters: Sarah Waldron Feld & Kellen Grubb

Perspective from a Small MA

- 121 Members in 2017. Membership dropped due to covid.
- NDWEA Challenges
 - Diversity of members
 - Strategic planning
 - Board Personnel changes
 - Operator Training- Spring training and Annual Conference
 - Joint participation in annual conference governed by North Dakota Water Pollution and Control (NDWPCC)
- Student Organizations
 - Over the last decade, student membership ranged from 20-30 members
 - Membership fees are subsidized by local MA
 - \$5 to join WEF \$5 to join AWWA
 - Strong Faculty Leadership and MA Support
- Goals
 - Put strategic plan to action
 - Support and enhance ongoing training and continuing education
 - Add interim meetings to accomplish goals
 - Increase membership numbers

MISSOURI WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION

Presenters: Saki Urushidani & Katie Bruegge

New Conference Attendee Orientation by the MWEA DEI Committee

- In 2021, their goal was to engage new conference attendees
- Newly formed DE&I Committee
- Goals and Objectives
 - Established conference ambassadors for both MWEA and AWWA
 - Provide new conference orientation for new attendees
- During the orientation the MWEA and AWWA presidents gave presentations about their organizations.
- Conference Resources Provided at the meeting:
 - Conference booklet
 - Conference App
 - Look Around- Golden Shovel (5S), DE&I Pins, Committee Ribbons
 - Registration Desk
 - Conference Ambassador
- Provided information about Water for People

- Provided information on how to get credit for your continuing education

OHIO WATER ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION

Presenter: Elizabeth Wick

COVID- What has stuck around OWEA besides the Virus

- OWEA received two rounds of Paycheck Protection Funding
- Covid Changes:
 - Canceling/Delay in-person classes
 - Added online learning options
 - In 2021, the One Water conference was in person and had a hybrid option
 - Host Online meeting
- Evaluation Changes
 - Virtual- Modified EC meeting duration time.
- Online Learning- Provides monthly webinars (\$15.00)
- No longer host Executive Committee meetings on Zoom.
- COVID made OWEA partnerships stronger with the Ohio EPA, Governor's Office, DAWWA and Vendors)
- COVID exposed the need for a large reserve.
- Since CVOID, they have added a clause that allows transfers for deposits
- COVID created many challenges and opportunities for MA's

