

Module

3

Lesson

1



Voices in the Conservation Movement

Lesson at a Glance

Experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (25 min): Participants will read stories of diversity in the outdoors and discuss.

Conclusion (5 min):
Reflection and questions

Learner Outcomes

Participants will:

- Explore experiences and contributions of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in the public lands movement.
- Name one way they can help honor all connections to public lands and waters.

Getting Ready

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Printed stories

Location: Indoor or outdoor with room to sit in a circle

Objective: To understand the importance of including all people and experiences in the conservation narrative.

Experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (25 min)

1. Explain that the traditional history that we tell about public lands and conservation doesn't include the stories of all people, especially the experiences and contributions of Black, Indigenous and People of Color. Black, Indigenous, and People of Color experienced and still are experiencing dispossession, genocide, and erasure in the name of land conservation and the public lands system, however these marginalized groups also have been leaders in the protection of land and are helping people feel welcome on public lands. These stories represent some of the varied experiences that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color have had in relation to the public lands narrative, and highlight the contributions which may have been erased or overlooked.
2. Pass out printed stories and have each participant read a different story aloud about the experiences of racially and ethnically diverse communities on public lands. Facilitators may also choose to run this activity as a "gallery walk" (posting stories around the room and allowing participants to digest the material in silence) or as a "pair share" or "round robin" activity (each student pairs with another student to share their story).
3. Debrief:

Which stories do you connect with? Why?

What stories surprised you? Why?

Why is it important to tell these stories in addition to the publicized stories of John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Theodore Roosevelt, etc.? By learning about these people and groups, we can honor their contributions to the preservation of public lands and help people understand that we all can play a role in helping to protect nature. Public lands aren't just for wealthy white people- they are for everyone and it's important for all people to be able to access the benefits of time spent in nature.

Do you know any other organizations or individuals who can help create a more inclusive narrative of the conservation movement?

What does diversity in the outdoors mean or look like to you?

Conclusion (5 min)

1. Ask participants to share one way they will help honor these connections to the land and stories from people whose voices traditionally haven't been represented in the conservation movement.
2. Allow time for questions.

