



## River Network's Principles for Equitable & Inclusive Work

We commit to holding ourselves accountable to the standards below, and to sharing, discussing, revising, and amending these standards over time with our water protection and river restoration community.

- 1. We use equity as a lens through which we view our work and as a guiding principle for choosing the right action.* We recognize that all people have a right to clean and ample water. We seek solutions to the root causes of water equity challenges and examine whether benefits and costs of solutions to water problems are distributed equitably. We work to build power for those who lack equitable access to affordable, clean water and healthy rivers.
- 2. We set a table for all.* We seek multiple perspectives to help us fully understand water challenges, and to find equitable solutions. We work with diverse partners and communities. Our work will initially focus on engaging the most vulnerable people who have suffered the most from environmental injustices.
- 3. We practice what we preach.* We model change by demonstrating by example what we ask our members and the water protection and river restoration community to do.
- 4. We value human and ecological needs.* We advocate conservation goals within the context of human health, economic, and other community needs and their connection to healthy rivers. To succeed with our mission, we broaden river protection conversations to fully encompass protection of people.
- 5. We partner with others who know more than us.* We have much to learn about influencing larger systems and about expanding those who we work with and listen to. We partner with those organizations that are ahead of us in doing inclusive, equitable work and can help us engage communities we would not otherwise be able to reach.
- 6. We build and maintain relationships that outlast funding.* This work is founded on relationships. In the past some of our relationships have depended on funding. We commit to finding ways to continue our relationships even when funding priorities shift.
- 7. We deploy our resources strategically.* We seek to serve all underserved communities. Because we

have limited resources and cannot work everywhere, we must be strategic. Carefully choosing where to begin is not meant to exclude; it demonstrates our commitment to succeed where we can make a positive impact, build on what we learn, and promote replication of effective practices.

8. *We commit to learn and grow.* Ours is a work in progress. We seek to be a learning organization. We reflect on what we are learning and revise our approach accordingly.

9. *We are transparent about our capabilities and our progress.* We are candid with ourselves and others about what we can and cannot do. We share about our successes, failures, what we learn, and what we will change as a result.

10. *We hold ourselves accountable and welcome others to hold us accountable.* We recognize that this work is our responsibility. We ask for encouragement when we are stretching, and we invite critique and recommendations for change when we are not living up to our commitments.