

**SOUTHEASTERN ASSOCIATION OF FISH AND WILDLIFE AGENCIES
MINORITY IN NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION**

2021 DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARDS

Executive Statement:

The Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) is an organization whose members are the state agencies with primary responsibility for management and protection of the fish and wildlife resources in 15 states, Puerto Rico and the United States Virgin Islands. Member states are Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. SEAFWA serves as a clearinghouse for the exchange of ideas concerning wildlife and fisheries management, research techniques, wildlife law enforcement, hunting and outdoor safety and information and education programs.

Over the past few years many SEAFWA member agencies' have begun to incorporate strategies within their organization that have the goal of increasing diversity and inclusion within their workforce and their end user community. As a subset of SEAFWA, Minorities in Natural Resources Conservation (MINRC) Council has initiated an award as a way of recognizing SEAFWA member agencies for their effort to create an inclusive culture within their individual organizations.

In conjunction with other achievements acknowledged during the annual SEAFWA awards banquet, the MINRC council would like to continue to recognize member agencies that have gone above and beyond in their efforts to implement strategies, policies, initiatives and practices that promote diverse and inclusive workforces, as well as, outreach activities that actively engage people from a broader demographic spectrum.

The objective is to applaud and recognize the member agencies that have made purposeful advancements towards internal and external people diversity and inclusion. We also desire to encourage those that have not had the type of successes in their diversity and inclusion efforts, and to exchange best practice information with all SEAFWA member agencies.

What is the Purpose of the Award?

The diversity and inclusion awards are designed to recognize SEAFWA members for their achievement in the area of people diversity and inclusion, share best practice information with other member agencies and to assist in providing a road map for the member agencies that are struggling with how to develop and implement a successful diversity and inclusion strategy.

We hope to accomplish the following:

- Honor the member agency that has gone above and beyond in their activation and implementation of strategies which have resulted in increased diversity and inclusion within their agency, provided greater promotional opportunities for their diverse team members and fostered outreach programs to diverse audiences with measurable results.
- Recognize the member agency that has been the most creative and innovative in their diversity and inclusion outreach efforts.
- Compiling best practice diversity and inclusion strategy information to be disseminated among member agencies.

What is the Application and Selection Process?

Honorees will benefit by being recognized as leaders in their region for successful internal and external diversity and inclusion strategic initiative implementation. Agencies can nominate a team focusing on these goals or it can be submitted as an individual nomination. There are two categories in which a winner can be recognized:

- 1) Traditional and innovative efforts to increase Workforce Diversity and Inclusion
- 2) Diversity Outreach and Education

Winners will be acknowledged during the annual SEAFWA awards banquet with a memento given to the State Director by the president of SEAFWA and the current chair of MINRC.

The awards process will be as follows:

- Announcement of redesigned SEAFWA Diversity and Inclusion Award process
- Forwarding of awards application and criteria to State Directors
- Selection of volunteer judges for awards
- Receipt and compilation of applications and letters describing the initiative
- Review and selection of award winners
- Announcement of winners to SEAFWA leadership
- Securing of mementos for winners
- Providing list and logos of all member organizations who submitted an application to program committee
- Announcement of winners during SEAFWA awards banquet

Who is invited to Participate?

All SEAFWA member agencies are encouraged to participate. The selection committee reserves the right to select no more than two winners per category in the case of a tie. Member agencies are asked to refrain from applying for a category which they have won two consecutive years.

What is the Process for Awarding the Winners?

It is suggested that announcement take place after the recognition for biologist of the year, and before the recognition of the new SEAFWA president elect and the announcement of the raffle giveaways. The Diversity and Inclusion Awards committee should be included in the planning of the annual SEAFWA banquet.

How Will the Award be presented?

The detailed description of the award presentation and announcement of winners is listed below:

1. Provide list of applicants to banquet committee.
2. Supply logos for all applicants, if requested, in PowerPoint or other requested format.
3. Deliver names of winner to banquet committee with brief (2 minutes max) overview of accomplishment.
4. Select and secure physical memento for winners and hand deliver to banquet committee if required.
5. Inform winning agencies and request a spoke person (preferably State Director) to accept reward.
6. Post winners on SEAFWA and MINRC sites.

7. Compile and distribute best practice information to Leadership of each member organization.

What's next?

There are several action items yet to be completed such as the following:

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| o Approval of application by MINRC council | June 11 |
| o Submission of application and selection process for review by SEAFWA Executive Directors | June 18 |
| o Approval of awards process and application by SEAFWA directors | June 25 |
| o Selecting judges | July 09 |
| o Sending application to member agencies | July 15 |
| o Award Reminder | Aug 06 |
| o Applications Deadline | Aug 20 |
| o Selection of winners | Sep 03 |
| o Winners notification | Sep 10 |
| o Purchasing award with inscription and SEAFWA logo | Oct. 01 |

Draft Agenda for award recognition

The following draft agenda is intended to provide a guideline and activity flow to the awards. Adjustments can be made as needed by the SEAFWA banquet committee.

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| Announcement of type of awards and categories | 2:00 min |
| Introduction of first category, requirements, and applicants | 1:30 min |
| Announcement of winner(s) | 2:00 min |
| Introduction of second category, requirements, and applicants | 1:30 min |
| Announcement of winner(s) | 2:00 min |
| Closing | 2:00 min |

Active Participants

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| Diversity and Inclusion Awards Committee | Rosezetta Bobo/ FFG
Sean Green/ LFWD |
| Application and process review | SEAFWA Directors/Staff |
| Awardee selection | MINRC council volunteers |
| Memento selection | Rosezetta Bobo/ FFG
Sean Green/ LFWD |
| Banquet D & I Awards Announcer | David Buggs/ TPWD |