

Erica Nelson

Equity and Engagement Manager



Erica Nelson serves as the equity and engagement manager at Western Resource Advocates (WRA), where she combines her extensive experience in diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice with her passion for the outdoors and conservation. She collaborates across internal teams and with external partners to ensure equitable policymaking, foster inclusive workplaces, and strengthen community engagement. She joined WRA in October 2024.

A lifelong advocate for equity and justice, Nelson’s career spans organizational development, outdoor leadership, and environmental stewardship. Before WRA, she co-founded REAL Consulting, where she guided organizations on their journeys toward racial equity and inclusion, leveraging her deep understanding of systemic inequities to create transformative change. In the outdoor recreation industry, Nelson is a leader and changemaker. As a fly-fishing guide and ambassador for Brown Folks Fishing, she co-created the Angling for All Pledge, a commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and justice principles adopted by corporations and organizations across industries.

Her connection to the land and water is deeply personal. A self-taught angler and outdoor enthusiast, Nelson has spent countless hours exploring the West. As a member of the Navajo Nation, she draws on her cultural heritage and firsthand experience with the impacts of climate change to inform her work to advance not just environmental protection but also equitable access to outdoor spaces and resources.

Nelson thrives on facilitating “aha” moments, helping individuals and organizations embrace new, inclusive ways of thinking. Among many other accomplishments, she worked with rafting companies on the first initiative in Oregon to promote Indigenous heritage on the Rogue River and has also served the boards of High Country Conservation Advocates and Women’s Wilderness.

She is also certified in DiSC and Insights Discovery leadership assessment and is a frequent keynote speaker, on everything from diversity, equity, inclusion and outdoor recreation to leadership development. Nelson believes in the power of storytelling to connect communities and continues to inspire others through her podcast, *The Awkward Angler*, where she explores social justice and outdoor recreation.

Nelson holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology with a minor in Outdoor Leadership from Sierra Nevada University – Lake Tahoe. Currently based in Colorado, she spends her free time fly-fishing, rafting, hiking, and writing. She enjoys camping during the summer months and reflecting on the beauty of the southwest.

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