

**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 19, 2023

The Honorable Martha Williams  
Director  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Director Williams:

Thank you for your recent response<sup>1</sup> to the March 14, 2023, letter<sup>2</sup> (“Ecogrief Letter”) from the House Committee on Natural Resources (the “Committee”) outlining concerns with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (“Service”) employee training sessions entitled “Acknowledging Ecogrief and Developing Resilience.” Although your response stated that no additional briefings on this particular topic were planned, your response acknowledged that “the workshops were conducted by outside consultants, approved on a case-by-case basis by leadership in the Service’s regional offices and supported through base funds set aside for general employee training and development.”<sup>3</sup>

As you may be aware, the Justice Department’s Office of Inspector General is currently investigating the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (the “DEA”) for allegations of improperly awarding contracts to outside entities and consultants.<sup>4</sup> The investigation includes a review of the contracting process; the excessive use and cost of outside consultants; and the expense, inadequacy, and brevity of a long-awaited report reviewing the foreign operations of the DEA that cost the American taxpayers \$1.4 million.<sup>5</sup> The allegations of impropriety at the DEA and your recent statements regarding the use of “outside consultants” at the Service has prompted the Committee to review the Service’s spending activity on outside consultants and organizations.

After sending the Ecogrief Letter, the Committee received additional reports of the Service hiring outside consultants at taxpayer expense for various trainings, workshops, and projects in related topic areas. The Service purportedly utilizes the expertise of outside consultants to institute “social change” initiatives, including but not limited to, programs on social justice; environmental

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Director Martha Williams to Chairman Bruce Westerman (Mar. 31, 2023) (on file with Committee).

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Chairman Bruce Westerman et al. to Director Martha Williams (Mar. 14, 2023), [https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/eco-grief\\_letter.pdf](https://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/eco-grief_letter.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Williams, *supra* note 1.

<sup>4</sup> Joshua Goodman & Jim Mustian, *DEA chief faces probe into ‘swampy’ hires, no-bid contracts*, AP NEWS (Apr. 19, 2023), <https://apnews.com/article/dea-corruption-fentanyl-cocaine-drugs-contracts-milgram-7fd24fe46c4b664f285773798357d418>.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

justice; eco-grief; diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (“DEIA”); and justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (“JEDIA”).

The Service’s use of outside consultants during the Biden Administration to push “social change” initiatives includes, but is not limited to, spending nearly \$2.5 million on Metropolitan Group L.L.C.,<sup>6</sup> a “social change agency” from Portland, Oregon.<sup>7</sup> Other outside consultants used by the Service for “social change” initiatives purportedly include, but are not limited to, Partners For Performance, Inc.; Collabovate Consulting, L.L.C., which develops pathways for “racial equity transformation”<sup>8</sup> in organizations; and Syah B. Consulting, whose mission is to “transform workplace culture.”<sup>9</sup>

The Committee is interested in understanding how the Service ascertains the need for an outside consultant in a particular focus area, as well as the process by which the Service selects and retains these consultants. The Committee is especially interested in understanding how the Service, aligning with the priorities of the Biden Administration,<sup>10</sup> promotes various “social change” and environmental justice initiatives at the expense of good governance and the Service’s mission to conserve and manage “fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the American people.”<sup>11</sup>

In order to assist the Committee with ensuring the efficient and appropriate use of taxpayer dollars, please provide the following documents and information – covering the timeframe of January 20, 2021, to the present – by May 31, 2023:

1. All documents and communications regarding the Service’s use of outside consultants for all “social change” initiatives, including, but not limited to, initiatives, programs, training, and events regarding social justice, environmental justice, eco-grief, DEIA, and JEDIA.
2. Documents and communications sufficient to show the funds outlaid by the Service on outside consultants for “social change” initiatives including, but not limited to, initiatives, programs, training, and events regarding social justice, environmental justice, eco-grief, DEIA, and JEDIA.
3. All documents and communications regarding the Service’s use of outside consultants for the Service’s Values Journey, Values Project, Purpose and Values Journey, Values Jam, Employee Resource Groups, Guiding Coalition for Wildlife Conservation in the 21st Century, and Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Plan.

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<sup>6</sup> USASPENDING.GOV, *FY2021-2023 USFWS Spending on Metropolitan Group L.L.C.*, <https://www.usaspending.gov/search/?hash=73e292011d87b703826370f353d0f710>, (last visited Apr. 22, 2023).

<sup>7</sup> METROPOLITAN GROUP, <https://www.metgroup.com/> (last visited May 16, 2023).

<sup>8</sup> Krischanna Roberson, *Bio*, COLLABOVATE CONSULTING (June 16, 2020), <https://www.collabovateconsulting.com/post/2020/06/16/bio>.

<sup>9</sup> SYAH B. CONSULTING, <https://www.deepdivedei.com/> (last visited May 16, 2023).

<sup>10</sup> See THE WHITE HOUSE, *Environmental Justice*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/> (last visited Apr. 24, 2023).

<sup>11</sup> U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, *About Us*, <https://www.fws.gov/about> (last visited Apr. 22, 2023).

4. Documents and communications sufficient to show the amount of money the Service has spent on outside consultants for the Service's Values Journey, Values Project, Purpose and Values Journey, Values Jam, Employee Resource Group, Guiding Coalition for Wildlife Conservation in the 21st Century, and Diversity and Inclusion Implementation Plan.
5. Documents and communications sufficient to show the amount of official on-duty time that Service employees were granted to participate in employee organizations, including, but not limited to, employee resource organizations.
6. All documents and communications regarding any contracts awarded to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
7. A complete copy of any contracts awarded to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
8. A complete copy of any competing bids for contracts awarded to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
9. All documents and communications regarding the solicitation process for any contracts awarded to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
10. All documents and communications regarding competing bid proposals related to contracts awarded to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
11. All documents and communications relied on by Service contracting officials in determining to award contracts to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
12. All documents and communications purported to constitute "market research" performed by the Service with respect to any contracts awarded to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
13. All documents and communications regarding any work product, program, research, or services provided by Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
14. All documents and communications regarding Metropolitan Group L.L.C., including, but not limited to, any services Metropolitan Group L.L.C. has provided the Service and any contracts and/or payments the Service has made to Metropolitan Group L.L.C.
15. All documents and communications regarding Syah B. Consulting, including, but not limited to, any services Syah B. Consulting has provided the Service and any contracts and/or payments the Service has made to Syah B. Consulting.
16. All documents and communications regarding Partners For Performance, Inc. including, but not limited to, any services Partners For Performance, Inc. has provided the Service and any contracts and/or payments the Service has made to Partners For Performance, Inc.

17. All documents and communications regarding Collabovate Consulting, L.L.C. including, but not limited to, any services Collabovate Consulting, L.L.C. has provided the Service and any contracts and/or payments the Service has made to Collabovate Consulting, L.L.C.

An attachment to this letter provides additional instructions for responding to the requests from the Committee on Natural Resources. Please contact the Majority staff for the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee at (202) 225-2761 or [HNRR.Oversight@mail.house.gov](mailto:HNRR.Oversight@mail.house.gov) with any questions. Under House Rule X, the Committee on Natural Resources has “general oversight” of any matter relating to its jurisdiction, including the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitat for the benefit of the American people. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,



Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations

Enclosure