Melody Mobley
The First African-American Woman Forester
Melody Mobley attended the University of Washington and became the first black woman to graduate with a Forestry degree in 1979.

She was hired by the United States Forest Service at 19, sealing her place in history as its first African-American woman hired.
Melody experienced discrimination throughout her career, faced with repeated experiences of sexist and racist verbal harassment.

The hardships Melody faced due to her identity carried into her professional work. As a black woman, she was denied opportunities for advancement and exposure as a black woman.
An Institutional History of Discrimination

The U.S. Forest Service has predominantly employed cisgender white men throughout their history. Throughout their history the USFS continued to put white men in positions of power, subduing voices of other identities.
Melody has spoken out about the USFS, and the natural resource industry in general, having a long way to go to create more inclusive and welcoming spaces for all.

She wants to see the natural resource industry commit to increased multicultural training, stronger mentorship of minorities, creation of a more inclusive and welcoming work environment, and a stronger commitment to end sexual harassment in the workplace.
Today, the Forest Service has begun to incorporate diversity into its guiding principles more and more in recent years.

This has included starting programs such as Bridging Cultures Conservation Corps which is a program specifically designed to support underserved college youth interested in natural resource related career fields.
I truly want to make a difference in the world. I know I can't change the whole world by myself, but if everybody did one thing, it would make a difference.

-Melody Mobley
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