

CONSERVATION IN A NEW NATION

A WORKSHOP for conservation organizations to strengthen the practice of conservation by ensuring future innovation and responsiveness to present-day challenges.



THE NEED

Conservationists everywhere in America face a strategic challenge to their methods, delivery systems and constituencies. This challenge has emerged quite profoundly as a “perfect storm” of factors: the changing demographics of our nation coupled with the narrowing of constituent groups for most land trusts.

Demographers predict that by 2042—in one generation—people of color will be the statistical majority in every metropolitan region of the United States. This will be an important and crucial milestone for the conservation community, which today includes relatively few people of color.

All of these factors beg important questions: Who will steward conserved lands in 2042? Who will support bond acts? Who will support land use policies? Where are the Asian Americans, the African Americans, and the Hispanic Americans in today’s conservation movement? And if they are not in the conservation movement today, what are conservationists willing to do to have them be part of the movement tomorrow? If significant steps are not taken now to diversify land trusts -- whose supporters are overwhelmingly white and aging -- who will support these institutions in the next generation? Who will defeat the growing number of cases of eminent domain seizing conservation lands? Who will be the stewards of our lands and communities?

Many leading conservation organizations are realizing that to succeed and become the powerful force in American culture they can be, they must build bridges, finding common ground among diverse groups, and unite ecological and social healing. The skills needed in this practice of conservation include story, dialogue, cultural competency, political agility and movement building. The opportunities for change are an expanded membership, greater public engagement and understanding, deeper collaborations, more funding, more legislative victories, and the chance to move beyond “landscape-scale” to “culture-scale” conservation. This is the extraordinary opportunity for all land trusts today: to help create healthy people and

whole communities, while at the same time building stronger, more resilient support for conservation itself.

Today, those who care about land conservation and biodiversity are remaking themselves by partnering with non-traditional groups with allied interests. This workshop addresses just how to make those critical steps in focus, strategic planning, and on the ground innovation.

WHAT WE OFFER

In response to this need, we offer this two-day intensive workshop for conservation organizations to take a broader look at the strategic benefits of leveraging difference for future innovation. It is a chance to talk openly and safely about how to diversify in order to maintain competitive edge and leadership and how to collaborate with facets of the larger community, thereby broadening bases of support, developing meaningful new relationships and engaging more public citizens on the issues.

Examples of core questions addressed by the workshop include:

- What are the values our organization has brought to our region, and how are changing demographics calling on us to respond?
- How can we understand the potential role of land, and our role, in repairing social and political fragmentation in our region? How can we clarify the competitive advantages of diversifying our orientation, our programs, and membership?
- What is our greater vision for our organization, our community and our landscape?

Your conservation group will explore and develop a greater understanding of the role of land in shaping healthy and prosperous human communities. You will practice the skills most needed in this new model of conservation: story, dialogue, dismantling racism, political agility and movement building. And you'll be familiarized with *Whole Measures*, a tool that will help you create the most positive change possible in the communities and organizations you serve. Whole Measures is the first community-based standard on the ethics and ecology of healthy, whole communities (see wholemeasures.org).

LOGISTICS AND COSTS

FOR INDIVIDUALS:

Whole Communities holds workshops and retreats for leaders at Knoll Farm in central Vermont and at other locations around the country throughout the year. For a full calendar of our programs, please visit our website at www.wholecommunities.org.

FOR ORGANIZATIONS:

Center for Whole Communities leads workshops for organizations seeking greater effectiveness or looking for new tools to help them catalyze broader change. We bring our faculty and curriculum to you and tailor our workshop to your specific concerns and goals. To

talk further about how we can serve your organization through one of our programs, please contact: Lauren Oleet, Program Manager; Lauren@wholecommunities.org; 802.496.5690

WHOM WE SERVE

We have conducted versions of this same workshop for dozens of private conservation organizations as well as state and county public agencies concerned with the land.

Alumni of our programs include over 1000 leaders from hundreds of organizations in 48 states, Canada and Mexico. Organizations we have served through our workshops include:

Big Sur Land Trust
Bay Area Open Space Council
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Conservation Trust of North Carolina
Fundors' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities
Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
Ruth Mott Foundation
Kulshan Community Land Trust
Land Trust Alliance
Larimer County Parks and Open Space
Marin Agricultural Land Trust
Maine Coast Heritage Trust
Massachusetts Audubon
Nature Conservancy
Natural Lands Trust
New Jersey Audubon
New Jersey Conservation Foundation
Peconic Land Trust
Pennsylvania Land Trust Association
Sonoma County Open Space
Wood River Land Trust



ABOUT CENTER FOR WHOLE COMMUNITIES

Center for Whole Communities is a land-based leadership development organization. We work with a wide range of organizations in different sectors connected to the land to do their best possible work together on behalf of the land. We support leaders and organizations that are building healthier, more just communities through stronger relationships between community and the land. Through our commitment to being a multi-racial, multi-cultural organization, we can create the safe harbors where difficult questions can be addressed and where leaders can positively engage many issues that in the past have created divides: the roles of race, class and privilege; the consequences of specialization; and limitations of defining success too narrowly. By helping leaders to fully grasp how their success is bound up in the success of others, we have earned a national reputation for being the place where lifelong change happens, leader-to-leader, week after week. We have over 800 alumni working in diverse organizations and communities in 47 states.