

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.



Conservation Fellows of the 2042 Today Program

■ THE NEED

Conservation everywhere in America faces a strategic challenge to 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 conservation organizations. How do conservationists engage with a changing American public?

Demographers predict that by 2042—in one generation—people of color will be the statistical majority in every metropolitan region of the United States. Today, 40% of all Americans under the age of 16 are people of color. These changes within our nation are to be celebrated because they bring new ideas and vigor and because people of color have traditionally been strong supporters of conservation. But, today, conservation and environmentalism include far fewer people of color. How can conservation groups adapt? What needs to evolve within conservation so that more people of color see themselves in the story of conservation?

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 move-

ment? 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 conservation groups—whose supporters are overwhelmingly white and aging—who will support these institutions in the next generation?

Many leading conservation organizations are realizing that to succeed and become the powerful force in American culture they can be, they must build bridges, find common ground among diverse groups, and unite ecological and social healing. The skills needed in this practice of conservation include story, dialogue, intercultural 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 conservation groups 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 strong 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.

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. 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).

■ WHOM WE SERVE

We have conducted this workshop for dozens of private conservation organizations as well as state and county public agencies concerned with the land. Organizations we have served through this workshop include:

- Big Sur Land Trust
- Bay Area Open Space Council
- Conservation Trust of North Carolina
- Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities
- Larimer County Parks and Open Space
- Marin Agricultural Land Trust
- Maine Coast Heritage Trust
- Massachusetts Audubon
- The Nature Conservancy
- New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- Peconic Land Trust
- Sonoma County Open Space

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:

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About CENTER FOR WHOLE COMMUNITIES

Center for Whole Communities is a land-based leadership development organization. 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. We have earned a national reputation for being the place where lifelong change happens, leader-to-leader, week after week. We have over 1000 alumni working in diverse organizations and communities in 48 states.

