

Dedication

A Ritual to Read to One Another

If you don't know the kind of person I am
and I don't know the kind of person you are
a pattern that others made may prevail in the world
and following the wrong god home we may miss our star.

For there is many a small betrayal in the mind,
a shrug that lets the fragile sequence break
sending with shouts the horrible errors of childhood
storming out to play through the broken dyke.

And as elephants parade holding each elephant's tail,
but if one wanders the circus won't find the park,
I call it cruel and maybe the root of all cruelty
to know what occurs but not recognize the fact.

And so I appeal to a voice, to something shadowy,
a remote important region in all who talk:
though we could fool each other, we should consider —
lest the parade of our mutual life get lost in the dark.

For it is important that awake people be awake,
or a breaking line may discourage them back to sleep;
the signals we give — yes or no, or maybe —
should be clear: the darkness around us is deep.

— William Stafford

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From the Editor

This summer we had the great pleasure of meeting, as a new addition to our faculty, Roberto Chené, a teacher and community-builder who brought here his great wisdom as someone deeply rooted in multicultural work and conflict resolution. Before leaving, Roberto put into our hands a slender book by Barry Lopez, *The Rediscovery of America*. In many ways, Lopez distills in those few pages the essence of our teachings, calling our attention to what it means to take one's stand, to make a *querencia*, a place of true belonging. And beyond that Lopez writes powerfully of the long history of unchecked exploitation of this land and its people, using that lens to pinpoint the deep sense of conflict, loss, and crisis many of us feel in our work in the land movement. "Five hundred years after the *Nina*, the *Pinta* and the *Santa Maria* sailed into the Bahamas, we are asking ourselves what has been the price of the assumptions those ships carried, particularly about the primacy of material wealth," he writes. What we face, Lopez argues, is not so much an environmental crisis as a "much larger crisis of culture."

These words and ideas were echoed in our dialogues and conversations all summer at Knoll Farm, by a diverse group of leaders from around the country. And though the issues these leaders grapple with and the grief and loss they carry can be enormous, we see over and over the transcendent optimism and joy that comes forth among any group of people when they are given time, space, and safety to deeply engage with one another and the land. We marvel at what a profound teacher the land itself can be when we take the time to listen, to see, to allow it the generosity and healing it has to offer us. When asked how the retreat had affected him, one leader replied, "It showed me in the most convincing means possible that practicing whole thinking is really just the process of peeling back the layers and aberrations that have built up around our lives and the ways we related to the world. Beneath those layers is the heart of partnering, productivity, and love for our fellow community members and the land."

In this edition of our annual journal, we have collected essays that we hope will deepen and inform the conversations that richly layer the land of Knoll Farm each summer, so that these ideas may continue to bear fruit among our growing community across the country.

In the first essay, Peter Forbes takes many of the themes of our work and opens our thoughts to their full potential. He asks us to reevaluate our relationships with the land and the judgments we might hold about others' relationships. He challenges our assumptions about our work, just as Lopez challenges our assumptions about our history.

Enrique Salmon gives us a personal perspective in his piece about how the food and growing traditions, landscape, collective memory, story, and identity of his people, the Rarámuri of the Sierra Madres, are all infused into one continuous story of relationship. Na'Taki Osborne, just beginning a rich personal journey, reflects on how revealing and celebrating the untold stories and contributions of women of color in the environmental justice movement is essential to guide her own work as a young activist. Her project, partially funded by a grant from Center for Whole Communities, will give these women long overdue recognition and will allow them to shine as models of courage and strength for other emerging women activists to follow.

As leaders whose work is about speaking our deepest values, listening to other voices, and growing toward a common language, dialogue remains an essential tool. Danny Martin helps us to understand the art of dialogue more deeply, and its significance in helping us to make meaning, to hear one another and to reach a collective wisdom. Andy Pitz and Virginia Farley grapple in their essay about one of the biggest issues of all: climate change and how conservation organizations and leaders might start facing it on all levels, emotional as well as strategic. Finally, we felt it was important to profile someone in the movement who is using dialogue and other tools to transform the way he leads and acts. In a conversation with Flo Miller, Bill Leahy talks about his journey to change and expand the direction, focus, and long-term vision of his organization, the Big Sur Land Trust, in order to respond to his broader community's needs. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to all these contributors.

We very much look forward to your reactions to these essays and to your contributions to future journals. Please stay in touch about your responses, ideas, and projects out in the world. You are doing important work, and you are not alone.

Helen Whybrow
Knoll Farm
Fall 2007

This Land Is Your Land

Peter Forbes

“As I went walking, I saw a sign there
On the sign it said ‘no trespassing’
But on the other side it didn’t say nothing
That side was made for you and me.”
— Woody Guthrie, 1940

Greg Brown took aim, slowed his breath, and gently squeezed the trigger. It was clear, 42 degrees, light wind, a fine morning in October to be in Glacier Bay. The shot hit the seal in the back of the head, forcing its mouth shut instantly, keeping it from taking in water and sinking in the deep waters around Garforth Island. The preferred weapon for hunting seals is the .22 Hornet because it’s light, accurate, and can humanely kill a relatively small mammal, but Greg and his uncle were not there for sport. They were there to take a seal and to bring it back to Hoonah, a Tlingit community outside of the park, for a potlatch ceremony honoring Greg’s cousin who had died. Greg, whose Tlingit name is Shaaa-yakw-nook, was doing in 1992 exactly what his ancestors had done since time immemorial, gathering seal, eggs, and berries from a land so critical to their survival that they called it their Ice-box.

John Muir was the first publicist of Glacier Bay, arriving there by canoe with a Presbyterian minister in 1879. Muir was awed by the vast forces at work in this sweeping landscape of mountain, glacier, and water. Being in Glacier Bay made Muir feel fully alive, and he translated his experiences in a series of popular articles sent in installments to the *San Francisco Bulletin* even before he got back to California. Muir’s writing led directly to the creation of Glacier Bay National Monument in 1925 and helped to establish the dominant theme of the early conservation movement: Keep safe what you find valuable by removing people and other species that may threaten what you love most. We have a large and inspiring national park system because of these first efforts at forming a practice of conservation. No one, tourist or Tlingit, isn’t grateful that Glacier Bay remains today a largely healthy and whole ecosystem. Muir had a powerful vision that served nature well, but his vision was incomplete: he saw the landscape and not the people.

On that first trip to Glacier Bay 125 years ago, as the story goes, Muir purposefully rocked the canoe so that his Tlingit

guide would be unable to shoot and harvest a deer. Muir wrote this account to make clear his values, but today it seems a sad parable of two people unable to hear each other’s stories about their different ways of being in relationship with a place they both needed and loved.

Greg Brown was arrested later that morning in 1992. His rifle and the hair seal were confiscated by park rangers and Brown was ordered to appear before a federal magistrate in Juneau on charges of taking a seal in a national park. The Hoonah Tribal Council quickly came to Brown’s defense saying, “We were made criminals for our food.”

This is not an essay about hunting, nor about the management of our national parks, but about the essential purpose of conservation today, which is to understand the role of land, and our relationship to it, in creating a culture of care and attention in our country. To heal the land, as well as be healed by it, requires of all of us a deeper self-awareness and a willingness to honestly ask these questions: Who do we allow — and not allow — to experience this land and why? Is our current relationship to this place healthy? What about this land, and our relationship to it, might teach us



about how to live differently today?

In 2007, with a growing human population and appetite felt everywhere on this planet, it is no longer possible to protect land and nature *from* people. No property boundary will survive a suffering, greedy humanity. Today’s conservationists speak of protecting land through “landscape-scale conservation,” but how do these bigger approaches “save” land from climate change or acid rain or a public that simply no longer cares? And when the human response to a park or wildlife refuge is to develop all the land around the “protected” land, what have we achieved? To be meaningful and enduring, the work of conservation must seek not just to work on a larger scale or with tougher legal statutes, but to engage the hearts, minds, and everyday choices of diverse people. The massive, vital work of conservation today is to reweave this

still spectacular landscape with the human experience, relating land to everyday human choice and life.

Conservationists have been enormously successful in protecting land, marshalling the money and skills to purchase more than 14 million acres of land across America in the past decade, but Americans are no closer, by and large, to that land or to the values that the land teaches. Conservation continues to be swept aside by the homogenizing and insulating effects of technology, electronic media, urban sprawl, and a culture of fear that contributes to the divorce between people and the land. Today, the purpose of land conservation must be to create a balanced, healthy people who carry the land in their hearts, in their skills, and in their concerns.

An unintended result of the early efforts at conservation has been to exclude many Americans. Conservation must now be defined by the full awareness that our past efforts removed people from the land, primarily the rural poor, people of color, and native people. People have forever asserted their values over other people in politics, economics, and, sadly, conservation too. At Yosemite, the Ahwahneechee were forced out of the valley but later brought back in to the park to change bed sheets, serve Coca-Cola, and dress up as the more recognizable Plains Indians. At Great Smokey Mountains National Park, almost 7,000 rural people were bought out through condemnation only to have their barns and cabins reassembled in a Mountain Farm Museum where actors play at hill-country life. And more recently, to create the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve in Alaska, a 100-year practice of homesteading was stopped and people removed from their land. Here's one result of this exclusion: Frank and Audrey Peterman could travel through 12 national parks in 3 months in 1995 and see only two other people of color. What did we lose as a nation and as a people when conservation became a segregated movement?

The result, too, is that dispossessors are damaged along with the dispossessed. No conservationist will ever reach his or her goal without first gaining a broader sense of history and justice and embracing Saint Augustine's wisdom that one should never fight evil as if it is something that arose totally outside oneself. If you're the one being taken from, it matters little if the taker is a robber baron, a land speculator, or a conservationist. Today, we must acknowledge this dispossession of native people and others, such as Black family farmers, without whom some significant portion of conservation would not have been possible, and that to heal this wrong — and to heal ourselves — requires not guilt but awareness, humility, and the courage to go forward differently.

Our conservation movement has been guided for more than one hundred years by this question: How do we produce a landscape that is worthy of our culture? But when we say "our" culture, who do we include or leave out? The language of conservation is filled with words about "preserving," "protecting," and "saving" places because we know deep down that we are fencing someone out. What we should be fencing out is unhealthy behavior, not whole classes or races of people.

Today is the conservation movement's age of becoming. We may have started with a landscape-as-museum philosophy and a focus on one set of cultural needs, but the truth today is that we have conserved vast expanses of land which hold the possibility of a return in a whole way, in a manner never achieved before. This isn't going back to the land, it's going forward to the land in a new way. Writer and homesteader Hank Lentfer suggests that we need an entirely new relationship to the land at his home ground at Glacier Bay. "Looking at the clear-cut hillsides around Hoonah, I would be reluctant to return title to the Tlingit," he writes. On the other hand, "watching the smoke billow from the cruise ships idling in Glacier Bay while 2,000 tourists snap pictures with disposable cameras I have to question the wisdom of the 'current owners.'"

Let us consider the possibility that Wendell Berry was right when he wrote more than thirty years ago that "we and our country create one another . . . our land passes in and out of our bodies just as our bodies pass in and out of our land . . . therefore, our culture must be of response to our place." Perhaps the motivating question is no longer how do we produce a landscape that is worthy of our culture, but how do we produce a culture that is worthy of our landscape?

Most conservationists believe that the land heals people, yes, but only a fraction embrace the alternative possibility that people heal the land. Humans are tuned to relationship. We're healed by our love and our compassion. And one of the most influential relationships in our lives is with the land itself. We can make soil through composting as well as destroy it through overgrazing. Within some of us still are the skills of how to keep the land and ourselves healthy. This ancient knowledge lies in the daily traditions of the Popago Indians, of Rarámuri farmers and Samburu hunters, and in the modern skills of range scientists, homesteaders, forest stewards, and organic growers. What kind of new concept of the land might emerge if we could listen more carefully to one another's stories of the land?

The Extinction of Human Experience

Day by day, the number of Americans with firsthand experience of the land dwindles. This allows us, as a culture, to destroy more and more, drifting further away from the anchor that has sustained us physically and emotionally for eons. We see the results everywhere: we have a harder time talking with one another, we have more fears, our physical and emotional health diminishes, and we become more easily manipulated. And soon we find to our amazement that we have become a nation addicted to things, a nation that produces more prisoners than farmers and more shopping malls than high schools.

This divorce between people and the land can lead only to one place: a society in which it is no longer necessary for human beings to know who they are or where they live. And if no one knows where they live, then anyone with political power will control the

land and the people. Barry Lopez tells us that “for as long as our records go back, we have held these two things dear, landscape and memory, each informing us with a different kind of life. The one feeds us figuratively and literally. The other protects us from lies and tyranny.”

Our experience and memory of the land, arising from scientific knowledge as well as our human senses of touch, taste, and smell, are the knowledge on which a country must ultimately stand. Our relationship and memory of land, therefore, is deeply connected to our sense of patriotism, citizenship, egalitarianism and fairness, and our sense of limits. Our healthy relationship to land is the means by which humans generate, re-create, and renew transcendent values such as community, meaning, beauty, love, and the sacred, on which both ethics and morality depend.

The powerfully corrupting force of disconnection has become business as usual in America, and it is no wonder that conservationists have been afraid to confront it directly. The fact that there are now 7 billion people makes any talk of healthy human relationship to the earth a challenge. As population levels increase and technology amplifies our impact, our capacity for destruction increases. But increasingly the land is without intimates, people for whom the land remains alive, those who have indispensable, practical knowledge. Our cultural understanding of land has shifted largely from personal and physical (farmers, hunters) to industrial and recreational. This is fine except in its extreme, where land simply becomes a form of commerce or entertainment, something to be consumed.

Twenty years ago, the scientist and writer Robert Michael

Pyle coined the phrase “extinction of human experience” in his important book *The Thunder Tree*. He writes:

“People who care conserve; people who don’t know don’t care. What is the extinction of the condor to a child who has never known the wren?”

The extinction of the condor is the slow, unspoken diminishment of ourselves. It is the damage that occurs when a part of our own capacity to think, feel and understand is lost because the world around us — the world that shapes us — is also lost. We lose the condor and we lose some of our capacity to be in relationship with anything other than ourselves and our kind. And the child who doesn’t know the wren is the child who is afraid of walking to school, who has already begun to feel boundaries surround her. How will our children love and protect what they do not know?”

Here’s evidence of the boundaries we make: Today, 42 percent of the private land in America is posted *No Trespassing*. And conservationists, also, show both our love and our fear by what we fence out. Nearly 70 percent of land protected by private conservation organizations is posted *No Trespassing*. In the span of my lifetime that sign has become America’s best-known symbol of our disconnection from the land and a common reminder of our fear of one another. Seeing those signs reminds me of the extent to which we have all become children of a broken lineage.

We humans have prospered from our collective memory of the land, a lineage of direct human experience of nature that has functioned for 160,000 years and which is now largely broken. We’re just beginning as a people to understand the consequences





of that fracture. Until this isolation from the land, every human culture had specific words to express their fundamental relationship to it. The Nguni of southern Africa speak of *Ubuntu*, meaning “connectedness and social responsibility.” The mestizos of the northern Mexico and southwestern United States have *Querencia*, which means “the place and source of one’s meaning and responsibility.” The Russians have *Mir*, which means both “land” and “peace.” And the Hawaiians have *Kuleana*, which means “personal sense of responsibility” and “one’s homeland.” Sociologists and psychologists have told us for more than a hundred years that the world we create for ourselves, the economic, social, and environmental systems that surround us (or not) give us the social clues to be our better or worse selves. Conservation and restoration put into our everyday lives the social clues for how to live well and, thus, help us be our better selves, and to foster a culture of respect, forbearance, tolerance and peace. This is the extraordinary power of conservation: to help create healthy people and whole communities.

Conservationists have vital work to do. One in four Americans will suffer sufficiently from clinical depression to send them to a hospital at some point in their lives. Wealth has consolidated: the richest 1 percent of our population now controls one-third of the nation’s wealth, creating a more dangerous and immoral divide between haves and have-nots. The poverty rate for African Americans and Hispanics is now nearly three times as high as

that for whites. These are the realities of American life. As conservationists aspire to speak to a broader range of Americans we must understand that they are waiting first for our response to these everyday realities.

The Walk Toward Whole Communities

With a spirit of humility and grace, we must ask ourselves the difficult questions that beg us to move beyond our memberships to serve a larger humanity. Can we expand upon the motivating questions of our movement, from how much land can we protect, how many laws can we pass, or how much money can we raise to what relationships do we need to be whole again, what is a whole community and how do we get there together?

Part of the work of Center for Whole Communities is to make these ideas real in the bone and muscle of today’s conservation movement. We teach that relationship is as fundamental as places and things. Conservationists have made a strategic error in assuming that our work is more a legal act than a cultural act, assuming we can protect land *from* people through laws as opposed to *with* people through relationships.

Laws codify values, they do not create them. If the people in a democracy no longer care about the land, the laws that protect that land will not hold. Imagine, alternatively, how a conservation movement grounded in an ethos of relationship might be different from one grounded in law. In order to protect land we would

need to involve as many different people as possible: hunters, biologists, artists, ranchers, loggers, hikers, urban gardeners. We would need a new quality of dialogue and the ability to hear and respect each other's stories to make mature choices between types of relationships.

Today, who has right relationship to the land? To know this, we will need to initiate inside our organizations and coalitions and outside among our neighbors an ongoing dialogue that will ask us to live with considerable tension and uncertainty as we learn from one another. Also, we will need to balance the rational, legal mind-set needed to protect land with the more empathetic, relational mind-set needed to connect people and the land. Let's

start with the controversial and difficult work of envisioning a hierarchy of relationships, an understanding that some types of relationship with the land are more important today than others. Resilient relationships, those that have succeeded in place over long periods of time — say more than 500 years — deserve our respect. Second, healthy relationship is defined by use of land more than by ownership of land. Third, right relationship seeks balance and continuity and would see the destruction of other species as ultimately destabilizing. Right relationship might be defined, in part, through the degree that the human is invested and the land is not depleted. Work and livelihood, as long as the land is not depleted, are higher, more valued relationships with the land than recreation because a nation of people living on the land, growing their food and fiber, is more valuable today to the long-term health of the planet than is nurturing a nation of consumers. Similarly, a whole community is resilient and endures not just because of its quantity of protected land but because of the variety and depths of its relationships to all of its land. Finally, our definitions of right relationship must include encouraging people to experiment today by living on the land. Ways of life are best preserved by living them. Museums are critical places to store our knowledge, but they should never replace opportunities for people to continue to evolve on the land. The walk toward whole communities sees the conservation of land as a cultural act to sustain our democratic traditions, to help people become native to a place, to nurture respect and forbearance, independence, and the source of our sustenance.

At Center for Whole Communities we also teach that all people deserve a relationship to the land. The social foundations that enable conservation to happen in this country, namely the wealth of many of our organizations, the access we have to political and social power, the ability we have to evolve a legal system to our benefit, even our ability to own land and to work effectively with other landowners, reflect a very privileged position. If we use that privilege primarily for ourselves then we ultimately squander

The core challenge to conservation today is our capacity to create trust and dialogue among a diverse people. A whole community is built upon a moral landscape where people are treated fairly and where other species of life are respected.

the opportunity to create a whole community and we diminish ourselves. If we use that power and privilege to make meaningful relationships with land available to all people, we have taken what was never really ours in the beginning and turned it into something of value for everyone. The core challenge to conservation today is our capacity to create trust and dialogue among diverse people. A

whole community is built upon a *moral landscape* where people treat each other fairly and where other species of life are respected.

Lastly, we teach the power of story. We tell stories to cross the borders that separate us from one another and to help us imagine the world — past, present, future — differently. Stories enable us to see through the eyes of

other people, and open us to the claims of others. Stories help us dwell in time; teach us empathy and how to be human. Stories are the way we *carry the land inside of us*. Stories of the land awaken and rekindle these experiences of wholeness inside each and every one of us. Wallace Stegner meant just this when he wrote that “no place is a place until it has had a poet.”

Story helps us find the different renderings of what is valuable. The shades of love that people feel for the land, whether they are new to that place or have been there for generations, are adequately expressed only in terms of human emotion: the expression of our deepest felt values. Telling these stories about our values helps conservationists to explain the role that land plays in shaping healthy human lives. When I tell you who I am and you tell me who you are, our isolation as people and leaders comes to an end; the reweaving of our conservation movement begins anew.

The most important work that can be done today is to create the safe harbors where different people can have honest and sustained dialogue with one another about the land: its meaning, what we value, our vision about it, and our capacity for shared leadership. We need places where people can ask reciprocal questions: Why do I need you and why do you need me? Why does the health of the land and people need us working together? Wayne Howell, of the National Park Service, is doing this at Glacier Bay by investing years in creating a new relationship with the Hoonah people through hearing their stories and reconnecting them with that landscape by organizing trips to pick berries, harvest eggs, and, perhaps one day, even hunt seals again.

The presence of each organization within the environmental movement focusing on individual pieces of the drama, making its own arguments to its own audiences, is why we collectively have not been able thus far to offer a compelling new story for how to be an American. It is also why our movement places a much greater emphasis on strategies and tactics than on story. The former are perceived as “hard” and the latter are perceived as “soft.” But without both in equal measure our movement can

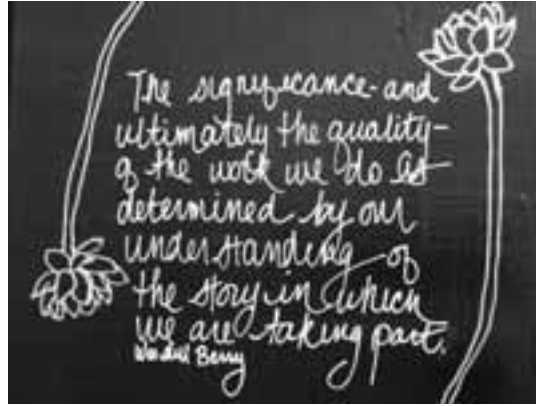
never flourish. Martin Luther King did not say, “I have a *plan*.” He said “I have a *dream*,” and he spoke of his values without offering strategy and tactics about how we might achieve them. He knew that if he could reach people with shared values then he could respect them to move in the right directions of their own accord. Today’s “I Have a Dream” speech for conservationists could be a story about children, about a return to healthy, local food, and about healing the isolation and divides between us all.

Healthy food and healthy children are today’s most important “doorway issues” to enter more Americans’ homes with a new story about land, people, and health. Imagine how many millions of Americans would take conservation seriously if its focus was the protection of our children and our food.

Inviting People In

Six years ago, in coming to Knoll Farm, Helen and I realized from our observations of the land and people in this valley, and from science, that the health of the place we loved was completely tied to the health of the human community we had joined. No sign keeping people away would protect this land; instead, our only choice was to invite people in, to play and buy some of their food here, to let them discover this place, and, perhaps, to love it the way we did. This act of making room for others on our land has never been easy and didn’t start out successfully. In the early days, when people thought us naïve, there were vandals and disruptions of our privacy and challenges to our ethics. Through dialogue and practice, our community has come to understand that our intention is to include them in our view of how best to create a healthy place. Though we have dozens of buildings, hundreds of acres, and miles of trail, there are no acts of disrespect, and, indeed, we have come to learn much about this land from others, like where the best hunting is and where one finds the chanterelles. Through their stories, we understand that this land is filled with both seeds and ashes and is much more meaningful to us. And by fostering more of a culture of care and attention in our neighbors, we believe we are protecting our land for the bear, fisher cat, deer, and turkey at a much larger and enduring scale. And by showing this possibility to many others within the conservation movement, we are re-weaving those leaders with their most powerful visions for how to nurture both the land and the people.

There is a new breed of conservation leaders who run their organizations not like a business but like an ecosystem. Were the movement modeled on an ecosystem, as opposed to a business, every organization would have its own specialized niche where there



is both competition and cooperation. Each organization would be dependent upon the success of other organizations. “Survival of the fittest” doesn’t mean survival of the toughest, or survival of the one with the best messaging campaign, but those that best evolve. Successful organizations are those that can quickly form new alliances, share resources, pick up new tools, and adapt to changing conditions. Today’s fashionable Resilience Theory says that ecosystems work best when there are

strong feedback loops helping organizations and the system as a whole to learn through *experience of current conditions*. These new conservation leaders have moved beyond “staying on mission” to lead by responding to what’s actually happening in the world right now. They are regularly speaking their vision for the future, finding the language and story that reaches more Americans, recognizing and speaking aloud past mistakes and injustices.

And when leaders and their organizations work in this manner, new life flows to them. They become less brittle, more flexible, and better collaborators. They are putting the fragmented pieces of their lives and of our movement back together again. These conservation leaders are using their land for food production and buying new land to create permanent locations for farmers markets. They are processing sustainably harvested wood from conserved land for affordable housing. They are conservationists committed to building wealth for people with low incomes by selling their own restricted land to co-ops, and they are translating their newsletters and websites into Spanish. They are local conservation groups committed to making a meaningful response to global issues like climate change and privatization of water.

Future generations will look back at the creation of very different parks like Glacier Bay in Alaska and Central Park in New York City with the same gratitude: they remind us of what it means to be human in healthy relationship to the world. We have been right to act quickly and to save these places from the grinding, numbing wheel of the industrial revolution. The vital work today is to reweave people and the land with the specific intention of creating a more resilient community, one that can not be achieved through fencing people out but only through the far more challenging work of inviting people in. We will never replace the dominant culture of fear and emptiness with a culture of care and attention until more Americans, of all colors and class, carry the land in their hearts and minds.

Peter Forbes is a writer, photographer, facilitator, and the cofounder and executive director of Center for Whole Communities.

Sharing Breath as a Rarámuri

Enrique Salmón

I used to sit in the sun with my grandfather at the edge of his small corn field. Here I learned how corn and chili were our parents and protectors. He told me about the beginning of the world as he whittled. He taught me and my cousins to respect the trees as relatives as he caught us swinging from the rubbery limbs of his huge fig tree. I also remember the pungent and savory smells of Grandma's plant arbor. I would sit and watch her grinding chiles and herbs in her old stone metates and mortars while she talked about our origins and about our plant relatives.

Though they weren't named as such, these biocultural and "whole thinking" lessons are woven into the daily fabric of our activities. There are many Rarámuri stories about how the world began, how

the animals emerged, and how the first Rarámuri found their way to this level of the universe. The history explains also how plants are direct relatives to the people. For me, as an indigenous ethnobotanist, the stories serve as conduits through which I can express my culture's perceptions of how the natural world developed and why it acts the way it does. The stories also provide metaphors and cultural models from which I can interpret actions and interactions among people, plants, and the land. The stories are essential for understanding human models of the natural world.

The focus of Rarámuri cultural history is the landscape. The heroes are the trees, plants, animals, and children. The people share the landscape with the plants and animals rather than dominate the land. In the Rarámuri origin story, plants were created after the land was shaped. Many of these plants were considered human by the Rarámuri, while others became plants after they first lived as humans. Some plants living today were brought to life by the Creator, *Onorúame*, and some once existed as plants but were later transformed by *Onorúame* into humans. As a result there are many Rarámuri understandings of plants that include gendered plants, plants identified as non-Rarámuri, plants that are of other indigenous groups, and plants that are Rarámuri. The categories of plants are indistinguishable from the Rarámuri categories of humans and, to a large extent, mirror human social categories. In addition, the moral and behavioral attributes of these human social categories are projected onto the corresponding categories of plant people.

Sunú (corn) is female. *Wásia* (*Ligusticum porteri*) and *Sitákame* (*Haematoxylon brasiletto*, brazilwood) are female plants as well. Male plants include piñon and junipers, oaks, tobacco, beans, squash, peyote, and datura. All these plants, except *Sitákame*, were

originally created in their plant form. In the minds of Rarámuri, they are not anthropomorphized. They are human but with different features. In his deep voice my grandfather used to tell the story of how *Bawákawa* (Tobacco) and *Baka-bu bahi* (Corn Husk) used to drink corn-beer together. They drank together at *tesguinadas* (ritual corn-beer drinking gatherings) and gambled together. A friend of theirs was Drinking Gourd. He would meet them at *tesguinadas*. Together they became beautifully drunk.

This is why it is good to smoke at *tesguinadas*. The story illustrates the human qualities applied to plants and also offers a cultural explanation for a particular tradition by applying what is expected to be proper human actions to plants.

Food plants and many other plants are female, because they take care of us and feed us. Female plants tend to be domesticated food plants or plants used for general healing and for female ailments. Male plants tend to be ceremonial, used by experienced healers, potentially dangerous, and are often not related to the Rarámuri.

The Rarámuri see themselves as part of an extended ecological family that shares ancestry and origin. There is awareness that life in any environment is viable only when humans view the life surrounding them as kin. The kin, or relatives, include humans as well as all the natural elements of the ecosystem. We are affected by and, in turn, affect the life around us. The interactions that result from this "kincentric ecology" enhance and preserve social structure and the ecosystem. Interactions are the commerce of social and ecosystem functioning. When humans fail to recognize their role in the complexities of life in a place, the life suffers and loses its sustainability. This sphere of thought encompasses all the senses.

The Rarámuri believe that human breath is shared by all surrounding life, that we owe our emergence into this world to some of the nearby life-forms. From this awareness we understand that we are responsible for the survival of all life. As a result we are cognizant of human kincentric relationships with nature similar to those shared with family and tribe. This awareness influences Rarámuri interactions with the environment. These interactions, these cultural practices of living with a place can be seen when the people selectively collect medicinal plants, when they carefully choose seeds for next year's crop, and when they perform annual ceremonies for rain.

Iwígara is the soul or essence of life everywhere. Therefore, *iwígara* is the idea that all life, spiritual and physical, is interconnected in a continual cycle. We are all related to and play a role in the

Interactions are the commerce of social and ecosystem functioning. When humans fail to recognize their role in the complexities of life in a place, the life suffers and loses its sustainability.



complexity of life. To the Rarámuri the concept of *iwígara* encompasses many ideas and ways of thinking unique to the place with which the Rarámuri live. Rituals and ceremonies, Rarámuri language, and even thought are influenced by the lands, animals, and winds with which they live. *Iwígá* reflects the total geomythic interconnectedness and integration of all life in the Sierra Madres. In a geomythic landscape the land is the source of memory. It stores the history and, therefore, the identity and values of the people that steward it.

The geomythic landscape of the Sierra Tarahumara becomes most clear when we look at how the people manage their land. The Rarámuri use of plants for healing and for food becomes a window through which to see their participation in the natural community. The origin stories and those of the plant relatives show how we are a part of a land onto which we were placed as stewards. We are also directly responsible for the health of the Creator who works hard each day to provide for the land and its inhabitants.

I once spent two nights sitting around the small fire of some Rarámuri cabin builders. After they felt that they had sufficiently drained me of information about the North, where I lived, the conversation turned to more mundane things, such as gossip about family members, who will dance in the next Yumari ceremony, and farming. I noticed that when these cabin builders, like other Rarámuri, spoke of the land, the religious and romantic overtones so prevalent in Western environmental conversation were absent.

To them, the land exists in the same manner as do our families, chickens, the river, and the sky. No hierarchy of privilege places one above or below another. Everything is woven into a managed, interconnected tapestry. Within this web there are particular ways that living things relate to one another. All individual life plays a role in the cycle. One elder told me that “it is the reason why people should collect plants in the same way that fish should breathe water, and birds eat seeds and bugs. These are things we are supposed to do.”

Rarámuri land management and resource use are harmonized with ecological ethics that positively affect the local environment. It is understood by the Rarámuri that cultural survival is directly linked to the biological survival of the Sierra. Over the centuries, the people developed methods of land use that adhered to this understanding. My grandmother, for example, told me once when collecting berries that only the berries from the mid-level of the bush should be taken so as to leave some for the smaller animals and some for the taller ones. Basket weavers often cut back weaving materials such as willow and yucca in order to promote new and straighter growth. This practice serves also to create microhabitats for smaller animals and birds.

Actions like the ones mentioned above have influenced the diversity of species at a morphophysiological, ecological, and even evolutionary level. In other words, while the culture of the Rarámuri has coevolved with the landscape of the Sierra Madres they have become a keystone species within the ecosystem. If the

Rarámuri were to be removed from the land or were to stop their kincentric practices the landscape and plant and animal life would change and most likely decrease in diversity. This is logical and easy to comprehend when it's understood that Rarámuri cultural priorities are also ecological and, therefore, hold the world together for the people as well as animals and plants.

There has been very little of the North American continent that was ever untouched by humans. Except for some of the loftiest peaks and hottest deserts, the land has been managed much like a garden. And in most places where people have sustainably lived with their place, the diversity of the place has been enhanced by the practices of the people. Rarámuri land management represents a tradition of conservation that relies on a reciprocal

Rituals and ceremonies, Rarámuri language, and even thought are influenced by the lands, animals, and winds with which they live.

relationship with nature, where the idea of iwígara becomes both an affirmation of caretaking responsibilities and an assurance of a sustainable, subsistence harvest. It is a realization that the Sierra Madres is a place of nurturing which is full of relatives with whom all breath is shared.

Cultural histories speak the language of the land. They mark the outlines of the human-land consciousness. Under my grandfather's fig tree I learned not only our cultural history but also practical and spiritual knowledge that has evolved over a vast stretch of time through our intimate relationship with a place.

Enrique Salmón is a cultural anthropologist, teacher, writer, and advocate of indigenous rights around the world. He is on the faculty of Center for Whole Communities and lives in northern California.

Sittin' with the Womenfolk: A Journey into the Lives and Leadership of Women of Color Environmental Justice Activists

Na'Taki Osborne Jelks

I realized long ago that women are the foundation of our learning. From the time I was a young girl, I have always valued sitting around the kitchen table with the womenfolk after dinner at family gatherings — learning about life, love, struggle, and the power of God from my mother, grandmother, aunts, older cousins, and female family friends.

As a young woman of color those lessons I learned while sitting with the womenfolk have given me direction and shaped my life as an activist and community builder working to achieve environmental justice and wholeness in my polluted neighborhood on the west side of Atlanta, Georgia. I carry those lessons with me every day, I hide their words in my heart, and I let their wisdom be my guide.

I am currently on a journey to learn and write about women of color environmental justice activists whose struggles to protect their homes and their families are lessons in the intersection of race, class, gender, and activism. These sister warriors have led the way for other women activists of color like me to follow. They are sources of strength and inspiration that propel us to challenge seemingly unbeatable political and economic forces and gather enough power to triumph

victoriously against great odds. I am particularly interested in the tools that they use to do their work, how they learn and have been “socialized,” their philosophies on leadership and vision for a just world, what and who inspires and sustains them, their imperative to raise up the next generation in the struggle, and what their definition of environment is. And by inference I'm interested in answering all those questions for myself.

This present journey is leading me to front porches, kitchen tables, living rooms, makeshift offices, churches, tenant association rooms in public housing projects, community centers, and rural settings as I interview women from across the country to learn from their struggles and triumphs. Their stories are constantly helping me to reflect on my place in the movement and are helping me to reinvent myself, my tactics, and my strategies for change every day. I plan to take these lessons learned

Many social movements have been sustained by nameless, faceless women who have received little or no recognition of their contributions, for their behind-the-scenes leadership, or for their sustaining force—for their power in causing the dusts of change to rise.

and pearls of wisdom shared to create a book that celebrates our work, our accomplishments, our undying spirits, our refusal to dismiss justice and righteousness as mere dreams, and our courage to lead and not wait on others to change our realities. By acknowledging the contributions of women of color activists to

grassroots environmental struggles despite societal barriers, I am attempting to “give them their flowers” of recognition and well-deserved honor while they are still here. Embarking upon this journey is allowing me to sit at the feet of these grassroots women to be taught, mentored, nurtured, and renewed.



According to environmental sociologist Dr. Dorceta E. Taylor, in the United States the intersection of race, class, and gender have had profound impacts on people’s environmental experiences, which in turn has had significant impacts on political development, ideology, and activism. Many social movements have been sustained by nameless, faceless women who have received little or no recognition of their contributions, for their behind-the-scenes leadership, or for their sustaining force — for their power in causing the dusts of change to rise.

The context of the environmental justice movement supports women of color in their roles as community leaders who protect home and families. According to Taylor, because women have the responsibility for raising the family, concerns related to housing and sanitation are paramount. In addressing these concerns, women of color have been beacons of guiding light — leading the way to better lives that are free of toxins and pollutants. Women of color carry the weight and bear the loads in grassroots environmental struggles. In my eyes, they are courageous “Davids” fighting evil “Goliaths.”

In Dr. Robert Bullard’s latest printed edition of the People of Color Environmental Groups Directory, over 50 percent of the leadership of the groups were women, and when major milestones have been reached in the environmental justice movement, women of color were there and have led the fights. They have many times been nameless, but through my work, I dare to speak their names. These women have played every role possible from the frontlines to the way-behind-the-scenes positions that never get public recognition. They have taken their struggles to town hall forums; public hearings; corporate shareholder meetings; statewide, regional, national, and even international stages. Rooted in resistance, they aren’t afraid to take on City Hall or keep “speaking truth to power” as their *modus operandi*.

Although I am including women of color from across the United States in my work, with support from the Center for Whole Communities, I am on the leg of my journey that is allowing me to focus on those whose stories have always given me strength and hope — African American women in the southeast United States.

Dr. Dorothy Irene Height, Chair and President Emerita of the National Council of Negro Women, is often heard affirming that “black women seldom do what they want to do, but they always do what they have to do,” and for the women I’ve been blessed to interview, the struggle for environmental and social justice is indeed an imperative. When asked why the womenfolk are always the ones on the frontlines for environmental and other social justice struggles, Cynthia Larramore, Executive Director of ACTION in Bell Glade, Florida, said that “these are the roles that black women have always played. For us, it’s not a phenomenon, it’s just the way it is.”

Na’Taki Osborne Jelks is a community activist and Chair of the Board of the West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, a community-based organization committed to ensuring environmental justice in southwest and northwest Atlanta’s African American neighborhoods. Na’Taki is also Manager for Community and Leadership Development Programs at the National Wildlife Federation in Atlanta, Georgia, and is a Senior Fellow with the Environmental Leadership Program. She is an alumna of our 2006 program.

Please direct any questions about this project or suggestions on women to profile to Na’Taki at nyosborne@yahoo.com.

Dialogue and the New Story

Daniel Martin

I am the rest between two notes
 Which are somehow always in discord
 Because death's note wants to climb over.
 But in the dark interval, reconciled,
 They stay there trembling and the song goes on, beautiful.
 R. M. Rilke

Dialogue, essentially, means “participation in the unfolding of meaning.” It is a creative interaction that allows — enables even — new insights and unexpected ideas to emerge from the encounter, the way new forms of life emerge throughout the universe, out of the interaction of things. When we say that a relationship or a team is more than the sum of its parts we are referring to dialogue.

Today, dialogue has lost this richer sense and is understood (or misunderstood) to mean simply talk of any kind. However, for many societies in the past, dialogue was regarded as a special form of exchange.

For the Greeks, the word *logos* referred to ultimate meaning. The early Christians, writing their gospels in Greek, used the word *logos* to define the creative word of God. What Christians call creation — the unfolding universe — is, from this perspective, a Dialogue: the ultimate Dialogue, whereby God, the Creator, infuses all things with life through his Logos — his self. Already, it is clear how Dialogue and Spirituality are intimately related.

In this context, all dialogue — all interaction, human and nonhuman — was understood to be a sacred act, a cocreative process with God.

Most early societies used dialogue as the means to define themselves. Indigenous peoples in North America sat in a “talking circle” to make important decisions about the tribe. In tribal society in general, the individual is defined by the group. In this sense, a person comes to know him- or herself through dialogue. When I lived in Kenya as a priest, from 1973 to 1984, I saw this kind of dialogue in action time and time again. A group — a parish council, perhaps — would come together for its quarterly meeting. I would have

talked with people beforehand and drawn up an agenda that would assume a certain sequence and a time frame: at least for me. However, the actual meeting would be something else. Instead of following the agenda in any way that resembled my previous experience in the West, these people would talk around and around things, like ever-widening circles of thought that appeared — to me — to be going nowhere. Still, when they had finished, they seemed to know exactly what to do and how.

Later, when I got to know the language better, I came to see that they had simply worked through the differences that underlay their various opinions or perspectives,

without simply refuting — as we might — or attempting to convince. Rather, they would hold these differences: allow them to hang out in the atmosphere, so to speak, until they had been well aired. Finally, when the differences had been explored in this way, they were able to see or hear what was being said — by them, as a group. It was as if they had floated ideas, like balloons, in the air above them, and these ideas had come together and merged — of their own accord — into one or two ideas that everyone could agree to, and everyone could own. Later, I came to see, they were

practicing the art of Dialogue honed and passed down for countless generations.

Throughout history, dialogue has actually taken many creative forms in order to achieve a variety of goals. The salons of the Renaissance brought dialogue to new levels of elegance. The Quakers used “silent dialogue” as a form of prayer. The 12-Step movement of sharing and support has proved effective as a way of recovery from addiction.

Today, the emphasis in many of our institutions is on collaboration and partnership as the most effective way of addressing complex



Dialogue uses the differences between things to create something new.

issues. Social commentator Daniel Yankelovich says that, as the world becomes increasingly complex and the potential for misunderstanding each other increases with this complexity, we will need something more than ordinary conversation if we are to live in harmony with each other. Writer and theologian Thomas Berry would add that this

harmony will have to include not only the human but also the natural world in what he calls “mutually enhancing human-earth relations” if we are to survive in the future.

Perhaps it is time now for a new conversation that is deliberate, intentional, and skillful, like these earlier forms, that will take place between individuals and among communities, across sectors, across gender, race, and creed, and even across species. I suggest we use the word *Dialogue* for this conversation, and that we capitalize it as a proper noun to emphasize the deliberateness implied and the skills that must be (re)learned.

David Bohm, an English scientist, brought his interest in the interaction of quantum particles to the way people interact. In conversational experiments with Indian philosopher Krishnamurti, Bohm concluded that it is possible to foster collective thinking — by which he meant, individuals thinking together without losing their individuality. The image of a flock of birds in flight, moving as one without destroying the autonomy of the individual birds, captures the idea. Dialogue uses the differences between things to create something new.

Dialogue is not simply discussion, which focuses on analysis, reduction, comparison, contrast, and conclusions based on already existing criteria. The word *discussion* has its roots in the phrase to *break apart*: in Latin, *dis-quaterere*. It is of course a very useful process for measuring and comparing and concluding. But Dialogue is about getting beyond differences to something new, the way the people in my African meetings did on a consistent basis.

Nor is Dialogue the same as debate, which comes from the Latin “to fight” (*battuere*). Debate, we might suggest, is appropriate in certain circumstances, but it tends to produce winners and losers with little new knowledge produced from the process. Dialogue offers a way in which every participant wins because every participant is creating the outcome.

The unfolding of meaning is never finished, because the process is infinite and truth is always a proleptic definition of reality. The dictionary defines *proleptic* as “a representation or assumption of a future act or development as if presently existing or accomplished.” Good Dialogue surfaces better and better expressions of truth, richer and richer forms of a reality, and produces deeper and deeper relationships in the process.

If we are to redesign our society to address the new challenges we face, the “new conversation” that Zeldin spoke of will be a form of therapeutic storytelling to lift the dark cloud of depression that hangs over our cultural head, and open our soul to a new world.

Dialogue consists of a combination of attitudes and skills that will allow this to happen: attitudes like a willingness to be influenced, and skills like the capacity to listen deeply. Underpinning both attitudes and skills, however, is intention. The intention in Dialogue is not to win or force a position but to work toward greater truth through deepened

understanding. Yankelovich speaks of three essential conditions that enable Dialogue to happen: these are *openness*, *empathy*, and *equality*. When these are in operation, Dialogue is happening.

We have all known this experience in various ways, whether on a good team or in a great exchange. We know when Dialogue is happening, for we feel enriched, even energized, by the encounter. By the same token we also know when it is not happening for we feel enervated, even abused, by the exchange.

Dialogue focuses on the underpinning and usually unconscious (tacit) assumptions that shape our thinking and behavior. To change a situation we need to change the thinking that created it. But in order to change *what* we think, we need to change *how* we think. Dialogue is about thinking together, thinking with others in order to come to shared understanding. When this occurs all sorts of things can happen: people see things in new ways; they relate to the world differently; they participate in the emergence of new insights that are owned by all the participants in the conversation.

The New Story

Dialogue has become a technology for organizational change management, but it is, more fundamentally, a way of relating to the world that has implications for human society at all levels.

Dialogue is the way life happens. It is the way the story of life is told. A story is something that has to be told if it is to be meaningful and effective in shaping things. Children know this and insist that we tell them a story before they go to sleep, before they can submit — commit — to the mysterious purposes of the universe in the dark hours of unconsciousness.

We use stories to get across a value, an insight, a way of doing things. The stories we tell our children describe a world of good and evil, remind them that the divine (the princess) sleeps in them, warn them to beware of wolves in sheep’s clothing, encourage them to be honest and brave in order to slay the dragon — the dark, fearful beast — that also lives in us all, and assures them that all will be well in the end.

Today we need a new story to tell our children that includes all of this wisdom but also expands it to address the new world that they will face. But, in spite of all the new information and knowledge we have acquired, we’re not there yet, by any means.

We still cling to the old stories even though they no longer serve, even though we no longer believe them. They still serve as the default when we run up against things. What kind of a God do you pray to when you're in a crisis? I know I find myself returning to childhood images of an elderly figure beyond the skies even though my mind has long since rejected such ideas. This is because I have not been able to fill the vacuum left by their departure. I can see now what Thomas Berry means when he says that we are in-between stories. It's not a good place to be.

Much more has to be done to draw out the implications of the Story. For this we will need what British social historian Theodore Zeldin calls "a new conversation." The New Story has to be told at every level. We need the poets and artists to capture its spirit and develop the mythical dimension. The various institutions will then redefine themselves accordingly, and we will implement their directives into our everyday lives. The religions will re-create their symbology, education will prepare our children for a different world, and so on.

For this to happen, we need multiple, cross-sectoral conversations — between unlikely allies — to draw out the meaning and application of the new framework. Why "unlikely allies"? Because, new life is born out of the tension of differences that are also attracted to each other — like opposite poles of a magnet: the greater the difference, the greater the energy generated, and the greater the potential for new life. Bringing together unlikely allies is not simply a political gesture, rather it is an essential strategy for the discovery of the new story.

Dialogue is a form of storytelling that allows a collective story, which is always a New Story, to emerge. Stories are the way we imagine who we want to be. Story is the form people have used from time immemorial for discovering how to live in new circumstances. If we can imagine something it becomes possible to create it. The loss of imagination is one of the signs of chronic depression: we cannot imagine, for example, that this dark cloud of depression had a beginning and will have an end. Sometimes a culture can be depressed: when we cannot imagine how things could be otherwise, when we have lost the energy of new possibilities. If we are to redesign our society to address the new challenges we face, the "new conversation" that Zeldin spoke of will be a form of therapeutic storytelling to lift the dark cloud of depression that hangs over our cultural head, and open our soul to a new world.

The disciplines of Dialogue release the individual and the collective imagination by making space for what wants to happen, for the story that *wants* to be told. Often when we are in conversation or at a serious meeting, we can feel as if there is something trying to find expression. Usually, however, the many blocks that hinder our hearing or even our being open to each other prevent this from happening. Dialogue frees the collective imagination to express itself in deeper and ever-new ways.

For many earlier peoples, Dialogue was a sacred act whereby human beings deliberately worked with life to create new forms. In fact, most indigenous peoples did not distinguish between the spiritual and the material as we tend to do. Many had no name for religion but instead saw their essential purpose as a dialogue with life. For them Dialogue was their Spirituality.

"My words are tied in one
With the great mountains,
With the great rocks,
With the great trees
In one with my body
And my heart."
— Yokuts Indian Prayer

Here, then, we are resurrecting an ancient awareness, an innate knowledge that has been lost, a victim of our struggle to integrate the consciousness that has caused us "to push out beyond what we each belong to for some empty freedom." A new — rediscovered — Dialogue offers us the opportunity to recover an ancient truth about living in the world: that we are cocreators; that life unfolds out of relationships; that we participate in the cosmic mystery. The art of Dialogue can offer us a spiritual practice to help us address the challenges that face us today in practical and relevant ways, with new skills and resources.

Danny Martin, a former Catholic priest, has for many years been studying Dialogue and using it to build community health and enhance the capacity of nonprofit organizations. This excerpt is from a larger work he is writing on the subject. He is an alumnus of our 2007 program and lives in New York.



Climate Change: The Opportunity for Land Conservation

Andrew Pitz, with contributions from Virginia Farley

How will climate change *change us*? Most likely, utterly, and in ways we cannot now conceive. The lands and places we love are evolving to something new, and so we must think about our roles as protectors and stewards in new, even transcendent terms. Yes, there will be a host of technical adaptations we will make, and those deserve our study, attention, and action, but this frightening time brings with it the spiritual possibility of a new relationship between humans and the earth, and among all the peoples of this world.

What do we know about climate change? That atmospheric carbon dioxide levels are 35 percent higher than at the beginning of the industrial age, in fact, far higher than any time in the past 650,000 years. We know that change began to visibly manifest itself in the 1970s, when air and sea temperature rise accelerated, when the number of severe storm events began to climb on every continent, when the Arctic ice cap began to shrink. We know we are at the root of this: our use of fossil fuels, the trappings of our wealth and inequalities, the many things we do every day to participate in the society in which we are enmeshed.

We begin to see the changes on the land also. In the West, the mountain snowpack is declining, the number and extent of wildfires increasing. Last winter Philadelphia basked in 70-degree January days. A month later, the relatively warm waters of Lake Ontario produced startling lake effect storms — 140 inches of snow in Redfield, New York, in one event. In Minnesota, temperature increases have been a driving force in the 94 percent decline in moose populations in the past two decades, according to moose researcher Dennis Murray of Trent University, Ontario. And of course there was Katrina, when we saw the intersection of storm and social injustice. We who work with the land know these effects are compounded by habitat fragmentation, sprawl, and the regular appearance of new invasive species. When we witness extreme weather events, we sense they are harbingers of worse to come. And so we begin to reinterpret our experience of the world.



Fear and grief come upon us at just the time when the larger world is looking to us for our knowledge and insight, what we have learned from our relationship with nature and the land.

But what to do? While there is much uncertainty, from a technical perspective, some things are clear. The forests of the United States sequester over 600 million metric tons of CO₂ every year, far more than any other terrestrial carbon sink. The protection and proper stewardship of forests is something we already do and must dramatically improve upon. Surprisingly, according to the US Department of Energy, the next biggest land use sink after forests are trees growing in urban and other settled areas. And like many good environmental solutions, this one comes with added benefits: trees in urban areas provide shade, reducing cooling costs and mitigating the urban heat island effect. Trees and other plants bring life to urban areas, improving the human experience.

In *The Botany of Desire*, Michael Pollan compares the highly organic, “dark brown and crumbly” soil of an Idaho organic farmer to the “lifeless gray powder” of the conventional potato field. In agriculture, cannot land trusts point the way to new agricultural “best climate practices”? By practicing and promoting the use of no-till, composting, manuring, cover crops, rotation and similar practices, we can recarbonize our nation’s agricultural soils.

In Pennsylvania it is estimated that use of these techniques could sequester an additional 11 million metric tons of CO₂ per year by the year 2025. Again, this action would bring multiple benefits: less need for fertilizer, less pollution, and less erosion.

More benefits would accrue from healthy, locally grown food on these same farms: reduced transportation costs and attendant energy use, fresher and more nutritious produce, and the sense of community that comes from knowing where your food is grown. It may be that the most important action we could take is to bolster the connections among food, place, and community and thereby lay the seeds of relationships that will sustain us in the years ahead.

Our organizations can be centers of our communities: educating our members and leaders about climate change, demonstrating the use of renewable energy, testing new approaches, spreading knowledge, and becoming community focal points — shelters



from the storms. We have experience with this kind of leadership. And we can make decisions about the kinds of lands we conserve, how we manage them, and how to help build sustainable communities.

These are some of the ways we can take concrete action, and we should. But we need to take care not to treat this solely as a scientific problem to be solved with only a suite of technical fixes.

There is another part of this story. Many scientists say we have five to ten years to change course, to significantly alter our trajectory. That may be overly optimistic. Scientists are bound by the rules of science and peer review, necessarily conservative, and reluctant to make predictions. But James Hanson of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies has written that this conservatism is not appropriate to the scale of crisis we face and that we must make "almost immediate changes to get energy and greenhouse gas emissions onto a fundamentally different path." It's hard to believe that will happen, and so we must think about what delay will bring. Those who know the land and are attuned to nature are familiar with its fragility, the toll already taken by invasives, by overuse, by fragmentation, by bad decisions. Many fear what may be coming. Some of us are already grieving.

Part of our new experience is that people we know come to us and ask, "Is this real? What can we do? How bad will it be?" Fear and grief come upon us at just the time when the larger world is looking to us for our knowledge and insight, what we have learned from our relationship with nature and the land. So, in our uncertainty, we have to find a way to give others hope and help them take action, even as we struggle to find our own way forward.

If there's a response to this dilemma, it may come in the form of a broader type of community, in new relationships, in new roles for those who work with the land. Perhaps we must start to see ourselves as midwives for an emerging global consciousness, no longer working to protect and conserve that which exists but to nurture and foster that which may be coming. Earth has been through many climatic shifts; it is human society that is most vulnerable now.

In his new book, *Blessed Unrest*, Paul Hawken describes the emergence of a global "movement with no name" of millions of grassroots organization working for social and economic justice, the environment, and the preservation of indigenous cultures. Hawken believes this phenomenon is something fundamentally new and may provide clues for responding to the problems we face. Finding those responses will require us to put aside our narrow agendas and missions, to live with great uncertainty, and in a truly connected manner, to find a new way for humans to be *here*, on this planet.

Andrew Pitz is Vice President of Strategic Policy & Planning at Natural Lands Trust in Pennsylvania. A trainer in former Vice President Gore's Climate Project, Andy is focusing his climate activities on the land conservation sector in order to foster the development of a land trust response to climate change.

Virginia Farley is a career conservationist who served as regional director at the Vermont Land Trust for over 20 years. She facilitates dialogue on topics such as conservation leadership, climate change, and sense of place for nonprofits, government agencies, and colleges.

Envisioning a New Land Trust: A Conversation with Bill Leahy

Bill Leahy is the Executive Director of California's Big Sur Land Trust. A 2006 alumnus of our Whole Thinking Retreat program, he invited Center for Whole Communities to California to lead members of his board and staff as well as community partners through a Vision and Values (now Whole Thinking) workshop. Bill is also on the board of the California Council of Land Trusts and an active member of the Urban Land Institute. Flo Miller interviewed him in July 2007.

What does the Big Sur Land Trust do?

Historically/traditionally the Big Sur Land Trust has operated like most land trusts, in that we acquire land for straightforward conservation reasons. Historically for the Big Sur Land Trust this has largely meant conserving the scenic character and the natural resources of the Big Sur coast. We are finding these reasons for conserving land to be somewhat limiting. That has shifted our thinking in the past few years as we look to a more expanded role for the organization, both geographically as well as in terms of the public benefits we provide and how we provide them. The visioning process that we went through with Center for Whole Communities last fall really reaffirmed our belief that we need to change to be more effective in the future.

Our mission is to conserve the significant lands and waters of California's central coast for all generations. The idea of serving the central coast suggests a much broader geography than we have historically been attached to, so that's where we're headed. And as I said before, what we've done historically has been what most land trusts do, with three traditional pillars: land acquisition, stewardship, and community outreach/education. I would argue that we have done all three with mixed results. Sometimes we've done it quite well, sometimes not well at all. We've done a lot of thinking about what those three lines of business represent to us: Are they the only thing we should be doing? And are we doing them adequately?

You alluded to a visioning process that you've recently been through. What was it like and where has it led?

It reaffirmed our belief that we needed to change to be more effective. The process itself — spending the time working on visioning, hearing from the community and each other — allowed us to escape our day-to-day attachments of getting projects done and really look at the issues that are affecting our business, our industry, both in the short-term and the long-term, and to examine how our work and the work of others are really two sides of the same coin. It brought to light some opportunities that we may be missing as we've gone about our work in the traditional manner in which we've been doing it.

It has also raised a lot of new questions about who we are and what we aspire to be. Some of those questions are hard to get our hands on right now, and some of them are easier to grapple with. That's led us into a strategic planning process that we're just beginning. We'll take what we learned at the [Whole Thinking] workshop conducted by Center for Whole Communities and start to move forward. That planning process will be just as inclusive as the workshop, if not more so, in terms of community members [the workshop brought together the organization's board, staff members, and seven community members representing various sectors — agriculture, affordable housing, local leadership, and business].

What are some of those questions you referred to — about what the Big Sur Land Trust is and what it could be?

Well, until we dig into the specifics, our questions are very general and somewhat ephemeral. For example, we have adopted eight new values, and one of those values is related to fairness and how we engage people in the community who have been ignored or not served by the conservation movement. We've had some engagement with the leadership of the Latino community (which is obviously by no means monolithic itself) — in fact we received an invitation from that leadership, who have very clear objectives for their community. They feel that if we're going to ever be able to collaborate with them in the future, we need to get behind some of their issues that are important to them, that they feel the communities of the Monterey Peninsula (which we are perceived to be most closely associated with) have ignored. For example, land-use policies that would support more affordable housing for the agricultural workforce of this area. This and related issues are on the surface oblique to our mission, and perhaps even seemingly counter to our mission in terms of land conservation, so the challenge may not be so much agreeing that we need to collaborate, but getting our organization, which has historically focused on presumably nonconfrontational, apolitical land protection approaches, to get involved in what are potentially divisive, political conversations. And if you move out of your comfort zone and into an arena you haven't historically been in,



there will be people who will come out of the woodwork and be quick to criticize you. This is one of the biggest obstacles we face: the perceived risk of moving out of your comfort zone and into an arena you haven't typically worked in and trying to communicate to your supporters why it's essential to do that. And to be able to articulate how it's moving us toward success with respect to our mission and vision.

If we're going to expand our notion of who we are, whatever way we want to expand that, it will require us to move into some areas that we have typically been uncomfortable in. Until we spend more time sitting down and having conversations with people, it will be difficult to see what our role is in that context.

What do you consider to be the most exciting part of your work at the moment?

That's easy: for me it's knowing that we have a vision and projects that we know others find extremely meaningful and cause them to get involved in our work. That our work is very healing, especially in a very divided community. As our work begins to play out, we're actually seeing others join with us in a very positive and healing way. That's very powerful. I get very excited about it. We imagined creating a very open organization, and the community is beginning to respond to that. They've been cautious, but we've seen more and more people beginning to step up and acknowledge the changes they've seen here and get excited about what we do.

What motivates you most?

I got into land conservation because I needed to do something that really mattered to the future of human beings on the planet, and that still motivates me. I like working in nonprofits and land conservation nonprofits in particular. Because it's a place where we can try new things, experiment, take risks; we have given ourselves permission to bring people together who perhaps would never have an opportunity to come together to work on projects or ideas that will hopefully, in the end, reverse some of the destructive behaviors that communities and humans find themselves in today.

What is one of the biggest obstacles you face in your work, and what methods have you devised to overcome it, if any?

I spoke before to an organizational obstacle, but there are also personal obstacles, which, by the way, Center for Whole Communities, in my experience at Knoll Farm, helped me deal with in some ways. One of them is just my personality — I lack patience. In our line of work we're exposed to so much that is troubling, and it feels like the loss of natural habitat and cultures and languages is so inexorably fast that I become quite anxious — as I suppose a lot of people in this business do. It leads me to want to see things happen more quickly. I have learned, and need to continue to learn, that one has to take time, make time for people to come to their own conclusions and move into a dialogue about change and ideas in their own time frame. If there's a leadership skill that this job requires, it's finding that sweet spot between keeping the wind in the sails and letting the sails out and finding the right pace for moving forward. That's been a personal challenge of mine.

An obstacle to our movement as a whole and one that I've been working on, and the Center has been really wonderful in helping me view it, is that a lot of us in the land trust movement, especially people like me, come from a fairly wealthy middle-class background. Being from a privileged white background, land conservation has often felt like a comfortable place where someone like me could contribute to the planet while others could worry about issues like social justice and poverty. But I and others in our work are realizing that by not acknowledging those things we're

"The whole communities retreat empowered me to stop and really think about how I do the work I do and what I believe in. It reminded me why I got involved in conservation, and the importance of sharing that passion with my community. I imagined a world that functioned differently, without the social constructs that are in place today, a world that focuses more on our similarities rather than our differences. It encouraged me to think more broadly about partners for my work in the community."

—Mark Scallion, Director, Pickering Creek Audubon Center

not going to be able to move a broader agenda forward, and we have got to move out of our comfort zone. It's really hard, when you talk about the boards and staff and members and donors of these land trusts: how do we move people to recognize that we have a responsibility to look at our work through the eyes of the people we've not served? That's a big challenge.

Who are your teachers, the people that most influence you and your work?

Everyone is my teacher. I'm not saying that flippantly, either. I've really had so many, there's not really any one that just pops out. Of course, my family, my wife and daughter, teach me to have fun and take things a bit less seriously each day. My parents really taught me generosity and humility and honesty. Those are my most significant teachers in life. In my work, I've had the benefit of working with some of the smartest, most dedicated and passionate people, including Peter Forbes. In commercial real estate, my first boss was an extraordinarily generous man, he made himself president and CEO of a very successful real estate outfit after growing up in poverty on the Texas/Mexico border. He was such a warm, generous man. When I first started at The Nature Conservancy, my bosses were really great thinkers, great mentors. Here at the land trust, I have really terrific staff who teach me something every day. That's a great benefit of working in this field; there are so many great people, all of whom have something to teach.

Are there any organizations or coalitions out there that you think are shining examples of "whole thinking" in practice?

I'll speak to one that I've most recently come into connection with through work: we're working right now with the Boys & Girls Club of Monterey County to develop a ranch to which they can bring the thousands of kids of Monterey County whom they serve, most of them from families where both parents are in the hospitality or agricultural workforce. This will give them outdoor experiences, exposure to sustainable agriculture, art, writing, journaling in an outdoor environment. They're going to be working in a historic complex of farm buildings restored in a green, sustainable manner. When we talk to them [the Boys & Girls Club] about where we want to go and our experience with Center for Whole Communities, they are 100 percent there and get it.

We've been in early conversations with the Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (ALBA), an outfit doing cutting-edge work in terms of recognizing the need to develop local farms and agriculture-related business, providing training programs to workers and moving them into owning their own farms. They're

working with the Spanish-speaking community; they're really forward-thinking and a group that we would like to partner with more intentionally in the future.

And a third that comes to mind is the Big Sur Arts Initiative. We collaborated with them last year on a pilot artist-in-residence program where they bring in a top-notch artist from outside the area and house them in the community. As part of the deal, that artist gets together sometimes with other artists from this community to share their experiences. A recent artist in residence was stationed at one of our land trust preserves, where we have a wonderful studio. They gain a deeper appreciation for land conservation in Big Sur and carry that message out to the community. In Big Sur, arts, and the whole relationship between arts and the land is one thing we want to explore more intentionally. They've already gone down the path of recognizing they need to expose more children to arts, and it's an exciting way to develop more connections between our land conservation work and the communities in Big Sur.

What gives you hope?

Seeing so many people yearning for something, some way of living that's more real and more associated with local foods, education for children — we're really active in our daughter's Waldorf school, and seeing so many parents committed to seeing their kids have an education with authentic experience rather than drawing on computer and TV — there's a powerful sense that people want a different way of living, one that's less violent to the planet. I suppose mainstream television would suggest I'm delusional, which is perhaps why my family doesn't watch TV. If you can peel yourself away from media and the zeitgeist, I'm really seeing a very powerful movement. Paul Hawken's new book [*Blessed Unrest: How the Largest Movement in the World Came into Being and Why No One Saw It Coming*] speaks to this to some degree and I think it's true. There are so many of us out with our heads down, grinding away; we need to remind ourselves that there are a lot of us out there. I think that's a great role of the Center — not only does it allow us to speak to each other, it's just wonderfully cathartic to see so many people working on these issues. Not only the diversity of cultures who come together there, but the diversity of work, all of it good.

What advice would you give to others doing whole communities work?

Be patient! Read a lot. Play music. Dance. Find new friends. Stay in touch with one another. We have a lot to offer each other. And don't get down. It's a powerful new story that's emerging. Don't underestimate its power.

NATIONAL PROGRAMS REPORT

Whole Measures

This year's Land Trust Alliance Rally in Denver saw over 2,000 conservation leaders earnestly clutching the Center for Whole Communities' **Whole Measures** package, intently watching the new DVD at our exhibit booth, and eagerly flipping through the guidebook. Featured in a set of workshops and presentations by our staff and partners, the LTA conference became a "coming out party" for our innovative guide.



Whole Measures is a one-of-a-kind evaluation tool and planning guide. A values-based, community-oriented tool, Whole Measures helps organizations rethink the role that they play in fostering healthy, whole communities. Whole Measures helps organizations express a clear set of big picture values that link environmental and social goals and invites users into a conversation about vision, values, and practice. It clarifies for institutions where they are successful and where they are

having unintended consequences. It helps the movement to see the connections between cities and wilderness, between biological and cultural diversity, and between healthy land and healthy people.

Just released this fall and produced by Tamarack Media and Design for Social Impact, our new DVD presents a comprehensive introduction to Whole Measures and captures stories of "best Whole Measures practices" from the many organizations already using it. The package also includes a printed guide that includes the background and rationale for Whole Measures, and presents a step-by-step manual on applying the concepts to a variety of projects and goals.

Thanks to funding from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Surdna Foundation, Kendeda Fund, and Educational Foundation of America, we are able to offer the Whole Measures guide, DVD, and interactive web platform free of charge.

To order the free Whole Measures DVD and guide, send an email to wholemeasures@wholecommunities.org. You may also download a PDF version of the guide and try out the interactive demo at www.wholemeasures.org.

Whole Thinking Workshops

As part of our Whole Thinking program, these two-and-a-half day workshops held at locations around the country, year-round, help land conservationists transform the scope and effectiveness of their work by realigning practice with vision and values. More than 150 executive directors, board members, and senior staff of land conservation groups have participated in the workshops, engaging with the questions:

- *How can we expand our bases of support in a changing world?*
- *How can we be more effective public leaders?*
- *How can we communicate more effectively with larger segments of the population?*

Participants are also introduced to **Whole Measures**, our new evaluation and planning tool that is transforming conservation success in America (see left).

Over the past year, we have conducted workshops for groups around the country in their own communities, including Big Sur Land Trust; Trustees of Reservations, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and Maine Coast Heritage Trust; D&R Greenway Land Trust and New Jersey Historic Preservation; Bay Area Open Space Council and affiliated Green Vision Group; and Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District.

"The workshop was excellent — beyond expectations! . . . Tying our work to needed social change and how to go about contributing to that change — these are the components of big change. You framed the discussion and provided the big picture that was necessary."

—Mark Ackelson, President,
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

For more information about our Whole Thinking program, contact Flo Miller at flo@wholecommunities.org.

"There was a universal sense of WOW from all who attended, giving me comfort that we are on the right road . . . Thanks for including us and for all you're doing to enrich our movement and our lives."

—Jay Espy, President, Maine Coast Heritage Trust

Whole Communities Fund: Alumni Small Grants Program

This year, we were very happy indeed to be able to support the work of five of our alumni through our small grants program: George Gay (Northern Forest Alliance), Dana Hudson (Vermont Food Education Every Day), Na’Taki Osborne (National Wildlife Federation), Kavitha Rao (Common Fire Foundation), and Miguel Santistevan (New Mexico Acequia Association).

Thanks to continued support from the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation and the Johnson Family Foundation, we will be offering five to ten additional \$1,000 grants this year to alumni doing whole communities work. Please apply by sending a short email to Flo Miller (see below) describing a project that demonstrates whole thinking. We are particularly looking for evidence that a grant of this size will make a tangible difference to the success of the project, so please be clear on how you plan to spend the money.

For information on the projects supported by the 2007 grants, please visit: www.wholecommunities.org/alumni_blog/?p=33
Application deadline: Friday, February 15, 2008
Apply to: flo@wholecommunities.org
Grants awarded: Monday, March 3, 2008

Publishing Program

As our work at Center for Whole Communities matures, we are asked repeatedly for published materials that articulate the teachings and stories of those who make up our growing community of leaders, thinkers and grassroots activists. And now we are beginning to serve those requests as we launch our publishing program in earnest. We aim to publish books that are powerful, motivating, inspiring and practical tools to strengthen and broaden the practice of land conservation in this country and make it more responsive to the pressing social and ecological issues of the day.

This fall, we announce the second book under our own imprint: *Entering the Land: A History of Knoll Farm* (see inside back cover for more details), following *What is a Whole Community?* In the works include titles on dialogue, story, and a book describing our chefs’ local food philosophy and recipes. All of our titles will be distributed to bookstores nationwide.

We have raised \$32,000 and are still raising seed money toward our goal of \$50,000 to underpin this program; we really hope you will be inspired to join this effort with a donation or a book order. To learn more about how you can be a supporter or contributor to our publishing program, please contact Helen Whybrow (helen@wholecommunities.org).



“The Whole Thinking Retreat provides an extraordinary opportunity to grow and learn as a person, to develop qualities and strengthen leadership abilities, and to consider with new insights your professional responsibility and life path.”

*—Janet Coit, State Director,
The Nature Conservancy—Rhode Island*

2007 Retreat Alumni and Faculty

This summer we welcomed several new faculty members: Adrienne Maree Brown, Roberto Chene, Anushka Fernandopulle, Carolyn Finney, and Toby Herzlich. In addition, we brought nearly 150 new fellows to Knoll Farm to participate in six Whole Thinking Retreats, mission retreats for The Nature Conservancy and the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, a Next Generation Leadership Retreat, and a leadership forum for our own Mad River Valley. These fellows came from across the country and from many different disciplines, perspectives, and backgrounds. It is with great gratitude and a sense of honor that we list the names of these people who came with their trust and willingness to share struggle, insight, truth-telling, and friendship.

Our 2007 Fellows

The Rev. Mary Abele, All Souls Interfaith Gathering, VT
 Mark Ackelson, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, IA
 Celana Ahtye, Art in Action, CA
 Eric Allen, Columbia Land Trust, OR
 Craig Anderson, Land Partners Through Stewardship, CA
 Ms. Carol K. Andrews, NH Association of Conservation Commissions, NH
 Laurie Andrews, Jackson Hole Land Trust, WY
 Jane Arbuckle, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, ME
 Rodney Bartgis, The Nature Conservancy, WV
 Andrew Kang Bartlett, Presbyterian Hunger Program, KY
 Susan Bartlett, Vermont State Senate, VT
 Sandy Batty, ANJEC, NJ
 Bob Bendick, The Nature Conservancy, FL
 Lauren Bornfriend, Philadelphia Parks Alliance, PA
 Barbara Brummer, The Nature Conservancy, NJ
 Lillian Buie, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, MD
 Margo Burnham, The Nature Conservancy, MD
 Daryl Burntett, The Nature Conservancy, NH

Michele Byers, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, NJ
 William Capps, Bay Area Open Space Council, CA
 Helen V. Chin, NY
 Joanne Chu, Spelman College, GA
 Janet Coit, The Nature Conservancy, RI
 Beverly Colston, University of Vermont, VT
 Vanessa Compton, CO
 Ed Connelly, New Ecology Inc., MA
 Susan Connolly, Maine Coast Heritage Trust, ME
 Jeff Cook, MA
 John Cook, The Nature Conservancy, RI
 Bill Corcoran, Sierra Club, CA
 Tera Couchman, Janus Youth Programs/Village Gardens, OR
 Thomas G. Dallesio, Leadership New Jersey, NJ
 Frank Davis, Hill Country Conservancy, TX
 Joanna Devers, Big Sur Land Trust, CA
 Tim Dillingham, American Littoral Society, NJ
 Donna Drewes, Municipal Land Use Center at TCNJ, NJ
 Marilee Eckert, Marin Conservation Corps, CA
 Darcel Eddins, Bountiful Cities Project, NC
 Kristina Egan, Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, MA

Elizabeth Ehrenfeld, Maine BEP/AMC, ME
 Bob Ferris, Yestermorrow Design School, VT
 Tom Fry, The Wilderness Society, CO
 Vanessa Crossgrove Fry, Citizens for Smart Growth, ID
 Nancy Gabriel, Sustainability Institute, VT
 Alixa Garcia, Climbing PoeTree, NY
 Alan Girard Jr, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, MD
 Claudette Grant, Albemarle County Planning, VA
 Lise Hanners, The Nature Conservancy, CT
 Karen Hatcher, Celebrate NJ!, Inc., NJ
 HawaH, One Common Unity, DC
 Rebekah Helzel, Advocates for Real Community Housing, ID
 Monica Hinojos, Barjolu Foundation, MA
 Charles Hosford, VT
 Phil Huffman, VT
 Emily Hunter, Symphony in the Flint Hills, Inc, KS
 Becky Hatfield Hyde, Yainix Parntership, Yainix Ranch, Country Natural Beef, OR
 Bob Hyman, Evergreen Cove Holistic Learning Center, MD
 EB James, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, MD
 Roger Jones, The Nature Conservancy, DE
 Suzanne Jones, The Wilderness Society, CO
 Anupama Joshi, UEPI Occidental College, CA
 Tara Kelly, Rutland Regional Planning Commission, VT
 Andrew Kendall, The Trustees of Reservations, MA
 Illai Kenney, Georgia Kids Against Pollution, GA
 Dale Kent, NV
 Melissa Kent, NV
 Sarah Khan, WI
 Robert Klein, The Nature Conservancy, VT
 Wayne Klockner, The Nature Conservancy, MA
 Bill Kunze, The Nature Conservancy, PA
 Mike LaMair, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, IA
 Drew Lanham, Clemson University, SC
 Julie Lawrence, Bronx Land Trust, NY
 Michael Lipford, The Nature Conservancy, VA
 Khiet Luong, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, PA
 Stuart MacNaught, Aquidneck Land Trust, RI





Neil Markowitz, Environmental Education Exchange, AZ
 Daniel Martin, Cross River Connexions, NY
 Cesar Maxit, Revolution Design, DC
 Julie Mayfield, Georgia Conservancy, GA
 Megan McWilliams, Relevant Times, NJ
 Sheryl Mebane, UC Berkeley, CA
 Brett Melone, ALBA, CA
 Laura Mercier, Tri-Valley Conservancy, CA
 Jim Merkel, Dartmouth College, NH
 Donna Meyers, Big Sur Land Trust, CA
 Roger Milliken Jr., Baskahegan Company, ME
 Della Moran, Growing Home, Inc, IL
 Daneen Morris, Camden Greenways, NJ
 Amy Owsley, Land Trust Alliance, ME
 Erica Packard, Manhattan Land Trust, NY
 Sabrina Parra-Garcia, Appalachian Mountain Club, RI
 Christ Pearson, CA
 Leah Penniman, Harriet Tubman Free School, NY
 Naima Penniman, Climbing PoeTree, NY
 Kristin Peppel, Asheville Building Convergence, NC
 Jennifer Pereira, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council, RI
 Alyx Perry, Southern Forests Network, NC
 Sayra Pinto, Mount Wachusett Community College, MA
 Morgan Powell, NY
 Dave Queeley, Trust for Public Land, MA
 Sudeep Rao, Literacy for Environmental Justice, CA
 Anya Raskin, Bard College, NY
 Adonia Ripple, Jackson Hole Land Trust, WY
 Anne Roane, Planning & Zoning Dept., City of Cambridge, MD

Kimberly Roberts, Environmental Leadership Program, DC
 Maryam Roberts, Art in Action/Women of Color Resource Center, CA
 Andy Robinson, VT
 Nia Robinson, Environmental Justice Climate Change Initiative, CA
 Chuck Roe, Land Trust Alliance Southeast, NC
 Euneika Rogers, Green Lady Media, GA
 Siddhartha Sanchez, Office of Congressman Jose Serrano, NY
 Mark Scallion, Pickering Creek Audubon Center, MD
 Richard Shank, The Nature Conservancy, OH
 Jennifer Sims, Columbia Land Trust, WA
 Ina Smith, VT
 Mistinguette Smith, MA
 Julia Somers, NJ Highlands Coalition, NJ
 Aline Soundy, Community to Community Development, WA
 Blake Spalding, Hell's Backbone Grill, UT
 Alan Spears, National Parks Conservation Association, DC
 Eric Stiles, New Jersey Audubon Society, NJ
 Mike Strigel, Gathering Waters Conservancy, WI
 Dijit Taylor, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, NH
 Henry Tepper, The Nature Conservancy, NY
 Mike Tetreault, The Nature Conservancy, ME
 Charlie Tipper, VT
 Miguel Vasquez, Northern Arizona University, AZ
 Lydia Villanueva, Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group, TX
 Juandiego Wade, Albermarle County Planning, VA
 Cy Wagoner, The Ruckus Society, AZ
 Nate Wallace-Gusakov, Full Belly Farm, VT



Jim Waltman, Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association, NJ
 Corita Waters, National Park Service, MD
 Ilana Weaver, Detroit Summer, MI
 Lana Weeks, Big Sur Land Trust, CA
 Nathan Welch, Wood River Land Trust, ID
 Thomas B. Williams, Cornell Cooperative Extension Suffolk County, NY
 Dahvi Wilson, ID
 Akaya Windwood, Rockwood Leadership Program, CA
 Ethan Winter, Land Trust Alliance, NY
 Jora Young, The Nature Conservancy, FL
 Tracy Zschau, Vermont Land Trust, VT

Our 2007 Faculty

Adrian Ayson, Center for Whole Communities, VT
 Adrienne Maree Brown, The Ruckus Society, CA
 Roberto Chene, NM
 Johari Cole, Iyabo Farms/Multi-Talent Resource Center, IL
 Anushka Fernandopulle, CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, CA
 Carolyn Finney, UC-Berkeley, CA
 Peter Forbes, Center for Whole Communities, VT
 Steve Glazer, Vital Communities, VT
 Toby Lynn Herzlich, NM
 Wendy Johnson, San Francisco Zen Center, CA
 Cynthia Jurs, Open Way Sangha, NM
 Stephanie Kaza, University of Vermont, VT
 Matthew Kolan, University of Vermont, VT
 Melissa Nelson, The Cultural Conservancy, CA
 Kavitha Rao, Common Fire Foundation, NY
 Enrique Salmon, CA
 Scott Russell Sanders, University of Indiana, IN
 Santikaro, Liberation Park, WI
 Deborah Schoenbaum, Marin Conservation Corps, CA
 Kaylynn Sullivan TwoTrees, CA
 Jesse Maceo Vega-Frey, stone circles, MA
 Tom Wessels, Antioch New England Graduate School, VT
 Helen Whybrow, Center for Whole Communities, VT

2007 Financial Report

It was a year of remarkable growth and activity. In our last fiscal year (April 2006–March 2007), the generous support of foundations and individuals allowed us to significantly expand our core programs of Whole Thinking retreats and workshops, and the Whole Measures evaluation and planning tool. Grants from foundations exceeded \$710,000 (\$189,000 of which was designated for this year's programming). We are particularly touched that contributions from individuals grew to \$176,000 from the previous year's \$143,000 — a 23% increase. Because of the extraordinary generosity of supporters, we were able to create a "Program Service Fund" that will fund new initiatives and programs and also function as a program reserve fund.

Support from individuals has been essential in this growth at Center for Whole Communities. This year, the Kendeda Fund has provided a special incentive for donors. In honor of our groundbreaking work, the Kendeda Fund will match every new and increased donation, dollar for dollar. With every new dollar being doubled, please give today to join in this extraordinary opportunity to help us build and share the dream.

Statement of Activities

Center for Whole Communities

Fiscal Year 2007: April 2006 through March 2007

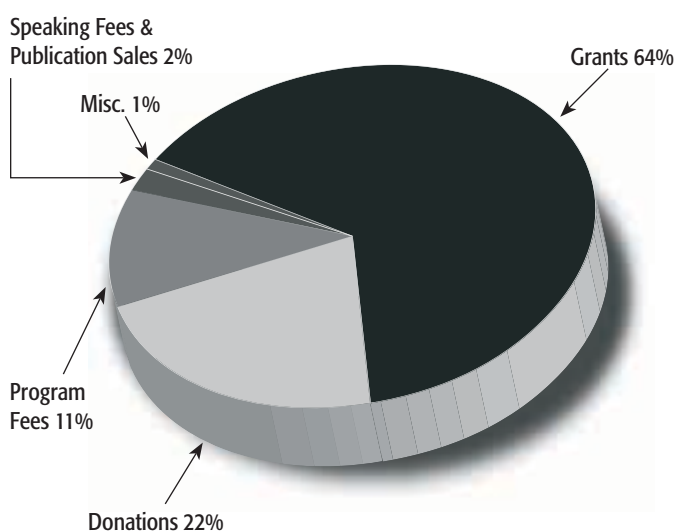
INCOME

Donations	\$ 175,933	22%
Grants for Fiscal Year '07 Programs	\$ 521,351	64%
Program Fees (retreats, workshops, Knoll Farm events)	\$ 93,717	11%
Speaking Fees and Publication Sales	\$ 16,378	2%
Miscellaneous income	\$ 7,865	1%
Total Income	\$ 815,245	100%

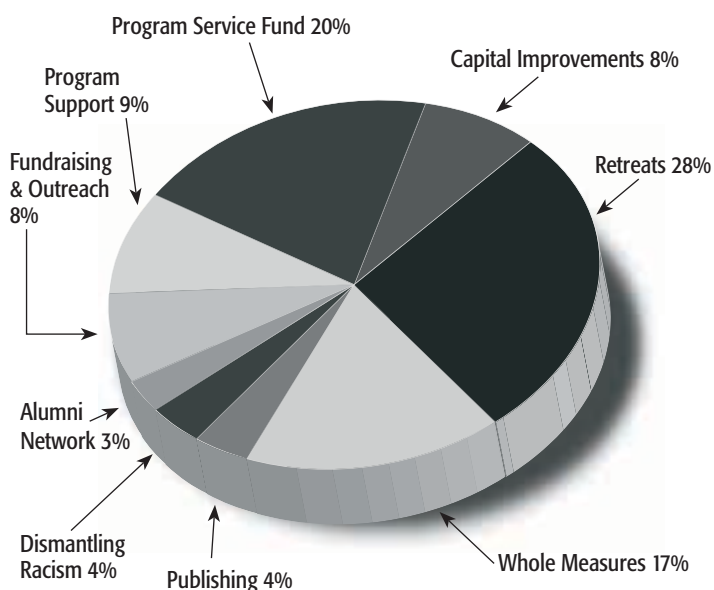
EXPENSES

Retreats, Workshops, Knoll Farm Events	\$ 225,020	28%
Whole Measures	\$ 134,707	17%
Publishing	\$ 30,024	4%
Dismantling Racism	\$ 32,451	4%
Alumni Network	\$ 22,276	3%
Fundraising and Outreach	\$ 68,328	8%
Program Support	\$ 71,628	9%
Program Service Fund	\$ 160,000	20%
Capital Improvements	\$ 67,532	8%
	\$ 811,966	100%

2007 Sources of Funds



2007 Uses of Funds



Honoring Our Supporters

Our deepest gratitude goes out to all those who have generously supported Center for Whole Communities since its creation in 2003. Each year, gifts ranging in size from \$10 to \$100,000 support the work of the Center, each one a vital part of our ability to deliver our programs.

We also take this opportunity to extend our sincere appreciation to donors who requested anonymity. We took great care to make this report as accurate as possible. We apologize if anyone is mistakenly omitted or incorrectly listed.

All donors are listed at their cumulative levels, from 2003 through July 2007.

\$5000 and above

Anonymous donors (3)
Michael Baldwin
Robert S. Bowers
Peter Stein and Lisa Cashdan
Ann B. Day
Nathan Wilson and Megan Gadd
Tom Johnson
Roger Milliken Jr.
Ruth and Scott Russell Sanders
Peter Forbes and Helen Whybrow
Peter Whybrow
Julia and Nigel Widdowson

\$1,000 to \$4,999

Anonymous
Susan Atwood-Stone
Bos Dewey and Liz Barratt-Brown
Janet Prince and Peter Bergh
Diane Bernbaum
John Bernstein
Kathy Blaha
Scott Boettger
Alan Brooks
Sonnihild Chamberland
Dwight Asset Management Company
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