

*A fighting chance for planet and people*



NCP is present in some of the most environmentally challenged areas of the world. In the Amazon, fire and drought, illegal logging, ranching and mining threaten this critical ecosystem. Up in the Arctic, our native friends have climate change breathing down their necks as the tree line marches northward, permafrost thaws and animal migrations go awry. In parts of Africa and the Himalaya, reliable monsoons have become uncertain, threatening water and food supplies. Palm oil invades bio-hotspot Borneo. With your support, we're doing what we can to offer help – whether lending expertise, planting mangroves in Borneo and trees everywhere (as in Sindhupalchok, Nepal), supporting native communities – whatever it takes to give nature and neighbor a fighting chance. Together, we can make a difference! \$10 plants 100/50/5 trees in Myanmar/South Sudan/Borneo.

**Give...till it helps...**

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### Backyard Fence – conversations about the new community

#### Voices from native leaders heard on 2024 Learning Tours

**Charlie Swaney, Gwich'in from Arctic Village:** *"Some people think we are poor. But we are rich. We have this land and we can gather our own food and don't have to pay the high prices at the local store. But there are strange things happening up here now. See that pond? There haven't been any muskrat there this summer! The caribou migrated by here last fall and lots of the cows didn't have calves. Why?! We're not seeing sandpipers or other birds like we used to. There are kinds of fish we've never had in this river. Wolverines and porcupines are scarce due to the wildfires. The lakes are shrinking because of permafrost melt and tree growth. So many changes!"*

**Delio, Siona shaman, Ecuador:** *"The oil companies are contaminating our waters – and they're contaminating us. Tell people where you live: 'Don't pollute the world – save the world!'"*

**Miguel, Secopai shaman, Ecuador:** *"We feel like we are in a cage, seeing the colonization, roads, and palm oil plantations all around us. Before, we felt free in the jungle."*

**Greg Scott, Han community, Alaska** (we met him in Denali National Park): *"There are 280 of our people left, and only two elderly fluent native language speakers. I'm working hard to learn as much as I can from them, because I want to pass our language and culture to my children one of these days."*

**Dorothy Keetso, Dineh medicine woman, New Mexico** (NCP provided support for her to learn to use crystals): *"Thank you for your support – now I can see further. Sometimes I have been wandering, unsure. It can feel lonely, as many of my own people don't believe in my healing ceremonies. You coming here is very encouraging."*

*New Community Project Advisory Board: Robbie Miller (chair), Taona Makunje, Steve Brady, Jerry O'Donnell, Libby Kreps, Kim McDowell, Linetta Alley, Hope Steele, Timothy McElwee, Alex Murphy*

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*As the World Turns...*



*"...turning the world upside down..."*

Newsletter of the  
New Community Project

*Ideas that challenge us.  
Experiences that change us.  
A community that gives us hope.*

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#### Middle Earth to top of the world

The summer Learning Tour season began square on the equator in the Ecuadorian Amazon and concluded 150 miles north of the Arctic Circle in Arctic Village, Alaska. Participants in these trips and the two in between, Lybrook, NM, and Denali/Kenai Fjords, AK, not only learned about significant environmental challenges and human realities, but also connected with native communities. Even in Denali and down in Kenai Fjords, we found ways to connect with representatives of native groups.

Altogether, 59 participants ranging in age from 14 to 74 from CA to PA and places in between joined this summer's trips. See pages two and three for more on our partnerships.

#### What have you been missing?!

World Orangutan Day, photo albums from the above-mentioned Learning Tours, a waste-not-want-not food recovery story, and a short but inspiring video about our Jubilee Carbon Farm all have something in common: they were recently highlighted on NCP's Facebook and/or Insta pages. Go, see, follow!

#### Hikes, bikes, weather spikes

NCP staff do what the moment demands for earth and earthlings.

Our Jubilee Climate Farm in Harrisonburg, VA hosted five college interns this past summer as they learned about agroecology, earth restoration, and building community within our food systems. In addition, we welcomed seven Congolese families as they reconnect with their culture by growing traditional foods. And we collaborate with two local farms in providing organic produce to 350 food insecure households.

The NCP-supported Give Solar program works with Habitat for Humanity to provide solar panels for homes in Harrisonburg and beyond. Phase II of the NCP-initiated Northend Greenway bicycle and pedestrian path is under construction.

Farther afield, director Tom Benevento has been working in Guatemala and Malawi to help village farmers in their efforts to build restorative agroforestry systems.

This past summer in Vermont saw lots of activity in the gardens, with an intern from Middlebury College and several new volunteer groups. Construction of a wood-heated greenhouse was completed to expand the growing season.

Vermont director Pete Antos-Ketcham welcomed staff from Senator Peter Welch's office to discuss access to local food systems for low-income folks. Pete was also part of an effort to increase awareness and implementation of weatherization programs for town residents.

With more power interruptions due to climate-charged weather events in Vermont, NCP secured a \$5000 grant for a generator to keep food fresh at our storage site during outages.

Since April, NCP director David Radcliff has led four Learning Tours, including 39 miles of hiking on the Alaska trips, spoken at camps, conferences, schools and churches, and taught a globalization class and given an Earthkeeping as Peacemaking lecture at Elizabethtown College.

#### Rest in Peace – fall campaign

Our partner in South Sudan is in need of \$30,000 to build an additional dormitory at Queensland Girls Day and Boarding School. This is the school in Nimule that NCP raised funds to build ten years ago with our *If We Build It* campaign.

Over 500 girls already reside at the school, but 300 more beds are needed. Among these are refugees from South Sudan's northern neighbor, war-torn Sudan; girls fleeing early marriage and insecurity within South Sudan; and current residents sleeping two to a bed.

The \$30,000 will construct a 3-room dormitory and provide 300 3-tier metal bunk beds.

And we have matching funds – all donations will receive a 25 percent bonus, a gift from an NCP supporter!

Can you, your club, your class, your congregation help these young women rest in peace? See the website for more information.

#### Borneo!

The island of Borneo is one of the world's biological hotspots, with a myriad of plant and animal species. It is also on the front lines of many ecological challenges, as palm oil plantations and other human activities disrupt natural systems.

NCP is developing a relationship with the forestry department to restore mangroves and do reforestation. Along with sequestering carbon, this will provide habitat for orangutans, whose numbers have declined by 150,000 since 2000.

We're also planning a Learning Tour – see page three.

*"I often feel like we are a very small fish in a very big lake - so this kind of affirmation is a helpful morale boost."*  
– NCP Vermont director Pete Antos-Ketcham after receiving the news that the Vermont Community Foundation, a state-wide funder of many large non-profits, is sending \$5000 to help purchase a backup power system for the Food Share program he coordinates.

As the World Turns is published by the New Community Project, a nonprofit organization. Contact NCP at: 117 Nature Road, Blue Ridge, VA 24064; 540-855-1199; dradcliffncp@yahoo.com; Website: www.newcommunityproject.info

## Justice – or Just Us

Seeking fairness for people everywhere

**A**im high, look low. It's important to be aware of the Big Picture issues regarding human justice: the status of women and native communities, the rich/poor divide at home and abroad, climate change and globalization.

We must also look low to find hope and opportunity.

### Labor Day Campaign Delivers

In the DR Congo, a woman has a 1 in 30 chance of dying in pregnancy or childbirth in her lifetime. There are many reasons for this tragic situation, but central among them are lack of prenatal care, unattended births, and lack of follow-up care for mom and baby.

Our partner in the DRC recently requested funds to hold two midwife trainings, fifty women per session. Cost: \$6400. With the help of a matching grant from a supporter, our Labor Day campaign raised it!

These women will offer their services to mothers like Masoka Fatima, assisted by a graduate of trainings we previously supported.



### Certified shaman!

Our friend Franklin of the Cofan in Ecuador has "graduated" from shaman training! He is grandson to chief Cofan shaman Aurelio and has been working toward this for three years. He studied under his grandfather, and also traveled to distant communities to learn from other shamans.

NCP has supported him throughout this process, covering his family's living expenses when he was away, and replacing his canoe when it was stolen last year. Franklin is "very motivated to continue learning on his own," said our Ecuador coordinator Diego Prado.



### Maelstrom and Ministry in Myanmar

The situation is still critical in Myanmar following the 2021 military coup.

Repression is rife, and fighting continues around the perimeter of the country, says our reforestation partner Jimmy Zan. His congregation has taken in many refugees, including lots of children. Jimmy has involved them in planting trees, for both environmental and emotional healing.



## Earth in the Balance

*Caring for the earth—as if our lives depended on it*

While lately there have been efforts to post The Ten Commandments in schools and other public places, NCP offers a different set of 'rules to live by' as we confront the moral challenge of climate change. Feel free to post!

### *The Ten (Climate) Commandments*

Thou shalt drive less, and walk, bike, share rides and telecommute more

Thou shalt eat lower on the food chain and clean thy plate – then storing, composting, or sharing the rest

Thou shalt use less energy in thine house or office – disconnecting, insulating, ventilating, tolerating indoor temperature swings

Thou shalt buy fewer goods and services, as this is responsible for the majority of our greenhouse gas emissions: Reframe (the meaning of life), Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle, in that order

We shall support girls' education and empower women as keys to addressing the climate crisis

We shall support regenerative farming and reforestation as ways of restoring ecosystems and storing carbon

We shall support young people as they name and shame the perpetrators and generally take it to "the man" – and shalt follow their lead by promoting green energy, joining movements to end fossil fuel subsidies, and holding legislators and corporations accountable for their inaction

We shall support native communities and learn from their earth-keeping wisdom, ecological practices and courageous defense of nature

We shall learn about the unjust impact climate change is having on the world's poor and on nature – and seek to make reparations

We shall devote ourselves and call our communities to loving our planet and creating a livable future for our kind and all life

New Community Project

## Truth...or Dare!

What we don't know *can* hurt us – especially in the long run. NCP doesn't shy away from facing the truth about our world, challenging all of us to dare to act for something better. Thus, this Truth...or Dare! segment: *Waste R Us*.

**Truth:** Humans are the only creature that creates trash – things that aren't readily taken back into the ecosystem. And we create a lot of it: the world extracts 100 billion tons of materials from the earth every year (yep, 12.5 tons per person) for construction, food production, energy, etc., recycling less than 10% of it. The rest ends up in the dump, incinerator or ecosystem (24 trillion plastic particles in the upper ocean) – or in the atmosphere: 50 billion tons of greenhouse gases per year (two times as much as 25 years ago).

The USA is the world's most wasteful society. Every day we discard 300 million pounds of food, 60 million water bottles (every month that's a tower to the moon), 4.5 lbs. of household trash per person – and at Halloween, a billion pounds of pumpkins go to the landfill to haunt us with methane – a potent greenhouse gas – as they decompose.

Food waste has before and after impacts, as it destroys habitat needlessly and uses 20 percent of the world's water withdrawals to produce food we didn't eat; there is the lost nutrition in a world with 800 million hungry people (and 13.5% of US households); and if it were a country, food waste would be the 3rd highest source of greenhouse gases after China and the US.

Plastics. The world produces 460 million tons a year, 85% of which ends up in landfills. In the USA, of the 50 million tons of plastic waste created annually, 5% is recycled – most ends up in the trash or is unrecyclable.

***"If the public thinks recycling works, they're not going to be as concerned about the environment."***  
– plastic industry executive on NPR

Humanity is currently consuming 1.7 times what the earth has to sustainably offer, leaving a deficit to be dealt with by future generations.

**Dare:** So what can we do? E.A.R.T.H.

Engage those around you in discussing waste – the produce clerk, those at the potluck, your office pals. You may educate them – or find co-conspirators.

Act with some of these same folks to change things: an NCP ally gets a pickup load of discarded food weekly from his local Aldi's – they feel good, people get fed.

Recycle, while also forcing producers to reveal items' cradle-to-grave footprint and design out problem materials. But practice the other Four R's first: Reframe (the meaning of life), Refuse, Reduce, Reuse.

Treat everything from our earth that passes through your hands consciously, as precious and to-be-valued.

Hound politicians to ban green-washing, ensure right-to-repair, support global e-waste and plastics treaties.

Oliver Franklin-Walls, in *Wasteland* (2023): *"The conclusion I came to is laughably simple: buy less stuff."*

## Experiential Learning

*Go. Meet. Learn. Grow. Be renewed. Change—yourself and your world.*

Participants beware! Visiting our Sustainable Living Centers or going on a Learning Tour or inviting an NCP speaker to your school or congregation or club can lead to...*who knows where*....

### 2025 Learning Tours

**Nepal** (January 14 - 26) Travel to this beautiful but impoverished Himalayan country, hosted by NCP partner Shakti Samuha. Visit shelters for survivors from the sex trade as well as girls and women receiving NCP support. Trek to see the Annapurna Range; explore Chitwan National Park – rhinos, elephants, crocodiles, sloth bears. Meet the Chepang girls!

**Rwanda/DR Congo** (February 10 - 21, 2025)

Experience the culture, beauty and resilience of the people of these East African countries. Visit girls and women and reforestation projects receiving NCP support. An optional safari to a National Park is available to see creatures great and small.

**Borneo** (May 12 – 20) Visit the third largest island in the world and its amazing display of biodiversity.

Learn about palm oil impacts and other environmental issues, along with NCP support for reforestation, including mangrove restoration. Explore coral reefs, hike in the rainforest, learn about sun bear conservation, see orangutans and other amazing wildlife.



**Ecuadorian Amazon: Deep Jungle** (May 29 - June 4)

Explore places deep in the rainforest guided by native shamans; see all manner of amazing plant and animal life (monkeys, sloths, pink dolphins!); learn about threats to the forest, including palm oil and petroleum; visit NCP preservation projects.

**Lybrook, NM** (June 20 - 26) Work alongside Diné (Navajo) on community projects, visit a medicine woman, talk with and learn from local artisans. Explore the culture and current challenges facing the Diné, including hydraulic fracking and climate change; visit Chaco Culture National Historical Park, one of the best-preserved examples of pre-Columbian native life.

**Denali/Kenai Fjords National Parks, Alaska** (July 31 -

August 8) Camp and hike in the Denali National Park; see bears, moose, caribou, a sled-dog demonstration – and Denali, the highest mountain in North America. End with two days in Seward exploring Kenai Fjords National Park via a full-day boat trip to view whales, otters, and puffins, and a stop at Exit Glacier.