

We save land.



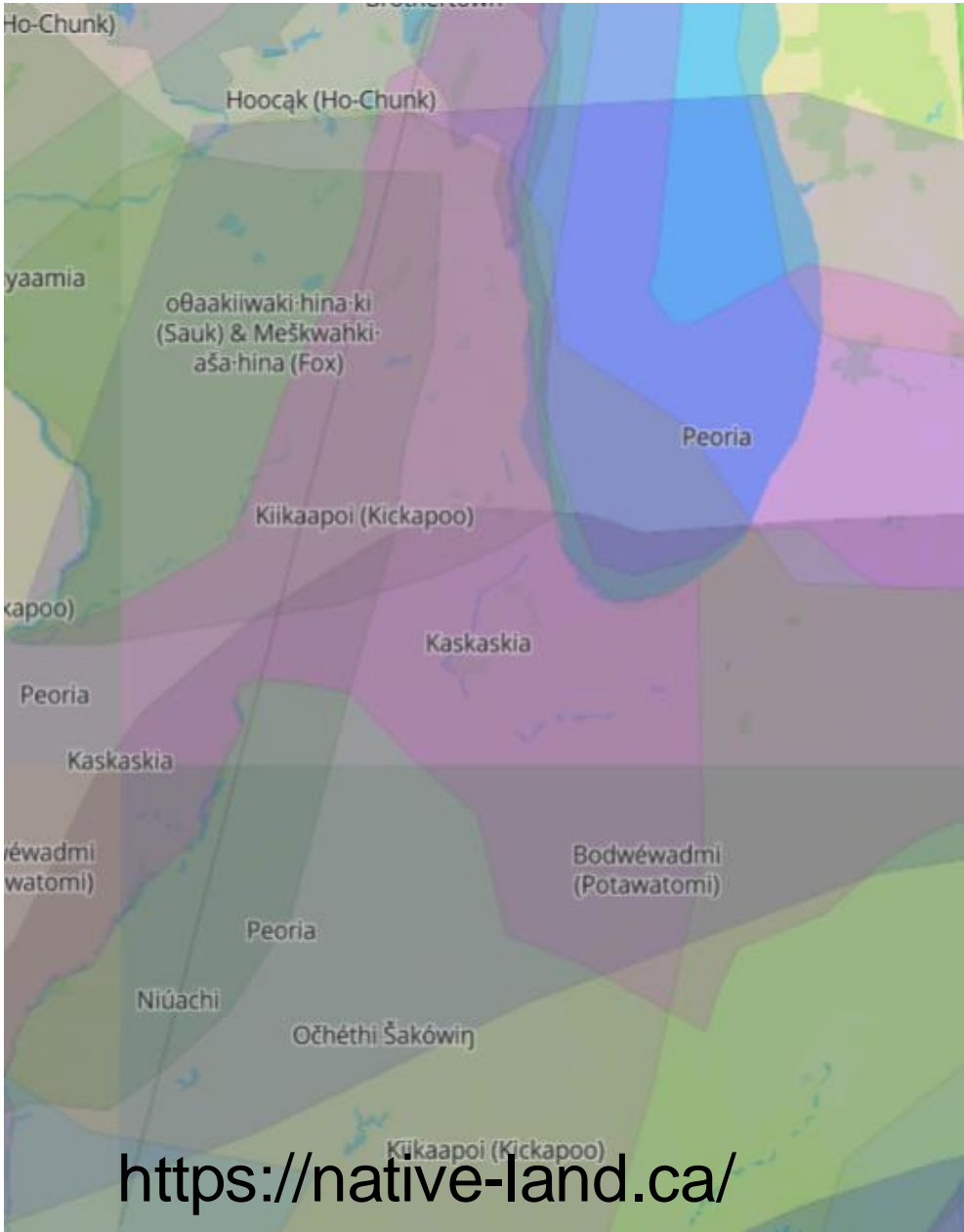
We save rivers.

# Equity in Nature Access & Environmental Justice



**Alison Paul & Kyla Muhammad**  
**The Conservation Foundation**

Where are we?





# Our Mission

**501c3 since 1972**  
**51 years**

We improve the **health of our communities** by preserving and restoring natural areas and open space, protecting rivers and watersheds, and promoting stewardship of our environment.



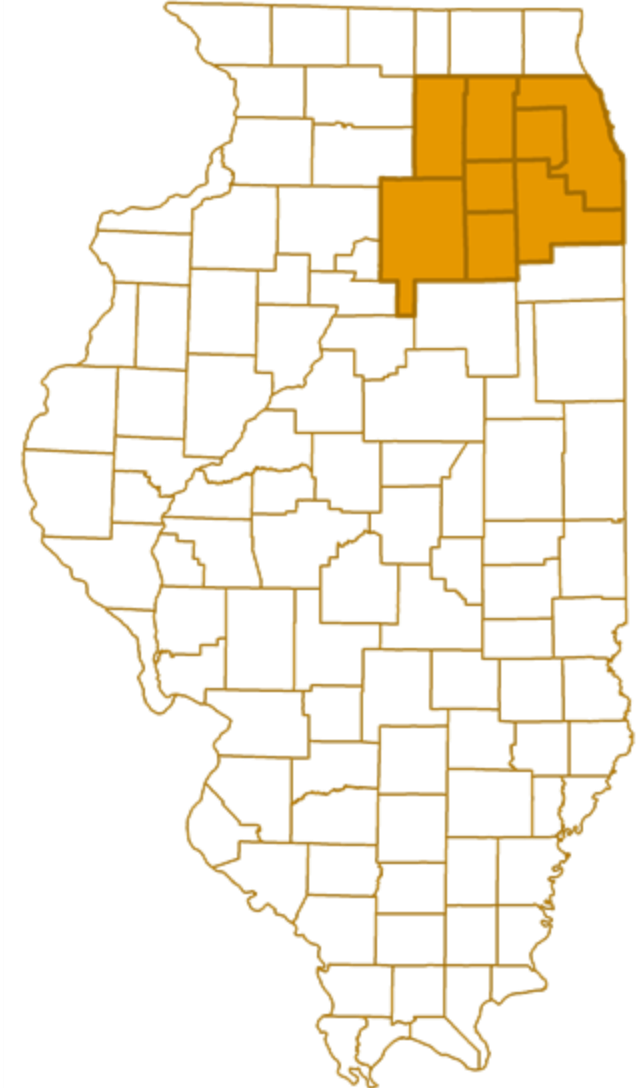


# Service Territory

Primary activity in DuPage, Kane,  
Kendall and Will Counties

Additional activity in Cook, DeKalb,  
LaSalle, and Grundy Counties

Headquarters at McDonald Farm in  
Naperville





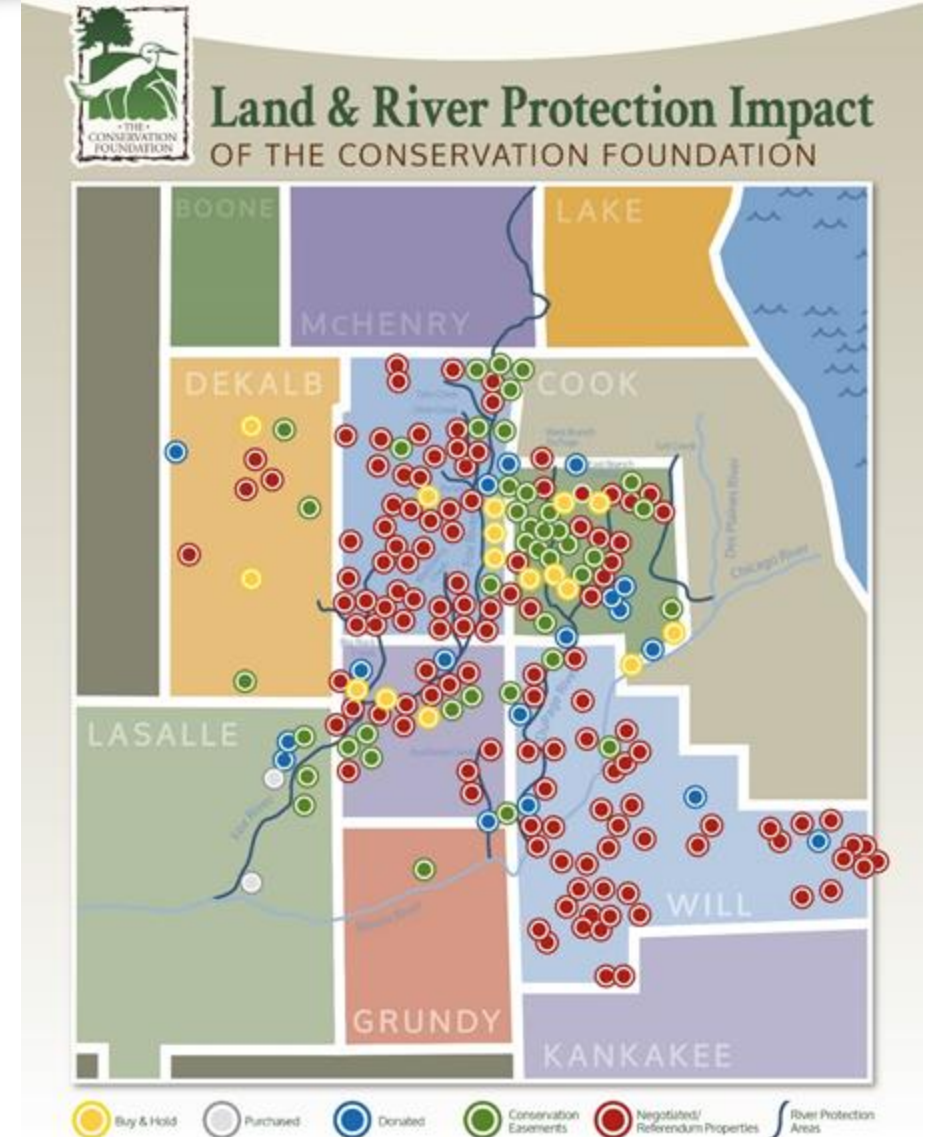
# Land Preserved

**36,000 acres**

**Nearly 200 parcels**

**45 conservation easements**

**8 counties**





# About TCF

## Local Community Focus

**Land Preservation and  
Restoration**

**Environmental Education  
for Kids**

**Conservation@Home  
Conservation@Work**

**Clean and Restore Rivers  
and Streams**

**Education, Outreach,  
and Advocacy**

**Grow & Provide Healthy,  
Organic Food**





# Why is it important?

## ***WE BELIEVE...***

Every person, regardless of where they live or their social-economic status, deserves clean water, clean air, and safe access to nature as a way to be healthy and happy.

*Our current strategic plan aims to:*

**“Be more inclusive, impactful, and relevant to people and communities by growing and adapting our conservation programs to local needs.”**

# What We'll Cover



- **Equity, Environmental Justice and the Evolution of the Conservation Movement**
- **TCF's Process of Incorporating Equity Into our Mission**
  - **Internal Processes**
  - **External Partnerships**
  - **Understanding through Data and Stories**
  - **Key Takeaways/Lessons Learned**

**Discussion/Questions**





# What are your burning questions?



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# Equity, Environmental Justice & The Evolution of the Conservation Movement



# What is Equity?

## What equity is (*WHO*):

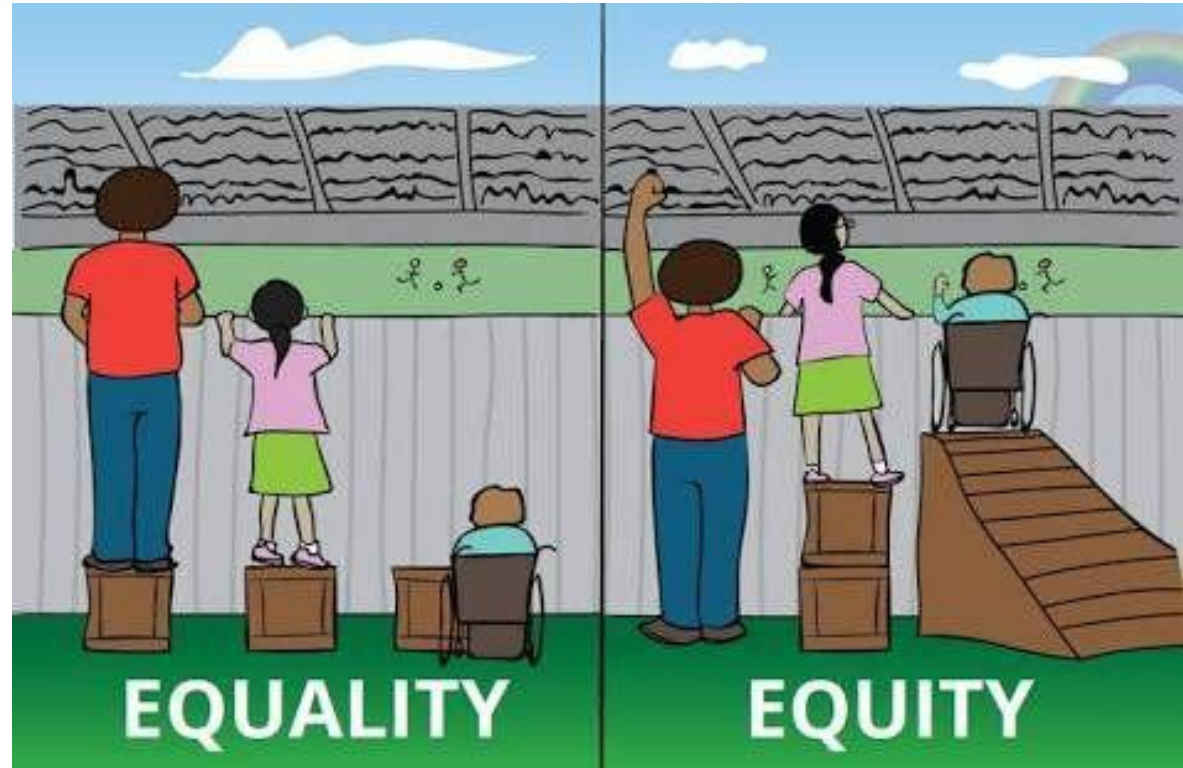
- “Absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people”

## What equity isn't:

- Applying the same approach to everyone

## *Environmental Equity (EPA)*

- Refers to the fair distribution of environmental risks across population groups.
- Acknowledges disproportionate impacts due to race and income.





# What is Environmental Justice?

## What EJ is (EPA):

“Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.”

## ***EJ is Achieved When (EPA)***

- People have the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards
- Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.



Hazel Johnson - "Mother of Environmental Justice"

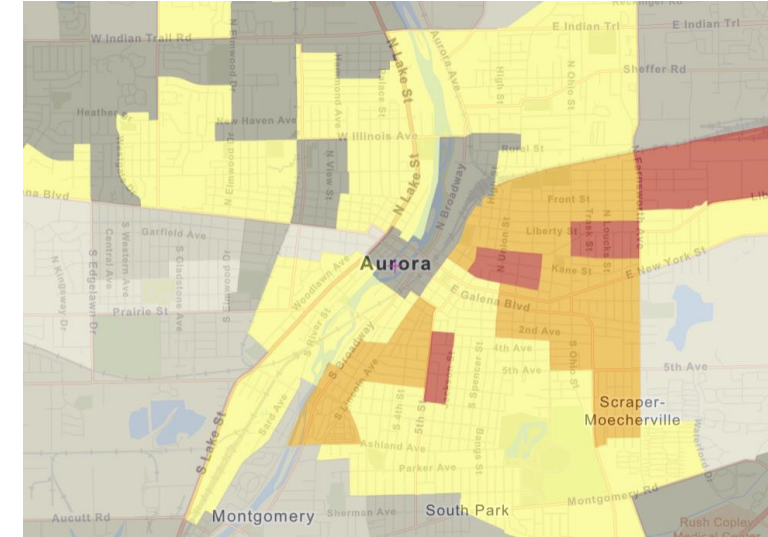
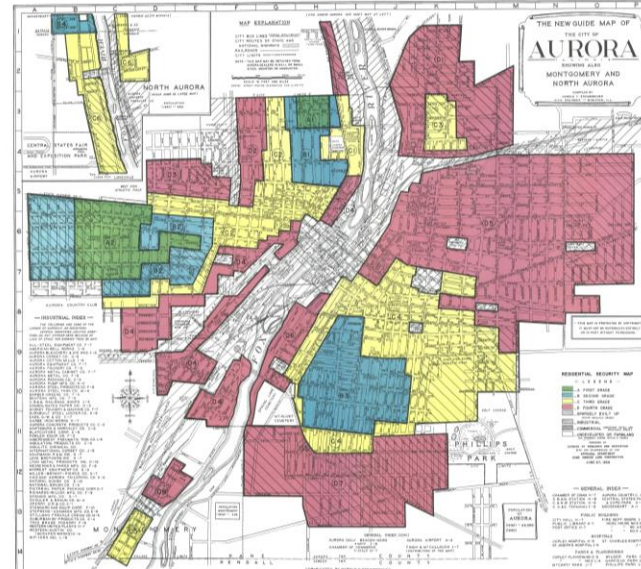
Photo Credit: PCRO



# What is Environmental Justice?

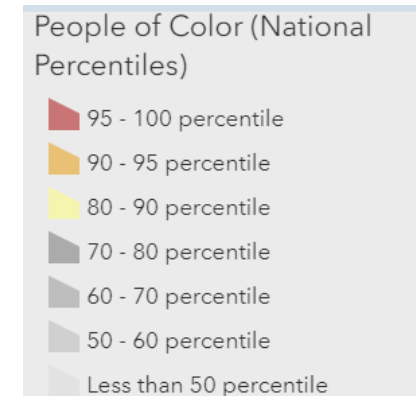
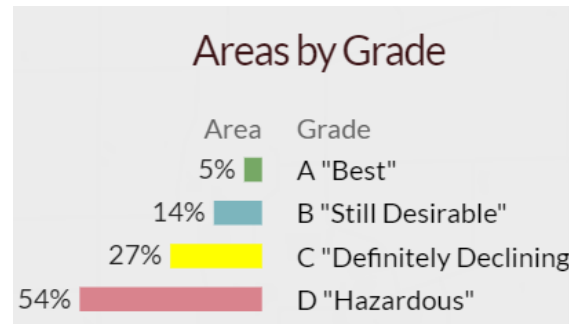
## EJ's Evolution:

- Redlining of housing & zoning & permitting decisions driven by race and income
- Pro-Economy & Development, but NIMBY – Not in My Backyard
- Concentration of Environmental Hazards in Low-income & Black & Brown Communities



1940s Redlining Map vs. 2020 EPA EJScreen People of Color Map

Source: Robert K. Nelson, LaDale Winling, Richard Marciano, Nathan Connolly, et al., "Mapping Inequality," *American Panorama*, ed.





# DEI & Conservation

## Evolution of Conservation Movement

**History of hostile land acquisition & management practices & policies**

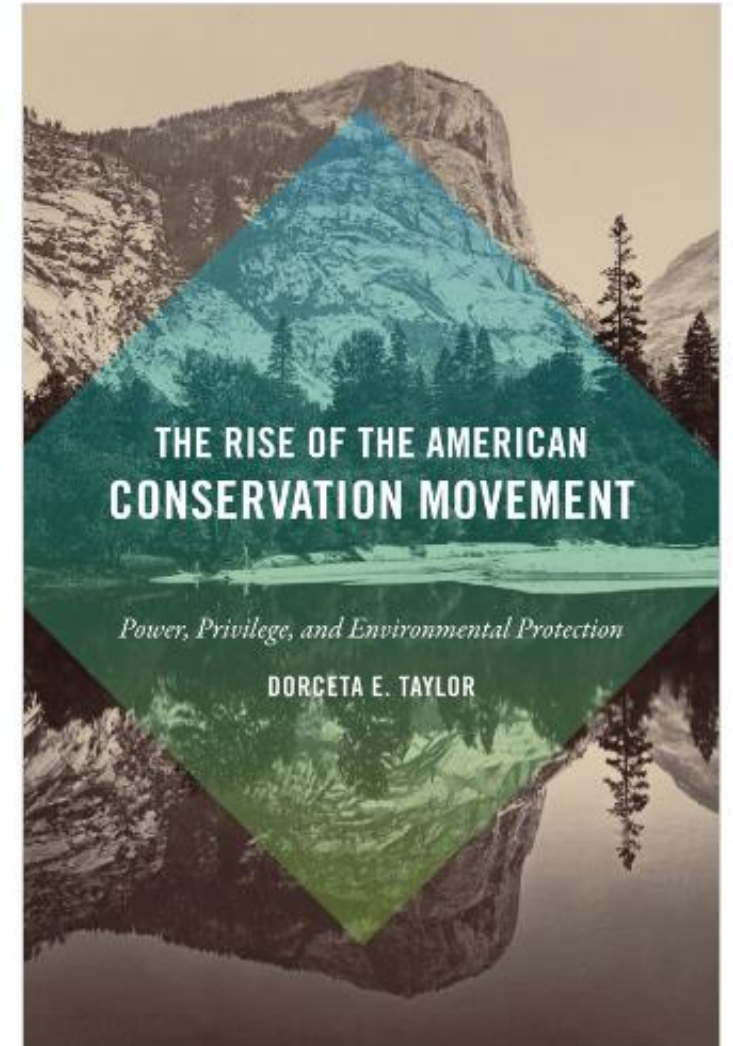
**Wealthy, white founders of the movement with racially discriminatory views**

- Teddy Roosevelt/ National Park Service
- John Muir/Sierra Club
- John James Audubon/ National Audubon Society
- Save the Redwoods League

**Philosophy of “Protect the land *from* the people” (Conservation 1.0)**

**Movement is shifting to Conservation 2.0 (Whole Communities Approach)**

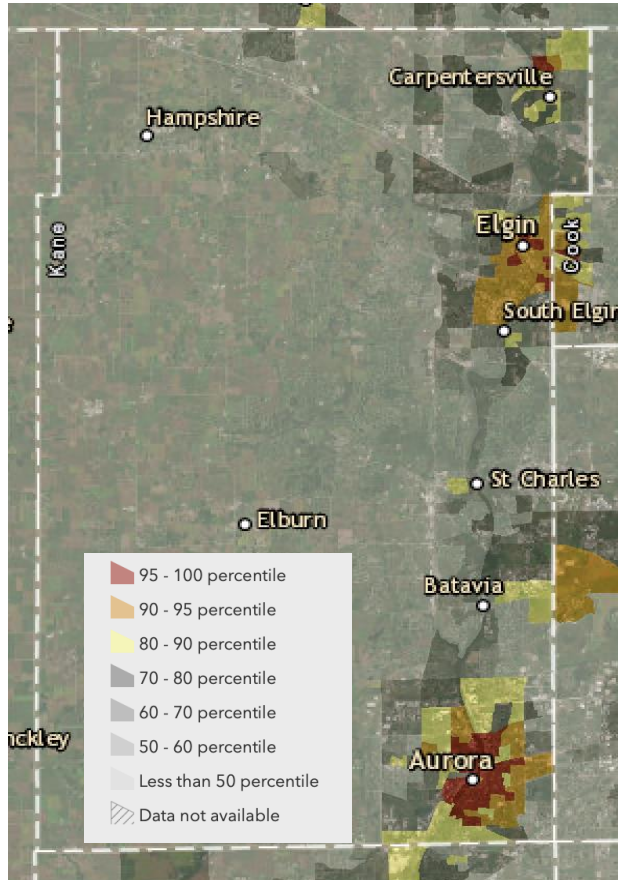
- Reconnecting people with the land
- “Community health is reflected in the health of the land” (Peter Forbes)
- Cross-collaboration to build healthy communities





# DEI & Conservation

## Wastewater Discharge



## Environmental Justice & Waterways Are Intertwined

Long history of polluting industries having large production facilities near rivers, lakes, and oceans and using waterways to dump toxins and pollutants in communities of color

- Fox River/ Mill Creek – Armour-Dial - Aurora – Jim "The Fox" Phillips
- Calumet River/ Lake Michigan – former U.S. Steel site - Southside of Chicago/Gary, IN - steel mill industry hub for > 100 years, now toxic storage hub (e.g. pet coke)



Most Impacted: Aurora, Elgin, Carpentersville



# DEI & Conservation

## Why Equity & EJ Matter for Conservation

- To better meet the needs & health priorities of all your constituents
- To counteract the systemic inequities that impede access, participation, and benefit from marginalized communities
- To strengthen your organization's work, resiliency, and relevancy
- To successfully recruit more employees, board, donors, and members
- The long-term impact of our work is contingent upon developing and supporting more environmental stewards







# Why is it important to TCF?

## ***WE BELIEVE...***

Every person, regardless of where they live or their social-economic status, deserves clean water, clean air, and safe access to nature as a way to be healthy and happy.

*Our current strategic plan aims to:*

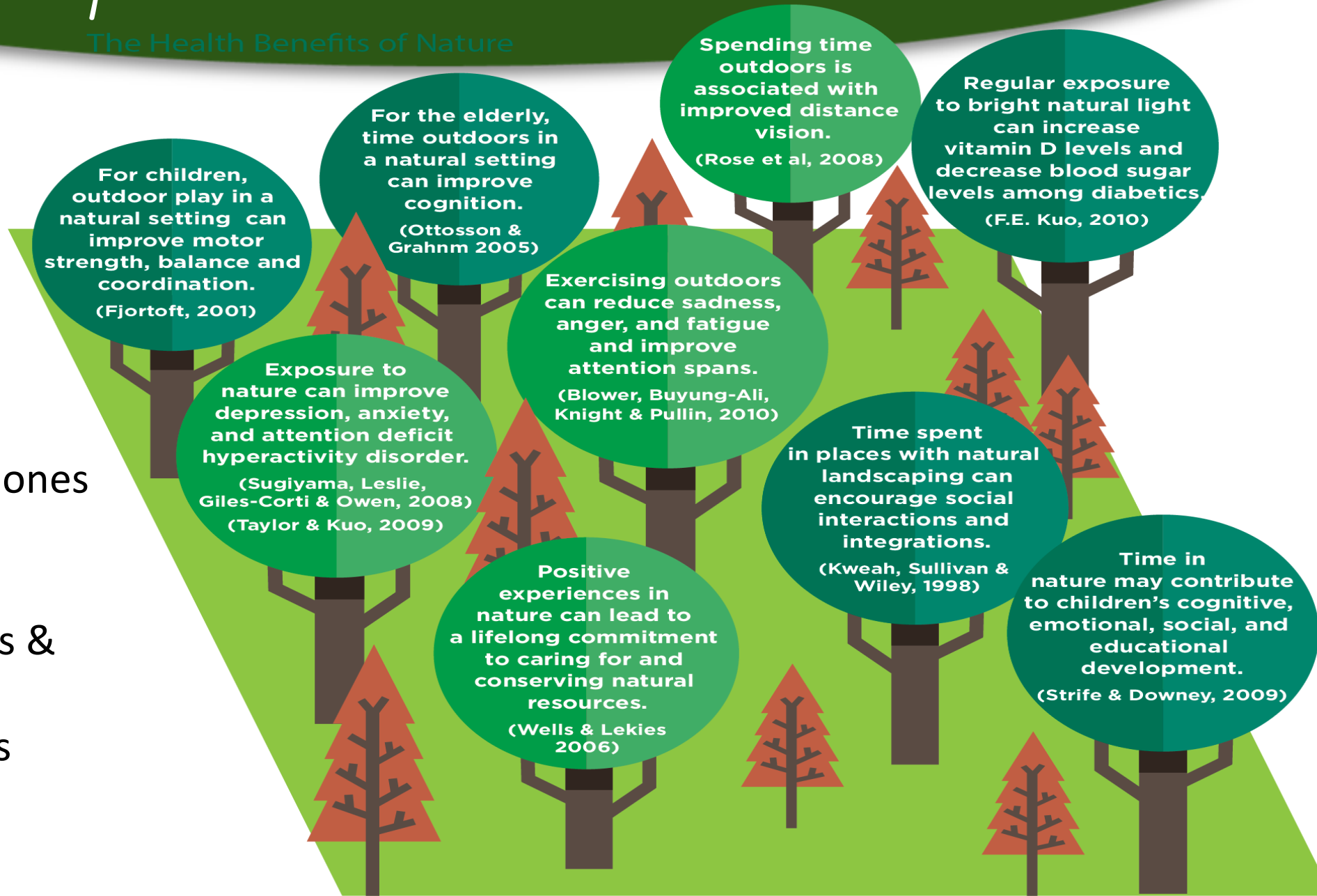
**“Be more inclusive, impactful, and relevant to people and communities by growing and adapting our conservation programs to local needs.”**



# The Many Health Benefits of Time in Nature

## The Health Benefits of Nature

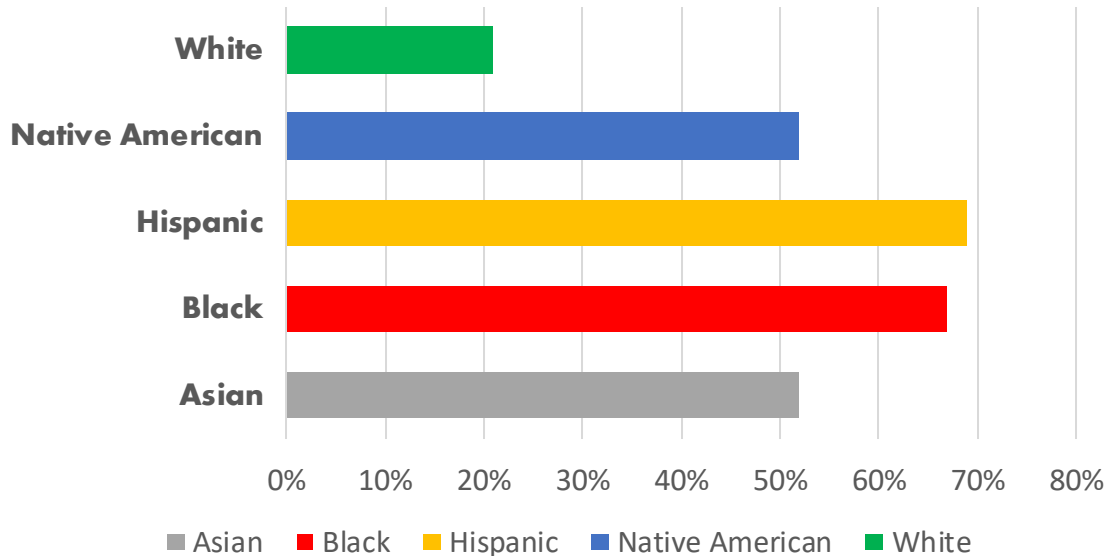
- Improve mood
- Reduce stress hormones
- Improve focus & concentration
- Increase motor skills & social-emotional development in kids
- Stimulate NKT cells



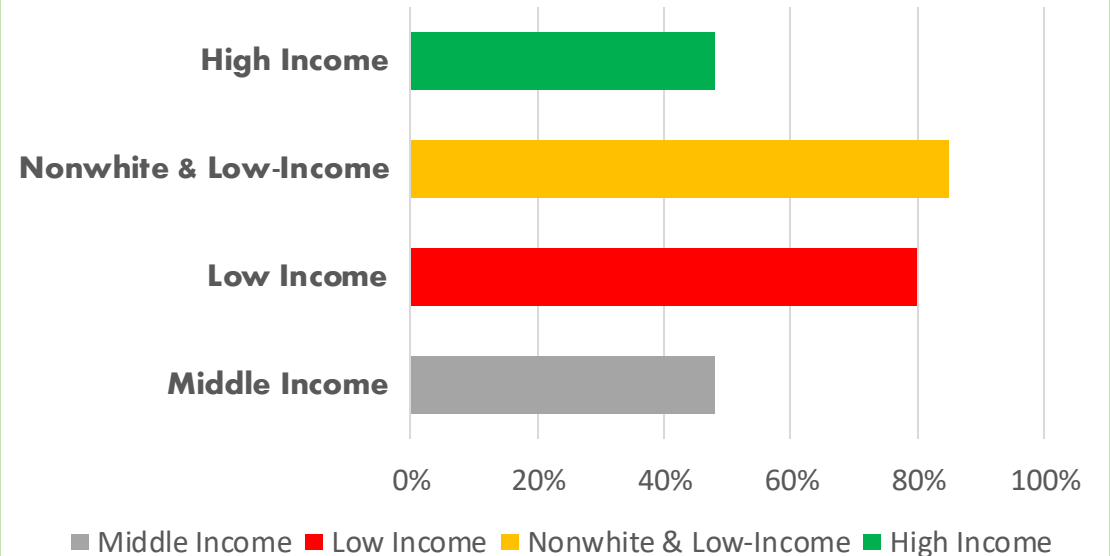


# Nature Access

### Illinois – Population Living in Nature Deprived Areas by Race/Ethnicity, 2017



### Illinois – Population Living in Nature Deprived Areas by Income, 2017



Do you think there are racial and income disparities as it relates to accessing the Fox River?



# Why is it important to you?

## What's Your Organization's Why?

- Providing access, accommodations, and opportunities for all of your constituents?
- Identifying and eliminating invisible barriers?
- Valuing the broader community benefits from equitable practices?
- Connecting more people to your mission?
- Ensuring your services make it to the people who need it most?



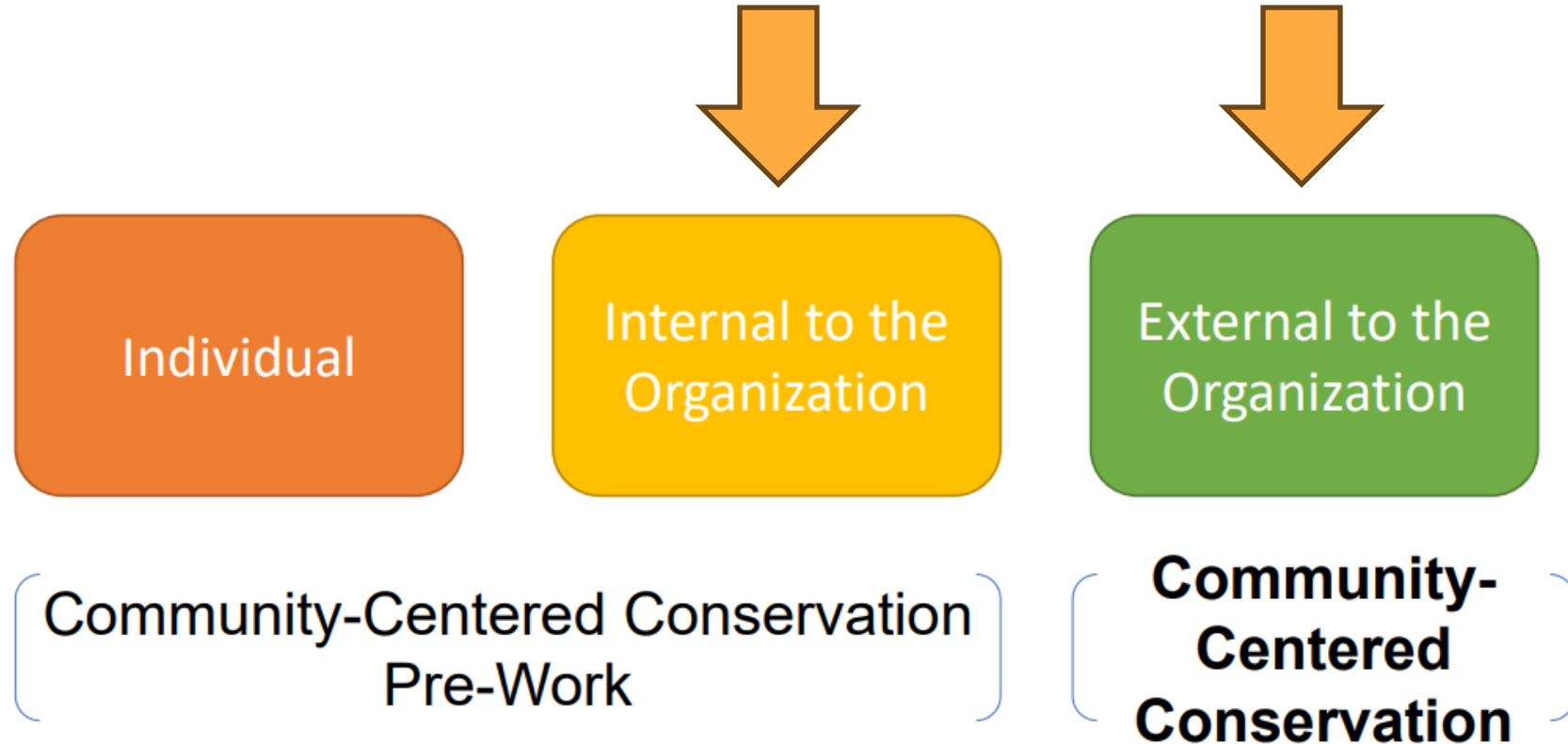
We save land.



We save rivers.

Our DEI Journey So Far...

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion & CCC

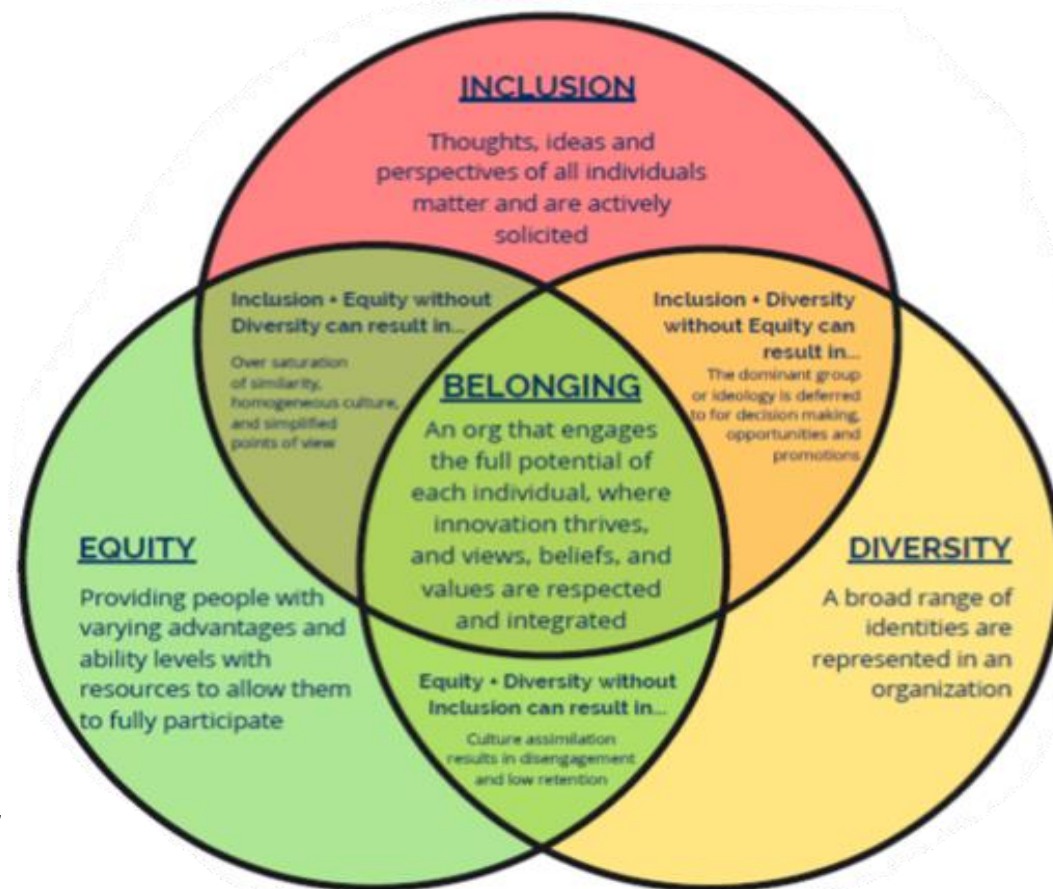




# The Beginning

## 2017 Strategic Plan

- DEI factored into TCF's work to help ensure relevance and success in the communities we serve
- Started with diversifying the age of staff
- DEI Goal is developed
  - *The Conservation Foundation will be inclusive, equitable, accessible, dynamic and open to new and different perspectives to effectively meet the unique needs of the diverse communities we serve.*



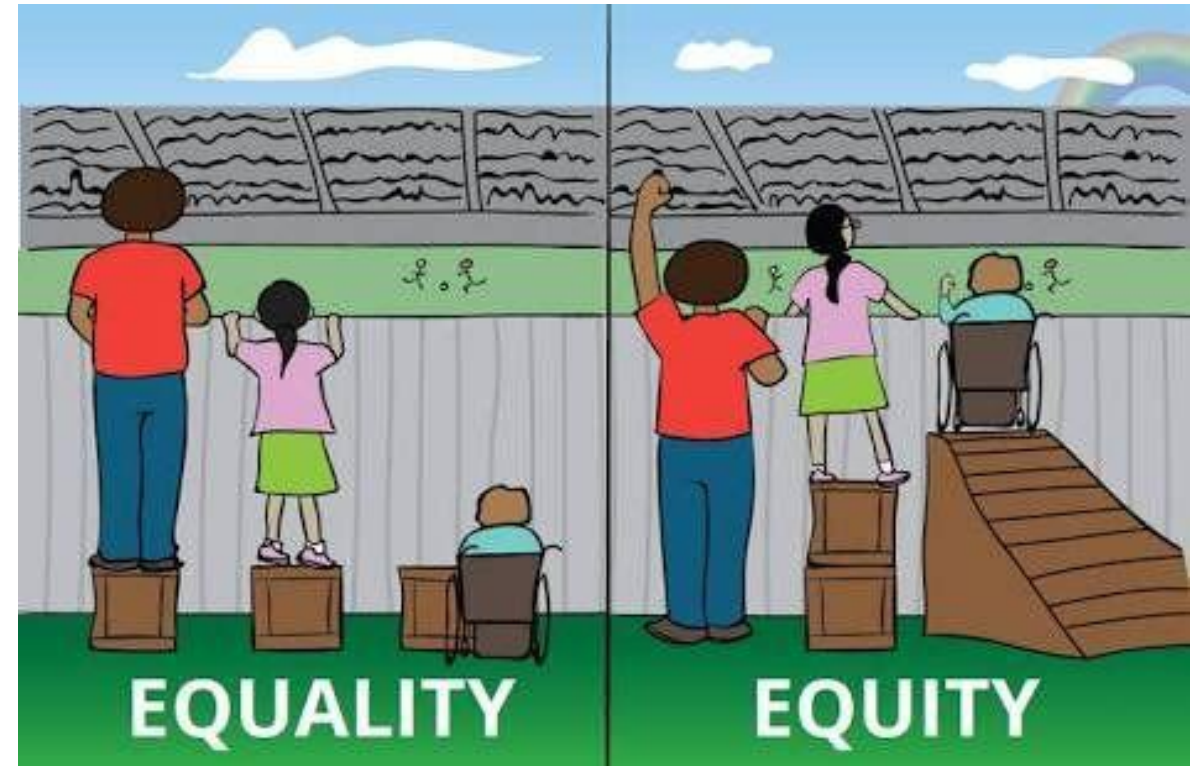
**This is the organizational culture we seek related to how we work on our mission**



# 2020: The Turning Point

## Events of 2020 – Time to Get Serious

- Board/Staff committee created to discuss and develop a DEI action plan
- Board and staff trainings, conversations, readings and self-reflection
- CEO connected to executive director peer group for formal training/consulting
- Created draft DEI action plan reviewed by staff and board







# DEI Action Plan

Flexible 2-3 year plan (2021-2023)

## Focus Areas:

- Training
- Internal Makeup
- Communications
- Programming/Events
- Operations

Actions	Outcomes (Why?)	Metric (How?)	Progress, 1/23	Strategic Goals and Metrics (2021-2023)
<b>Internal Communications</b> Provide training and education opportunities for staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Develop a DEI communication plan that includes internal and external communication. Establish a DEI communication committee to oversee and coordinate all DEI-related communication. Develop a DEI communication strategy that includes internal and external communication.	Staff and staff are educated on DEI-related topics. Internal and external communication is consistent and effective. A DEI communication committee is established to oversee and coordinate all DEI-related communication. A DEI communication strategy is developed that includes internal and external communication.	Number of DEI-related training sessions and educational opportunities provided. Number of internal and external communication pieces published. Number of staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Number of internal and external communication pieces published.	Completed 100% of DEI-related training sessions and educational opportunities provided. Completed 100% of internal and external communication pieces published. Completed 100% of staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Completed 100% of internal and external communication pieces published.	<b>Internal Communications</b> • The Foundation's communication strategy is consistent and effective. • The Foundation's communication strategy includes internal and external communication. • The Foundation's communication strategy includes a DEI communication plan. • The Foundation's communication strategy includes a DEI communication committee. • The Foundation's communication strategy includes a DEI communication strategy.
<b>Internal Makeup</b> Develop a DEI communication plan that includes internal and external communication. Establish a DEI communication committee to oversee and coordinate all DEI-related communication. Develop a DEI communication strategy that includes internal and external communication.	Internal and external communication is consistent and effective. A DEI communication committee is established to oversee and coordinate all DEI-related communication. A DEI communication strategy is developed that includes internal and external communication.	Number of internal and external communication pieces published. Number of staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Number of internal and external communication pieces published.	Completed 100% of internal and external communication pieces published. Completed 100% of staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Completed 100% of internal and external communication pieces published.	<b>Internal Makeup</b> • The Foundation's internal makeup is consistent and effective. • The Foundation's internal makeup includes internal and external communication. • The Foundation's internal makeup includes a DEI communication plan. • The Foundation's internal makeup includes a DEI communication committee. • The Foundation's internal makeup includes a DEI communication strategy.
<b>Training</b> Provide training and education opportunities for staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Develop a DEI communication plan that includes internal and external communication. Establish a DEI communication committee to oversee and coordinate all DEI-related communication. Develop a DEI communication strategy that includes internal and external communication.	Staff and staff are educated on DEI-related topics. Internal and external communication is consistent and effective. A DEI communication committee is established to oversee and coordinate all DEI-related communication. A DEI communication strategy is developed that includes internal and external communication.	Number of DEI-related training sessions and educational opportunities provided. Number of internal and external communication pieces published. Number of staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Number of internal and external communication pieces published.	Completed 100% of DEI-related training sessions and educational opportunities provided. Completed 100% of internal and external communication pieces published. Completed 100% of staff and staff on DEI-related topics. Completed 100% of internal and external communication pieces published.	<b>Training</b> • The Foundation's training and education opportunities are consistent and effective. • The Foundation's training and education opportunities include internal and external communication. • The Foundation's training and education opportunities include a DEI communication plan. • The Foundation's training and education opportunities include a DEI communication committee. • The Foundation's training and education opportunities include a DEI communication strategy.
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• Direct Actions- Outcomes- Metrics- Progress and Accomplishments



# DEI Actions 2021 - 2023

- **Building Our Own Knowledge**

- Shared TCF DEI Resource Folder
- Created a DEI glossary for internal communications
- Ongoing staff training opportunities
- VSN Educator Training Grant
- Whiteness @ Work
- Lunch n Learns
- Created a Staff DEI group
- Expanded capacity for community conservation work

- **Being Welcoming/Inclusive**

- Gender-neutral bathroom signage
- Honor cultural heritage months and events



## DEI Glossary

Accessibility	Environmental Justice
Accountability	Environmental Racism
Advocate	Equity
Ally	Implicit Bias
Anti-racism	Inclusion
Belonging	Intersectionality
BIPOC/LGBTQIA+	Institutional racism
Color Blind	Microaggressions
Culture & Cultural Appropriations	Privilege
Diversity	Under-served/resourced Communities



# DEI Actions: 2021-2023

- **Diversifying Our Team**

- Young Staff Leadership Council
- Revised hiring practices to be more inclusive, expansive search/language
- Hired more racially diverse and younger staff and interns
- Created Next Gen, Inclusion Council

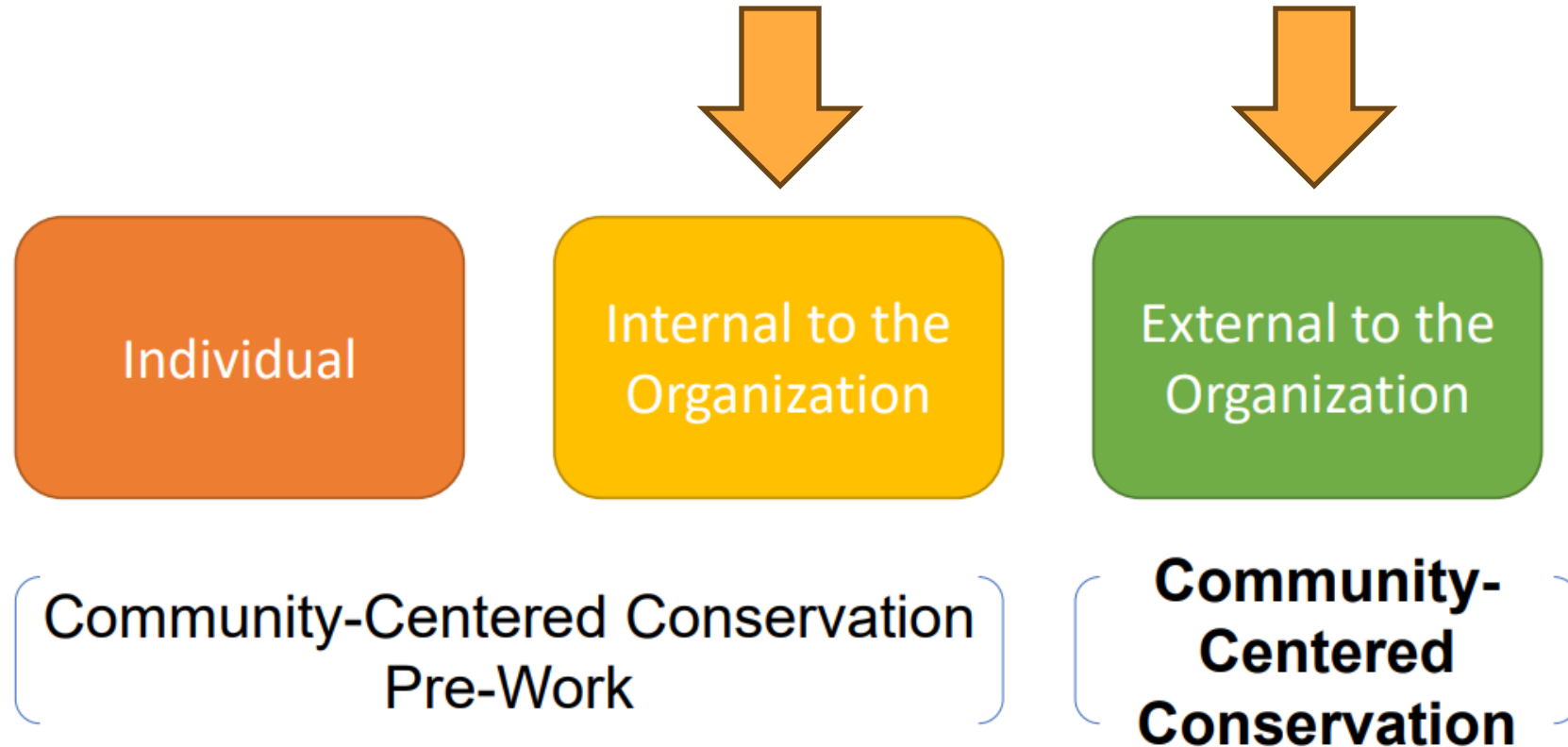
- **External Work**

- Translated some materials into Spanish
- Land Acknowledgement Statement and follow up work
- Website equity audit
- Wove DEI into the fabric of 2022 Strategic Plan



**NextGen  
Advisory  
Council  
Members**

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion & CCC





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We save rivers.

## Our Community Focus

Over the next five years, The Conservation Foundation will continue to strengthen its commitment to be an inclusive, community-based organization with impactful on-the-ground programs and projects tailored to the needs of each community served. This approach will result in:

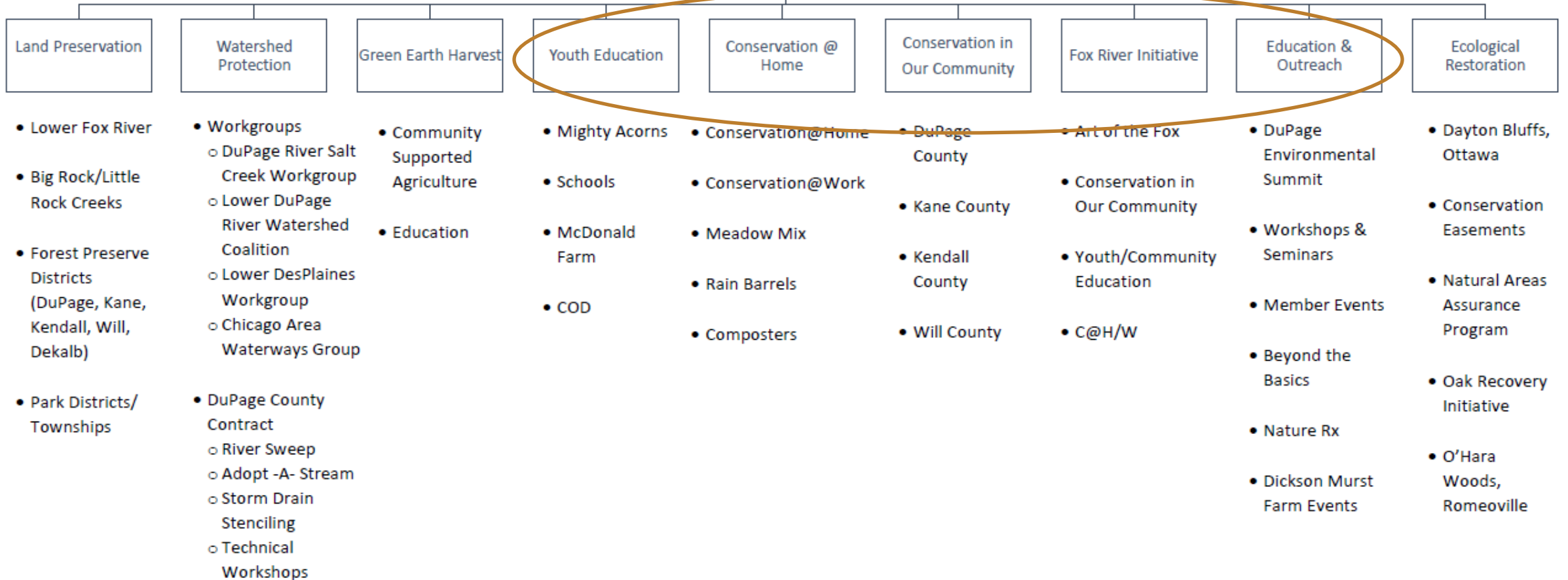
- Deeper mission impact in our communities,
- Local, grassroots efforts that help mitigate the impacts of climate change,
- A consistent and expected presence in our communities,
- Meaningful and long-lasting relationships with communities and individuals,
- A more engaged community in local conservation,
- Broader community support for TCF and for local conservation programs,
- Communities where conservation is embraced as a core value.



# The Conservation Foundation

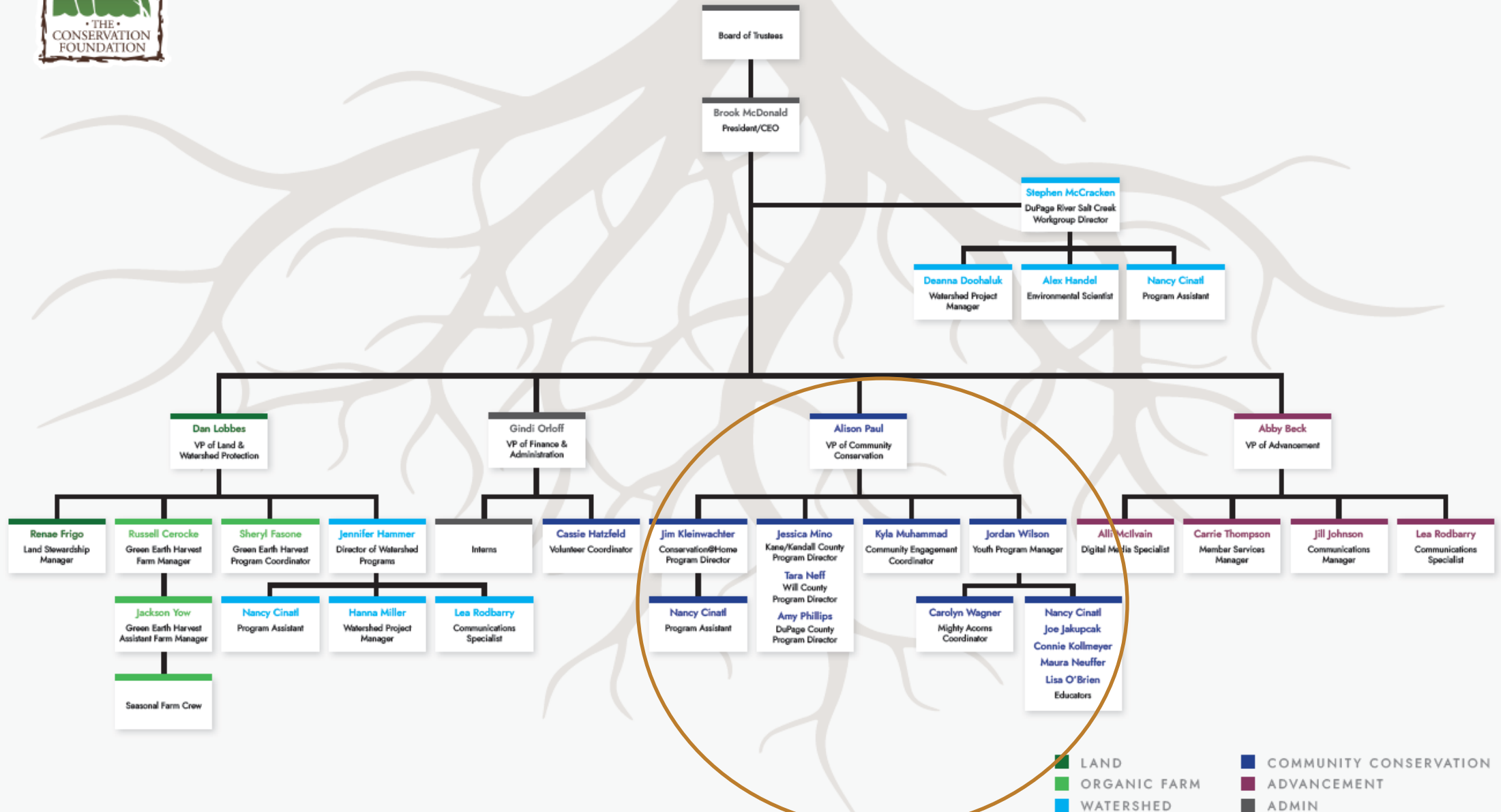
*We improve the health of our communities by preserving and restoring natural areas and open space, protecting rivers and watersheds and promoting stewardship of our environment*

## Programs & Major Projects





# THE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION Organizational Tree





# External Actions

## **Current Strategic Plan Priority 1:**

Be more inclusive, impactful, and relevant to people and communities by growing and adapting our conservation programs to local needs.





We save land.



We save rivers.

# How will we do that over the next 5 years?

- Evaluate, **grow and adapt** current programs and ensure they meet the changing needs of residents, partners, communities, and nature.
- Create **new pathways** for people to connect to nature and TCF by integrating programs into an inter-connected web of local engagement opportunities.
- Develop partnerships with a diverse set of stakeholders in communities with the highest need for nature-based programming, and pilot new community engagement programs that **address local barriers to nature and are responsive to community needs.**



So how do we understand local barriers, pathways to engagement, and what are current community needs?

We start with....  
A Community Engagement  
Listening Tour





# Community Engagement Listening Tour

## Objectives

- Build **trust** and relationships with new and existing stakeholders
- Identify **common themes** that will inform how we make our community conservation work more inclusive
- Lay the groundwork for emerging new partnerships and **pilot** programs
- Discover the ways in which TCF may be able to leverage its resources and nature-based solutions to **support other organizations**

We save land.



We save rivers.

What We've Learned So Far  
on this Journey

# Kane County Overview

## Key Demographic Takeaways for Kane County

**Racial Diversity:** Only 57% of population is White. 1/3rd of population is Latino/Hispanic (33%). Kane County has the highest Latino population as a percentage in the whole state of Illinois.

**Language:** Nearly 1/3rd (31%) of population speaks a language other than English at home.

**Income Disparities:** While 41% of households make over \$100k/year, 29% of households make under \$50k/year.

**Top Environmental/Environmental Justice Concerns:** Air pollution, potentially hazardous & toxic sites, racial/ethnic minority status, and water pollution.

**Communities Most Impacted by Environmental Justice Factors:** Aurora, Elgin, Carpentersville, Batavia (all Fox River cities!)

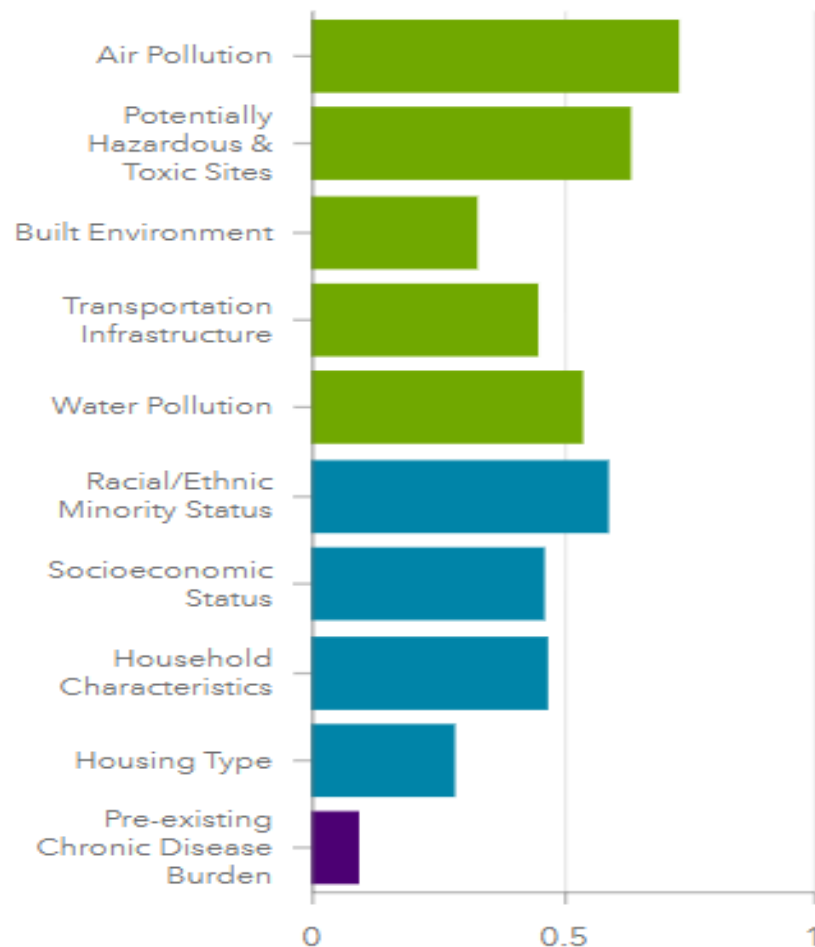


# Kane County Environmental Justice

## Environmental Justice Themes for Kane County

Overall Environmental Justice Rank	Social Vulnerability	Racial/ Ethnic Minority Status	Minority Status
		Socioeconomic Status	Poverty
			No High School Diploma
			Unemployment
			Housing Tenure
			Housing Burdened Lower-Income Households
			Lack of Health Insurance
		Household Characteristics	Lack of Broadband Access
			Age 65 and Older
			Age 17 and Younger
		Housing Type	Civilian with a Disability
			Speaks English "Less than Well"
	Group Quarters		
	Mobile Homes		
	Environmental Burden	Air Pollution	Ozone
			PM2.5
			Diesel Particulate Matter
		Potentially Hazardous & Toxic Sites	Air Toxics Cancer Risk
			National Priority List Sites
Toxic Release Inventory Sites			
Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Sites			
Risk Management Plan Sites			
Coal Mines			
Built Environment		Lead Mines	
		Recreational Parks	
Transportation Infrastructure		Houses Built Pre-1980	
		Walkability	
		High-Volume Roads	
Water Pollution		Railways	
		Airports	
Health Vulnerability		Pre-existing Chronic Disease Burden	Impaired Surface Water
			Asthma*
	Cancer*		
	High Blood Pressure*		
	Diabetes*		
	Poor Mental Health*		

Percentile Ranks of Domains in the Environmental Justice Index (average rank in current map extent or state/county selected)

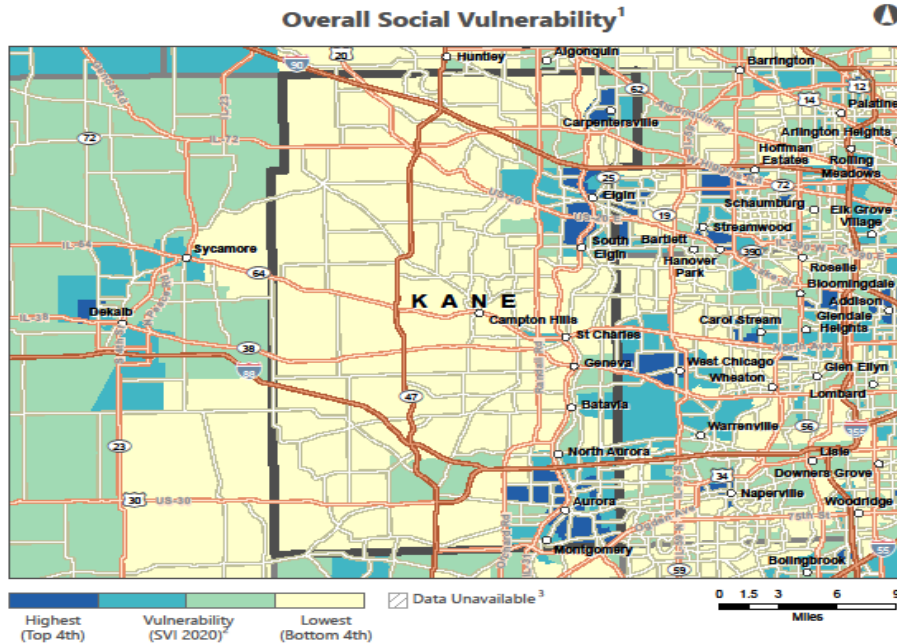


# Kane County Social Vulnerability

## Social Vulnerability Index for Kane County

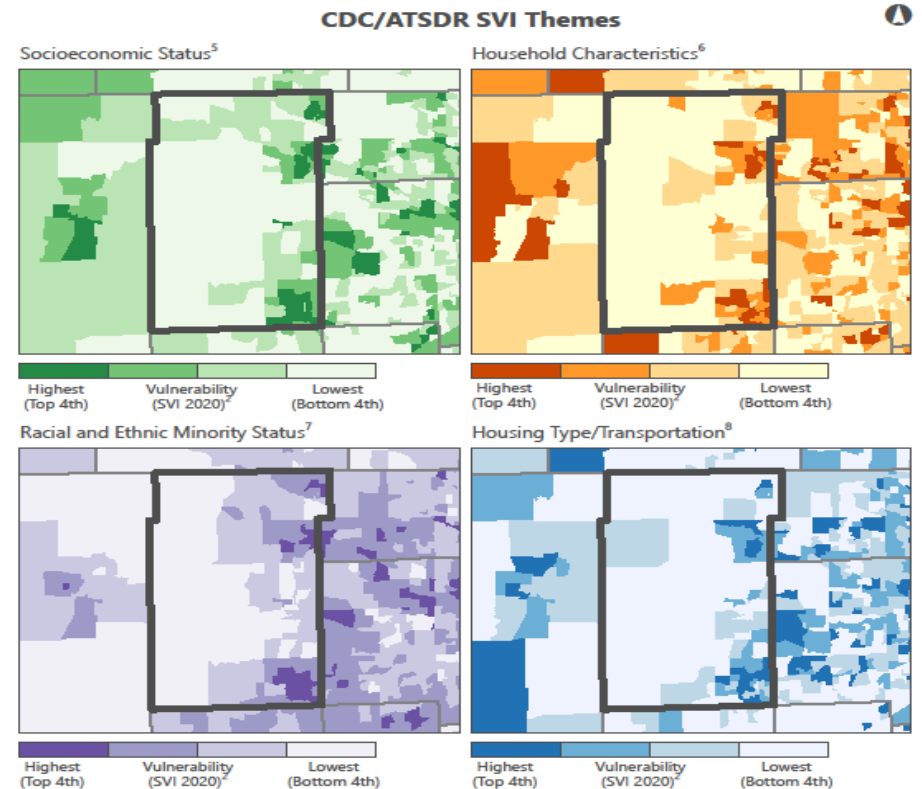
CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020  
KANE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

CDC/ATSDR SVI 2020 – KANE COUNTY, ILLINOIS



Social vulnerability refers to a community's capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events ranging from natural disasters, such as tornadoes or disease outbreaks, to human-caused threats, such as toxic chemical spills. The CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index (CDC/ATSDR SVI 2020)<sup>1</sup> County Map depicts the social vulnerability of communities at census tract level, within a specified

county. CDC/ATSDR SVI 2020 groups sixteen census-derived factors into four themes that summarize the extent to which the area is socially vulnerable to disaster. The factors include economic data as well as data regarding education, family characteristics, housing, language ability, ethnicity, and vehicle access. Overall Social Vulnerability combines all the variables to provide a comprehensive assessment.



Data Sources: <sup>1</sup>CDC/ATSDR/GRASP, U.S. Census Bureau, Esri® StreetMap™ Premium. Notes: <sup>2</sup>Overall Social Vulnerability: All 16 variables. <sup>3</sup>Census tracts with 0 population. <sup>4</sup>The CDC/ATSDR SVI combines percentile rankings of US Census American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 variables, for the state, at the census tract level. <sup>5</sup>Socioeconomic Status: Below 150% Poverty, Unemployed, Housing Costs Burden, No High School Diploma, No Health Insurance. <sup>6</sup>Household Characteristics: Aged 65 and Older, Aged 17 and Younger, Civilian with a Disability, Single-Parent Household, English Language Proficiency. <sup>7</sup>Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino (of any race); Black and African American, Not Hispanic or Latino; American Indian and Alaska Native, Not Hispanic or Latino; Asian, Not Hispanic or Latino; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic or Latino; Two or More Races, Not Hispanic or Latino; Other Races, Not Hispanic or Latino. <sup>8</sup>Housing Type/Transportation: Multi-Unit Structures, Mobile Homes, Crowding, No Vehicle, Group Quarters. Projection: Illinois Transverse Mercator NAD83 (ILGSI). References: Flanagan, B.E., et al. A Social Vulnerability Index for Disaster Management. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 2011. 8(1). CDC/ATSDR SVI web page: <https://www.atdsr.cdc.gov/plaoandhealthsv/Index.html>.

# Kendall County Overview

## Key Demographic Takeaways for Kendall County

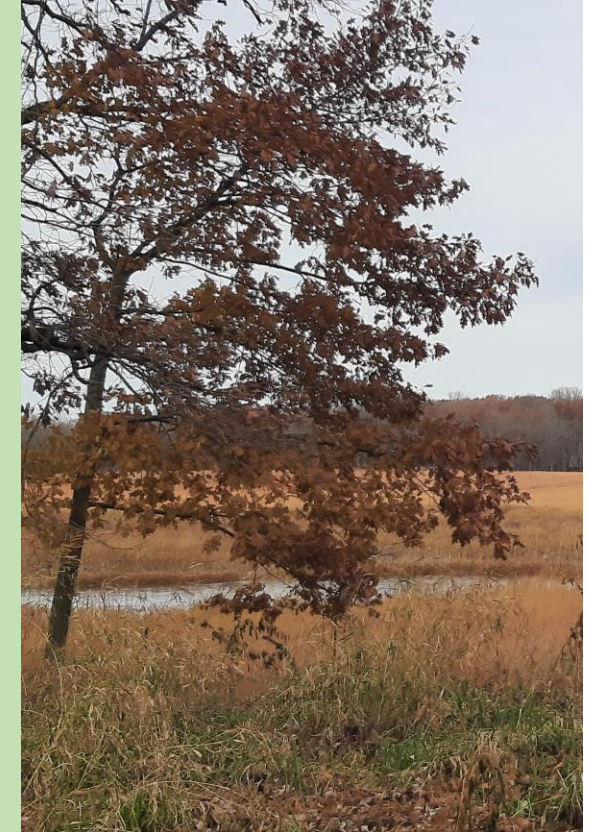
**Racial Diversity:** About 1/4th of population is Latino/Hispanic (20%) or Black/African-American (8%).

**Language:** About 1/5th of population speaks a language other than English at home.

**Income Disparities:** Less disparity than other near suburban counties with 18% of households making under \$50k/year and 48% of households making over \$100k/year.

**Top Environmental/Environmental Justice Concerns:** Air pollution, potentially hazardous & toxic sites, transportation infrastructure, and racial/ethnic minority status.

**Communities Most Impacted by Environmental Justice Factors:** Yorkville & Plano (Fox River cities), and Elburn





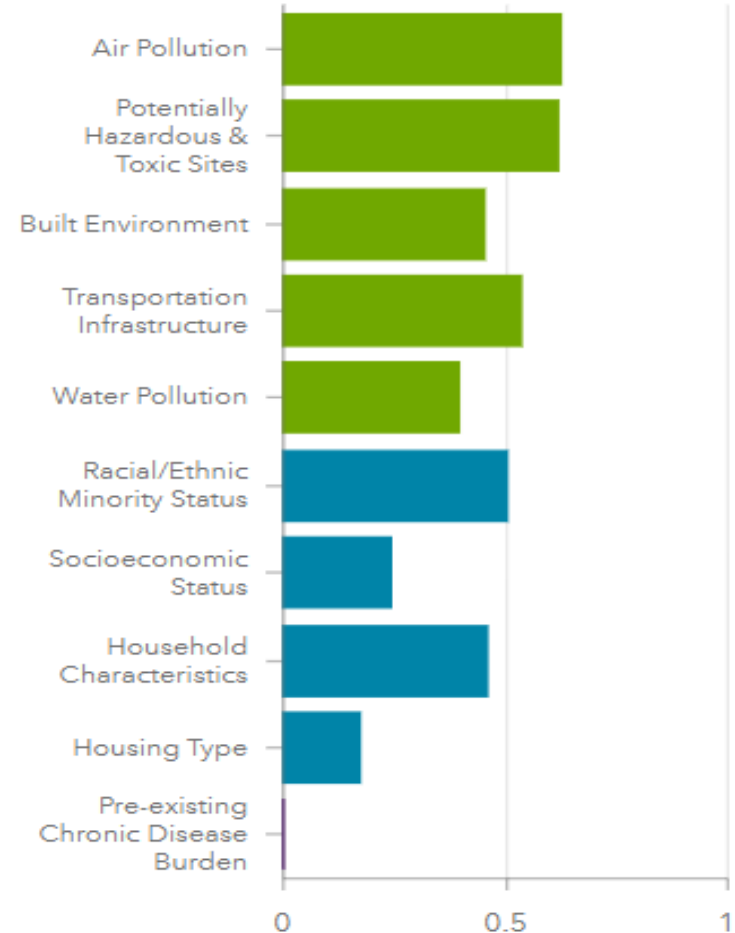


# Kendall County Environmental Justice

## Environmental Justice Themes for Kendall County

Overall Environmental Justice Rank	Social Vulnerability	Racial/ Ethnic Minority Status	Minority Status
		Socioeconomic Status	Poverty
			No High School Diploma
			Unemployment
			Housing Tenure
			Housing Burdened Lower-Income Households
			Lack of Health Insurance
		Household Characteristics	Lack of Broadband Access
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			Speaks English "Less than Well"
	Group Quarters		
	Mobile Homes		
	Environmental Burden	Air Pollution	Ozone
			PM2.5
			Diesel Particulate Matter
			Air Toxics Cancer Risk
		Potentially Hazardous & Toxic Sites	National Priority List Sites
			Toxic Release Inventory Sites
Treatment, Storage, and Disposal Sites			
Risk Management Plan Sites			
Coal Mines			
Built Environment		Lead Mines	
		Recreational Parks	
Transportation Infrastructure		Houses Built Pre-1980	
		Walkability	
		High-Volume Roads	
Water Pollution	Railways		
	Airports		
Health Vulnerability	Pre-existing Chronic Disease Burden	Impaired Surface Water	
		Asthma*	
		Cancer*	
		High Blood Pressure*	
		Diabetes*	
Poor Mental Health*			

Percentile Ranks of Domains in the Environmental Justice Index (average rank in current map extent or state/county selected)





# Kendall County Social Vulnerability

## Social Vulnerability Index for Kendall County

CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020  
KENDALL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

CDC/ATSDR SVI 2020 – KENDALL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

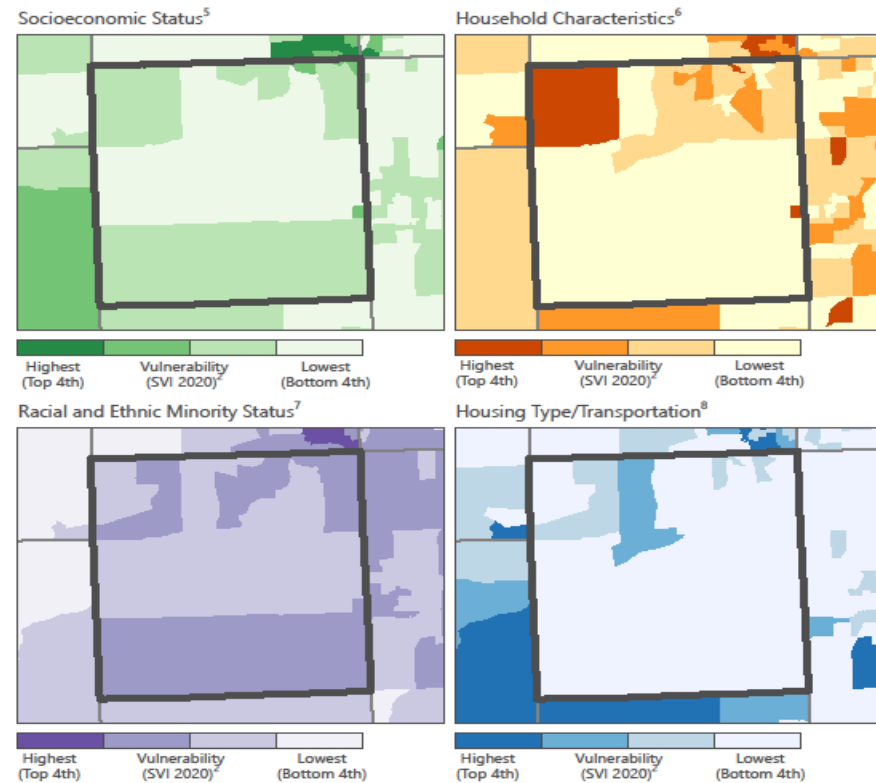


Overall Social Vulnerability<sup>1</sup>



**Social vulnerability** refers to a community's capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events ranging from natural disasters, such as tornadoes or disease outbreaks, to human-caused threats, such as toxic chemical spills. The **CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index (CDC/ATSDR SVI 2020)<sup>1</sup> County Map** depicts the social vulnerability of communities, at census tract level, within a specified county. CDC/ATSDR SVI 2020 groups sixteen census-derived factors into four themes that summarize the extent to which the area is socially vulnerable to disaster. The factors include economic data as well as data regarding education, family characteristics, housing, language ability, ethnicity, and vehicle access. Overall Social Vulnerability combines all the variables to provide a comprehensive assessment.

CDC/ATSDR SVI Themes



**Data Sources:** <sup>1</sup>CDC/ATSDR/GRASP, U.S. Census Bureau, Esri® StreetMap™ Premium.  
**Notes:** <sup>1</sup>Overall Social Vulnerability: All 16 variables. <sup>2</sup>Census tracts with 0 population. <sup>3</sup>The CDC/ATSDR SVI combines percentile rankings of US Census American Community Survey (ACS) 2016-2020 variables, for the state, at the census tract level. <sup>4</sup>Socioeconomic Status: Below 150% Poverty, Unemployed, Housing Costs Burden, No High School Diploma, No Health Insurance. <sup>5</sup>Household Characteristics: Aged 65 and Older, Aged 17 and Younger, Civilian with a Disability, Single-Parent Household, English Language Proficiency. <sup>6</sup>Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino (of any race); Black and African American, Not Hispanic or Latino; American Indian and Alaska Native, Not Hispanic or Latino; Asian, Not Hispanic or Latino; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic or Latino; Two or More Races, Not Hispanic or Latino; Other Races, Not Hispanic or Latino. <sup>7</sup>Housing Type/Transportation: Multi-Unit Structures, Mobile Homes, Crowding, No Vehicle, Group Quarters.  
**Projections:** Illinois Transverse Mercator NAD83 (ILGIC).  
**References:** Flanagan, B.E., et al., A Social Vulnerability Index for Disaster Management. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 2011. 8(1).  
 CDC/ATSDR SVI web page: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html>.



# What it looks like in Action

- On our path to understanding local barriers, pathways to engagement, and how to address current community needs in West Chicago and Bolingbrook:
  - 13 organizations (libraries, schools, government agencies, health departments, youth groups, LGBTQIA+ groups, forest preserve districts, social service groups, and garden clubs)
  - Emerging themes: youth health, mental health, time restraints, food, transportation, lack of environmental education
- Pilot Partnerships and Programs





- **Who:** *Outdoor Afro celebrates and inspires Black connections and leadership in nature. The network also connects Black people with our lands, water, and wildlife through outdoor education, recreation, and conservation.*
- **Why?** Increasing access and expanding both of our networks





OutDoor  
Afro





# Naper Pride

## OUT IN NATURE

Community Building & Outdoor Meetups for LGBTQIA+ People

- **Who?** Naper Pride brings together people from all walks of life- family, friends, neighbors, and allies in a celebration of inclusivity for ALL people of Naperville and the contributions LGBTQ+ individuals add to the diversity and quality of the life in the Naperville community.
- **Why?** Reaching new audiences, including those with a high need for nature-based supports.





# OUT IN NATURE

Community Building & Outdoor Meetups for LGBTQIA+ People



March  
**18**  
2023

*Community*  
**HEALTH**

**FAIR**

This event is free to the entire community, designed to encourage good health, prevent illness, and connect you to critical resources.

Presented by Naper Pride.

### HEALTH SCREENING AND CONSULTATION

- HIV testing
- Blood pressure
- Covid-19 Testing & Vaccination
- Flu Vaccinations

### COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Adoption & Fostering
- Legal Aid
- Veteran's benefits
- Domestic Violence Workshops
- Medical & Dental Insurance

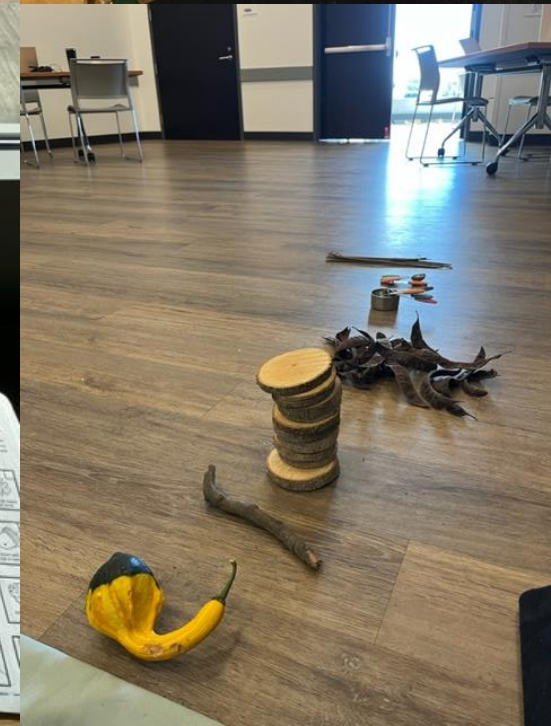


10:00 am to 2:00 pm

Community United Methodist Church  
20 N Center St, Naperville, IL



- **Who?** DuPage Health Department, Healthy West Chicago, and TCF are working together to engage families in West Chicago on nature, health, and wellness.
- **Why?** High need for West Chicago families to access health and wellness resources and it dovetails nicely with our current listening tour and longstanding school partnerships in West Chicago.
- **How?** Sponsoring events and attendings others to get families who are in WIC (or could be) involved in other health and wellness activities, including nature-based one.







- **Who?** Faith in Place empowers people of diverse faiths and spiritualities to be leaders in advancing environmental and racial justice, providing resources to educate, connect, and advocate for healthier communities.
- **Why?** Building and connecting both of our networks to reach more and difference audiences



# West Chicago and Environmental Justice

## Kress Creek - Kerr-McGee Chemical LLC

### DuPage County

There are four Kerr-McGee Superfund sites in the West Chicago area that were contaminated by radioactive thorium waste material. The waste was generated by a processing facility (now closed and owned by the Kerr-McGee Chemical Corporation) that operated in West Chicago between 1932 and 1973. Over many years, thorium-contaminated soil particles from the Kerr-McGee facility entered a nearby storm sewer, contaminating sediments in Kress Creek and the West Branch of the DuPage River. The thorium was also deposited into the floodplain during high water periods. The source of the pollution has been controlled so no more thorium is entering the environment.



ENVIRONMENT NEWS CHICAGO

### West Chicago's Latino residents say they don't want trash from Naperville, Wheaton and other white communities

Garbage brawl is called 'textbook' environmental racism.

By Brett Chase | Updated Sept 27, 2023, 9:24am CST

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Connect to  
FREE Xfinity  
Internet  
at home.

The Affordable  
Community

We save land.



We save rivers.

## **Strategic Plan Priority 1:**

Be more inclusive, impactful, and relevant to people and communities by growing and adapting our conservation programs to local needs.

# Key Takeaways

- **It's important to learn about the real experiences and community needs**
  - Gather and review relevant data
  - Build community relationships
  - Find multiple ways to hear from the community
- **Identify actions that can make your organization and programs more equitable, particularly for marginalized communities is an ongoing process**
  - Which voices are not at the decision-making table?
  - Who'd have trouble accessing your current services?
  - Who's not participating in your services?
  - What can you do to lower barriers to participation?
- **Look for the intersectionality between your mission and community needs**
  - We must be creative in trying new solutions --> Agroecology connections example
  - Don't go it alone – Expand your partnerships

# Lessons Learned



- We've Reached More and Different Audiences
- Building Trust is a Long-Term Process
  - Example of West Chicago
- New Partnerships Fuel Our Own Learning
- Opens Paths to New Resources
- How to decide? (is hard!)
- Eye on Long-Term Sustainability
- Telling the Story is Important

We save land.



We save rivers.

# Questions?

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