

Join us for the Land Ethic Leaders Program!

JUNE 1-3, 2012



Presented in partnership between:

Aldo Leopold Foundation
Northern Sierra Partnership
Sagehen Creek Field Station

WHAT IS LAND ETHIC LEADERS?

In his classic book *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold set forth his most enduring idea, the “land ethic,” which he articulated as a shift from seeing humans as “conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen.” Yet, even as he described this shift, he refused to define it. “Nothing so important as an ethic is ever ‘written,’” he wrote, indicating that instead it should evolve “in the minds of a thinking community.” The Land Ethic Leaders program is based on exactly this idea: Our goal is to enable community leaders across the country to find and create opportunities for rich and productive dialogue about humanity’s relationships to land.

Learn to help your community think about complex and changing environmental issues and have deeper discussion about their collective values and vision. Each Land Ethic Leaders workshop engages participants from across the country in leading reflective discussions designed to help people think about the relationship between human communities and the land. Paired with nature observation and land restoration work, these discussions offer a new way to engage and build the “thinking community.” The workshop focuses on giving participants the skills, tools, and confidence to help others explore their individual and collective connections to the land.

THE VALUE OF DISCUSSION

Much of the discussion of environmental issues in American society today focuses on identifying problems and formulating solutions. It is prescriptive rather than reflective. Very little time or space is given to contemplating the root causes of these problems, their ethical implications, or our personal and communal connections with the natural world. Working on conservation—whether through education, community outreach, research, or restoration—can be gratifying, but it can also be emotionally draining. Deep understanding and knowledge of the full implications of the ecological problems before us can lead to a feeling of helplessness and disengagement, a sentiment that affects professionals and concerned citizens alike.

The Land Ethic Leaders program attempts to directly address this issue by giving you a chance to explore, question, and reaffirm your beliefs and values, deepening your commitment to conservation and your communities. The program also aims to empower you to create similar dialogues in your own towns and workplaces, getting people talking about conservation in deeper, more meaningful ways.



What People Are Saying...

"I felt that every minute of my time was maximized by the well-wrought training presented. I have been teaching since 1975, and as you would expect, have sat through what amounts to years of training and meetings, and the two days last week were the most meaningful and valuable to me."

-August 2011 participant

"The Land Ethic Leaders program went beyond my expectations, it created a safe place to explore and honor not only my own feelings, but those of others. Listening actively was a powerful reminder of how what we think we know and what we believe is linked, vitally, to how we act. The program facilitates a deeper look at our interior landscape and in doing so, collectively, may be the catalyst for deep cultural change."

-September 2010 participant

"It was reinvigorating and inspiring, doubly to know I can lead these discussions and help re-inspire other conservationists."

-July 2011 participant

"Now I feel much more confident about my ability to discuss, and not debate, issues that I feel passionate about. I loved meeting knowledgeable people and realizing that our shared values were more than enough to overcome any age/experience differences."

-September 2010 participant

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

- **Building Leaders:** Find the Land Ethic Leader within you. Learn to use your own caring and connection to the land to inspire others and help to create reflective dialog about our collective conservation values.
- **Connecting to Nature and Each Other:** Learn to use observation, participation, and reflection as a systematic method for connecting or reconnecting people with the land. Explore, renew, and deepen your own personal connections to the land.
- **Recognizing Common Values Across Divides:** Engage with a community of your peers from a variety of places and backgrounds. Learn to guide reflective discussions that build community around shared conservation values.

WHAT YOU'LL TAKE AWAY

- Skills and confidence in leading reflective discussions on conservation values;
- Tools to organize community-based events that connect people and land;
- A public screening license and resource kit to help you show the film *Green Fire* in your community;
- The ability to express your own definition of a land ethic and the confidence to help others develop theirs;
- New friends and connections to a network of Land Ethic Leaders across the country and around the world.

YOUR COMMITMENT

We want you to engage with various members of your community not only to introduce Leopold's ideas, but to discuss them in depth. Participants are asked to plan an event or series of activities using specific tools and techniques from the workshop, within one year of attending Land Ethic Leaders. Target audiences for events may range from the general public, to your own co-workers or students, to groups or clubs, and more.

COSTS:

The workshop fee is \$350, including all meals, lodging, program materials, and a public screening license and kit for *Green Fire* (\$150 value).

NORTHERN SIERRA TRAINING (at Sagehen Creek Field Station):

Fri-Sun, June 1-3, 2012

Program begins Friday evening and ends Sunday afternoon.

Visit www.aldoleopold.org/Programs/lel.shtml to register or contact Jeannine Richards at jeannine@aldoleopold.org or 608.355.0279, ext. 25 for more information.