



CHURCH OF DEEP ECOLOGY

Recognizing nature as the true root of our spirituality, we will work to encourage a more sustainable lifestyle based in exploring and celebrating the interconnectedness of all living things and the Earth.

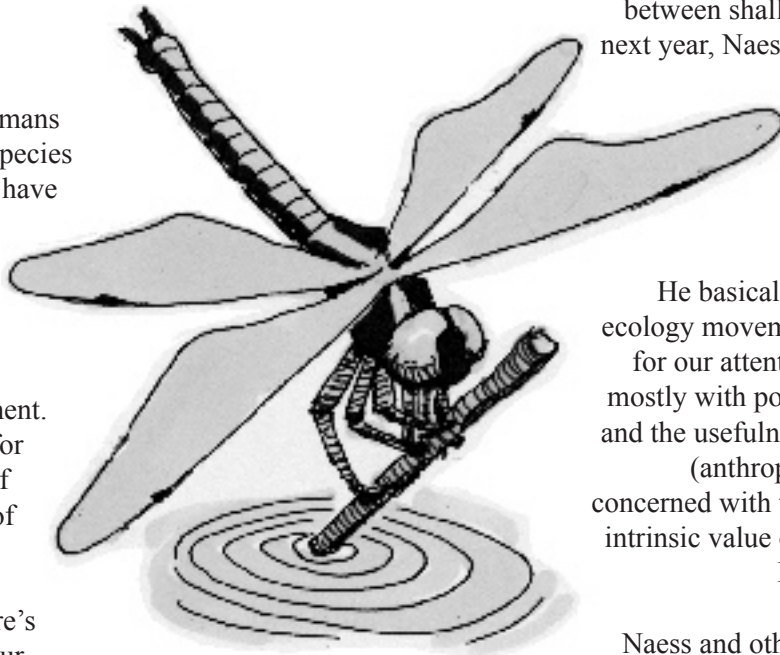
What is Deep Ecology?

Deep Ecology is the radical idea that all life has the right to exist, that no one species is more important than another.

According to Judi Bari, "Nature does not exist to serve humans. Rather, humans are a part of nature, one species among many. All species have the right to exist for their own sake, regardless of their usefulness to humans."

We agree with this statement. Biodiversity is essential for the continued existence of the living Earth. As part of this biodiversity, humans must learn to live within nature, according to nature's law, and learn to accept our role as one among many.

We embrace Deep Ecology because it gets back to our roots. Not our roots as humans living in a modern society, but as members of something much larger, where our every action affects those around us. We embrace Deep Ecology as a return to nature-based living, rather than the greed-based societies we have come to know.

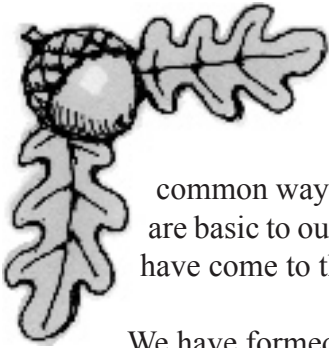


A Brief History of Deep Ecology

In 1972, at the Third World Futures conference in Bucharest, Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess presented a paper which first distinguished between shallow and deep ecology. The next year, Naess published, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movements," in which he presented his philosophy to the world.

He basically stated that there are two ecology movements which are competing for our attention. The first is concerned mostly with pollution, resource depletion and the usefulness of the Earth to humans (anthropocentrism). The second is concerned with the diversity, richness, and intrinsic value of all the Earth. This is the Deep Ecology movement.

Naess and others spent years explaining and building the Deep Ecology movement around the world. In 1984, while camping in Death Valley, Naess and George Sessions conceived the eight guiding principles of Deep Ecology. These principles are not meant to be dogmatic, but rather a starting point for discussion and action on deep ecological matters. Anyone who broadly agrees with the principles will see the implications of them in their daily lives, and live accordingly.



WHY A CHURCH OF DEEP ECOLOGY?

What is a church, but a group of individuals gathered together to worship in a common way? The beliefs of Church of Deep Ecology members are deeply rooted. These beliefs are basic to our very nature. We come from various backgrounds—religiously and otherwise—and have come to the realization that nature is the root of our spirituality.

We have formed a church so as to have these convictions recognized as the sacred beliefs that they are. These beliefs are just as sacred to us as are the beliefs and teachings of other religions to their followers.

In order to worship freely, we needed to be recognized by state and federal governments. The Church of Deep Ecology was founded in 2001 in the state of Minnesota. The Church of Deep Ecology is registered with the Minnesota Office of the Secretary of State. Donations to the Church of Deep Ecology are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

Eight Guiding Principles of Deep Ecology

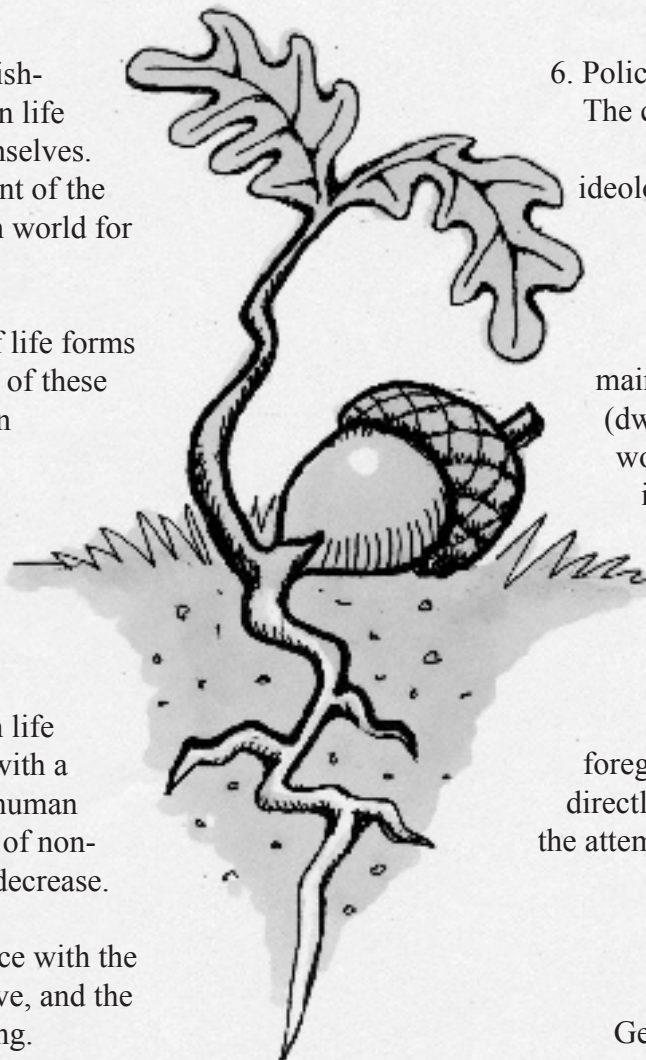
1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.

2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.

5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.



6. Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating quality (dwelling in situations of inherent worth) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes.

As revised by Arne Naess and George Sessions in January 2000

RITUAL

Worship

The Church of Deep Ecology teaches that spiritual worship is personal, and that we should make our worship in our everyday lives. Rather than separate ourselves from our daily lives for an hour a week, we strive to act daily based upon the Eight Guiding Principles of Deep Ecology.

Marriage

The Church of Deep Ecology does not believe that individuals need to have their various relationships validated by any church. We will, however, perform marriage ceremony as dictated by state and federal authorities so that people can have their relationships recognized by the government.

Death Rites

The highest and best end is that our death is of value to the Earth and its inhabitants. Only when we are part of the cycle of life in death, is the cycle complete and we are of some final use to the living Earth. To this end, the Church of Deep Ecology recognizes proper death rites as ones that will return one's matter to the cycle in a natural way, as is the case with all other animals.



Quarterly Gatherings

The Church of Deep Ecology meets quarterly on or about Winter Solstice, Vernal Equinox, Summer Solstice and Autumnal Equinox. The gatherings are open to Ministers of the Church of Deep Ecology, Members of the Church of Deep Ecology and Invited Supporters of the Church of Deep Ecology. People interested in participation in the Quarterly Gatherings should make their interest known to the Ministers of the Church of Deep Ecology.



order of the wild

Members of the Church of Deep Ecology have varying viewpoints and beliefs. The common threads that bind us together are the principles of deep ecology. The order of the wild is founded on the following beliefs:

We cannot improve upon nature. Re-wilding the Earth and our selves are our goals. We recognize no authority but nature.

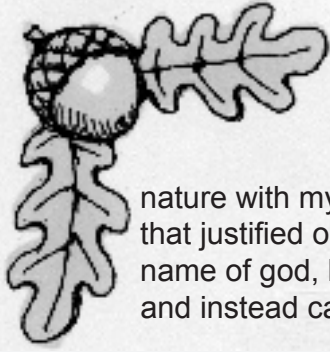
Every element of life requires death. Simply inhaling, we kill millions of living beings to survive. We strive to make every death a respectful one, committing no murder but for sustenance or defense.

We must strive to find our connections with all beings. Relationships extending beyond the human family must be reasserted.

The patterns of wild nature in the places we live, inform our living. When we accept the bounty of the Earth, there is no need for technologies that support a consumer lifestyle that is unsustainable and unnecessary.

We must act now. Members of the order of the wild have an obligation to bring about a re-wilding, to help the living Earth on the path to healing. This can take many forms, from the destruction of the critical infrastructure of civilization and direct defense of nature, to preserving the knowledge of the old ways.

Humans vs. Nature



For millions of years, humans lived in a predator-prey relationship with all species. An equilibrium existed on the Earth. As we lost sight of our origins, we began to develop tools and ways of living that insulated us from predators, the elements and the uncertainty of hunger. We explained away nature with mythology. We became arrogant, and developed religious and state institutions that justified our behavior and helped us to live with the atrocities committed every day in the name of god, king, country, ego and sport. Humans stopped looking to nature for answers, and instead came up with answers that suited the moment.

All life, all around the Earth, is now subject to the whims of the dominant culture: a culture repressed, disconnected completely from the wildness of the Earth and the wildness in itself. Only through this alienation could anyone commit such atrocities as the captains of industry and government do daily.

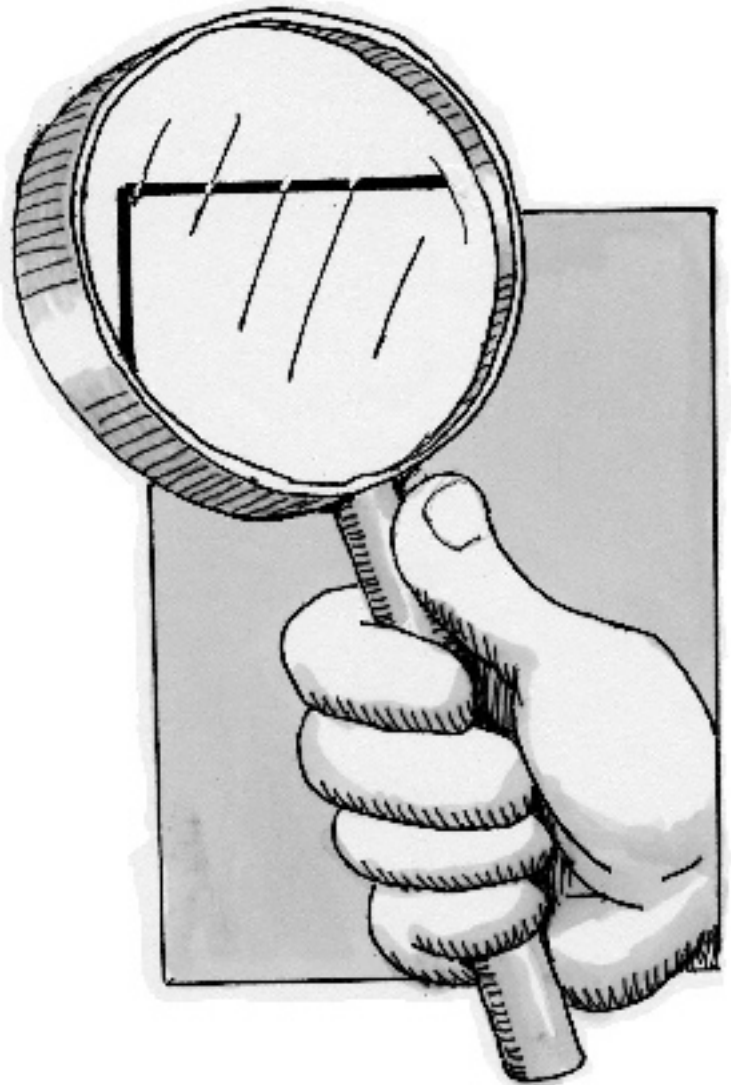
We strive to find ways of healing our selves and the land, letting the land heal us, and living in place. A place will only reveal itself if we are there long enough to see the seasons change, to sit very quietly, very still for a long time. This is the process of re-wilding ourselves, becoming feral. Re-wilding the Earth, defending wildness where it remains, and stewarding injured land onto the healing path of re-wilding, is our way. Learning the ways of nature—this is the path of Deep Ecology.

First, we are animals.

As you study the natural world, pay special attention to the other animals. What do they spend their waking hours busied with? Are they hunting? Are they preoccupied with mating? Are they building or finding shelter? Look at the other animals and see what the real focus of their lives is. Draw the inspiration for your daily life from the patterns of the natural world.

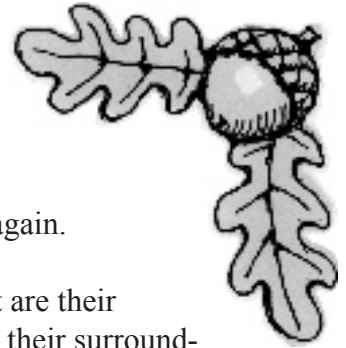
Survey your life. Are you spending your life striving for the things that an animal does, or are you toiling for things outside of those natural needs? Try to see the human place within nature. What changes can you make as you strive to live within that natural place? Strive to find your animal niche. Look at your life and make a decision to avoid the things that are not part of your natural animal. Live each moment with purpose, as does the squirrel or the dragonfly.

As you observe the natural world ask yourself, “Do animals take more than they need?” And ask yourself, “How many animals destroy for reasons other than self-preservation?”



Where do you live?

Where does your home come from? Most of us live in houses which are barriers against nature. From our windows we may be able to watch the birds, but we can't feel the flutter of their wings in the air, we can't feel the chill of winter, can't smell the rain. It doesn't have to be this way. Our homes could be inspired by the homes of other animals, allowing us to dwell in the natural world again.



Look at the animals around you. Where do they live? Do they own the land? What are their shelters made of? Can you even see their shelters, or do they blend in so well with their surroundings that you can't find them? Are the animals' homes larger than they require? Does the animal build its home in a place that threatens the animal's very existence? How does your home compare with these?

An animal's home is utilitarian, not excessive. Animals' homes are made of natural materials: mud, sticks, sod, bamboo, straw. Animals' homes will degrade, once abandoned, or they will be taken over and maintained by another animal. Animals live in homes that breathe, that don't poison them. When you see an animal shelter, you see it as part of nature, not an impenetrable barrier between that animal and the natural world.

Our shelters should be constantly changing, growing, degrading, according to our needs. Shelter is transient, malleable, something that we can abandon from season to season, if our needs dictate.

What are you eating?

Are you actually sustaining yourself, or are you slowly killing yourself and the world around you? When you look at the natural world, do you see other animals passing up their basic nutritional needs for poison?

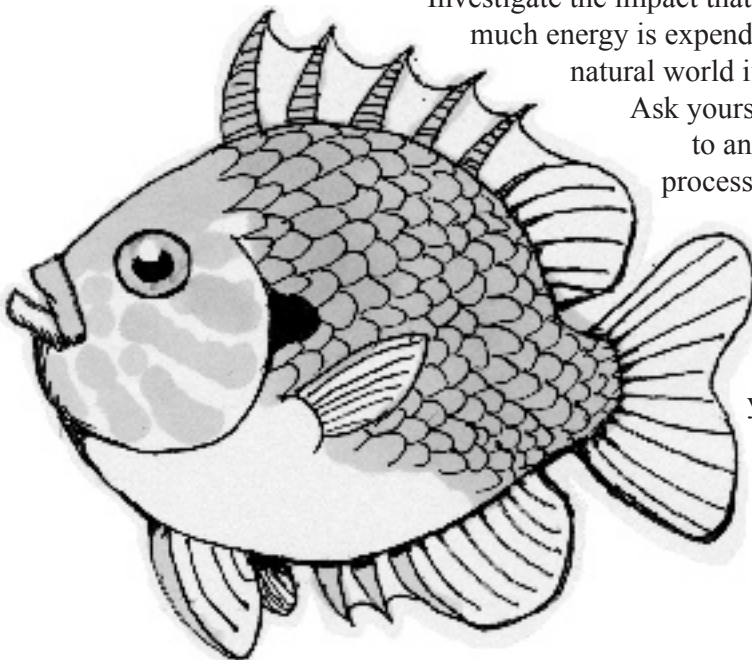
When do you think that the humanimal evolved? What foods do you think were available to that animal? Do you think that you are evolved to eat the diet you are currently eating?

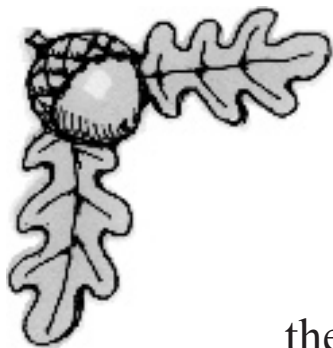
Investigate the impact that your food choices have on the natural world. How much energy is expended to produce your food? Is it less damaging to the natural world if you grow a radish, or if you get it from a market?

Ask yourself, "What kind of ecological damage is connected to an organic apple from the other side of the Earth?" Is processed vegan food any better for you or the planet than raising chickens in the city?

How many of your food needs can you actually meet for yourself? Can you find it locally? Where does it grow? Before eating that piece of fruit, ask yourself, where does this come from? Can you find something similar growing wild in your neighborhood or bioregion?

As we think about our food, let's think about what makes sense, and why it makes sense.
Eat deliberately.





Taking Action

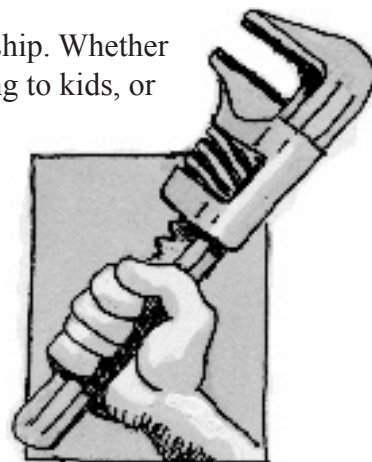
(Don't just sit there, do something)

“Never doubt that a few committed people can change the world. In fact, it’s the only thing that ever has.
-- Margaret Mead

The Earth is not dying, it is being killed. You see it everyday, everywhere you look, and you can’t just sit back and watch it. Direct action is vital to stopping environmental destruction and confronting corporate control. Direct action is taking personal action to directly improve your life, taking personal responsibility and living deliberately. Think of direct action as self-defense: defending yourself and the Earth against the forces that are destroying nature and wildness. Remember, you are a powerful person.

For members of the Church of Deep Ecology, direct action is a form of worship. Whether you’re blocking bulldozers, pulling biotech crops, teaching organic gardening to kids, or biking rather than driving, you need to fill your days, and your *nights*, with direct action. Direct action to save the Earth is deliberately working toward a vision of species in balance on a healthy, living Earth.

Gather your own food. Walk to work. Eat local, organic food. Turn off the lights. Read by candlelight. Plant a fruit tree. Barter instead of buy. Identify the edible plants in your yard. Wake up with the sun. Sleep when you’re tired. Eat when you’re hungry. Meet your neighbors. Form a community. Compost. Take someone to your favorite wild place. Watch the squirrels. Watch the wasps. Watch the blue jays. Learn from them all.



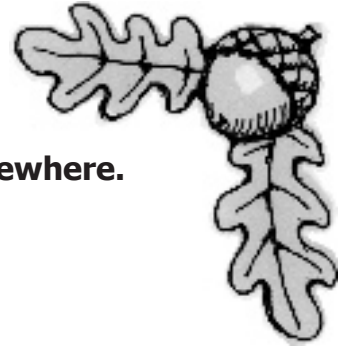
You can host a straw bale construction workshop or start a bio-diesel cooperative. The more you can do for yourself, by yourself, the less negative impact you will have on the Earth. You can learn the ways of the Earth, and teach these to others. By learning the ways of the Earth, you will learn what’s best for you, and for the Earth. Together we will destroy the class of experts who tell us that they know best, and instead listen to our natural instincts, taking our clues from our surroundings. Define the terms of your own survival, and then take action.

**“Sentiment without
action is the ruin of the soul.”**

-- Edward Abbey

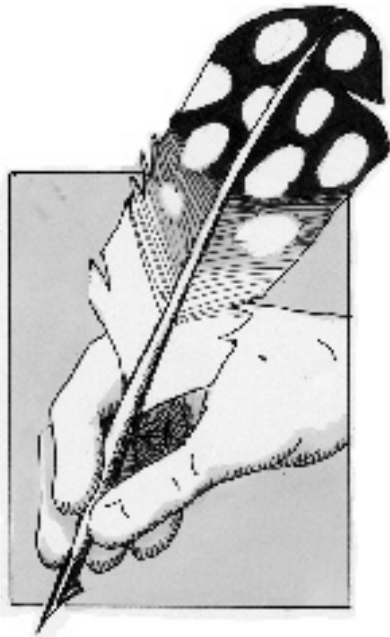
Start your studies

We draw our inspiration from many sources; from nature, and humans who write with nature in mind. We all have to start somewhere.



Action

Adkins, Jan, Moving Heavy Things
Angier, Bradford, How to Stay Alive in the Woods
Dickson, Murray, Where There is No Dentist
Gibbons, Euell, Stalking the Wild Asparagus
Jenkins, Joseph, The Humanure Handbook: A Guide to Composting Human Manure
Mollison, Bill, Permaculture: A Designers' Manual
Oehler, Mike, The \$50 and Up Underground House Book
Shelter Publications, Shelter; & Shelter II
Werner, David, Where There is No Doctor
Wescott, David, Society of Primitive Technology, Primitive Technology, A Book of Earth Skills; & Primitive Technology II, Ancestral Skills



www.deep-ecology.org
www.deepecology.info
www.ecoself.net
www.earthfirstjournal.org
www.paleofood.com
www.religionandnature.com

Inspiration

Devall, Bill and George Sessions, Deep Ecology; & Simple in Means/Rich in Ends

Devall, Bill, Living Richly In An Age of Limits

Diamond, Jared, Guns, Germs and Steel

Eldredge, Niles, Dominion

Foreman, Dave, Confessions of an Eco-Warrior; & Eco-Defense

Glendenning, Chellis, My Name is Chellis, and I'm in Recovery from Western Civilization

Kimbrell, Andrew, ed., Fatal Harvest: The Tragedy of Industrial Agriculture

Macy, Joanna, and John Seed, Thinking Like a Mountain, Toward a Council of All Beings

Naess, Arne, Ecology, Community & Lifestyle

Perlman, Fredy, Against His-story, Against Leviathan!

Quinn, Daniel, Ishmael; & The Story of B

Sessions, George, Deep Ecology For the 21st Century

Zerzan, John, ed., Against Civilization

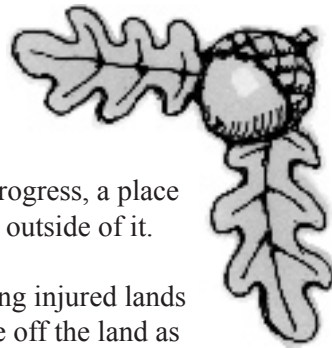
CrimethInc. Workers' Collective, Days of War, Nights of Love

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Vision

We envision our community as an educational center for retreats, conferences and workshops which further the influence of Deep Ecology on the Earth's human inhabitants. We will offer an ever-changing classroom of living in harmony with the living Earth. We see a never-ending work in progress, a place for inspiration where humans can fall into the realm of nature, not always outside of it.



We need a place to make our vision a reality. Preserving pristine lands, healing injured lands and helping them onto the path of re-wilding, we will teach others to survive off the land as they steward it.

We know there are ecosystems out there in need of re-wilding, we know there are properties, because of years of abuse, that could benefit from our vision. We know there is land somewhere that someone would like to see preserved or healed. We need to make connections with these lands and their caretakers.

Donations

The Church of Deep Ecology needs your donations of land and money to help fulfill our vision for the living Earth. This is a great opportunity to guarantee preservation of the land that you cherish so much, while gaining tax benefits and retaining the right to see your vision for your land achieved.

All donations are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Anyone who donates at least \$25 per year to the Church will receive our newsletter and be invited to our Quarterly Gatherings. For a complete wish list, please visit: www.churchofdeepecology.org.



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