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# RAISE THE STAKES

Number 20

The Planet Drum Review

\$4

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## ECO-GOVERNANCE II: Anatomy of the Shasta Bioregional Gathering



SCOTT HESS

*Curing the Green City Blues*

*Reflections on Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V*

*Musings on Congresses and the Bioregional Movement*

# Bioregional Gatherings Close-Up

Kari Norborg Carter

This issue of *Raise the Stakes* presents a close-up and in-depth look at the first Shasta Bioregional Gathering (SBG) held September 1991 in northern California's Napa Valley. It is a kind of anatomy of this event, providing an outline of its conception and planning, on-the-scene accounts of meetings and activities, and descriptions of grassroots actions and responses it generated. Through the Gathering, inhabitants of the Shasta bioregion celebrated their efforts to rediscover or maintain a local identity and to live according to the ecology—the self-governing natural processes—of their region. This report includes detailed descriptions of its ingredients, such as the invitation, registration ritual, and cultural presentation schedules, as well as insights into why the event suc-

ceeded so well. We hope it will prove helpful as a guide for other groups who are planning a gathering of their own.

Place-related culture flavors bioregional gatherings as much as or more than politics, and the SBG was no exception. The delectable and truly "Californian" cuisine of John Birdsall and Shirlee Quick; Gary Snyder's and Jerry Martien's regional poetry; simultaneously sobering and energetic homemade "eco-raps"; earth-connecting Native American ceremonies; Judy Goldhaft's eloquent and educational Water Web dance—these and much more gave spirit to the Gathering, and we attempt to capture part of it here.

Some of the spirit of Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V, held this past

spring in Kerrville, Texas, is likewise reflected in a report by Gene Marshall. Also inspiring is Whitney Smith's invaluable and detailed account of the first Toronto Bioregion Week, including how he pulled off this extraordinarily successful urban gathering (despite his initial "feeling-alienated-in-the-city" sentiments). In addition, Seattle sociologist David McCloskey provides a not-too-delicate critique of some of the rhetoric and processes involved in bioregional "congressing."

As in the previous issue of *RTS* (entitled *Eco-Governance: Bioregional Gatherings*), thoughts about why bioregional gatherings are important, what happens—or should happen—during them, and what participants gain from them provide running themes here. Yet another concern is noticeably recurrent: what is the proper *modus operandi* of bioregional politics, or eco-governance? Both McCloskey and bioregional mapping expert George Tukul warn us of the potential for insularity or provincialism in locally-focused groups. Tukul suggests that, like the natural areas we live in, our bioregional communities must be linked by "corridors"; we need avenues of communication and cooperation to "help overcome the threats to diversity" that isolation poses. In a similar vein, an impromptu SBG meeting discusses the possible problems that arise when state government takes on "bioregional" initiatives. (*RTS* hopes to publish more comprehensive visions of eco-governance in the fu-

ture. We welcome your thoughts on this issue.)

In the U.S. today, the political tenor is one of increasing distance between voters and those who "represent" them in government. We grow more distant from politicians on the economic level, in our lifestyles and cultures, and by sheer population size. While we recently stood or drowned in the wake of George Bush's appalling performance at the Rio Earth Summit, the Supreme Court floated two unconscionable actions. One of these disabled the Endangered Species Act for U.S.-funded projects overseas; the other prevents wildlife experts and activists from contesting illegal administration policies in court. Clearly our national government is refusing to listen to the popular majority, who consistently cite environmental concerns as an important—if not the most important—political issue.

In the face of this, it is easy to grow discouraged and feel powerless. But now is a critical time for strengthening our regional voices and identities. We can join together on local, more manageable levels. We can get to know the characters, histories and ecologies of our regions. We can develop a strong sense of local culture in celebration of our diversity. Through these actions, we can regain a sense of self-determination and a clear agenda for living in harmony with the many places—and eventually the one planet—where we live.

## Announcement

### Call for Artwork and Cultural Reports

Looking to the future, *RTS* 21 will be dedicated to the day-to-day living out of bioregional culture. How do you celebrate or participate in the unique character of your region? We invite you to send us your reports as well as copies of original artwork, photography, poetry, stories, song lyrics and photos of artwork or crafts that express your lifelace. Also, if you know of an artisan, performer,

ceremonialist, healer or anyone who expresses local culture in an intriguing manner, let us know if they should be interviewed. Written submissions should be sent on computer disks if possible (Macintosh or IBM, in Microsoft Word, Wordstar, or Word Perfect), including a hard copy and postage-paid return envelope. All submissions should be received by October 15, 1992.



Shasta Bioregional Gathering opens among the redwoods.

## Shasta Bioregional Gathering NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BIG TIME!

Dear Friends,

We have been working in our communities from the Klamath-Siskiyou to the Tehachapi Mountains and from the Pacific Ocean to the Sierra Nevada, for environmental and social causes. Salmon runs have been restored, urban gardens have been planted and neighborhood activism is on the rise. All of these concerns are connected to the overall well-being of the bioregion where we live and it is time for people in Northern California to come together. We are a diverse bunch. We have different agendas, different issues, but there is common ground that we need to share and experience.

You are invited to attend the Shasta Bioregional Gathering. Join urban and rural Northern Californians to discuss mutual bioregional issues, explore our cultural heritage, develop goals for the future and celebrate. Let's start declaring what we want and do something cooperatively about it.

This invitation contains some specific information on the Gathering but we would like to stress that the eventual content of the event is up to the participants who attend. Also, this is a not-for-profit event and donations are tax-deductible.

Our gathering will take place at the Enchanted Hills Camp in Napa, California. The program will begin Thursday evening, September 12 and continue through late afternoon Sunday, September 15, 1991.

The program for the Gathering is in process. Offerings of knowledge and organizational help are welcome. Plans to date include opening and closing ceremonies, introduction to the local ecology of Northern California, exhibits, demonstrations, crafts, nature walks, late afternoon fun (music, games and stuff) and a big party Saturday night. Caucuses and watershed councils may claim time and space to form. Networking and friendmaking opportunities will abound.

People of all interests are encouraged to join in and be part of the bioregional celebratory experience. Please call us if you have any questions or need more information.

Sincerely,

Crofton Diack, Event Coordinator  
Shasta Bioregional Gathering  
Planet Drum Foundation  
(415)285-6556

## A Gathering Emerges

Kari Norborg Carter

At the 1990 Fourth North American Bioregional Congress in Maine, several northern Californians realized that perhaps the time had come for a similar event in their region. Recruiting the help of Planet Drum staff members, Marie Dolcini and Freeman House surveyed local bioregionalists and concluded that many folks were eager to partake in the first Shasta Bioregional Gathering.

Thus began a long, labor-intensive and rewarding time of planning and organizing an informative and multi-cultural event. SBG organizer Crofton Diack provided the following insights into what made the Gathering so successful:

1. The planning committee strived "always to be as inclusive as possible by working with many different people from the beginning." The Gathering was not to be a Planet Drum production but an event put together by the participants themselves.

2. Initial meetings were held to "feel out if this was a worthwhile thing to do" and to determine whether there was sufficient support. Planning the details came later.

3. To allow everyone to participate in the event, planners worked to keep attendance costs as low as possible and to secure scholarship funds.

4. At the Gathering, core people took the role of "roadies for a rock show." After they "set up the stage," they essentially let the "performance" run itself—thanks to the willing help of participants, of course.

*"Vastly different people coming from incredibly different walks of life doing hugely different things but finding common ground, talking, making plans for the future and really coming together—that's what bioregionalism does through advocating a cultural relationship to the earth."*

CROFTON DIACK  
SBG COORDINATOR



## Managerial Lineup

From late January through June of 1991, many people took part in a series of planning meetings that led to the Shasta Bioregional Gathering. We wish to thank all of them for their early input.

The following people volunteered an extraordinary amount of work as managers. We hope the SBG was an enjoyable and informative meeting that will lead to future common efforts for Northern California.

### Planet Drum Staff

**Peter Berg** Workshop, Panel and Presentation Co-Manager, Saturday Cultural Presentation Co-Manager, radical and humorist

**Crofton Diack** Gathering's tireless Coordinator

**Judy Goldhaft** Food Manager, Saturday Cultural Presentation Co-Manager, interpretive hydrologist

**Greg Gregory** Registration Manager

**Joanna Pertz** Arts & Crafts Manager, "The Muse from Manhattan"

**Kim Jack** Food Donations Assistant, "the woman with the sweet voice"

### Volunteers

**Ocean Berg** Childcare Manager

**John Davies** Transportation Manager, artwork

**Craig Dremann** Booths and Tabling Manager, "the seed guy"

**Freeman House** Workshop, Panel and Presentation Co-Manager, "salmon swami"

**David Simpson** Friday Cultural Presentation Manager

**Patrick Walkinshaw** Manager's Assistant, Registration, all-species "gopher" representative

Thanks to Rebecca Haycox for designing and laying out the beautiful SBG flyers.



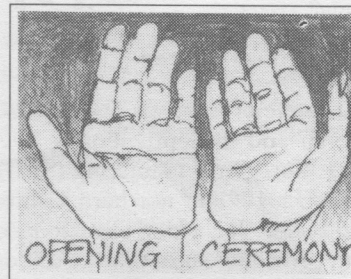
JOHN DAVIES

### Peter Berg

If you've seen the Shasta Bioregional Gathering symbol, you may have noticed that it has representations of some of the principal features of the living geography that we are also part of: a whale, a redwood branch, an oak branch, and Mt. Shasta, representing the breadth of this extraordinary place. The bioregion extends from the Pacific Ocean to the North and South coasts, the Klamath-Siskiyou Mountains, the Sierra Nevada, the Central Valley, the rivers that come down to the Delta and into San Francisco Bay, and as far south as I suppose people will want to claim.

That's the place and the natural systems within it that really mediate this gathering. The native plants and animals, watersheds, soils, climate, and land forms really are mediating us. That's the subject of attention here. There is no way we could live without being a part of those things.

# Shasta Bioregional Gathering Opening



JOANNA PERTZ

It's only been a temporary lapse that most people somehow forgot that what really mediates human relationships is the natural health of the place where they live. I think what we are trying to do is to reclaim that, to try to make it part of our lives again, and to learn to trust each other about it.

We are often suspicious that somebody has got some angle or some political routine that they are trying to run on people, or some sort of power trip. But we are re-

spectful of natural continuities and features. We share a desire to restore and maintain them and to "get out of the way." You can get out of the way actively by trying to restore things. You can also get out of the way by not putting dams on rivers or other obstacles to natural systems that we all ultimately depend upon.

Our goal is to be native to this place, to respect the things that are native to it and to develop social, cultural, educational, artistic, and political forms as appropriate tools for that purpose.

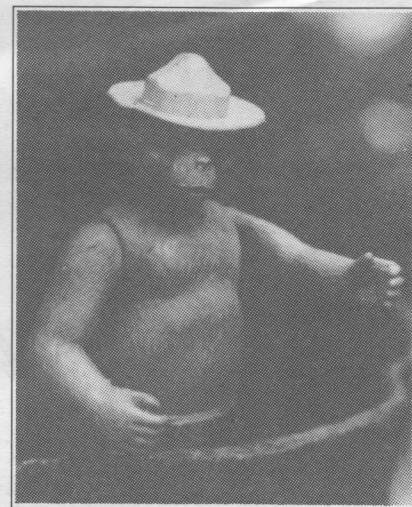
I would like to open this Gathering with that wish.

(Excerpts)

## Campers' Advisory Bulletin

- A. Campers should be warned that there's been an outbreak of rabid screeds among isolated populations of north coast malcontents (*Disgruntus cranki*). With the exception of the physical indicators of foaming mouth and apoplectic coloring, symptoms are rhetorical. The following whining notes are considered typical and should constitute positive identification: "Shasta is not a proper name for the bioregion." "The bioregion it purports to name is actually at least three bioregions, none of them containing Mt. Shasta." "It's premature to name things before we know what they are." "Isn't that the name of a cheap soda pop?" Since the disease is transmitted by proximal contamination and bites, the best prevention is complete avoidance of infected individuals.
- B. When campers have completed three workshop units—or three meals, whichever come first—they will have absorbed sufficient bioregional doctrine to begin planning their future lives at Enchanted Hills. Once it is understood that true bioregionalists Can't Move, participants will become Dwellers and can begin to upgrade their campsites to permanent homestead status. Building permits are available at SBG HQ. Please disregard all other parties claiming to be Enchanted Hills representatives. Our rangers will be on hand to make sure your stay is a long and happy one.
- C. Because of the rarified atmosphere surrounding bioregional gatherings, campers are unusually vulnerable to Politically Correct Thinking (PCT), a hot-air borne virus that excites the self-righteous neural complex of the ego, which in turn numbs the imagination and shrivels the spirit. In its early stages, PCT divides humans into victims and oppressors and often progresses into absolute either/or thinking. Severe cases are marked by the development of liberal totalitarianism, a state of mind where everything not prohibited is compulsory. A sense of humor is both preventative and cure.
- D. Your SBG experience has been carefully structured to provide a no-stress conflict-free zone within the camping area. However, attendees should be aware that anarcho-psycho terrorists have threatened to inject lunatic tendencies into your bioregional encounter. Provocateurs disguised as workshop leaders may attempt to participate in otherwise-normal cultural presentations. Members of the notorious Black Bart Brigade may disrupt workshops and panels with poetry, dance, theater and other inappropriateness. You are asked to cooperate with SBG rangers, who are trained to deal with this sort of cheap watershed trash.

Fred Hardpan & Norman Loon  
SBG Psycho-Rangers



JUDY GOLDHAFT

## Sponsors List

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the following sponsors of the 1991 Shasta Bioregional Gathering:

- Diana Arsham
- Botanical Dimensions
- Calvin Broomhead
- California Conservation Corps
- Mel Krebs
- East Bay Greens
- Green Earth Foundation—Ralph Metzner
- Institute for Sustainable Forestry
- D & Z Karzog
- Donald Lotter
- Mattole Restoration Council
- New Dimensions Radio
- New Society Publishers
- Thomas E. O'Conner
- Planet Drum Foundation
- Redwood City Seed Company
- Juan-Tomas Rehbock
- Small Systems Company
- Threshold International
- Center for Environmental Renewal
- The Yuba Watershed Institute

## Announcement

### Upriver Downriver Returns

In the wake of steps taken at the Shasta Bioregional Gathering, *Upriver Downriver*, a magazine of essays, poetry, art and fiction, has emerged from a three-year hibernation.

Noted for its literate and non-ideological approach to living in northern California, *Upriver Downriver* last appeared in 1989. Former editors Jim Dodge and Jerry Martien convened a dozen or so people who still remembered the magazine to decide whether its two-year silence should be made official and permanent.

Perhaps it was something in the water or the air at the Gathering, but those present

acclaimed the revival of *Upriver Downriver*, despite formidable obstacles of energy (too much required) and money (too little available). Twelve people constituted themselves as an editorial board, with Mattolians Freeman House and Seth Zuckerman agreeing to coordinate the actual editing and production. Dodge and Martien will become the elder statespersons of the journal. Gary Snyder will continue as a contributing editor. Seven others—Marie Dolcini, Jon Haumeder, Brian Hill, Stephanie McBrayer, Sarah Pollock, Gen Snyder and Christine Vida—will help guide the magazine and assist in drumming up the necessary material and money.

Issue 14 appeared in May 1992, thanks in part to generous underwriting by Chuck Gould and

Green Mountain Bookstore. Successive issues will follow quarterly, if the planets and other actors align themselves correctly. Old subscription obligations will be honored and new ones are welcome. Send \$10 for four issues to P.O. Box 103, Petrolia, CA 95558 (sample copy \$3).

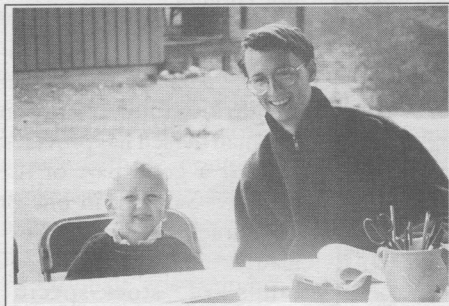
Like a bear awakening from its winter dormancy, *Upriver Downriver* is seeking nourishment in the form of manuscripts, poems and artwork—as well as material blandishments, such as pictures of dead presidents—to build our subscription base. Contributions beyond the price of a subscription are tax deductible. Thank you.

Seth Zuckerman

# "Why" Register?

Lyman Gregory

Every registration manager for a bioregional gathering needs a helpful and humorous assistant. Mine was Nicholas, two-and-a-half-year-old son of the director of Enchanted Hills Camp, the site of our gathering. He helped me by saying "Hi" a lot and giving hugs. He also humored me with many drawings and fed me apples and raspberries. I returned these favors by providing Nicholas with "thickers" (Post-It notes) for him to wear and supplying him with art materials. Nicholas also inspired my philosophical musings about the gathering by asking "Why?" after every phrase I uttered.



Registration manager Lyman "Greg" Gregory and his assistant Nicholas.

So why is a bioregional gathering important? If the purpose of the gathering as a whole is to create awareness of the diversity of the Shasta Bioregion and encourage people to identify their place within it, we at the registration table were doing just that on a smaller scale for a much smaller place: the gathering site.

Thanks to the information and materials we provided as people registered, a small-scale bioregional association began as soon as participants arrived at Enchanted Hills. Two of the most successful elements

at the registration table were the pre-registration packet and the "Shasta Bioregional Gathering Living Artifacts."

The personalized packet contained a map of the area, a sheet identifying lodging and kitchen work assignments, and lists of sponsors, donors and organizers. It purposefully lacked a schedule for the weekend so that participants could have input into the timing of events. Having assigned kitchen duties helped people get to know one another and become involved, which made them feel more comfortable in the workshops and discussions.

The "Shasta Bioregional Gathering Living Artifacts" were medallions of unfired

**THE Shasta Bioregional BIG-TIME LIVING ARTIFACT!**

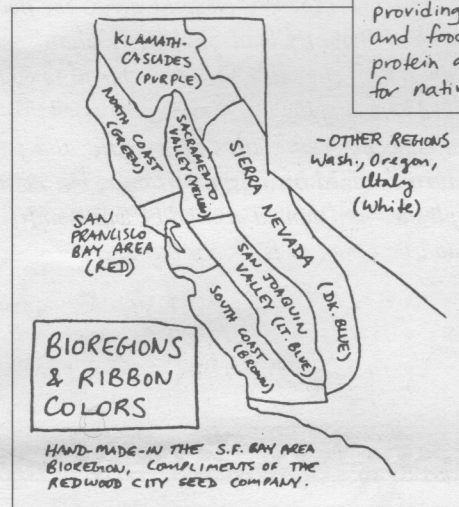
UNFIRED CLAY - NOT WATERPROOF!

**MOUNTAIN SIDE**

A Stylized mountain, to represent Mt. Shasta and all the other mountains within our own bioregions that are important to us.

**REVERSE**

Live California poppy seeds embedded in the clay. Best planted in the next six months - in the garden. Simply crumble and cover with 1/4" of soil. Another method is just lay the artifact mountain-side up in sunny, poor, rocky soil (like a road-cut) and let nature do the rest. California poppy is an excellent colonizer of rocky soils, providing pollen for bumblebees and food in the form of protein and oil-rich seeds for native birds.



clay with images of Mt. Shasta etched on front and California poppy seeds pressed into the back. They hung on colored ribbons that identified wearers according to their home watersheds. Designed to be impermanent, the medallions functioned as seed dispersal mechanisms that could eventually be buried to propagate even more native northern California poppies.

Accompanying these Living Artifacts at one end of the registration table stood a map outlining the sub-areas of Shasta Bioregion, each identified by its appropriate medallion ribbon color. On this map, a red dot for each participant was placed approximately at the site of his or her hometown. With the medallions, the map encouraged gatherers to identify with their place.

The rewards of instilling a sense of place right at the registration table is another answer to Nicholas' favorite question, "Why?" If I had not heard it from my assistant so frequently, I doubt that I would have had these reflections. Thanks, Nicholas.



## Scholarship Fund Donors

We would like to thank the following individuals and groups who contributed to the scholarship fund:

- Estelle Akamine
- Michelle Berditschevsky
- Peter Berg
- Richard and Gloria Brennan
- City Lights Books
- Barbara Clark
- Justine Cooper
- John Cothran
- John Coveney
- Jane Deer
- John Diamante
- Jim Dodge
- Fort Mason Center
- Michael Gelbart
- Judy Goldhaft
- Rafael Gonzalez
- Rhodes Hileman
- Akemi Hiraki
- Institute for the Study of Natural and Cultural Resources
- Bing Jiang
- Louise Lacey
- Ken Lakritz
- Mattole Restoration Council
- David McCloskey
- Danny Moses
- David Pate
- Sarah Pollock
- Juan-Tomas Rehbock
- Victoria Stockley
- Ron Thelin
- Seth Zuckerman

# Media at Gatherings: A Discussion

On the first morning of the Gathering, several participants became alarmed upon spotting camcorder-carrying photographers in the crowd. Perhaps it was merely an allergic reaction on the part of some video-celibates, but others were truly concerned about the appropriateness and impact of recording the event. An impromptu meeting was called at breakfast on Friday morning. Transcript excerpts follow.

**Jim Dodge:** No! That's my opinion. No media.

**Mary Porter:** Why is that?

**Jim Dodge:** I don't like them. (He laughs.)

**Peter Berg:** He is one of them, and he knows that he is one of them.

**Mary Porter:** I'm interested because I brought my high eight camera. I would like to shape and edit something so that people here could buy a tape. Also, I have just learned that KCET is going to be open to non-PBS, quality tapes, from people such as myself, to show in central and northern California. They are going to have a program to reflect the life of northern Californians. It seems this would fit in perfectly with that.

**Judith Lowry:** I would love to go to an event that existed only in the minds and hearts of the people that were there and the people that they talked to.

**Jim Dodge:** I'm with you. I want one event in my life that is mine. I want one political event where there isn't always the intrusion—always the other consciousness working—that since somebody is recording, you better watch what you say.

**Mary Porter:** I wouldn't be taping the opening ceremony. It seems to me that there are some things that are special.

**Judith Lowry:** Maybe it would help me for there to be some areas that were not videotaped.

**Seth Zuckerman:** I have been at gatherings that have been videotaped, and I don't know. There are hours and hours of tapes, and I don't know how much they get watched.

I am wondering if we can step back for a moment and think, "What do you really imagine would go out, would actually be broadcast?" Do you have a vision of the piece that you want to produce?

**Mary Porter:** What I imagine is showing a little bit of the color of life here and also having idea content from different people. I probably won't bring out the camera until later in the day after I have had a chance to get to know people. That way, people understand that I am a part of this.

**Ron Whitehurst:** In some sense what we are doing is the integration of high-tech and going back to the land. So, as long as you are unobtrusive about your videotaping, I personally don't see any problems with it.

**Seth Zuckerman:** I'm not sure it can be unobtrusive. I think it's a subjective call whether a camera pointed at a ceremony or event is unobtrusive.

**Peter Berg:** Remember you said something about integrating high technology with a new idea of the earth? What we're really discussing here are the terms for that. What are the terms for integrating this high

technology media world with a vision of reinhabiting the earth?

**Danny Moses:** Last year at the national Green Gathering—the keynote speaker was Walt Bresette—a Chippewa from northern Wisconsin said, "You have got to pass down to your neighbors and your children the story of this event. But don't write it down. Don't take pictures of it. Tell them about it. The story needs to be told person-to-person because that's the only way you know it won't be destroyed." Words have the illusion of permanence when they are on the page, but the reality is voice transmission from person-to-person in the family, in the community, in the circle.

I think that's an element of the terms of how we communicate to each other also. Maybe there is no way we can keep it pure and exclusive; but the verbal component, the storytelling component, I think needs to be where we start.

**Mary Porter:** Well, I would like you to see the camera as the friendly avenue to your neighbors and friends back home so that you feel open to playing to the camera, relating to the camera.

**Peter Berg:** Anybody else want to say anything about this? You know, this committee can reconvene after our opening circle and just keep discussing this and developing guidelines for it.

Do we have consensus we are not going to do the opening ceremony, and do we have consensus it can be tested on what's happening this afternoon? We could reconvene then to discuss it and see how it's working. Those people who still feel critical can take a look and make a decision.

**Mary Porter:** That's fine.

**Seth Zuckerman:** I would add only one thing. When you go to a workshop to videotape it, would you please ask the people if there is any objection?

**Mary Porter:** Yes.  
(The group expresses its agreement.)

This ad hoc committee came up with the following ground rules for media involvement at the Gathering:

- The camera person should be non-intrusive and non-authoritative. Some people become self-conscious when photographed. Some wish to enjoy an event without thinking about who's watching.
- Ask whether participants agree to be photographed.
- The thing itself is what's important—not the process of recording. Make a pact that the event is primary.
- It is important that you have sensitivity to what is happening. The feelings of individuals involved must be considered.
- Think about the following questions: What are the intended uses of the recording? Where will it be played? What income will be received from the work? How will it be edited? What will be the slant?
- Can the group participate in the editing process?
- Feedback should be collected throughout the event on how the videotaping is going. Ask people, "How do you feel about it?" At any time media may be asked to stop recording or to leave.



## Workshops & Presentations



### Friday

#### Morning Ceremony

Nature Walk:  
Mount Veeder Natural Features  
Run Wild with Native Plants:  
Recognition, Seed Gathering and  
Propagation

What Are Salmon Telling Us?:  
Salmon at Risk

Bioregional Mapping

Bioregional Industries

Fostering Local Bioregional Social  
Structure

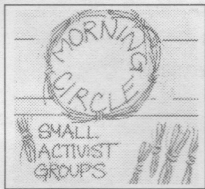
Local Water Imperatives

North Coast Biodiversity

Shasta Bioregion Newsletter:  
Upriver Downriver

Bioregional Green Cities

Save Mount Shasta



### Saturday

#### Birdwalk

#### Morning Ceremony

Urban Creek Restoration  
Nature Walk:  
Mount Veeder Natural Features

Watershed Reports

Bioregionalism: Spirit of Place

Biodiversity Policies: State and Bioregion

Multicultural Storytelling

Personal Environmental Impact

Bioregional Shelter

Body Ecology:  
Elemental Earth Movement

Multicultural Urban Environmental  
and Justice Issues

Geomancy of the Shasta Bioregion

South Yuba River Citizens' League

Power Places of the Earth in  
Northern California

Institute for Sustainable Forestry

Native American Ecological Issues

Ethics of Population Growth  
Management

Cultural Ecology:  
Breaking Out of Environmentalism



### Sunday

#### Morning Circle

#### Equinox Healing

Bridging Human & Whale/Dolphin  
Communities

Om Circle for Peace & Planetary Healing

#### Camp Cleanup

# What Are Salmon Telling Us?

## Freeman House

On the North Pacific, humans and salmon have co-evolved for 30,000 years. Salmon have adapted to predation for food by both humans and bears. Humans have thrived with salmon abundance, and even today salmon as food remains the last great link for us in the wild chain of natural provision. Fishermen are our ambassadors to the wild.

Not until 100 years ago could anyone imagine that it might be possible to damage this living flood of provision. Japan began then, in the 1890's, to build its great hatcheries which today pump millions of genetically homogenized juvenile salmon into the North Pacific. A decade or two later, fishwheels at the mouths of North American rivers began to be outlawed. Only in the last forty years has it become possible to imagine salmon becoming so rare as to be unavailable to us as food. Gear limitations and limited entry began to be imposed on commercial fishers. Only now, or in the last ten years, has it become possible to think of the end of whole species of salmon as race after race blinks out in our injured watersheds.

The American Fisheries Society has identified 214 races of North American salmonids at risk of extinction, over forty of them in the Shasta Bioregion. The unthinkable has now become a condition of existence, and we don't know what to do. What happens when in the equation of co-evolution, one element, one species, falters? What happens to the other species in the equation?

Our human carelessness as we have imposed our technologies on the landscape has been so great as to call into question the viability of our survival instincts. Our dams have generated enough electricity to win a world war and spawn an information revolution. Little thought was given to the spawning habitat upstream. Industrial agriculture has invented techniques to feed more and more people on less and less land but the costs are incredible. According to writer Greg Goldin, the waters of the Sacramento River "are daily subjected to injections of deadly elements that make the Dunsuir spill seem like a drop in the ocean." Timber in California still tends to be mined rather than nurtured in an economy driven by the market rather than by rate of growth. Spawning salmon are victims of the resulting sedimentation. In what has to be the most comprehensive marketing program ever conceived, the State of California has contracted more water than it contains without guaranteeing enough free flow to keep a single salmon wet.

It's not our job to itemize the collective sins that have brought us to this state, but rather to invent responses to the conditions we have created. We need to invent strategies for acting our way out of the unthinkable. These are not

## Salmon Woman and Raven

One day Raven drifted in his canoe through thick fog that had covered the world for weeks. Raven was hungry and depressed. No fish showed itself to him. Suddenly fog cleared over the bow of the canoe and there stood Bright Cloud Salmon Woman altogether as beautiful as Raven was ragged and thin. Right away Raven asked her to marry him, and who could resist Raven? Bright Cloud Salmon Woman stayed with Raven and made salmon run plentifully up the river by his lodge. Her eyes shone with love for him and he grew fat and handsome. Soon their storehouses were filled with dry fish and there was no need to feel hunger. They wanted for nothing but Raven grew bored and surly. Bright Cloud Salmon Woman tried to comfort him by giving him everything and making life easy in the lodge. Finally, in a fit of anger, Raven broke a salmon spine comb that caught in a tangle as Bright Cloud Salmon Woman was combing his hair. He threw the broken spine across the floor and cursed it, and Bright Cloud Salmon Woman stood up. "Come my tribe," she said, "it is time for us to go back." She walked back into the water and every dried fish—even the smallest bone—came alive once again and followed her. Raven realized his mistake at once, but no matter how he pleaded and danced around he was soon left alone again, and he began to feel very hungry.

TSMISHIAN TRADITION  
STORY BY CONNIE MARTIN  
ETHNOGRAPHIC TEXT BY FRANZ BOAZ

areas of human activity easily ameliorated by changes around the edges of suburban lifestyles. We are entering here into a history of carelessness, the products of which lie close to the center of contemporary North American culture: the way we grow our food, the materials with which we build our houses, our dependence on electricity. Salmon is presenting us with some difficult choices.

There is language in the Endangered Species Act that offers protection to every individual "race" or stock of salmon, literally thousands of them in the United States alone. This is good law, biologically, but

head, humans who go on to rearrange all of their priorities around the endurance of natural areas.

We can, and probably should, begin with the restoration of local salmonid habitat and the enhancement of native salmonid populations. These brave endeavors will teach us what we need to know about the particulars of our future adaptations. We will learn enough to begin to act out the restorative technologies and industries that leave the place in a condition as lively as or livelier than when we entered. We will also learn that our efforts do not stand in isolation from the systems that include our local watersheds.

Soon enough, we will learn that our restoration projects are not enough, even though they may have become the heart of a community beginning to experience itself ecologically.

Not enough in the face of the criminal use of a technology that allows the strip-mining of life from the North Pacific.

Not enough to confront the mobile venality of corporate capital located who knows where.

Not enough to correct for the disinterested management of governments located always elsewhere.

At this point we will need to turn to each other. We will need to seek alliances with other communities that organize themselves around the lives of places. We need to hear what it sounds like when enough people say, "Enough! Salmon is not just one more special interest, it is a necessary part of my life!"



ROBERT C. WATTS

# Mapping Workshop

George Tukel

Mapping Workshops are the best means for bioregionalists to learn the natural features of watersheds—to go over their quirks, wonders and natural patterns. During the workshops, features of landscapes rather than institutional priorities become sources for heated discussions. Participants argue about what levels of scale—from the trickling creek on up—should be considered important to determining bioregional boundaries. These debates, which are influenced not only by elegantly organized information but also by personal experiences of beauty, result in high altitude thinking grounded in everyday specifics.

The mapping sessions at the Shasta get-together had this special quality with a different twist. From the start, the workshop emphasized how mapping and regional planning could be used simultaneously to preserve wildness across watershed boundaries. Shasta people could map areas of high and unusual natural diversity, based on their firsthand experience of watershed conditions, and overlay these onto United States Geological Survey maps to create correct maps of wildness. Reinhabitants would also discover which adjoining watersheds shared areas of biodiversity and could begin local alliances to protect and restore them.

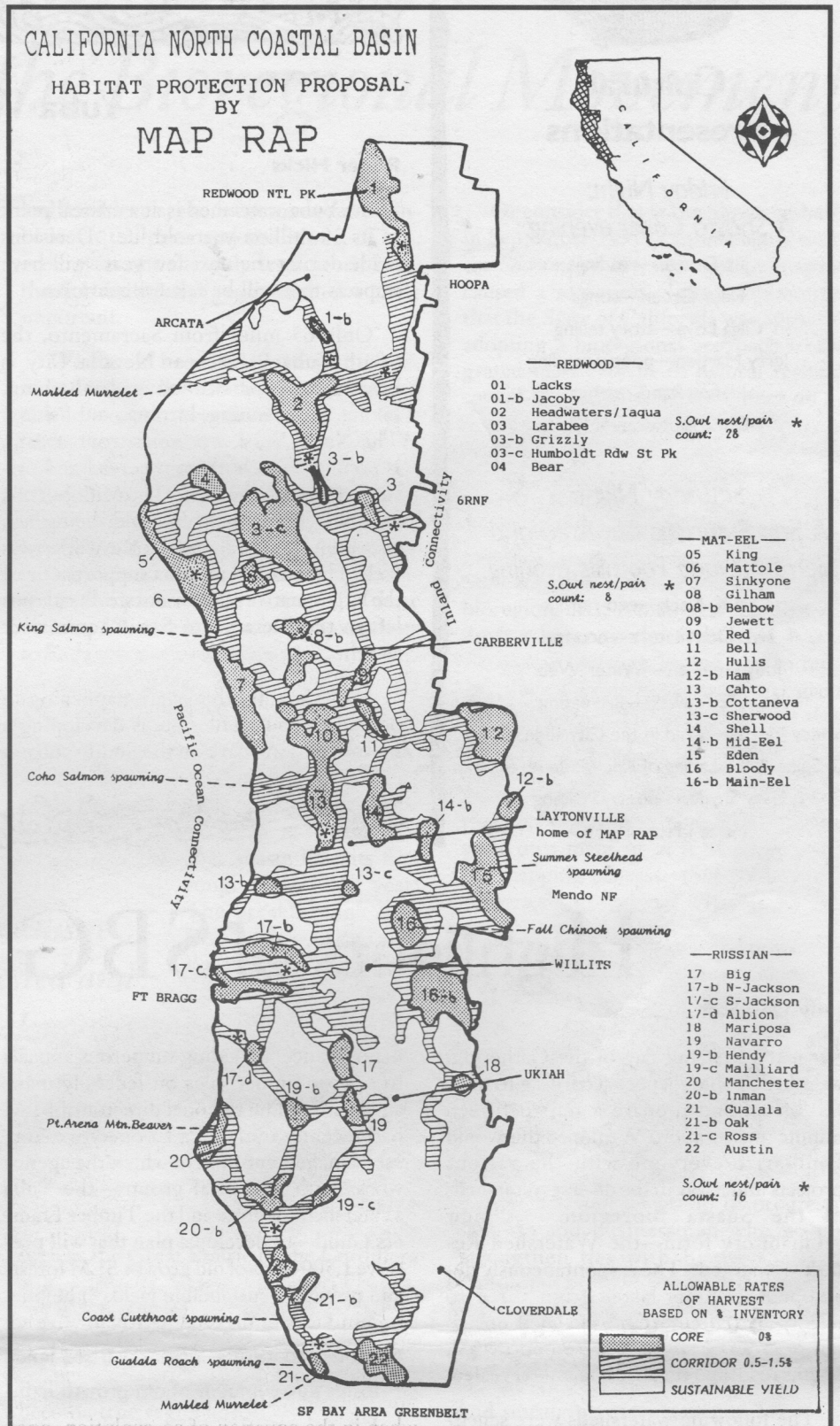
Maps from several state agencies were available at the Gathering to show the locations of rare and endangered species, the patterns of land ownership, the reserves that exist and who manages them. Of special interest were Department of Fish and Game maps of "significant natural areas." They show where late succession ecosystems and biological richness occur in the same place. It was suggested more than once at the workshops that creek residents could improve upon the definitions of these "areas" of biodiversity and, with some work, help develop them as places for information on sustainability, restoration efforts and cultural identity.

Participants easily learned to overlay various maps to create their own landscape vocabulary for locating core areas of natural diversity in their neck of the woods. But even when preserving biodiversity was at stake, they had more difficulty seeing beyond watershed boundaries to cooperate with people on the other side of the mountain. People wanted to make the attempt,

but they had too little practice or patience for it. Bioregionalists have always prided themselves on their commitment to place, and they express it through reliable ways of regenerating natural systems and attending to family and community needs. A lesson learned at the mapping workshop was that local people have to become as good at seeing connections across natural boundaries as they presently are at working within them.

Map Rap, a group of map makers and forest activists, presented a well-developed example of connecting across boundaries. Map Rap members have put a lot of time and savvy into designing an ecological reserve system based on cores and natural corridors (please see sidebar graphic). Core areas are centers of biodiversity, such as sites where old growth stands still exist, and corridors are landscape linkages between the cores that help overcome the threats to diversity caused by the ecological isolation of core areas. At first, core zones might seem like the key to the reserve system, but corridors are equally essential and, as it could turn out, more complex and politically complicated. Many cores will be located in existing parks or will be obvious, easily defined land tracts for purchase by the State or by conservation groups. Intelligently designed corridors will run across many private and public lands and must allow for a variety of land use and conservation choices if they are to work. The process of selecting corridors is a job best undertaken by local watershed people.

There are surely many other examples of connecting across boundaries, but discovering them will probably mean coming to grips with a paradox. The importance of preserving natural diversity is now on the agenda of many governmental and institutional groups, primarily because watershed groups have culturally identified with and centered their lives around the wildness and natural features of their regions. Ironically, this devotion to a particular bioregion can become myopic, inhibiting broader regional thinking in reinhabitants and leaving too much responsibility to larger centralized institutions. Bioregionalists could make a real difference by bringing to regional relationships and issues the same cultural values and determination that have made their more local efforts so original and worthwhile.



Map Rap is a grassroots effort at bioregional planning based on cores and corridors for the North Coastal Basin. If you would like to lend a hand or talk, please call Steve Day, Rick Cloninger or Todd Cinnamon at (707) 923-2931 or write to them at Map Rap, P.O. Box 151, Leggett, CA 95455.

## Announcement

### Bring Mother Home

Growing plants native to your own territory requires a reorientation of knowledge, but the rewards for making that effort are profound. Just to mention a few: Because the plants are native to your region, you do not need to amend the soil or water them much—or at all—once they are settled in. In addition, restoring native vegetation attracts birds and butterflies. You don't have to leave home to get the spiritual refreshment Mother offers in her own space.

At Growing Native Research Institute, Louise Lacey gathers and publishes a rich, personal stew of information, experience and wisdom about California native plants in her bimonthly newsletter, *Growing Native*. A \$30 annual membership fee includes a big bonus issue, "The Basics of Growing Native Successfully."

For information, contact the Growing Native Research Institute, P.O. Box 489, Berkeley, CA 94701.

## Art In Situ

Joanna Pertz

I began preparing for my role as SBG art director by imagining what kinds of activities would be appropriate. I decided that the art projects should include participation by a large group of people and express concern for the earth in a unique sense. Art for bioregionalists should incorporate the ceremonial as well as the visual, and it should be fun, especially since many kids would participate.

SBG T-shirt making was the most successful activity for getting people's hands dirty. Participants experienced or re-experienced the joy of making something by hand rather than getting it from a store. At first, people who saw the drying shirts wanted to buy one; but they underwent a transformation when they realized they had to make their own, learned how to mix colors, and printed the ready-made silkscreen. Much noise and anticipation accompa-

nied preparation, then admiring silence as the prints were revealed. Each person produced her or his own uniquely-colored SBG logo.

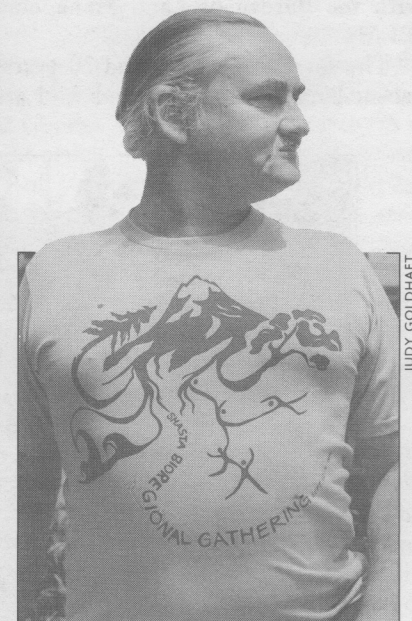
An exciting idea for future gatherings is the creation of bioregion-specific prayer flags, which would be both ceremonial and environmental in nature. Everyone at the gathering would receive a piece of material to mark his or her entry into the group. They would carry their material for the duration of the gathering and at some point paint on it a wish or a natural image from their home places. For the closing ceremony, all pieces of material would be strung on a line and raised. As the wind blew, the prayers would fly off—interaction with the wind as a bioregional art piece. The material pieces could later be sewn into a quilt or a hanging as a meaningful memory of the gathering.



## Art Supply Donors

The following businesses contributed art and craft supplies to the Shasta Bioregional Gathering:

- Aaron Brothers, Inc.
- Britex Fabrics
- California Arts Supply
- East Bay Art Depot
- New York Fabrics
- Precita Eyes Mural Arts



Joanna Pertz-designed T-shirt silkscreened and modelled by avid SBG participant.



## Cultural Presentations

### Friday Night:

#### A Shasta Coast evening.

Jim Dodge—readings

Fleur Green—songs

Olga Loya—story telling

Jerry Martien—poetry reading

Joanne Rand—songs

David Simpson—MC

### Saturday Night:

#### A San Francisco Bay Area and Sierra Nevada Foothills evening.

A.K. Black—eco-rap

2wo Dominatorz—eco-rap

Judy Goldhaft—Water Web

Sean Gosiewski—fire eating

Nancy Morita—Wild in the City slide show

M.C. Spice & the Ladies of Knowledge—eco-rap

Gary Snyder—poetry reading

Marie Mitchell—MC



# “Local Water

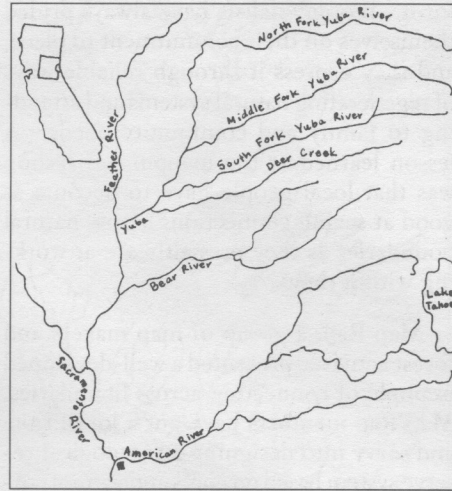
## Yuba Watershed Presentation and Update

Roger Hicks

The Yuba watershed is at a critical point in its 30 million-year-old life. Decisions made during the next few years will have impacts that will be felt for centuries.

Only 65 miles from Sacramento, the South Yuba River near Nevada City is heavily used for swimming, sunbathing, hiking, goldpanning, birding, and fishing. The North Yuba, a premier trout stream, is popular with both commercial and private whitewater boaters. The Middle Yuba also has excellent fishing and, being less accessible by road, more of a wilderness feel. The main stem Yuba supports one of the largest native salmon and steelhead runs left in the Sacramento-San Joaquin river system.

Many hopeful things are happening in our watershed. The state is developing a first-of-its-kind park on the South Yuba: a



21-mile-long site centered around the river and its canyon. The Forest Service recently found all three forks of the Yuba eligible for Wild and Scenic River protection. Included in this group is an entire North Yuba tributary system that runs through

old growth forest. Furthermore, the Forest Service has begun an old growth management planning process for the forest and is soliciting input from environmentalists. The Bureau of Land Management has designated some of the old growth forest it owns near the South Yuba as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern and has promised to manage it appropriately.

So everything is copacetic in Yubaland? No environmental nightmares on the horizon? You seasoned environmentalists guessed it—it sounds too good to be true. The Yuba County Water Agency (YCWA) wants to build a series of massive dams in the watershed for the purpose of water rustling. It wants to take water from the South Yuba and sell it to the highest bidder. None of the proposed dams would be built in Yuba County, and one would drown miles of salmon spawning habitat and put the historic covered bridge under water.



# Highlights of SBG Watershed Reports

Judy Goldhaft

On the first full day of the Gathering, we asked people to meet according to their watershed and prepare a ten to fifteen minute presentation. We hoped this would familiarize everyone with the various projects underway in the diverse watersheds of the Shasta Bioregion. A new reinhabitory form—the Watershed Report—emerged. These spontaneously developed accounts lasted from three to twenty-five minutes and included one to ten reporters. Displays were improvised, poems read, and theatrical talents revealed.

The following watersheds were scheduled: Bolinas Lagoon, Hudson Estuary (New York City), Jacoby Creek (Arcata), Lake Dolores (San Francisco), Mateel (Mattole and El Rivers), North Coast Rivers of Mendocino County (Navarro, Albion, and Noyo), Petaluma River, Putah and Cache Creeks (Davis), Siskiyou and Klamath Rivers, and Yuba River. Presentations included information on local history, ecological disruption, resistance to further degradation, restoration projects and local culture. There isn't space for all the reports, but here are some highlights:

**Yuba River** attendants divided their report into sections on forests, a forest management project, the river, and mining. The complete and concise account included a description of a notable alliance evolving with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

The forest report covered 20 years of recent land development and wild areas

maintenance, including numerous appeals to oppose timber sales on federally managed lands. The regional director of BLM had recently initiated a Cooperative Forest Management Plan in which the agency works with two local groups—the Yuba Watershed Institute and the Timber Framers Guild—to develop a plan that will preserve 1,500 acres of old growth BLM forests and provide a sustainable yield. The purposes of this unprecedented Plan were to:

- protect maturing forest on BLM land,
- foster development of old growth habitat,
- provide a sustainable yield of big trees,
- provide a model for BLM to work with long-term land-based residents in other places.

At the time of the Gathering, the policy statement was finished, site-specific recommendations were being researched, and BLM was considering adding an additional 1,500 acres of federal forest to the Plan.

The SYRCL (South Yuba River Citizen's League) river report highlighted continued efforts to preserve and protect the Yuba River ecosystem by opposing dams. The group continues to study the feasibility of including Yuba as a Federal Wild and Scenic River. (See “Yuba Watershed Presentation” above.)

The mining report noted that new mining technology has made it possible to obtain tiny amounts of gold from large amounts of gravel, re-introducing the specter of ecological devastation caused by hydraulic mining in the 1850's. Portions of mining company lands are adjacent to State

forests in the Yuba watershed, so moves are underway to declare them “critical environmental concern areas” in hopes that mining will be limited and/or companies will donate these lands to parks.

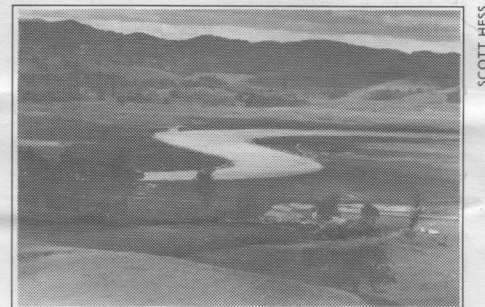
**Jacoby Creek** activists, who joined together during spring of 1991 in response to a private company's timber harvest plan, gave an *urban* watershed report. Jacoby creek is in the town of Arcata but is populated only for a short distance, so it is still quite wild. It is often used by Humboldt State University professors and students for research projects. The group has been mapping the watershed with the help of Mateel activists, holding meetings with the logging company and researching lawsuit possibilities.

**Navarro, Albion (& Salmon Creek), and Noyo River representatives** showed large aerial photographs and maps of their Mendocino County North Coast Rivers, all of which have been heavily impacted by private logging company contracts. A few areas in Mendocino County have never been logged, so trying to preserve these second-growth forests has been particularly difficult. Mendocino activists offered discussions and advice to anyone facing similar situations and presented the following procedural suggestions which they have used in their watersheds:

- 1) **Close monitoring** of California Department of Forestry to review Timber Harvest Plans (THPs).
  - Reviewing the legal status of THPs.
  - Making sure environmental standards are upheld.
  - Checking for violations of the California Environmental Quality Act.
  - Checking for individual violations of THPs in terms of water quality/fisheries, geology/roads, wildlife habitat, and sustainability of the area.
  - Expanding existing laws to cover an entire watershed rather than just a part of it.
- 2) **Litigation lawsuits** as a tool.
  - Outreach, including a newsletter for explaining points of view and providing a vehicle for dialogue.
  - Demonstrations that utilize humor or a musical event/concert to diffuse violence.
- 3) **Direct Action** after exhausting legal processes.
  - Outreach, including a newsletter for explaining points of view and providing a vehicle for dialogue.
  - Demonstrations that utilize humor or a musical event/concert to diffuse violence.

- Consideration and respect shown to the opposition to invite peaceful dialogue.

The report closed with encouragement to actively employ all possible tools in watershed struggles.



Petaluma River.

The **Eel and Mattole Rivers** watersheds organize themselves as the Mateel community. Two roving reporters in a “hot air” balloon interviewed Mateel reinhabitants for their report, moving from group to group and gently poking fun at the community and themselves as they searched for a salmon in the rivers. The local groups were involved with:

- restoration of salmon habitat,
- raising native salmon,
- community outreach and development,
- land protection through Land Trust acquisitions,
- reinhabitory schools,
- sustainable forestry and logging practices, and
- mapping and maintaining ecodiversity.

Their humorous presentation concluded with audience laughter and generous applause. One of the group's elders explained that “the Mateel community is too small to have a village idiot, so we all take turns.”

Watershed reports stimulated learning about projects and events around the bioregion and precipitated an exchange of activist methods as well as delight and support that so much solid work is being pursued. Everyone regretted that time for reports was limited but agreed that this new format was a success and should be given prominence at the next gathering.



Watershed reports at the morning circle.



## Marin County Watershed Presentation and Watershed Reports

Ron Thelin

Local water issues was the vital focus of this workshop/panel. Mary Haughey and Roger Hicks described the issues confronting the Yuba River, and this writer spoke about water supply for the Marin Municipal Water District, a public policy issue that was being put to the voters as Measure W on the November 5, 1991, general election ballot. It would divert additional water from a neighboring watershed, thereby enabling further unchecked growth and development.

I got involved in the Marin County water supply issue for two reasons: I wanted to see the continuing return of the salmon (last year, 250-300) up Papermill Creek, and my friend, Steve Kinsey, had asked me two years ago to be a member of the Marin Conservation League's (MCL) Water Committee. The MCL, among a number of active Marin County environmental

organizations, has traditionally maintained effective political clout by participating actively and intelligently in the Marin Municipal Water District's five-year planning process. Its board voted 19 to 1 to reject Measure W.

What had commonly been referred to as five years of drought in Marin had occasioned two responses. One was that the perceived inconvenience of water rationing—shorter showers, less toilet flushing and dying exotic vegetation—was evidence for increasing the water supply. The other was that the limited supply should be viewed as an opportunity to understand and appreciate the value of water, to change our ways and to make responsible choices concerning its use. The first behaves as though one should not have to think about water; the second behaves as though awareness of water usage is a positive and necessary element of human consciousness.

I am of the latter persuasion along with many others. However, the proponents of Measure W included some very creditable personalities with backgrounds in environmental work. They had a well-financed campaign and the rabid support of Marin's only large daily newspaper, *The Independent Journal*.

Marin was at a crossroad with this election. If Measure W passed, the pressure and need for conservation practices, efficiency, reclamation and other means of using water wisely would be greatly relieved, if not gone. If the measure failed, it would mean a majority of the Marin County voting public supports an environmentally sound and economically viable water policy for Marin's future.

[Author's note: On November 5, 1991, a 43% voter turnout (about 10,000 more voters than normal) turned down Measure W.]

## Ripples on the Surface

Gary Snyder

"Ripples on the surface of the water were silver salmon passing under—different from the ripples caused by breezes"

A scudding plume on the wave—  
a humpback whale is  
breaking out in air up  
gulping herring  
—Nature not a book, but a performance, a  
high old culture

Ever-fresh events  
scraped out, rubbed out, and used, used, again—  
the braided channels of the rivers  
hidden under fields of grass—

The vast wild.  
the house, alone.  
the little house in the wild.  
the wild in the house.

both forgotten.

No nature.

Both together, one big empty house.

From Gary's forthcoming collection of poems, *No Nature* (Pantheon books).

# Multicultural Urban Environmental & Justice Issues

Carl Anthony *Director, Urban Habitat and President, Earth Island Foundation*

Cultural diversity is important in the whole bioregional perspective. In our metropolitan areas we now have a pattern of disinvestment in the urban quarters and rapid expansion of the suburbs that is destroying farmlands surrounding the metropolitan core. This also requires more and more automobile transportation, which leads to waste of fossil fuels, air pollution and congestion. At the same time, the populations left behind are increasingly vulnerable to the resulting poverty, lack of social services, and lack of a functional economy. The only economy that actually functions now in the inner city communities is the drug trade; this is a really big entrepreneurial activity among young people.

Neighborhoods are becoming stratified by race and class. Rather than having richly diverse neighborhoods with many people whose various skills can complement each other, we're getting neighborhoods where everyone is on welfare, or everybody is a worker in a factory. If we really are serious about trying to develop a more healthy relationship between our neighborhoods and the larger bioregion, we'll halt this pattern of capital flight and reinstate these neighborhoods as healthy, sustainable ones.

Along with this "frontier of abandonment" has been a decline among the people in the communities to actually *do* for themselves. The only thing people can do is buy things. They can't raise food, they don't make furniture, they don't repair the houses—nothing is being *made* in these places. The power that would come from self-reliance, which many rural communities have, is rapidly dissipating. Part of the problem with shopping centers is that they tend to reinforce the consumer mentality as opposed to a more balanced view of production and consumption.

In order to address the issues of communities of color in the bioregional movement, it's important to have respect for cultural diversity and to look at principles of social justice and the contribution that each culture can bring to the whole. The issue of cultural diversity isn't concerned only with African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans and Native Americans; it also means being much more aware of the cultural inheritance of people with European and other backgrounds. Look, for example,

at the upland culture of people from Scotland in the American South.\* There are many of their traditions in the South that have maintained continuity over hundreds of years, such as the use of open range and cow pens. There are about twenty of these characteristics that are very unique to this particular region.

If you look at the American South—and I think it is a really important area in the bioregional movement—you find some of the thorny questions that are not really being asked. African Americans in the South usually live in river beds where the soil is very rich and heavy capital investment made it possible for plantation owners to use gang slave labor. A whole kind of ecology developed around these locations: rich soils connected to river beds. And the poor whites preferred the uplands. I was struck that this settlement pattern seems to be continuing even now—150 years later—with all sorts of other ramifications. What's really interesting to me, in looking at the relationship between peoples' culture and the land, is that if you have a whole different set of categories to look at, this also suggests new possible ways we might work together or think about making changes.

The bioregional movement is valuable. But it needs to embrace the true complexities of what it would mean to be more in touch with some of these contradictions. One of the paradoxes of the decentralized vision is that each region may have some political and social views that other regions don't necessarily consider significant.

I think there are a lot of possible next steps. But for me, the deeper questions actually take the challenge to redefine environmentalism to include not only the experiences of people of color, but also those aspects of our culture that we've been denying. The concept of "white" was invented primarily to create solidarity between Europeans as they were coming to North America, to differentiate them from Native Americans and African Americans in order to create the internal cohesion needed to dominate the land. In line with ecological diversity, we need to take a good hard look at how we classify human beings. We take the idea of being white for granted, but it is a false construct. It denies us our sight.

There are hundreds of groups around the country involved in various environmental issues that are not usually called "environmental" groups that could provide some real opportunities for active cooperation. The more collaboration we can get, the better.

I think we're going to see increasingly that communities of color will be taking leadership in terms of sustainable development strategy. Look at patterns of consumption in our communities: if you're a white suburban member of the Sierra Club, making \$60,000 a year, you probably use 300-400 gallons of water per day for your swimming pool and lawn. But if you live in the inner city, it's probably 40 gallons a day. If you're homeless, it's 10 gallons a day. When you ask who's really living within limits, you're going to see a lot more people of color aware of the fact that we have been living within those limits—although not necessarily with dignity and beauty. That, I think, we have to discover.

The other side of this is that we also need to be critical of communities of color. Historically we've been followers—not leaders—and we've thought of ourselves as victims of a dominant politics. We need to change that. We need to find a mechanism through which we can express our aspirations in a constructive and positive way and also, quite frankly, to begin to take responsibility for European Americans and other people in the city. The question is, who is actually going to solve this problem of racism? We need to *do* it; it's not just going to happen.

One of the most thorny areas is that when we demand justice, we'll need to redefine it to mean something other than the right to consume resources; we're already destroying the whole planet by doing that. So we need to find some way to assert our right to have a fair share of resources, but also help move away from this restrictive consumption approach.

\* For more information, see Forrest McDonald's "Cultural Continuity and the Shaping of the American South" in *Geographic Perspectives in History*, ed. by Eugene D. Genovese and Leonard Hochberg (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1989).

From a transcript edited by Peter Berg and Judy Goldhaft.

Nancy Morita  
*Director, Wild in the City*

We've gathered in this place, from our ancestors' beginnings in villages, townships and wildernesses from all over the world. We've brought with us recipes, memories, seeds and dreams that grew from those other watersheds of place and time. The poorer of us believe "anything that's better than where we came from" is sufficient. The more confident of us have a more elaborate agenda. Everyone has a history.

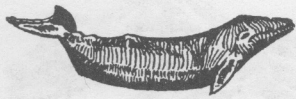
Here we are, gathered in this place with a history of its own, rich in mythic stories of its origins, alive in dreamtime with grizzly, meadows and song. How can we hear these stories and come to belong, all of us together now, with our bursting bundles of luggage, and the old language of this place never learned or now nearly forgotten?

Among us are San Francisco's children who've never touched the ocean, never known the peace of sleeping in a meadow of wildflowers, never tasted water from the spring, and who have come too late to hear the thunder of wings. Among us are those without homes, let alone habitat.

This is our community, and here is our place, *terra incognita* as it is. But I know of a few wildflowers, and that woman over there is practicing the basketry stitches of her ancestors who've lived here since the beginning. Those people there have pulled two tons of garbage from our marsh at Hunter's Point, and now the egrets are returning. . . . Isn't it the same as it always was, to help each other through the passageways and across the waters?

Let me share with you a few of these seeds I gathered from a small wild stand of relict grasslands, just a short walk away from here in our watershed. As these and other seeds sprout, we might deepen our hopes of what is possible and come to know a meadow we might dream in together someday, along with the children.





## Menus

### Thursday Night

creamy potato soup with kale  
baby lettuces (organic) with vinaigrette  
fruit & cookies



### Friday

#### Breakfast

coffee & tea  
bagels, oatmeal

Downtown Bakery (Healdsburg)  
sticky buns

#### Lunch

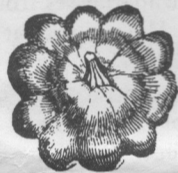
pita sandwiches with cukes,  
red onions, tomatoes, feta,  
mint, hommus, peppers,  
onions, & baby lettuces  
with vinaigrette

cookies

#### Dinner

Sonoran pork stew/vegetarian version  
(peppers, onions, squashes, hominy,  
pasilla & New Mexico chiles)

black beans & rice, cornbread,  
tomatillo salsa  
chocolate cake



### Saturday

#### Breakfast

coffee & tea  
oatmeal, scones

#### Lunch

pizzas: pesto, pesto & veggies,  
tomato & veggies

salad with cucumbers, cherry tomatoes  
& vinaigrette

rice & leftover stew

cookies & fruit

#### Dinner

grilled chicken or tofu marinated in  
garlic & coastal sagebrush

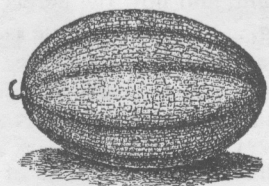
Green Gulch Farm potatoes roasted with  
Native Bay & Judy's Rosemary

corn on the cob

Star Route Farm mesclun  
of baby lettuces with vinaigrette

bread pudding with  
elderberry flower sugar  
& wild plum sauce

Guisseppi's Parmesan Reggiono  
with Anjou pears



### Sunday

#### Breakfast

coffee & tea  
oatmeal, melons, scones

#### Brunch

frittata

# Of Regional Cooking and the Cuisine of Empire

John Birdsall

*To feel at home here, to learn from our predecessors on this continent, each of us must kneel on the ground, put an ear to the earth, and listen.*

GARY NABHAN, ENDURING SEEDS

To feel at home here, we also need an authentic local cooking that nourishes our bodies, minds and spirits and roots us as rain and sun root the elderberries, oaks and bays. Yet who can feel nourished by "California cuisine," which often juxtaposes bizarre combinations of food on our plates: lobster with vanilla sauce, sea scallops with peaches or sliced pastrami with wasabi mayonnaise and pickled ginger?

True regional cuisines are created gradually by generations of home cooks living in more or less self-sufficient communities and making do with local ingredients. In California, the development of an authentic local cooking has been hindered by the scarcity of homesteads and small farms on which folks would grow or gather much of what they needed for medicine and food. "California," wrote an observer in 1871, "is not a country of

farms, but a country of plantations and estates. Agriculture is a speculation." After California became a state, large Spanish land grants became large ranches, orchards, and fields tended by migrant workers too poor and landless to have kitchen gardens or even kitchens.

Following the advent of large-scale agriculture, California's cooking served as an advertisement for the state's metamorphosis from a desiccated frontier to the center of a worldwide system of food production and exchange. Then, as now, the subject of California's cuisine inspired a good deal of wind. "This aggregation of cuisinaire," wrote Clarence Edwards in 1914, "gathered where is to be found a most wonderful variety of food products in the highest state of excellence, has made San Francisco the mecca for lovers of gustatory delights."

California's epicurean mecca offered dishes like "fillet of sole, Lord Curzon," native sole doused with wine and curry powder—preparations recognized to be international. Turn-of-the-century San Francisco had realized the aspirations of the '49ers, people less interested in becoming

ing Californians than in becoming millionaires, who could return to Boston or Frankfurt at the top of the social pile. Those who remained mimicked the wealthy of those places with such imported dishes as oysters with Chablis, turtle soup and galantines studded with truffles.

However, there were Californians isolated from the cuisine of agricultural empire, for whom the "desert wastes" provided sustenance. Rancheros and their descendants ate native or naturalized herbs and greens in the spring and early summer: *bledo* (amaranth), *chual* (lamb's-quarters), *lengua de vaca* (sour dock), *mostaza* (mustard greens), and *verdolagas* (purslane).

This simple menu is a point of departure for a genuine regional cooking, a cooking infused with the smells of sagebrush in the coastal scrub, of native bay along cool creekbeds, of elder blossoms in the foothills. To feel fully at home here we must, as Gary Nabhan suggests, listen to the land, but we must also taste its plants and know their scents and make them flower again in our cooking pots.



FROM COMMON EDIBLE AND USEFUL PLANTS OF THE WEST

## Grilled Chicken with Coastal Sagebrush

John Birdsall

Unassertive meats like chicken take well to grilling after first steeping in a marinade that includes garlic and keen-scented coastal sagebrush (*artemisia californica*). Leg and thigh sections are probably most suited for this treatment, but breasts can be used if they remain on the bone, with wings removed at the first joint.

#### Ingredients:

4 pieces of chicken  
4 3-inch sprigs of coastal sagebrush, smacked sharply with the broad blade of a knife  
2 big stalks of wild onion, smacked with a knife (or substitute scallions)

1 small head of garlic, with cloves separated, peeled, and crushed with a knife  
juice and strips of peel from a small lime  
2 teaspoons salt  
pepper from a mill  
3/4 cup olive oil

#### Method of Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in a large shallow bowl. Leave to marinate at a cool room temperature for a couple of hours, turning the pieces of meat now and then. When you are ready to grill the chicken (preferably over solid charcoal burned down to a steady, gentle heat), wipe the excess oil from the meat and any clinging aromatics.

## Witching Water

for Jane and David

Jerry Martien

*Mister Pogue rode over in the pickup from the neighbors' Where he'd witched a vein in the ridge. Right where it was Hoped it would be. Not saying how deep. How to get it out. Or how to get it from under the other neighbors' To your place where he didn't find any. There are rivers flowing under rivers. There are rivers In the land underneath the land. Willow knows where they are.*

*The Mattole is low now, a long way down. The spring just a trickle. The tank takes hours to re-fill. The last moon of summer Empties itself for half the day. The storms are more fire than water. We walk through the long grass. Dry, untended, these ten years now Ungrazed by anything but deer and the wind. Uneven sod underfoot We follow Mister Pogue in a line. Ahead of the undancing willow fork David leads us back to his and Jane's. She is barefoot.*

*Nope, says Mister Pogue. I can't put it there. When it ain't there it ain't there.*

*Not everything comes out like we hope. Sometimes it's there. Sometimes it isn't. Willow knows why. There are rivulets of blood under the sweat and tears. To some people water comes from the earth. Others wait. They dance. It comes to them from the sky.*

*Pray it come soon.*

Petrolia

From *Upriver/Downriver*, Tangram, 1992.

## Bread Pudding with Elderflower Sugar

John Birdsall

Throughout summer, elderberry shrubs break out into creamy blossoms, scenting the air around them with a spicy perfume. In this recipe, a simple—and not very sweet—bread pudding is strewn with sugar redolent of the tiny flowers. Serve it slightly warm with a lightly sweetened puree of wild plums or blackberries.

To make the elderflower sugar, mix a handful of elderflowers plucked from their stems with a few cups of sugar. Store in a tightly sealed jar for at least two weeks, when the flowers will have communicated their perfume to the sugar. Break up any lumps and pass through a sieve.

#### Ingredients:

3 ounces unsalted butter  
5 ounces slightly stale white French bread, crust removed, torn into pieces  
a small handful of raisins, plumped for 2 hours in a little kirsch or brandy  
3 tablespoons honey  
1/4 cup elderflower sugar, and more for sprinkling  
a pinch of salt  
3 eggs  
2 cups milk

#### Method of Preparation:

1) Set your oven to 350° and butter a baking dish.  
2) Melt the butter in a large skillet over a low flame, stir in the pieces of bread and turn them over and over until crisp and lightly brown. Tip them into the baking dish and strew in the plumped raisins.  
3) Break the eggs into a bowl, mix briefly and whisk in the honey, elderflower sugar and salt. Whisk in the milk.  
4) Pour this custard over the bread and raisins in the baking dish. Bake about 40 minutes, until the center of the pudding is just set, and remove from the oven. Sprinkle with a couple of tablespoons of elderflower sugar.

# Native American Panel Presentation

Kari Norborg Carter with Peter Berg

**S**peakers on the Native American panel expressed unanimous concern for the preservation of indigenous culture and religion:

- **Priscilla Hunter** of the Native American Heritage Commission called for an end to the disruption of Native American burial sites—for any and all purposes. Anthropologists, she claimed, have accomplished all of the grave digging they can reasonably do under the guise of science. The sanctity of human culture must also hold precedence over any construction or development that would disturb sacred burial grounds.

Priscilla also promoted the establishment of an inter-tribal state park in California's Sinkyone Wilderness to be maintained by and for Native Americans—perhaps even exclusively. The park would provide a site for observing both personal and group ceremonies and cultural activities that relate to wilderness and the sanctity of life. A tremendous obstacle to performing these ceremonies now, Priscilla explained, is the difficulty of repeatedly transporting cooking and ceremonial equipment to and from currently available and appropriate sites. She suggested that facilities for cooking, sleeping and performing ceremonies be made available at the proposed park.

- **Joe Carillo** from the Tule River reservation in San Joaquin Valley cited the need for a non-native group, like the Shasta Bioregional Gathering, to serve as a bridge between native and emigrant Americans. Many non-indigenous persons, he noted, have too little knowledge of Native Americans to approach them effectively on issues of concern. Educated mediators could teach non-natives about native traditions and culture, thus increasing their appreciation and respect.

- As a cautionary note, moderator **Tim Carnahan** pointed out that many people need to gain a wider perspective of their own heritage before attempting to relate to another. Every non-indigenous American, he explained, has forebears in his or her ancestry whose culture was not unlike that of Native American tribes—that is, a culture centered in ecology. It is important that one not simply adopt the trappings of the Native American spiritual and cultural life, he warned, but think deeply about what each element refers to—for example, the eagle feathers, the sacramental tobacco.

- **Darryl Wilson** observed that even bioregionalists may suffer from a lack of background on Native Americans.

Bioregionalists should not overlook native culture when learning about the places where they live. He proposed that every time we hold a gathering, we should try to contact the native people of the area and truly find out who they are. This project should be undertaken, he added, no matter how much trouble or time it entails.

- A disheartening story of a people forgotten came from **Kerry Beane**. She told of a group of visiting Russians who wanted to unite concerns about their Lake Baikal with the problematic situation at Lake Tahoe. The Russians asked about the native people of the Tahoe area, the Wintus, and were mistakenly told that they no longer exist there. Kerry, who has been recording stories, family accounts and activities of the Wintu at Tahoe, said that these people are commonly treated as if they are not around anymore. It is a classic case of assuming that natives have vanished.

- Finally, **George Gillette** provided a detailed description of Native American spirituality as a recounting of a tribe's local ecology. The native idea of spirituality, he claimed, is essentially what non-indigenous people call "ecology": it is based on the sacredness of all life and should be venerated.



## Food Notes

Before 1492, as many as 10% of the people inhabiting North America may have lived in the Shasta Bioregion. Supporting that population was possible because of the diversity and fecundity of our lifeplace. Meals at the Gathering reflected this and were part of the celebration of living here together.

Chefs John Birdsall and Shirlee Quick volunteered long hours before the Gathering locating donations, buying and transporting food, planning menus and preparing food. We hoped some funds would remain to show our appreciation for their efforts, but essentially they volunteered their time. Special thanks to Ann Belden who recommended them and also provided supplies, contacts, suggestions, and storage and refrigeration space.

We received generous donations of food, equipment and ideas from the following food purveyors, businesses and individuals:

- Acme Bakery
- Aidells Sausage Co.
- Auntie Pasta
- Greg Belknap
- Buffalo Whole Foods
- George Burger
- Cafe Beaujolais
- Calistoga Water Company
- 101 Carl Bakery and Cafe
- Jennifer Carvaly
- The Cheeseboard
- Chez Pannis
- Clover Stornetta Dairy
- Daniel's Creamery
- Downtown Bakery and Creamery,
- Healdsburg
- Eagle Snacks, Bracco
- Kristi Eurich
- Fowler Brothers
- Green Gulch Farm
- Greens Restaurant
- The Holey Bagel
- The House of Bagels
- The Inner Sunset Community Store
- Ironwood Cafe
- Just Desserts
- La Tempesta
- Lazzari Fuel Company, Inc.
- Lynn, The Bee Woman
- Mendocino Brewing Co.
- Metropolis Bakery
- Oh La La Bakery
- The Old Green Go
- Patisserie Française—Fran Gage
- Peet's Coffee
- Quong Hop Company
- Rainbow Grocery
- Real Food Company Deli
- Safeway
- San Francisco Real Food Company
- Kathy Shee
- Lindsay Shere
- Sierra Natural Foods
- Sola
- Sonoma Cheese Company
- Star Route Farm
- Suzanne's Muffins
- Sweet Sue's
- Tassajara Bakery
- Veritable Vegetables
- Robert C. Watts
- Western Sierra Foods
- What's For Dessert
- Whole Foods Market (Berkeley)

## Government Agencies' "Bioregional" Plan: Action Response

**M**ixed reactions greeted a pertinent news story that had spread throughout the Gathering by Saturday. Participants learned that leaders of state and federal agencies were considering adopting a natural resources management plan that would institutionalize a "bioregional" approach, dividing California into eleven bioregions for management purposes. At a Sunday morning meeting, those present discussed the implications of this plan and the possibility of political action on the part of the Shasta Bioregional Gathering. The meeting transcript and resulting letter to the Secretary of Resources follow.

**Peter Berg:** It happens that a political event has presented itself to us. If the bioregional axiom is that you go ahead and do what you think is right and only stop to get "political" when things get in your way, then that is what has happened to us just now.

The State of California has done something that Cecelia Lanman will describe. Then we can have a discussion about what we might do about it. Some people have expressed strong hopes for some sort of political action from this Gathering.

**Cecelia Lanman:** In 1989 a bill passed the legislature creating the Timberland



Task Force, which was basically a committee of thirteen heads of federal and state agencies that dealt with parks, forests, and fish, game and wildlife services. All of these groups operate under the auspices of the Secretary of Resources for the State of California.

The Task Force was commissioned to develop a database because the State was being sued and had no data on how much old growth forest was left or where the wildlife species in the State were and how they were faring. They formed the Task Force and they began to develop a database.

What grew out of this was an ad hoc committee of people who began to meet to develop a strategy for protecting biodiversity throughout the State. They began to focus specifically on the Klamath Province, which is the region of the northern spotted owl from California's northern border to Sonoma and Marin counties. The strategy was to begin to develop an inter-agency bioregional planning effort because this particular region has many public and private land jurisdictions.

This is now a bioregional strategy for the whole state, and an inter-agency group is beginning to identify bioregions in the State of California. What the member agencies would like to do is reduce resource use conflicts. They don't want to be sued anymore under the Endangered Species Act or other protective mechanisms that environmentalists have traditionally used to halt development or logging or mining. In other words, they don't want species to become listed as endangered because that triggers protective mechanisms to make it difficult for loggers and developers and people who have other interests in mind.

This may be well-intended to some

degree. State agencies would like to protect resources and also allow economic growth to continue. But we all know that those two things are contradictory at best.

On Thursday in Sacramento they are going to sign a formal agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding between all of the agencies, which sets out their goal to work through this coordinative strategy. That is just the beginning.

The idea is to have a state-wide Executive Council of these agencies and then have Bioregional Councils with the supposed task of setting up local landscape and watershed groups that would interface on the bioregional level and from there to the state-wide level.

So this is what they are doing, and it could be good or it could be bad. I think it will only be successful if we have grassroots watershed-based involvement on an active and strong level; otherwise, we are going to find ourselves represented on these councils by people who are going to make trade-offs. They might save something in one place as a mitigation but develop it somewhere else. Without local involvement, strong local involvement, it may not go our way.

**Peter Berg:** Cecelia, I knew you were the right person to report on this because you not only presented the situation but pointed out the wood rat that might be lurking. There are a couple of conceptual wood rats as well in that this is really a limited biogeographic designation of bioregions. It doesn't include human beings. It's only for conservation purposes and Cecelia suspects that even the conservation element might be warped.

**Seth Zuckerman:** Well, it seems that for many years we have been saying, "Hey, political boundaries don't make sense!" Now along come the government people who in effect say, "Gee, that might be right." They start to draw these new lines on the map and basically this is a very positive development. I think there are problems irrespective of the wood rats and other

*continued on following page*

## Announcement

### Second SBG Set for Sept. 1992

The Second Shasta Bioregional Gathering, hosted by the Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center, will celebrate "Building a Bioregional Culture," September 10-13, 1992, at the Methodist Church Camp near Mount Shasta. Workshops and panels include Community Building, Food for Everyone, Mount Shasta Preservation, and Biodiversity Including Forests.

For information, contact the Mount Shasta Bioregional Ecology Center, P.O. Box 1143, Mount Shasta, Shasta Bioregion, CA 96067, (916) 926-3397, or call (916) 926-3333.



## Eco-Rap Lyrics

"What's the Answer"  
(I'm Lookin' 4 It)

**Two Dominatorz:**  
**Marcus Justice & Bernard Henderson**

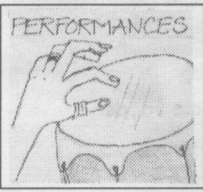
Environmental hazards in Frisco  
For sure is all around  
But mainly most of these hazards  
Are in my part of town  
Ain't nothing new in Bayview  
And seems like nothing will ever change  
Let's ask a city official it always out of  
their range

Remember the slaughterhouse and  
naval ship yard

If there's a problem in the B.V.H.P.  
it's disregarded

Like the mercury in the fish in Islais creek  
Fish swimmin around toxic every day  
in the week

When others go outside in the rain see I can't  
The reason behind this is our sewage plant  
'Cause when it rains it pours, when it pours  
it flows, when it flows the best thing is  
just to hold your nose



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continued from preceding page  
creatures that are lurking there.

We have been thinking about bioregions longer than most of the people who have come up with these designations, and that puts us in a position where we can conceivably help shape the direction in which this goes. But only if there is an active policy. I think this can give us an avenue to express bioregional ideas both through what we do elsewhere and through what effort we put into these councils. Instead of clamoring outside the tent, we can have a couple of people, or maybe everyone, spend a few hours inside the tent. I think it has potential to be a good thing as long as we don't delude ourselves into thinking, "Now the State has fallen before the bioregional forces and everything is okay."

**Andrea Luna:** I think we have to respond in the mode of, "Why, yes, finally!" My concern in all of this work is the co-option of the term into something that is less than the reality we all know exists. For instance, biodiversity is simply an attribute of watershed ecosystems. We have to define biodiversity in the context of the watershed ecosystem, and we have to use all of our powers to achieve recognition that practically all of the watershed ecosystems we inhabit are severely degraded and damaged. The myth is that, "Oh well, we will just agree on this, and we will provide plans and go on managing it." Some timber

harvesting is at total odds with maintaining biodiversity because biodiversity is damaged in most places. You have to have the goal of restoration first.

We have to be really clear and articulate and get in writing the experience and the data that we have from our twenty years of working in these watersheds. We have to take over and clarify the concept. We have to acknowledge the reality of ecosystem damage. We have to address the myth of management and maintenance, and we have to put in place long-term commitment that excludes certain uses for large portions of our watersheds.

**Freeman House:** I've been tracking the growth of this situation for some time and agree entirely with the reservations I've heard expressed today. But I think there is potential for a positive aspect. Part of this effort is an authentic response from a whole range of bureaucrats who recognize the necessary redefinition of resource issues based on the spotted owl experience. The species-by-species approach was, in practical terms, impossible. On one level this does represent an attempt by the State to respond to threats to biodiversity on an ecological landscape basis.

To an important degree we are going to have a blank slate to work with. The structure of the bioregional councils is still to be determined. We should involve ourselves at the local and state levels in the way these bioregional councils are built and should take the point of view that biodiversity cannot be served by the councils unless they are made up of watershed representatives. We have some leverage at this time. It's very early in the game and I would recommend the Shasta Bioregional Gathering write a letter to the Secretary of Resources commending the State on adopting a right-

minded approach to defining biodiversity and stating these concerns.

(Following Freeman's suggestion, the group drafted the following letter:)

Dear Secretary Wheeler:

*The Shasta Bioregional Gathering is a network of more than 200 individuals affiliated with over 50 community groups organized around the sustainability of life forms and human culture in the bioregions of Northern California. We share with you the recognition that the protection of biodiversity is central to the principles of maintaining and restoring the health of ecosystems and the viability of local economies.*

*We welcome you in joining our efforts to engage in the problems of sustaining biodiversity using watershed, ecosystem and landscape scale approaches. We will work with you in the formation of local bioregional councils as proposed in the Memorandum of Understanding, "Agreement on Biodiversity."*

*It is crucial that community-based people be involved in initiating the bioregional councils and in establishing the structure, composition and the process by which they operate. In order to achieve the stated goals of the agreement, strong representation from community, watershed and Native American organizations will be essential. We are prepared to provide contacts for this purpose and expect to hear from you soon in this regard.*

*The definition and boundaries of bioregions require full consideration of biological, hydrological and cultural values. Any mapping and definition of bioregions must be provisional until all parties concerned agree on criteria for drawing those lines.*

*This letter was drafted and agreed to at the Shasta Bioregional Gathering convened at Napa, California in the Klamath Province of the Northern Spotted Owl on September 15, 1991.*

Sincerely,  
Cecelia Lanman  
Biodiversity Project  
Shasta Bioregional Gathering



Photo by Ruth Gravanis presented in Wild in the City Slide Show.

# Two Generations Respond

Darryl Wilson and sons, Theodoro & Seterro Garcia-Wilson

The overwhelming positive response to the first Shasta Bioregional Gathering came in the form of exclamations, written reports (see bibliography at left), and letters. Three members of one family sent us their inspired reflections:

December 7, 1991, 5:11 a.m., UC Davis

Peter/Judy/gang,

*I know that the immense and sprawling governments of the world are vanishing monsters. It will not be long before the people in various countries say, "What? Who is that guy to tell us how to live, when to live, where to live, and why? Gather all of those people who are sick of the political amoebic syndrome, and we will care for ourselves."*

*At that time, the societies that have welded themselves together in thought and action and have evolved back into tribal elements that seek balance with nature and depend upon each other will be the survivors.*

*I would like to impress two thoughts here. One, that local gatherings are most important. Those international/national meetings have proven only that there can be as much of a struggle for recognition in the bio-movement as there is in American politics. That is unhealthy.*

*And two, I think that children should have more of a voice in any situation that involves them. Just like the women had to fight for the right to vote and the slaves had to fight for the right to be free, children have to struggle to be*

*recognized, and sometimes they mature and still have no place to stand and make statements for their cause—except upon the plastic platform of politics.*

*Boss and Hoss and their little friend Lincoln had the most wonderful time. True, they caused a lot of confusion, but they were doing "firsts." Also, they found a lizard. After carrying it around for awhile and showing their wilderness prowess, they returned the lizard to the exact rock where they found it. They disturbed the ecosystem for a moment, replaced it, but their screams of delight are still echoing in that canyon.*

*Almost forgot. Kerry and I enjoyed the moments we shared with the gathering immensely. Children laughing as they march into a future that they are comfortable with has always been a thought that moves within my quiet moments when Boss and Hoss are sleeping.*

- Darryl Wilson  
Member of the A-juma  
and Atsuge tribes

## Announcement

### SBG Networking Directory

A networking directory from the first Shasta Bioregional Gathering, compiled by Barbara Clark, is available through the Planet Drum office for \$5.

September 14 journal entry of Theodoro Garcia-Wilson (Boss):

*It is real important to save the earth.*

*We went to the Shasta Bioregional Conference. We went boating and we went to the BBQ. The main course was chicken.*

*It was my first time in a boat by myself.*

*It was a long trip but the place was hidden and beautiful.*

*Saving the earth is a good thing.*

September 15, 1991 entry of Seterro Garcia-Wilson (Hoss):

*At the Shasta Bioregional Conference, I played on an outside bowling alley with Boss and Lincoln.*

*It was a conference to save the earth. I think it is a very good idea.*

*Gary and Carol Snyder, Joe Carillo and Peter Berg and a lot of other people were there.*

*The woman in the cook shack gave us some cookie dough. It was delicious. It tasted like sweet oatmeal. She was very nice!*

# Musings on Congresses & the Bioregional Movement

David McCloskey

Having been involved in bioregionalism for over a decade, attending several continental congresses as well as helping organize five major gatherings in our area, I want to share a few reflections on what works and what doesn't and where we might go next.



## Congresses

"Congresses, schmongresses," scoffs a friend. "Can't you be more imaginative?" There's always been something inappropriate about using the term "Congress" to describe our gatherings. The original intent of Congresses and Committees of Correspondence as an operating model was to develop a kind of shadow parliament, as it was described to me, to school us for the eventual takeover. It seems silly in retrospect, but passing resolutions for non-existent audiences when we don't represent anybody isn't even good high school civics. Enthusiasm for such juvenile sandbox politics faded long ago, and it's past time to give the word a decent burial.

Besides, there's far too much focus on Congresses anyway; while they may serve a certain function, they are not the central work of bioregionalism!



## Consensus

This has become the great "elephant in the living room" that everyone is afraid to discuss. I believe that consensus is being misused as a process. It is appropriate in certain contexts: when a group knows each other and enjoys shared purposes and common tasks, then it may work well. Otherwise, it is probably misplaced. At its best, consensus process can be inspiring; at its worst, it's emotional fascism.

The great flaw of generalizing this process to all situations is that truly significant matters get reduced to the lowest common denominator, and no one cares about mush. Too often the misuse of consensus kills real debate and leads to a mindless group conformism. In the face of such a plodding, lifeless process, including the mechanical observance of preset time schedules that cut off vital discussion in mid-stream and recorders who neglect to write down what is actually said but always seem to translate it into other, preconceived categories, all presided over by the domineering presence of the "neutral facilitator," the very spirit we seek to safeguard wilts and flees. Finally, in the end, exhausted and exasperated, people simply give up or give in and go home.



## Audiences

We can no longer afford tacitly to assume that our audience is the left or back-to-the-land refugees or aging hippies. Nor does it seem likely that bioregionalism will ever become an umbrella group for a whole host of alternative movements. Surely we have our own work and unique contribution to make, and we need to spell it out much better to different groups. We need to talk straight, without relying on the in-group jargon and badges of clothes and hair, to our friends and neighbors. We need to address them in clear, cogent, compelling prose that will move, say, the county commissioner and voter as well as

the environmentalist and businessperson. For it's the plain folks who share our homeplaces who are the prime audience. "Outreach" is such a lousy term for conversing with one's friends and neighbors about what really matters.

Several other potential audiences present themselves. First are various environmental groups, mainstream as well as deep-ecological. Of special interest here are sustainable agriculture and permaculture folks and the emerging sustainable forestry movement. We need to find out who's doing the best work in our regions regardless of labels and cultivate relationships with them.

A second largely undeveloped audience is professionals. I often find an immediate grasp of the vision and sympathy for it among professionals such as ecologists and wildlife biologists, geographers and cartographers, sociologists and anthropologists, and above all design professionals such as architects, landscape architects, and city and regional planners. Those who work for government agencies often seem starved for a camaraderie of the heart and want to do the right thing. Talk with them, work on projects together, learn from their expertise and draw them into the vision.

Finally, Environmental Education is another growing field we should try to influence. It is often mandated by the states in secondary curricula. I'm thinking of offering mapping workshops in the new "ecological geography" to high school teachers to get them involved in bioregional thinking.



## Issues

In our own bioregions, we need to focus more on real, practical issues through which we can inform the public agenda. To help set the terms of discourse and define the agenda is always an achievement. Our concern should be more on doing the real work throughout the year in our regions than on consensing on resolutions at congresses. We need to translate our vision into the crises and great debates of our time.

This means becoming well-informed about the central issues in our own areas. Often I discover, however, that county governments are already doing what some bioregionalists are just getting around to proposing. How can we call ourselves bioregionalists if we don't even know what's going on in our own backyards?

## Regionalism

Again and again I hear the same old refrain: "bioregionalists are concerned with the local." But I wonder: are we localists or regionalists? Remember that "bioregionalism" is a compound word, and what we seek is a new orientation and identification not merely with our locale but with whole ecosystems. The region is the common "house" that integrates the planetary

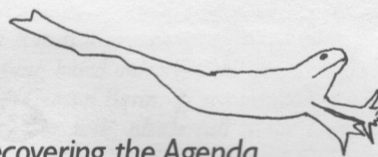
and local levels, the forgotten country in-between the parts and the whole. Thus, ecology is not the only framework here; the rich tradition of regionalism is equally important.

We should become known as the foremost spokesfolks for the special life and character of the region on all levels. It is important to acknowledge that even in ecological terms, the Mattole Valley cannot hope to save the Mattole by itself. We need to go beyond the local watershed level to the ecoregion and then the macrobioregion, and so on. We must show others in the process (e.g. of mapping these areas as Chinese boxes within boxes) how to find their way carefully stepwise through all the mediations between the local and the planetary ecosphere.

No wonder the "air is thin at the continental level" when the nested series of ecologies between the local and the continental have been so apparent by their absence. For instance, Shasta held its first

congress only last year! The breakthrough here has already occurred with the gathering of the High Plains/Great Prairie bioregions last fall. What I propose is this: (1) watershed and ecoregional meetings every year (e.g. Ish River); (2) a macro or bioregional level (e.g. Cascadia) get-together every two years; (3) a gathering of bioregions

such as the Great Prairie or the Cordillera (e.g., Cascadia, Shasta, Colorado Plateau, the Great Basin, Sonora, Sinaloa—the bioregions of western North America) every three years, and (4) a continental confluence every four years. We need to become true regionalists!



## Recovering the Agenda & Taking the Lead

A strange thing happened on the way to utopia: we got leapfrogged by the mainstream! It happened so fast and was so unexpected we've been caught by surprise. Who would have even thought it possible to go in a moment from the margin to respectability? But it shows the void of vision in the mainline and also a widespread recognition of our compounding crises. These are open, fluid times in the world, and the best and brightest are engaged in a kind of mad, wild improvisation leading who knows where. It's both scary and wonderful. Nobody really knows what they're doing anymore or what's going to happen next, but they're willing to try almost anything now. Bioregionalism sounds good to some. It's being plugged in with a lot of other things for a run at the problems and will be tested and discarded along with everything else if it can't deliver the goods.

Imagine having a U.S. Congressman sitting in your office, as I recently did, seeking information on the bioregional perspective and Cascadia for his new bill establishing an international joint commission between British Columbia and Washington. Or being interviewed for a special documentary on Cascadia for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (C.B.C.), or interviewed on N.P.R. on the same subject. All of this has happened to me in the last three months, and I must confess that I am still somewhat astonished.

Or consider that at the Shasta gathering in September 1991, a front-page article in the *Sacramento Bee*, the capital newspaper, caused a sensation. The announcement that the State of California was apparently adopting a bioregional approach to integrated management of natural resources spread like wildfire during dinner on Saturday night. What caused perplexity and chagrin at what might have been wonderful news was that (a) most people there knew nothing about the proposal to divide the state into bioregions and set up local advisory bioregional councils, and (b) the State took the initiative and leapt ahead of bioregionalists. A mad scramble ensued to draft a letter to the California Natural Resources secretary urging him to recognize the pre-existing bioregional groups who've been doing God's work all along, to include them in the bioregional councils, and to keep the lines on the map provisional until the bioregionalists could get their act together enough to either create their own maps or at least participate in the mapping process. (See "Government Agencies' 'Bioregional' Plan" p. 9.)

A less dramatic and lesser-known cooperative effort is also underway among the Feds. The BLM has organized a "Timberland Task Force" in developing a coordinated forest management strategy for the northern spotted owl habitat in the "Klamath Province" of northern California and southern Oregon.

In Cascadia, we have a related but different problem. A group of progressive lawyers and businessmen who want to strengthen ties with British Columbia ("plow the border" says one) along the I-5 corridor from Portland to Vancouver have taken over our ideas and maps of Cascadia. Using their own journal *The New Pacific* to spread the word, they're holding meetings and setting up arrangements that we are not party to. While one dreams of having elites and resource managers embrace the bioregional vision and welcome you with open arms, co-optation is quite another matter.

Therein lie many dilemmas, but we should admit that we have also done little in the public arena to articulate what the bioregional vision means in practice. Sad to say, but the bioregional literature remains only an inch thick and a foot wide.

A specific suggestion for recovering the agenda and taking the lead: if we take the compounding crises in our ecosystems as fundamental, then we need to get with the revolutions happening in Conservation Biology, Landscape Ecology and Restoration Ecology. For instance, in terms of the Cordilleran bioregions outlined earlier, we could regain the cutting edge of a fast-moving issue by focusing collectively on a bioregional-scale strategy for conservation and restoration of our forests and waters. As George Tukul argues so well in his recent article, "Wild at the Heart" in issue 14 of *Upriver Downriver*,\* we could help set the agenda and seize the lead by articulating a coherent long-range strategy of connectivity between cores and corridors (the Biosphere Reserve Model) for all of the western Cordillera from Alaska to Mexico. In addition, if we could help produce an inventory of damaged lands, we could advocate monies to put displaced local people back to work restoring the lands with long-term stewardship contracts; this would go a long way in overcoming the tragic civil war splitting environmental and economic interests. Bioregionalists could help heal this trauma if we lived out our own vision more fully. Let's get going!

\**Upriver Downriver*, P.O. Box 103, Petrolia, CA 95558.

# Curing the Green City Blues



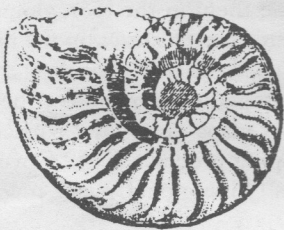
Whitney Smith

"City bashing is an easy occupation, but it makes the regeneration and renaissance of cities much more difficult for those who, like Lewis Mumford, see the city as a place where 'the separate beams of life' are brought together and 'the issues of civilization are brought into focus.'"

REGENERATION: TORONTO'S WATERFRONT AND THE SUSTAINABLE CITY, FINAL REPORT, ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE TORONTO WATERFRONT, 1992.

"People and their cities are as much natural phenomena as trees, streams, nests, and deer paths. It is crucial that we come to see ourselves as an integral part of the total living community."

KEVIN LYNCH, *A THEORY OF GOOD CITY FORM*, 1981.



FROM TORONTO BIOREGION WEEK BROCHURE

Some remarkable experiences stay with us forever. Like charming, delinquent lodgers in memory, living rent-free, they come out in dreams, conversations, letters and articles in magazines. One of the most compelling of those experiences occurred when I attended my first continental bioregional congress in Squamish, B.C. in 1988. My first congress was not exactly a religious conversion, but it was definitely a conversion of some kind. What I got from this week-long gathering of independent, convivial outsiders was two-fold. On the one hand, for the first time in my life I had encountered a large "tribe" of people motivated by a common goal: living "in place" in harmony with the earth. This notion made sense to me partly because I published a magazine called *The Journal of Wild Culture*, pertaining to issues of ecology and imagination, the idea of which evolved out of my own earth-based experience of picking and marketing wild foods.

On the other hand, coming from a large city in Eastern Canada, I felt quite lonely in this group of 400 people from all over North America, Latin America and beyond. Yes, there were some urbanites at the congress, but they seemed shy, and definitely not part of any tribe. I remember being a little embarrassed when someone asked me where I lived.

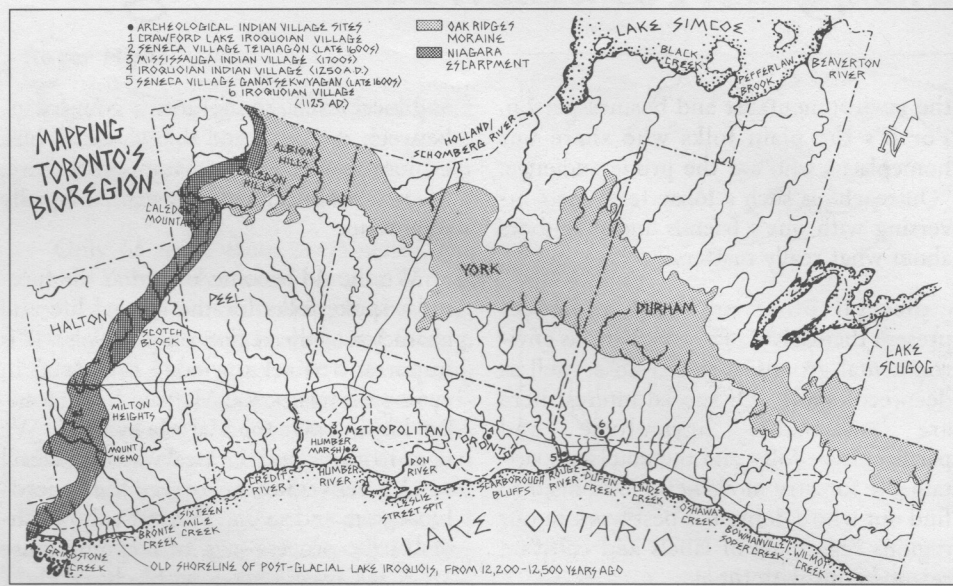
"Toronto," I said.

"Oh, really. That's too bad. I lived there a long time ago. I could never go back."

"Yes," I said, acknowledging my disease, my shoulders bowing to a glorious Pastoral god. "Yeah, it's tough in the city. So many problems." Suddenly I felt I had a new problem. I lived in a city. I'd lived in a city all my life, but now I knew I really lived in a city.

In the beauty of the Squamish woods I carried my fresh despair to a Green Cities Committee meeting. People there did have some ideas about how to engage neighbours and revitalize the downtown core, but I was still a bit overwhelmed by the task of transforming a region that didn't have a lot of "bio" in it. I was lost in my city. I was looking for a watershed I could call my own.

Over the next two years I became very active in Toronto municipal politics, helping to elect a majority council of reformers to City Hall. This was good and fun work, but I didn't feel the seeds of bioregionalism that had been sewn in Squamish were pro-



REVA POMER first published in NOW Magazine

ducing anything. When I mentioned the B-word at one of my political meetings, my colleagues smiled at me affectionately. I could read their minds. "Humour our friend. He must be doing one of those human potential things. He knows not what he does. . . ."

Another two years passed and I went to the Fourth congress in the Gulf of Maine. There again I joined the Green Cities Committee, where we worked very hard to dissect urban issues and came up with almost nothing, save an inspiring yet questionable strategy using an organic model (see "Cities in Climax" by Bruce Hinkforth, *Raise the Stakes* No. 17). All in all, there was nothing to take home to the folks. What I did take home was a copy of Planet Drum Foundation's book, *A Green City Program*. It showed examples of urban revitalization that penetrated my megalopolis gloom. I wondered how these ideas, this

"program," could be used to actually have an effect on the city I lived in. What would have the most impact? What I did know was that I didn't want just another one-shot event that got everyone excited at the time but led nowhere two years down the road.

When I considered who made the most difference to the future of a city, I came up with three groups: politicians, municipal bureaucrats and planners. For these people

## TURTLE ISLAND BIOREGIONAL CONGRESS V

# Reflections on Bioregional

Gene Marshall

The celebratory mood at this Congress broke all bounds on several occasions. I have rarely become more ecstatic at dancing or drumming events. Tuesday night's band leader, Tommy Hancock, expressed unusually powerful words about this:

"This occasion on the beautiful upper Guadalupe River was one of those rare events that inspire one toward being a better planetary resident. In particular, the Supernatural Family Band played and taught folk dances to [what turned out to be] an enthusiastic and responsive audience for a vast spectrum of Texas roots music. In 45 years of conducting dance parties professionally, I've never experienced a better combination of the right people, music, place and spirit.

"Indian drums were used to signal the action around Camp Stewart, a pleasant relief from PA sets, TVs, telephones and the like. On one evening a dance occurred spontaneously as the drummers jammed. A multitude of dancers continued their unconceptualized interpretation of the music for several hours! Fun!

"There is hope for humankind!"

Eight-person talking circles was another unusually successful format. My circle was deep nurture and fun every time. I heard the same report from many others.

I imagined a two-day seminar, a kind of Green City Berlitz Immersion Course from which, with all due respect, no meat-faced, gas-guzzling, incinerator-head could return unchanged. The seminar would be called Sustainable Cities: Toward a New Urban Revitalization and would be led by someone with a bioregional wand and a big city handshake. The creator of *A Green City Program*, Peter Berg, despite his suspiciously anarchic, flowing emeritus locks, seemed the perfect candidate. Several conversations and letters later, Peter and I developed a two-day seminar based on ten problem areas: urban wild habitat; rethinking transportation; renewable energy; waste and sewage (recycling); neighbourhood; place awareness; citizen planning; water (supply, distribution, re-use and disposal); the economy; and human services (housing, homeless, addicts and job training). The first day of the seminar would be devoted to considering the problems and possible solutions; on day two we would identify local problem areas to develop solutions.

This all sounded fine on paper until the old economic woes kicked in: our local gov-

The business-work-thinking part of this Congress was a significant leap into something new. We struggled to put our old committees on hold and try to think through some general decisions in a different configuration—"the circles of change" we called them. Overwhelming issues were tackled but only begun. All in all, a certain unity of vision began to emerge. Some of the highlights were:

- 1) Softening and clarifying our names for things: "Gathering" instead of "Congress," "Vision Council" instead of "Steering Council," "Continuity Committee" for the administrative core of the Vision Council. The process of congressing (true eco-centric governance) was not given up. One helpful image of "gathering" was an encampment of many tribes: children playing; youth, adults and elders mingling; and visionary wisdoms being shared.
- 2) The nature and "standard flow" of TIBC were articulated in an artful and helpful fashion for the designers of future gatherings.
- 3) We set up a coordinated network linking our existing Bioregional Research and Training Centers.
- 4) We began the task of mapping our local bioregions and discerning the various regional scales on which we wish to operate.
- 5) We reasserted that bioregionalism begins at home and with ourselves and concrete relationships to work and community.
- 6) We did something never done before for the place where we met: we gave Camp



REVA FOWLER

ernments decided to put a freeze on conference and travel spending. Since I had personally vowed not to get involved anymore with drain-me projects, however worthy and world-changeable, that cost me not only my own time but also my own money, I cancelled it for a future, safer time when a \$40,000 budget would be easier to come by. As a consolation to Peter for all the time he had put in, I called him and said I would organize a talk for him in Toronto that would help support his trip out East. End of Green City Gloom Antidote, phase one.

Being a wily expansionist by nature, I had a bit of trouble producing "a little talk" on such an expandable subject as bioregionalism with such an expansive brain as Philosopher Berg. In a matter of a few days the little talk grew to a nine-day conference with 22 events, 13 locations, 41 speakers and 1,000 anticipated, paying participants. Since it was only eight weeks away, there was still a financial risk factor. My rationale was complex, naturally: (a) this conference was a quarter of the budget of the seminar; (b) it was grass-roots in style, thereby making it possible to draw in vol-

unteers, donors and a wider public; (c) I had a strong desire to do it; (d) with this kind of activist-oriented event, I would be able to pull in my colleagues in the Society for the Preservation of Wild Culture, Christopher Lowry and Marie Patterson, who were imaginative, brave and solid enough to make bold, risky ventures work, but who didn't have much interest in corporate-style events like my Green City Berlitz Course. The other reason, based on a dangerous motive, was that it just felt right.

We decided to call the conference "Our Own Back Yard: Toronto Bioregion Week" (Ecological Renewal in the Greater Toronto Bioregion). We had \$13 in the bank and eight weeks to pull it all together. Though it was a bit of a struggle, it was the kind of struggling that can make lefties believe in God. We worked hard but it was fluid and fun. Committed volunteers came forth quickly and donors responded with checks of \$150 to \$2,500. No one made much money but no one lost any either. After it was all over, Our Own Back Yard was pronounced a critical success, attracting about 1,500 people who were inspired by the concepts of bioregionalism, many of whom wanted to get involved in some way. The question for me now is—after a long period of having Green City inertia problems, wondering whether bioregion-

alism and the city would in fact consume their affair—what happened that made it work so well without a huge amount of planning or resources? By way of a brief analysis of how we designed the conference, here are some of the reasons why I think it worked.

**An Open Vessel.** The primary reason for the conference's acceptance in Toronto was that people were ready for a new sort of environmental event: something comprehensive, challenging and fresh. People are tired of the same old approach; bioregionalism provides the new paradigm that lets people look at the same old ecological issues with new eyes, hearts and minds. Throughout Our Own Back Yard, we exploited bioregionalism's "open vessel" virtues without actually having to use the B-word too much, as Berg encourages. This helped us to steer clear of unproductive debates about whether bioregionalism is just another vagrant family of obscure jargon. When we talked to people unfamiliar with bioregionalism, we tried to think the B-word but not speak it.

**Soup Needs Spice.** Because bioregionalism is more of a cultural movement than a solely political one, it blooms best as a philosophy when positioned beside events that you can smell, touch and taste. The enjoyment of lectures and work-

shops on ecological restoration, bioregional mapping, watershed action accountability and community economic development is enhanced when mixed with workshops on ecological ritual, farm tours, organic gourmet dinners, \$5 street food fairs, hoedowns, river walking tours, cabaret nights, and children watching their school yard pavement dug up to plant a wilderness garden. Information, however stimulating, only takes you so far.

Also, we were careful to know who we were marketing to: a sophisticated urban audience. For example, we went easy on rituals and the more complex consensus events that would be commonplace at a bioregional gathering. All those things have their own value and are best introduced in the right place at the right time. We wanted a foot in the door.

**What's Under the Rocks.** Thanks to contacts established at my first North American Bioregional Congress, it was easy to pull together a list of speakers who would provide a foundation for the conference: Peter Berg, Stephanie Mills from upstate Michigan, Jean Gardner from New York, Beatrice Briggs from Chicago. With the fundamentals of bioregionalism covered by these speakers, we were able to bring in many local people who would not have thought of themselves as "bioregionalists" but who all fit easily under the umbrella. As David Haenke has said, bioregionalism is comprised of many different movements that reflect its principles (i.e., ecofeminism, permaculture, ecological restoration, organic agriculture, midwifery, among about thirty others). If you look under the rocks, you'll find a vast number of good people to put into a conference in any community, let alone a city. Just within the planning architecture and landscape architecture fields you can probably find several people who have practical and radical concepts for urban restoration.

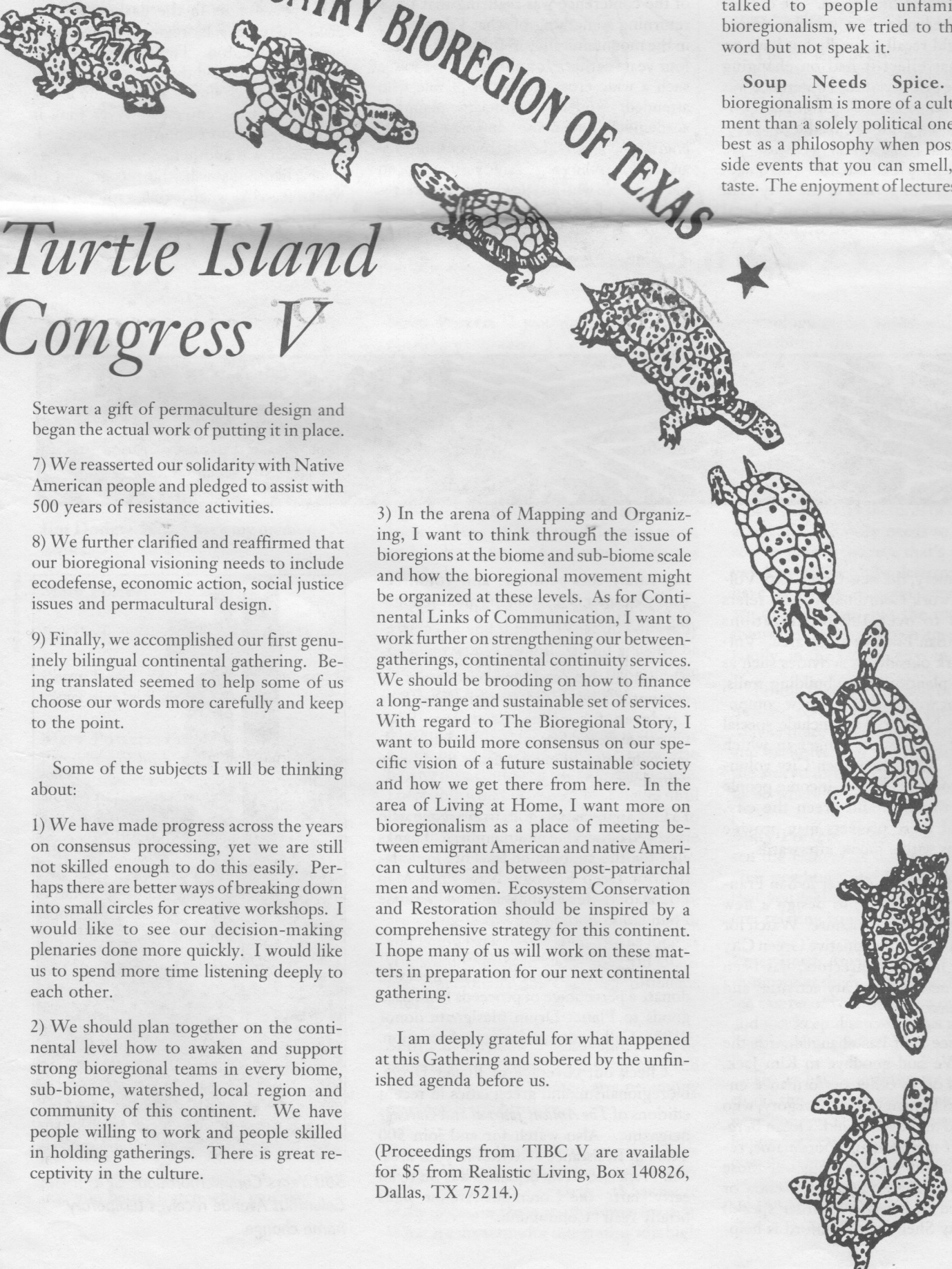
**Bioregional Work Had Already Begun.** When I returned from Squamish I spoke to David Crombie, a federal minister who was heading up The Royal Com-

*Continued on following page.*

*"Because bioregionalism is more of a cultural movement than a solely political one, it blooms best as a philosophy when positioned beside events that you can smell, touch and taste."*

## IN THE HILL COUNTRY BIOREGION OF TEXAS

# Turtle Island Congress V



Stewart a gift of permaculture design and began the actual work of putting it in place.

- 7) We reasserted our solidarity with Native American people and pledged to assist with 500 years of resistance activities.
- 8) We further clarified and reaffirmed that our bioregional visioning needs to include ecodefense, economic action, social justice issues and permacultural design.
- 9) Finally, we accomplished our first genuinely bilingual continental gathering. Being translated seemed to help some of us choose our words more carefully and keep to the point.

Some of the subjects I will be thinking about:

- 1) We have made progress across the years on consensus processing, yet we are still not skilled enough to do this easily. Perhaps there are better ways of breaking down into small circles for creative workshops. I would like to see our decision-making plenaries done more quickly. I would like us to spend more time listening deeply to each other.
- 2) We should plan together on the continental level how to awaken and support strong bioregional teams in every biome, sub-biome, watershed, local region and community of this continent. We have people willing to work and people skilled in holding gatherings. There is great receptivity in the culture.

3) In the arena of Mapping and Organizing, I want to think through the issue of bioregions at the biome and sub-biome scale and how the bioregional movement might be organized at these levels. As for Continental Links of Communication, I want to work further on strengthening our between-gatherings, continental continuity services. We should be brooding on how to finance a long-range and sustainable set of services. With regard to The Bioregional Story, I want to build more consensus on our specific vision of a future sustainable society and how we get there from here. In the area of Living at Home, I want more on bioregionalism as a place of meeting between emigrant American and native American cultures and between post-patriarchal men and women. Ecosystem Conservation and Restoration should be inspired by a comprehensive strategy for this continent. I hope many of us will work on these matters in preparation for our next continental gathering.

I am deeply grateful for what happened at this Gathering and sobered by the unfinished agenda before us.

(Proceedings from TIBC V are available for \$5 from Realistic Living, Box 140826, Dallas, TX 75214.)

### Announcement

#### Voice of the Turtle to appear in Raise the Stakes

Planet Drum has been asked to produce Voice of the Turtle (VOT) until the next continental gathering. VOT will include information about developments toward the next gathering as well as poetry, artwork and reports from bioregional groups. Please send materials for inclusion directly to RTS.

Copies of this issue are being sent free to past recipients of VOT and to TIBC V participants. Future VOT's will be sent only to respondents who indicate their interest and send \$5 to \$10 USD (sliding scale) to cover expenses. (Of course we will be delighted if you become a member of Planet Drum and continue receiving RTS!)

FROM COVER OF THE TIBC ALPHANAC

Continued from preceding page.

mission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront. I asked him if he knew what a bioregion was. "Bio-region? What's that?" he said. Now David Crombie is "Mr. Bioregion," having just published a 500-page report, *Regeneration*, that takes an ecosystem approach to renewing the waterfront. We had some very fertile soil to plant our ideas in.



**An Effective Brochure.** If our brochure had not worked, we would have died. It was our most successful promotional tool for the conference: 2-color, double-sided, 16" x 20", folded (to standard #10 envelope size), printed on recycled newsprint. We mailed 5,000 (from well-targeted mailing lists given to us by local organizations) and distributed another 7,000. Some of the organizations mailed a few hundred for us so we could save on postage. The brochure cost about \$1,000 to print and \$700 to design (imaginatively). A downtown of 15,000 printed it as an insert, costing us \$500.

The success of the brochure is significant because the press didn't really respond before the event. This was partly because we didn't have enough lead time or a publicity person who had been fully briefed about bioregionalism. To do good B-R P-R, you have to be able to explain to an arts journalist what makes bioregionalism a "cultural story."

We did receive some effective post-event publicity from Toronto's largest weekly tabloid, *NOW*. They wrote a well-researched article and designed their own bioregional map of the area, complete with aboriginal sites. This was a real bonus for us, since the map is such a powerful tool for organizing and getting people to identify with the bioregion. Post-promo can be just as good!

**"Toronto Bioregion Week."** By writing a nice letter to the Head of the Protocol Office of the City of Toronto, we were able to get Toronto Bioregion Week designated by the mayor. It was a very simple matter, partly because we were not controversial and had people like David Crombie, a popular former mayor of Toronto, as one of our supporters. However, this didn't seem to mean much to the press. In the future we would do a more assertive, clever press strategy to get Toronto Bioregion Week recognized.

**An Action Plan.** This conference had a clear political agenda. We strongly emphasized in the promotional materials that Our Own Back Yard was a first step in an on-going accountability process for ecological renewal in the region. We did not want another one-shot wonder where people would recall it fondly but have no idea of what effect it had on changing things. The priority of the conference was to produce some kind of action plan process that would grow out of the final plenary, and before each session we encouraged people to attend. The objective of this evening, held in the City Hall council chambers, was to form a local bioregional network that would, as we

stated in the brochure, "[be] a community of organizations and individuals who are committed to a set of action plans for our bioregion."

To ensure that we had a decent turnout for this important seeding event, we did two things: we promised to hand out a four-page newsletter, "Our Own Back Yard: The Week in Review"; and we featured a distinguished keynote speaker, Pat Adams, Executive Director of Probe International. The subject of her talk, "Property Rights and Bioregionalism: Lessons from the World," showed a wider picture after a week of focus on "the local."

A month later, we formed the Greater Toronto Bioregion Network to "promote bioregionalism in the Greater Toronto Bioregion" and identified several achievable and measurable objectives, including the need for a more appropriate earth-centered name to replace "Greater Toronto." Some of the initial names put forth, "The Urban Sprawl Commutershed Bioregion" and "The Greater Megalopolis Bioregion," were tabled for future discussion.

Personally, the most rewarding aspect of the conference was realizing that I was returning something of what I'd received in the mountain valley in British Columbia four years earlier. It was heartening to see such a wide cross-section of people who attended: students, politicians, planners, academics, bureaucrats, business people, engineers, homemakers, activists, cable TV and radio producers, organic gardeners, and many people who just described themselves as "citizens," all of whom clearly had compassion for where they lived and passion to see something done about it.

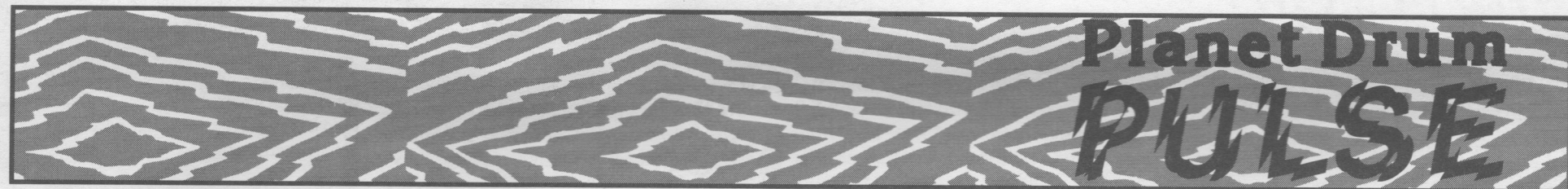
In an era when gloom's shadow covers too much of the globe, there is something so igniting in what city-dwellers can experience where they live: in the parks, on the sidewalks and streets, at City Hall. If there is any tyranny in the bioregional movement, it is the bias toward country living, where, admittedly, Eden is closer at hand, within political grasp, almost perfectible. There are certainly good reasons for that: living

where you touch, taste and smell the earth hour by hour sure beats subway trains, grid lock and high rises for fulfillment.

Then again, despite its current blight, the city is a living system. It is a misunderstood, scapegoat of a living thing, yet it is also the densest reflection of who we are and how we are together. In the words of Claude Lévi-Strauss, "By its form, as by the manner of its birth, the city has elements at once of biological procreation, organic evolution and aesthetic creation. It is both a natural object and a thing to be cultivated; something lived and something dreamed. It is the human invention *par excellence*."

If we can see the city in this way, not as a cruel mistake outside ourselves, but as one of our species where place *is* life, then what it mirrors for us in the dark, civilizing glass—in relative, bioregional terms—may be perfectible, too. The response to Our Own Back Yard and the desire that people showed to work slowly and steadily to renew our urban centers, however long it takes, revealed more hope than it dispelled. For me, it was another soul-seizing experience like Squamish, the recognition of what it feels like when people gather around a simple, powerful goal.

*"The desire that people showed to work slowly and steadily to renew our urban centers, however long it takes, revealed more hope than it dispelled."*



## Nancy Heil

The summer fog barrels (not "tiptoes on little cat's feet") from the ocean and into the Planet Drum office. During an unusual burst of sunshine, we briefly report on Planet Drum's recent activities.

Peter Berg and Judy Goldhaft ventured deep in the heart of Texas in May to Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V. (See report on page 13.) Besides participating in Congress business, they enjoyed local and continental friends, wild summer storms and some lucky bird sightings (painted bunting, great blue heron, hummingbirds).

P and J gave glowing reports of Mt. Shasta's emergence from winter as they returned from trips to Shasta Bioregional Gathering II planning meetings. Peter's East Coast tour to Toronto Bioregion Week (report on page 12), Rochester and New York City was quite successful. Another fall tour of the East is in the works; call for details.

We fought the recession with two PD benefits. "Earth Sights and Sounds" featured eco-performances and didgeridoo (an Australian aboriginal musical instrument). "Make Mayday Green Again" filled a Sausalito home with comedy, bellydancing and drumming by Mickey Hart and friends.

Linzy Emery, the new Green City Volunteer Network Coordinator, now refers volunteers to over 100 organizations around the San Francisco Bay area. Volunteers work outside on activities such as gardening, planting trees, building trails, or caring for wild animals. A new component of the Network will include special projects of one day or longer in which community members, Green City volunteers and homeless or low-income people will come together and green the city. Sponsors of these projects may provide work groups with a picnic afterwards.

The Public Media Center in San Francisco has been helping to design a new Green City logo and brochure. Watch for these this fall. The imaginative Green City Gang, our board of directors, has been suggesting new Green City activities and funding sources.

The office staff has changed with the seasons. We said goodbye to Kim Jack, who moves on to other performance endeavors, and Lyman "Greg" Gregory, who has returned to the southland. Ocean Berg, our summer membership coordinator, responds to members and sends out those ever-popular belly-up notices. (Renew or be subjected to her snowboarder speak!) Intern Tony Shen from Stanford is help-

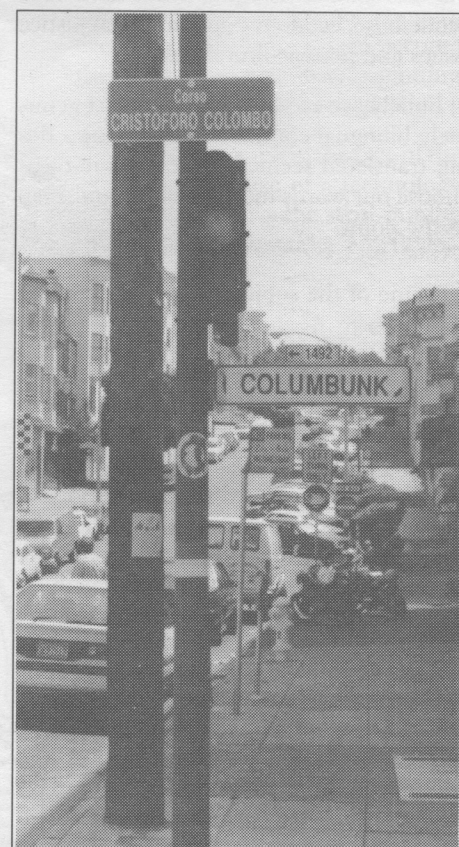
ing Linzy this summer, and volunteer Emily Zeamer is rearranging and cataloguing the library.

Kudos to the following volunteers: Rhodes Hileman and Don Nicodemus for computer advice and consultation, Jean Lindgren for office assistance, Walt Christensen and Stevyn Polk for bulk mailing help, and Phoebe Adams for library consultation.

Our appreciation goes to everyone who renewed or became new members. Thanks also for the support of Ira-Hiti Foundation for Deep Ecology, New Road Map Foundation, Rex Foundation, and Gerbode Foundation.

If you live near San Francisco, the Community Thrift Store on Valencia Street will donate a percentage of proceeds from used goods to Planet Drum (designate donor #190). Call if you need more information.

Check out coverage of Planet Drum, bioregionalism, and green cities in recent editions of *The Amicus Journal* and *Garbage* magazine. Also watch for and join 500 Years of Resistance activities in your area. San Francisco's North Beach was off to an early start: the Columbus Avenue signs briefly read "Columbunk."

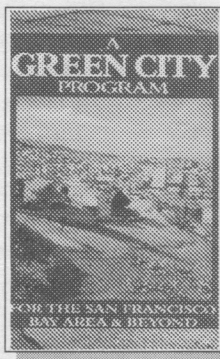


500 Years Commemoration: SF's Columbus Avenue receives temporary name change.

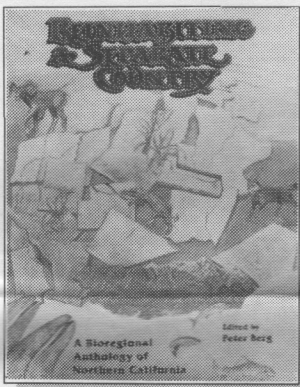
JUDY GOLDBAFT

# Planet Drum PUBLICATIONS

## Books



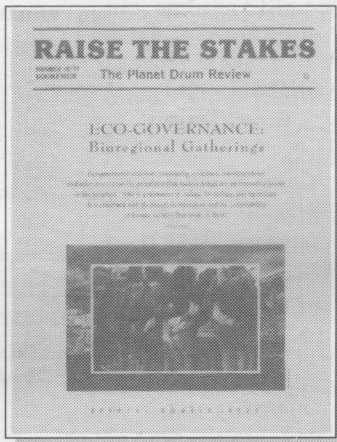
• *A Green City Program for the San Francisco Bay Area and Beyond* by Peter Berg, Beryl Magilav and Seth Zuckerman. 90+ pps. This book is the culmination of two years' work with more than 100 Bay Area organizations, has both visionary ideas and practical applications and is in its second printing with a new chapter on Green City Realities. It addresses ecological, socially responsible and sustainable topics ranging from Smart Transportation to Recycling and Reuse. \$7  
"Each chapter has a fable dramatizing how citizen action can bring healthy change on a human scale. These, and visionary 'what's possible?' sections, bring the greening of cities within reach of ordinary people pursuing sensible goals upon which consensus should be possible...its suggestions are valid and inspirational for any city." — Ernest Callenbach, author of *Ecotopia*



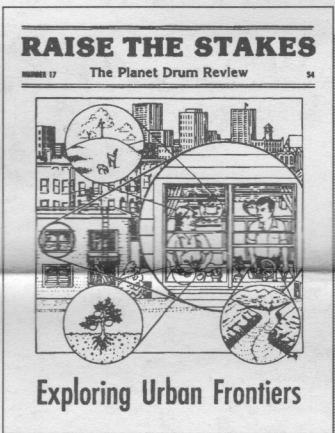
• *Reinhabiting a Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California*, edited by Peter Berg. 220 pps. Essays, natural history, biographies, poems and stories revealing Northern California as a distinct area of the planetary biosphere. \$7  
"The Book serves as both a pioneer and genre model...representing a vital and widespread new ethos." —New Age Magazine

• *Devolutionary Notes* by Michael Zwerin. 64 pps. A first hand account of European separatist movements today. \$2.95 post-paid.  
"...a strange and fascinating little guidebook that is 'redesigning the map of Europe.'" —Rain Magazine

## Raise the Stakes Back Issues

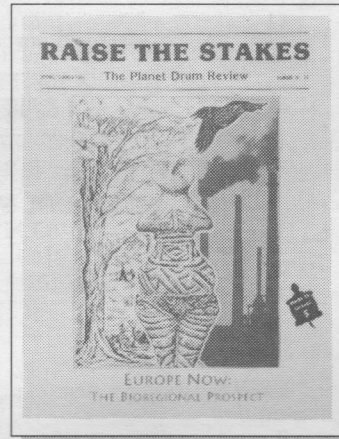


• *Eco-Governance: Bioregional Gatherings, Raise the Stakes No. 18/19* (Winter 1991/ Spring 1992). Informative accounts of bioregional gatherings in British Columbia, the Cascades, the Great Prairie, Ozarks, Detroit, the Great Lakes, Ohio River watershed, northcentral Pennsylvania, and Italy. Also features special reports from indigenous groups in the Dakota Black Hills, Mexico, Costa Rica, and San Francisco in response to the quincennial of Columbus' arrival; Peter Berg on "Post-Environmentalism Origins"; reviews, including educational magazines; bioregional directory updates; PD Pulse; and news of the Green City Project. \$5



• *Exploring Urban Frontiers, Raise the Stakes No. 17* (Winter 1991). Surveys unprecedented Green City achievements as well as some common frustrations. Green City planning from Paul Ryan's proposed "Eco-Channel" for NYC to eco-development in Brisbane, Australia. Also an interview with Richard Register on "Ecological Rebuilding and Evolutionary Healthy Future Cities," Patrick Mazza's "Portland Needn't Be a Rainy Los Angeles," Paul Glover's "Greenplanning," Nelson Denman on reaching young people with Green City theater, Beryl Magilav on urban recycling, Bruce Hinkforth's "Cities in Climax," Peter Berg on "Recreating Urban-

ity," and Doug Aberley's "Can Cities Really Be Green?" Reports from Lake Baikal, Hungary, the Latvian Green Movement, reforesting Barcelona, and Planet Drum's burgeoning Green City Center for San Francisco. PD Pulse, book reviews and more. \$4.



• *Europe Now: The Bioregional Prospect, Raise the Stakes No. 16* (Spring/Summer 1990). Articles by George Tukel on "Reinhabitation in Hungary," Thomas Kaiser's "The Difficulty of Dis-Covering Eastern Europe," Green discussions for reorganizing along bioregional lines rather than as nation-states; new social inventions in P.M.'s "Planetary Wednesday Liberation Movement;" Ruggero Schleicher-Tappeser's "Ten Theses for Regional Ecological Development;" reports on the restoration of prehistoric sites in Catalunya and a glimpse of sustainable agriculture in Neolithic (New Stone Age) France by Marc Bonfils. Includes reports from Seitland, Ireland and the Italian Alps, directory updates, reviews and poetry. \$4

• *North "America" Plus: A Bioregional Directory, Raise the Stakes No. 15* (Fall 1989). Features an updated international bioregional directory with listings of over 200 groups, publications and regional contacts. The most comprehensive resource guide of the bioregional movement to date. The magazine section reexamines the impact of Columbus' "discovery" of North "America." Articles by Kerry Beane, Darryl Wilson, and Andrés King Cobos express native perspectives while Kirkpatrick Sale and Peter Berg consider the upcoming 500th anniversary from a reinhabitory standpoint. Also included is Richard Grow's popular and much reprinted essay "Decolonizing the Language of the Ecology Movement." \$4

• *Borders, Raise the Stakes No. 14* (Winter 1988-89). Explores the importance of the concept of boundaries from a bioregional perspective. Features include an interview with Malcolm Margolin on "Walking the Border Between Native and Non-native Culture," Judith Plant's account of crossing a national border for the first extra-U.S.

NABC, Dolores LaChapelle's "Boundary Crossing" as a way of reconciling wilderness and civilization, Beryl Magilav on returning nature to art and Stephen Duplantier on "Distance Disease." Reports feature the Dominican Republic, a bioregional manifesto from the Mediterranean Basin and Josep Puig's argument for a new border there. Poetry by Jerry Martien. \$3

• *Nature in Cities, Raise the Stakes No. 13* (Winter 1988). Urban areas don't have to be diametrically opposed to natural systems. Beryl Magilav discusses "Cities within Nature," urban policy issues and ecological practices are further pursued in David Goode's "The Green City as Thriving City" and Christine Furedy's "Natural Recycling in Asian Cities." Doug Aberley discusses Native American reinhabitation in "Windy Bay Journal," Brian Tokar reports on the Gulf of Maine Bioregional Congress, and Peter Garland looks at the musical tradition of Michoacán, Mexico. \$3

• *Open Fire: A Council of Bioregional Self-Criticism, Raise the Stakes No. 10* (Summer 1984). From about seventy persons, guest editor Jim Dodge selects representative gripes from Marni Muller, Bill Devall, Gary Snyder, Kelly Kindscher, and others. The centerfold is Peter Berg's "Amble Towards Continent Congress." The insert: A Bioregional Directory. Also: Slocan Valley, New South Wales, and Alaska reports. Networking news and reviews. \$3

• *What's Happening to the Water Web?, Raise the Stakes No. 7* (Spring 1983). Highlights "The Water Web" special section with Donald Wooster's historical look, "The Flow of Power," and articles about the Columbia River Watch and terminal lakes. Plus reports from Euskadi and the Australian Big Scrub, and in North America from the Connecticut River area, the Slocan Valley, the Gulf of Maine, and the Triple Divide. Centerfold photo essay, "Songs of the Outback." \$3

• *Cities—Salvaging the Parts, Raise the Stakes No. 3*. Contains regional updates from the Black Hills and Samiland as well as in depth reports from Aboriginal

Australia, the Rockies, the North Atlantic Rim, and the Klamath/Trinity, Passaic, and Sonoran Watersheds. Other features include Bioregional Comics by Leonard Rifas, Aesthetics by Michael McClure, Renewable Energy to Renew Society by Peter Berg, Cities: Salvaging the Parts by Gary Snyder, Ernest Callenbach, Murray Bookchin and Morris Berman, Decentralism by Jacques Ellul, No Guarantees by Tom Birch, and poetry by Peter Blue Cloud. \$3

• *Eco-Development, RTS No. 2*. \$3

Issues 1,4,5,6,8,9 and 11 are sold out. We will, however, make complete sets of Raise the Stakes available to libraries and archives.

## Bundles

• *Reinhabit the Hudson Estuary: The Hudson Estuary Bundle*. Essays, poetry, graphics, poster compiled and produced by New York area reinhabitants. \$9

• *Backbone—The Rockies*. A six part Bundle of essays, poems, journals, calendars and proposals about the fragile Rocky Mountains. \$3.50

• *Watershed Guide & Living Here*. A four-color poster with pamphlet evoking natural amenities of the San Francisco Bay Watershed. \$2

## Performances

*Water Web* is a 20 minute performance by Judy Goldhaft with words and movement that celebrates water and describes our complex relationship to it. Live performances can be arranged through Planet Drum. Script is available for \$4.

## Bioregional Bookstore

Proceedings from North American Congresses (NABCs) II, III, IV. Includes essays, illustrations, poetry along with resolutions from the proceedings. NABC II—\$9; NABC III—\$8; NABC IV—\$10.

## Stakes Raisers this Issue

Peter Berg—editor  
Kari Norborg Carter—editor, production manager  
Judy Goldhaft—art, editor, production  
Lyman Gregory, Crofton Diack—SBG angels  
Joanna Pertz—SBG Art  
Linda Rebenstorff—proofreader  
Marianne Wyss—design, layout, production  
Jonathan London—proofreader  
Ocean Berg, Linzy Emery, Nancy Heil, Emily Zeamer—office support  
Alonzo Press—printing

Thank you to Naturegraph Co. (Happy Camp, CA) for permission to use graphic on p. 8 from *Common Edible and Useful Plants of the West* by Muriel Sweet.

## Membership

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P.O. Box 31251  
San Francisco, CA 94131  
Shasta Bioregion, USA

One-year membership (tax deductible) \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 regular.  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$25 U.S. outside North America\*

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Planet Drum was founded in 1974 to provide an effective grassroots approach to ecology that emphasizes sustainability, community self-determination and regional self-reliance. In association with community activists and ecologists, Planet Drum developed the concept of a bioregion: a distinct area with coherent and interconnected plant and animal communities, often defined by a watershed and by the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place. A number of individuals and communities have adopted bioregional stances—they have "reinhabited" their regions, they have chosen to "live-in-place" with the intent to restore, preserve and sustain their place in the biosphere. How about you?

**Become a member** of Planet Drum foundation. Membership includes two issues of Raise the Stakes, at least one bonus publication, a 25% discount on all our books and bundles and access to our networking and workshop facilities.

**Help build a bioregional group** in your area. We can help by sending a list of Planet Drum members there. To introduce your friends to bioregional ideas, send us their names and we'll forward a complimentary issue of Raise the Stakes. Send us ten names and we'll mail you a copy of Reinhabiting a Separate Country for your effort.

**Send a report** from your region to Raise the Stakes, for publication in the Circles of Correspondence section.

## Orders

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Ripples on the Surface <i>Gary Snyder</i> .....	7	<i>Raise the Stakes</i> is published biannually by Planet Drum Foundation. We encourage readers to share vital information, both urban and rural, about what is going on in their native regions. Send us your bioregional reports, letters, interviews, poems, stories and art. In- quiries, manuscripts, and tax-deductible contributions should be sent to Planet Drum, P.O. Box 31251, San Francisco, Shasta Bioregion, CA 94131, USA. Telephone 415-285-6556.	
Multicultural Urban Environmental and Justice Issues <i>Carl Anthony; Nancy Morita</i> .....	7	All contents copyright © Planet Drum Foundation 1992. Write or call for permission to reprint.	
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# RAISE THE STAKES

Number 20 The Planet Drum Review \$4

## ECO-GOVERNANCE II: Anatomy of the Shasta Bioregional Gathering



Curing the Green City Blues  
Reflections on Turtle Island Bioregional Congress V  
Musings on Congresses and the Bioregional Movement



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