

WECHI The Wild Earth Communities & Households International Handbook

Guidelines for Personal & Planetary Sustainable & Regenerative Living, Learning, and Action

**for Ecologically Conscious Individuals, Households,
Communities, and Villages**



A Local, Regional, National, and International Network



**A Special Project of
The Wild Earth Institute Inc. and University of the Wild**
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WECHI Handbook

A Wild Earth Communities & Households International Roadmap to Personal & Planetary Sustainable & Regenerative Living, Learning, and Action

Executive Summary

The *Wild Earth Communities & Households International (WECHI)* mission is to bring people, communities, and organizations of all ages, circumstances, and persuasions together within an ever-widening planetary network that practices ecological living, learning, and action.

As such, WECHI provides fertile ground for experiencing interconnections within a “living and learning holistic community” of ecologically conscious practitioners and advocates in which sustainable and regenerative ecocentric values, principles, and skills are learned, practiced, and shared.

QUESTIONS

Why WECHI?

We need more practical and Earth-based replicable models where all life thrives through Personal and Planetary interconnection and interdependence, “ease, joy, wonder and awe”, and the well-being of all life.

“The response to climate change, cultural fragmentation, and social and environmental injustices must be deep, radical, and immediate.” - Dr. Larry Buell, Founder, University of The Wild

How is WECHI different?

In traditional intentional communities and ecovillages, there are three central components:

- 1) an expressed vision;
- 2) a group of people coming together to live the vision; and
- 3) a physical space to live the shared vision.

This movement has rich traditions of Earth-based community, such as the Fellowship for Intentional Communities, Global Ecovillage Network, Federation of Egalitarian Communities, Co-Housing, and many others.

The concept of WECHI is based on the same traditional Earth-based and community principles, yet different because there are individuals and groups who also seek and could benefit from support, learning, and collaboration with aligned individuals and groups worldwide.

Why “Wild Earth”?

Wild Earth abides by the Universal Laws of Nature. This “call of the wild” is a return to nature as we learn and follow its natural laws and thereby live in connection and in harmony with nature, her processes, and all life.

*What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.*
- Gerard Manley Hopkins

Wild Earth Communities and Households are aligned with FOUR MAIN GOALS

1. **Live & Learn with Earth.** Live and learn in connection and harmony with Earth and All Life, allowing Earth herself and all her bioregional manifestations to be the inspiration and teaching for a life well-lived by all - through Biomimicry, Indigenous Wisdom, and Lived Experiences.
2. **Earth Vow of Commitment.** Agree to the Vows of Commitment that are designed to assure conscious presence, personal integrity, service and stewardship of Earth for All Life.
3. **Stewardship, Service, and Activism for Earth.** Offer stewardship, service, and activism skills to the Earth Community that will contribute to shifting the paradigm (**from** the adverse effects of climate change, cultural fragmentation, embedded social and environmental injustices, and outdated worldviews that do not serve the planet nor us who live and depend upon Earth for our existence, **to** a paradigm of living in harmony with, stewardship of, and service to Earth and All life).
4. **Committed Global Ecological Citizenship.** Be a person of joy, celebration, positive energy, and intention who identifies and develops skills and abilities to improve the health and well-being of Earth and All Life.



Introduction

One of the greatest obstacles to building a planetary culture based on sustainable and regenerative principles is the disconnection of the individual from Earth and fellow human beings. This has resulted from our present educational, social, political, and financial systems. The *Wild Earth Communities & Households International* (WECHI) provides fertile ground for experiencing interconnections within a “living and learning holistic community” where sustainable and regenerative ecocentric values, principles, and skills are learned, practiced, and shared.

The intention of WECHI is to create a forward-looking, innovative, practical, and replicable model for people of all ages, circumstances, and persuasions to use in order to re-invent themselves as “Global Ecological Citizens” and to address the challenges of climate disruption, cultural fragmentations, social injustices, ill health, and outdated worldviews. We intend to shift the paradigm to one of interconnection and care for Earth and one another.

Wild Earth Communities and Households are modeled on the founding principles of Ecovillages, wisdom teachings from indigenous traditions, practices in the art and science of sustainable/regenerative living, “state-of-the-art” research, and the lived experiences of practitioners committed to a new worldview that honors all life. Through the ***Paths of Ecological Living, Planetary Learning, and Community Participation***, resident and non-resident participants can become “cultural creatives” prepared to change the world view as recognized connected Ecological Citizens of Earth.

This proposal of the Wild Earth Communities & Households International outlines the key components of the philosophy, content, and methods for living and learning within ecologically conscious communities and households of care, concern, and love.

Below describes the full proposal, including the WECHI Purpose, Vision, and Mission, and guidelines for communities, physical locations, and participating members.

“... I am asked what to do about climate change - my short answer – find community!”

- Bill Mckibben, Founder, 350.org



The **WECHI** program is a project of the **Wild Earth Institute, Inc.** which is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt educational corporation umbrella organization for the Wild Earth Community Land Trust, the University of the Wild, the Wild Earth International Network, and the Wild Earth Fund.

Purpose, Vision, Mission, Goals, and Objectives

PURPOSE - Why the WECHI initiative?

The primary purpose of WECHI is to contribute to shifting humanity's consciousness to a shared ecological vision of interconnection, collaboration, and sacred service to Earth and All life.

SHARED VISION - What we dedicate our lives to creating/manifesting

Planet Earth thrives as a healthy, regenerative, and naturally evolving ecosystem that supports and nurtures All life.

WECHI is a dynamic, collaborative, and synergistic planetary network of ecologically conscious, socially just, and spiritually fulfilled individuals and communities who live, learn, and act in harmony with and sacred service to Earth, One Another, and All life.

MISSION - How we attain our purpose and vision

"Small islands of coherence in a sea of chaos have the capacity to shift the system to a higher order."
- Nobel Laureate Ilya Prigogine

Mission Statement

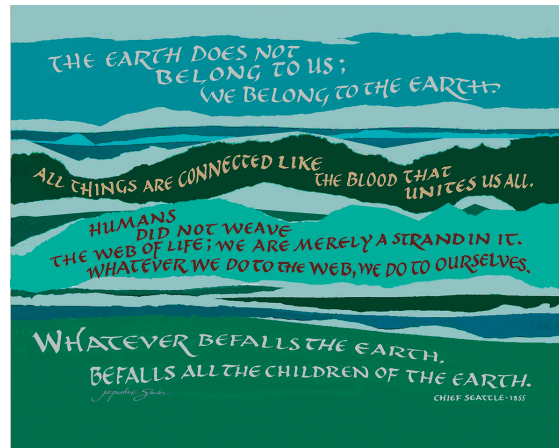
The WECHI mission is to:

1. **Shift the consciousness of humanity** to a shared ecological vision that serves, supports, and nurtures Earth and All life
2. **Create an ever-widening dynamic, collaborative, and synergistic planetary network** of ecologically conscious, socially just, and spiritually fulfilled individuals, households, and communities who support one another and live, learn, and act in harmony with and in sacred service to Earth's evolving bioregional life support systems and All Life
3. **Override the "6th extinction"**
 - Create and Share replicable ecological practices and bioregional models that serve and further develop this generation and future generations of Global Ecological Citizens. These may include the methods and production of ecologically conscious bioregional living structures, land use, and farming models in communities and households worldwide.
 - Restore sustainable, regenerative processes that support Earth's bioregional life-support systems.

Mission Details

A. INVITE all to adopt the following wisdoms, values, principles, and practices:

- 1) [Universal Laws of Nature](#)
- 2) Listen to the Heart, Act for Earth
- 3) Think Globally, Act Locally
- 4) Tend to Energy, Food, Clothing, and Shelter
- 5) Focus on Education, Community, Culture, and Place (bioregion)
- 6) Sustainability and Regeneration
- 7) Earth is made up of evolving bioregional life support systems
- 8) The natural world is a feedback loop (not simply a resource)
- 9) An ecological vision of interconnection, collaboration, and sacred service to Earth and All life
- 10) Oneness consciousness; all is a profoundly interconnected web of life



B. EDUCATE and EMPOWER individuals and communities to live, learn, and act in deep connection with, in harmony with, and in sacred service to Earth's evolving bioregional life support systems.

C. INSPIRE others to join the movement.

D. UNIFY those who share ecologically conscious values and practices and a vision of living lightly on the planet.

E. DEVELOP an ever-widening dynamic, collaborative, and synergistic planetary NETWORK of individuals, households, and communities who:

- 1) Practice ecological living, learning, and action based on the ecocentric values, principles, and practices of sustainability and regeneration
- 2) Are of service to their respective bioregions

- 3) Seek out and collaborate with others for support, learning, wisdom, and sharing
- 4) Collaborate to create and enjoy lives that integrate ecological, social, economic, emotional, and spiritual endeavors that are informed and inspired by Earth herself
- 5) Endeavor to create replicable ecological practices and bioregional models that serve and further develop this generation and future generations of Global Ecological Citizens

SUMMARY OF BENEFITS to Members of the WECHI Network

Recognized members of the WECHI Network enjoy benefits that include, but are not limited to:

- 1) **NETWORKING and INVOLVEMENT** that provides support, collaboration, and education, from local to international.
- 2) **GUESTS.** Members of a recognized WECHI Community or Household may request short-term residency (3-5 days) at member WECHI communities and households. Agreement as to the logistics of such visits shall be directly negotiated among the members.
- 3) **PROGRAMS.** WECHI Members may offer and participate in selected programs and services of other WECHI members.
Members' program offerings might be candidates for UMass accreditation through The University of the Wild.
- 4) **GATHERINGS.** WECHI Members may participate in periodically scheduled online or in-person gatherings, conference calls, virtual classes, and podcasts.
- 5) **NONPROFIT SERVICES.** Members may access and use the 501(c)(3) tax-exempt educational corporation, Wild Earth Institute, Inc* (WEI), to enhance WECHI members' programs and services, such as grant proposals, purchases, and online platforms.
 - *WEI is a certified 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is based on the principles of the Institute for Environmental Awareness founded in 1973.*

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, and STRATEGIES

GOALS for Developing the WECHI Network

1. Further develop the [WECHI Handbook](#), which identifies the criteria, guidelines, and steps for communities and households.

Main Goals

- 1.) Live & Learn with Earth and All Life Forms
- 2.) Honor an Earth Vow of Commitment
- 3.) Practice Stewardship, Service, and Activism for Earth
- 4.) Become Committed Global Ecological Citizens

Objectives

- 1.) Earth-based Community
 - 2.) Living, Learning, and Activism for Personal & Planetary Well-being
 - 3.) Local, Regional, and Global ***Personal and Planetary*** Transformation
 - 4.) Land and Cultural Protection, Stewardship, and Education
 - 5.) Demonstration Models for Sustainable, Regenerative Ecological Living
2. Identify and connect with communities and households that may desire to become WECHI members.
 3. Create a forum for sharing, support, and collaboration among communities/households, i.e., weekly/bi-weekly/monthly Zoom calls.
 4. Operate based on the principles of consent-based decision-making and self-governance, i.e., [Sociocracy](#).
 5. Create collaborative Focus Teams based on various focus topics, with “point persons” who share with other circle groups and change-makers.
 6. Eventually, coordinate and make [scalable](#) circle groups through [Sociocratic circles](#).
 7. Develop, evolve, and share replicable bioregional community and household models for Global Ecological Citizens' current and future generations.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives that guide the day-to-day operation of the Wild Earth Communities and Households International include, but are not limited to:

1. Earth-based Community

Live in an Intentional Earth-based community and/or household respecting the natural, social, and spiritual laws of the Universe.

2. Living, Learning, and Activism for Personal & Planetary Well-being

Individuals and groups conduct programs and services to educate and inform the citizenry who are aligned with the mission of the Wild Earth Institute, Inc., and embody personal and planetary well-being.

3. Personal and Planetary Transformation

Combine the Path of Personal Transformation and the Path of Planetary Well-Being.

4. Land and Cultural Protection, Stewardship, and Education

Assure, in perpetuity, the conservation and preservation of the land and cultures surrounding selected core properties and portions of the original land of the First Nation Peoples.

5. Demonstration Models for Regenerative Ecological Living

Initiate the construction and use of “state-of-the-art green” buildings, structures, and land-use initiatives with a focus on the applied principles and practices of cooperative ownership, collective management, and collaborative operations.



STRATEGIES

Multifaceted Strategies for Creating Replicable Ecological Practices and Bioregional Models

Based on ecovillage principles and practices of

- community governance
- ecological management
- sustainable property stewardship,

programs and services of Wild Earth Communities and Households International (WECHI) and its collaborators cultivate a **Path of Personal Transformation in service to a Path of Planetary Well-Being.**

Wild Earth Communities and Households combine the best of and are modeled on contemporary principles and practices of:

- Intentional Communities and Ecovillages
- Wisdom teachings from indigenous traditions
- The art and science of sustainability and regeneration
- Personal transformation that integrates Self, Community, Nature, and Spirit
- A worldview that honors All life.

Through the three (3) ***Paths of Ecological Living, Planetary Learning, and Community Participation***, resident and non-resident participants can become “cultural creatives” prepared to change their worldview as Global Ecological Citizens.

“Global Ecological Citizens” address the environmental, social, cultural, and economic challenges we face (i.e., global warming, extinction, cultural fragmentation, social injustices, ill health, outdated worldviews, etc.), and shift the paradigm to one of interconnection, harmony, and stewardship of Earth.

The [WECHI Handbook](#) outlines the key components of the philosophy, content, and methods for living and learning within ecologically conscious communities and households of care, concern, and love.

The handbook describes the entire proposal, including the WECHI Purpose, Vision, and Mission, and guidelines for communities, physical locations, and participating members.

The Earth Covenant of Commitment to Self, Community, & Planet



Individual and Group WECHI Membership is based on a commitment to the EARTH VOW of COMMUNITY. The key to the success and advancement of the WECHI initiative is the involvement of individuals, families, and community groups willing to live and embrace the following Earth Vow.

As a WECHI member, I/we commit to the daily support and expression of the mission, intention, practice, and expansion of the Wild Earth Community Land Trust programs, projects, and services through the following **Covenant**.

1. To integrate the following Principles of the Wild Earth into my daily life
 - 1.) Participate in a Daily Practice and Community Endeavors
 - 2.) Live in an Intentional Earth-based Community and/or Household
 - 3.) Practice Voluntary Simplicity & Reduced Ecological Footprint
 - 4.) Choose a Career of Service based on Earth Justice & Right Livelihood
 - 5.) Establish Local Regenerative Food Security, Shelter, and Energy
 - 6.) Engage in Earth-centered Environmental, Culture, & Social Justice ways
 - 7.) Honor a Spiritual and Heart-Centered Practice
 - 8.) Access state-of-the-art Scientific and Quantum Physics Theory and Practice
 - 9.) Seek and Live With Cultural, Individual, & Lifestyle Diversity & Inclusion
 - 10.) Engage in Education for Global Ecological Citizenry and the Well-Being of All Life
 - 11.) Commit to the Deep Work of Personal Growth and Empowerment



2. To be engaged in a daily practice that increases my awareness, understanding, experience, and action of living more in connection, consciousness, and harmony with Earth and All Life
3. To be of service and assistance to others on a path of living, learning, and acting in ecological, sustainable, and regenerative ways
4. To be a person of Joy, Celebration, and Positive Energy, even in the midst of great challenges, pain, uncertainty for Earth and all life
5. To be impeccably truthful and forthright in all my interactions in my personal, community, professional, and planetary lives – to live in a “land of no secrets”
6. To nurture and attend to my personal needs, interests, and commitments so as to always be of the highest service to Earth, all life, and my work in the world
7. To honor the different aspects and choices of all humans, including gender, race, age, sexual orientation, beliefs, profession, and lifestyle
8. To surrender to the great mystery of life and accept all of my experiences and circumstances as lessons of great insight and personal growth
9. To do all that is necessary to be a compassionate, supportive, and loving community member in service to the Community of our Planetary Species

Note that the EARTH VOW of COMMUNITY and Covenant are working guidelines. It is encouraged that each WECHI member develops their own, as inspired.



Categories of the Wild Earth Communities & Households

The Core Group of WECHI will oversee selected locations in and around the Northeastern United States and beyond and include four community configurations:

1. **Wild Earth Household** of one or more residents
2. **Wild Earth Community** of four or more residents or non-residents
3. **Wild Earth Villages, Towns, and Cities** where communities and households exist
4. **Wild Earth Traveling Caravans** of one or more travelers

The Founding Phase I development will include:

1. **UofWild Eco-Campus and its WECHI Community**, Petersham, MA.
2. **Local WECHI Households** in the greater North Quabbin & Central New England regions and beyond within regional, national, and international settings.
3. Village at **Project Urban Earth**, Boston, MA.
4. Selected international **WECHI-aligned groups**.

Each member of WECHI shall be aligned with the original vision, mission, and practices of Wild Earth Institute, Inc. (based on the original Earthlands vision of 1964), and operate under specific agreements with individual community members and the WECHI Communities "Core Group".

A. **The WECHI Strategic Planning Team** shall oversee the transitional founding of the organization and shall serve until a bonafide group of residents and non-residents have been selected.

B. **Membership to WECHI**, resident and non-resident membership, shall include the following steps:

1. Receive and read **designated background and informational materials**
2. Complete and submit a **WECHI Application for Residency** (Form)
3. Participate in a **series of interviews and experiences** on the land, including interviews with members of the "Core Group," and spend time online and/or in-person on the land.
4. Following a successful interview and time on the land, attend a *New Members Retreat* with other community members for a deeper interview and exploration process. Content will include a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** outlining each member's commitments and responsibilities.
5. Following successful completion of steps 1-4, acceptance by the voice of the community*, and the unanimous decision by the Planning Team, the candidate will be accepted for a **three month provisional membership** which will include involvement in the community's activities and additional training and orientation, including skills of Conscious Communication, Governance by [Sociocracy](#), and selected online or in-person classes.

*Note: With Sociocracy, decisions are based on the active consent of all involved. Consent is - no paramount objections; good enough for now, safe enough to try, with a method of evaluation within a time frame.

C. Suggested Typical Community Week and Responsibilities

1. Offer approximately ten hours/week of service to the community, including but not limited to meetings, work projects, meal prep, and special assigned projects.
2. Offer a consented to committed day, including but not limited to work projects, community meals, evening sharing circles and "Compelling Information" programs.
3. Participate in selected programs and services offered by WECHI and be included in the recruitment and acceptance of additional members.
4. Do all else necessary to build thriving communities and households as stated in the organization's vision and mission statements.

D. Tentative Timeline of Actions and Initiatives

1. January, 2024 - Establish a Strategic Planning Team that meets weekly on ZOOM.
2. February, 2024 - Prepare Documents, i.e., Marketing and Recruitment and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for WECHI members. Finalize the [WECHI Handbook](#). Establish a WECHI website.
3. March, 2024 – Recruit new WECHI members.
4. March 21, 2024 - Public launch/announcement of WECHI
5. 2024 - Optional involvement in UofWild & Wild Earth Community Land Trust Activities
6. 2024 – Do all that is necessary to prepare the facilities for legal residency, offer programs, fundraise, network, etc.

The Intention of the Founding Wild Earth Community at the University of the Wild (UofWild), Petersham, MA

The founding community of WECHI is the Wild Earth Community at the University of the Wild, Petersham, MA. This village is based on International EcoVillage and Intentional Communities principles and practices* and shall serve resident and non-resident members, students, staff, and guests of the *UofWild* and selected Indigenous tribes, while offering a demonstration model of a green, “net zero” residential village community.

* See <https://www.ic.org/foundation-for-intentional-community/>

Other WECHI communities and households will be located at selected sites in North America and around the world. Members shall be people who strive to lead ecologically conscious lives in harmony with Earth and All life. These eco-communities shall be a central component of the UofWild's international Earth-based living & learning curriculum and also serve as its residential community campus for its “Semester-on-Earth” curriculum.

Establishing this successful demonstration model is the first step in being able to replicate and advance this initiative on a larger scale. The Eco-Community practice based on the EARTH VOW of COMMUNITY shall serve this and the next generations of Global Ecological Citizens. WECHI communities are encouraged to engage in partnership groups, with members, guests, and special mentors, advisors, and instructors. It is encouraged that the grounds consist of eco-housing, unique teaching sites, and a variety of organic forest and food gardens. The physical community and its teaching spaces shall demonstrate new approaches to ownership, governance, currency, and ecological lifestyles. This founding phase of WECHI includes households in the North Quabbin Region and beyond.



“...we must return to community; our existence depends on just that. The ‘I’ will become the ‘WE’.” - Dr. Larry Buell, Founder, WECHI

“...the Wild Earth Community in Petersham, USA will help demonstrate new models of Earth-based education and regenerative community.”

- Dr. Daniel Greenberg, President Emeritus, Global Ecovillage Network

University of the Wild Community **Founding Members and Roles**

*Dr. Larry Buell, Founder, Executive Director, and Senior Instructor

*Brother NorthStar, WECHI & UofWild Staff

*Anthony Brogno, Program Coordinator

*Bobbi Melville, Marketing & Fundraising

*Michele Cunningham, Board Member

*Margaret Arndt, Advisor

Others to be announced

"...the vision and mission of the Wild Earth Community and its University of the Wild are fully aligned with what the world needs now! To prepare for our uncertain, climate-in-crisis future, we need a student-centered, place-based, and hands-on curriculum guided by experienced mentors grounded in living and learning communities. The UofW approach, which incorporates both ancient indigenous teachings and the best of modern understanding and research can be a model for others at this crucial time. I look forward to assisting in any way I can." - Jeff Clearwater, Co-Founder and Executive Director, VillageLab

THE LIVING & LEARNING COMMUNITY

The Wild Earth Community, which is the founding community of WECHI, *Wild Earth Ecovillage*, and its residential study program, *University of the Wild*, shall include wisdom teachings from Indigenous Traditions and “state-of-the-art” research and practice in the art, science, and spirit of sustainable/regenerative living. Residents, staff, students, and guests shall gain competency in core programs and services that give them the philosophy, content, and methods of basic ecological living principles and career endeavors. Selected experiential-based learning and skill development courses are designed by a diverse community of teachers, leaders, elders, mentors, and special guest instructors. Course of study may include personal development, community-building, social transformation, contemporary ecology and sustainability/regeneration practices, and earth-based experiential learning. Governance, organization, leadership, and decision-making may be facilitated through cooperative group processes using [Sociocratic](#) and indigenous wisdom practices that integrate Nature, Community, Self, and Spirit.

“...I look forward to some form of partnership between Clark University and UofWild at Earthlands...the green building development is particularly of interest to our students.” - The late John Baker, Professor, Environmental Studies Program, Clark University



The Wild Earth Community is Characterized by:

1. The daily and longer-term practices of intentional community

As a participating member of a community, residents shall explore, experience, and gain competence in

- Governance and decision-making processes
- Personal responsibility and interdependence
- Group dynamics and communication
- Economics, right livelihoods, work, play
- Personal practice and self-development

2. Personal “re-education” via the deconstruction of society’s engrained and unsustainable worldviews and the development of ecologically conscious worldviews

Working with the best of research and development techniques, including eco-psychology, ecological self-initiatives, empowerment strategies, Earth-based experiential learning exercises, and personal practices for growth and development, students shall learn how to replace present worldviews and actions that threaten the future of our planet, with globally sustainable/regenerative practices. The central strategy of this process of “re-education” is to learn and practice these new techniques within the support, guidance, and safety of a caring, intentional community.

3. An ecologically focused setting

Together we are creating a community where sustainability/regeneration is a lived practice. The *Wild Earth Ecovillage* residents and *University of the Wild* Learning Community members shall consciously integrate the “state-of-the-art” principles and practices of green building, sustainable food production and consumption, and alternative energy and transportation into their own lifestyles and daily activity. Practices include permaculture, use of solar energy, conservation of resources, alternative fuel vehicles, organic and biodynamic gardening, vegetarian and vegan diets, land-use planning, spiritual practices, and other Earth-friendly ideas initiated by community members.

4. Ongoing Mentorship

The learner is encouraged to integrate into a diverse community of children, adults, and elders; garden and wild plants; farm and wild animals; local sages and world travelers - to assure the widest breadth of personal understanding, appreciation, and wisdom. A community of support and assistance shall help mentor the learner through life’s challenges and experiences that result from environmental, social, cultural, and economic challenges (such as climate disruption/global warming, extinction, cultural fragmentation, social injustices, ill health, outdated worldviews, etc.) and a myriad of other challenges that can affect one’s health and livelihood, the community, and the planet.

5. Global Ecological Citizen Network and Worldwide Learning Cooperatives

To affect change in education values and content on all levels, the Wild Earth Community shall participate in global initiatives that offer new curriculums, strategies, and practices to a wide range of people. One of the priorities is to identify with, collaborate with, and model aligned global change-makers and organizations.

WECHI MEMBER GUIDELINES

The Founding Seven Tier SANEWEB Process for Core WECHI Members

1. **S Support** other members by providing short-term residency.
2. **A Attend**, when appropriate, On-line and In-Person Meetings, Calls, Gatherings.
3. **N Network** locally and internationally with ecologically conscious individuals, households, and communities.
4. **E Establish** Educational Global Support Networks for Living, Learning, and Action.
5. **W "Walk** your Talk" ; Live by action in your life and in the world.
6. **E Engage** in Public and Private Projects, including workshops, programs, & courses.
7. **B Be** a compassionate, caring, and joyful member of the Planetary Circle of Earth Stewards.



RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH COMMUNITY & HOUSEHOLD

1. Application & Interview

Attend to all the requirements to become a full member.

2. Establish the WECHI Setting

Set up the Community and/or Household based on WECHI recommendations and the needs and expectations of the physical setting and potential members.

3. Budget & Membership Fees

Commit to modest annual fees for WECHI membership - \$111.00 for a Household and \$222.00 for a Community of six or more. Membership fees shall be used to help defray monthly costs, i.e., marketing, insurance, and administration costs. (*Fees may be waived by Founding WECHI Members.*)

It is recommended that WECHI members prepare a 6 month **“Working Budget”** in the form of a Business Plan that adequately covers fixed expenses and prevents members from experiencing common financial stressors.

4. Visitors and Guests

Each WECHI Community & Household shall develop their own set of rules and expectations around visitors and guests. Card carrying WECHI members shall have visiting rights to other WECHI communities and households based on a mutually acceptable contribution and period of stay.

5. Offer Programs & Services

Each WECHI may provide public or private programs and services to enhance the WECHI mission and help defray monthly operation costs. Programs and services shall be in alignment with UofWild Guidelines (see the “UofWild Checklist for Creating Community” in the Appendix) and meet local and state requirements.

6. Care and Maintenance of the Setting

It is encouraged that each physical setting has protocols and practices to reduce the community’s “Ecological Footprint” and make a cultural/social justice impact.

7. Manifestation of the WECHI Mission

Each community and household shall do all that is necessary to meet the Vision, Practice, and Promise of living in community and serving Earth in sustainable and regenerative ways. Efforts of the WECHI Network shall be models that may be replicated and provide roadmaps for others.

WECHI Teams/Groups/Members

WECHI Strategic Planning Team (developing)

Larry Buell, WECHI Co-Facilitator, Wild Earth Institute (WEI) Founder, President, and Board of Director, Founder, Executive Director, and Senior Instructor of University of the Wild, Founder and former Executive Director of Earthlands

Margaret Arndt, WECHI Member/Co-Facilitator/Administrator, Wild Earth Institute (WEI) advisor, Unity Team member, Agent of Conscious Evolution, Financial Consultant

Michele Cunningham, Wild Earth Institute (WEI) Board of Directors, Unity Team member
Bill Grover, Pachamama Alliance Trainer

Eric Lassotovitch, founder of Pole Timber Construction, CA

Michelle Reid, Former Earthlands & UofWild resident, Research & Network Specialist
Others TBA

Wild Earth Ecovillage International Advisory Group

Dr. Daniel Greenberg, Global Ecovillage Network

Tina Clark, Transition Towns USA

Jeff Clearwater, Ecovillage Design Association

Bill Grover, Green Architect, Boston Area

WECHI "Charter Founding Members" (developing)

- 1) UofWild WECHI.....Larry Buell <Larry@UofWild.org> www.UofWild.org, MA
- 2) Buell/Esser Homestead.....Larry Buell <LarryBuell2143@gmail.com>, MA
- 3) One People, One Earth.....Brother NorthStar <BrotherNorthStar@gmail.com>, MA
- 4) Dances in Wood.....Eric & Cindy Lassotovitch <ericinthehills@yahoo.com>, CA
- 5) The Good Life Homestead.....Margaret Arndt <margaretsarndt@gmail.com>, CT
- 6) Mandy Blackwell Household.....Mandy Blackwell <hello@mandyblackwell.co.uk>, England
- 7) Green's Island Community.....Keith Snow <Keith.Harmond.Snow2@gmail.com>, ME
- 8) Greener Earth Fund.....Marty Cendroski <GreenerEarthFund@gmail.com>
- 9) Hands-in-the-Soil Project.....Blair Phillips <handsintheearth247@gmail.com> wanosh.org, CA
- 10) Brogno/Surprenant House.....Anthony Brogno <BrognoTravel@gmail.com>
- 11) Global Roots Farm.....UofWild Office

WECHI Membership Descriptions <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1umOTQusKrieXHYVrhNi4mroicDJyzBOLedBi8ivvDWU/edit>

APPENDICES

- 1. UofWild Checklist for Creating Community**
- 2. WECHI Application CHECKLIST**
- 3. WECHI Application**
- 4. WECHI Founding Core Group; Biographical Sketches of Founding Members**
- 5. Map of the UofWild WECHI Ecovillage Campus**
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UofWild Checklist for Creating Community

UofWild's Checklist for Creating Earth-based Intentional Community

The creation and operation of Earth-based communities is essential for healing humanity's relationship with Planet Earth. The *University of the Wild* and its associated projects are central to creating sustainable and regenerative communities.

The 11 point Checklist for Creating Earth-based Intentional Community is as follows.

1. Intention

- * Founding Principles and Practices
- * Purpose, Vision, and Mission Statements
- * Goals

2. Membership

Who will join the community? What are their needs, interests, and expectations?

3. Governance and Organizational Formats, Protocols, and Practices

- * Organizational format: Community, Cooperative, Commune, Collective, Corporation, Other
- * Leadership, Followership, Fellowship
- * Decision-making process: Sociocratic, Consensus, Democratic, Autocratic
- * Use of Power, Influence, and Privilege
- * Conflict Resolution, Conscious Communication, and Restorative Justice

4. Role and Responsibility of Individuals and Community Members

- * Personal growth and development
- * Needs and desires of Children, Youth, Adults, Elders, and Special Needs
- * Intentions around Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity
- * Physical Fitness, Recreation, and Play
- * Stress Reduction and a Balanced Lifestyle
- * Personal and Community Daily Practice

5. Ownership and Management of Property, Resources, and Equipment

- * Types of ownership: Community, Land trust, Private, Nonprofit, Religious
- * Strategic Land-use Planning, Design, and Operations
- * Living, Work, & Community Spaces: Design, Ecological efficiency, Community use

6. Economy, Work, Prosperity, Currency, and Wealth

- * Income options: Cottage industry, work off-site, fundraising, social service
- * Financial Administration and Management
- * Philosophy and Practice of Work, Money, and Prosperity

7. Health, Well-being, Self-Care, Food, Diet, Nutrition, and Security

- * Daily Food and Nutritional options
- * Identify source of food: Garden, Local markets, Cooperatives
- * Preventative Health Programs, Medical Care facilities, & Alternative Healing options
- * Cradle-to-Grave Health Care and Well-being; Focus on elders and children & youth.

8. Community and Group & Personal Development and Well-being

- * Community Practices and Procedures
- * Group Dynamics and Personal Interactions
- * Daily Operations and Personal and Community Practice
- * Work Jobs: Daily Tasks and Special Interests

9. Spiritual Practices and Programs

- * Daily, monthly, seasonal Rituals, Ceremonies, and Events
- * Personal and Community Spiritual Practices
- * Sacred spaces: Shrines, Circles, Healing Spaces, and Meditation sites

10. Public Service, Outreach, and Collaboration

- * Local, regional, national, and international interactions and collaborations
- * Local community support and initiatives

11. Service, Support, and Collaboration with the Global Ecological and Social Communities

- * Become an engaged and active member of the International Global Community
- * Work, Share, and Support International Sustainable and Regenerative efforts



WECHI Application CHECKLIST

Introduction: Each candidate(s) for membership in any of the Wild Earth Community Land Trust, including Communities and Individual Households, shall complete the following:

1. Pre-Application for Residency

- a. ____ Three minute to three hour discussion with a member of UofWild or WECHI Leadership team to determine appropriateness to apply.
- b. ____ Attend a specific Zoom or in-person scheduled Meeting.
- c. ____ Physically come onto the land to 'walk and talk" with a member of the Leadership Team.

Upon successful completion of these steps, the candidate may apply for a three month WECHI Residency, Part-time Residency, and/or Non-Resident Membership. Upon a successful three months, one can apply for permanent membership with all rights and privileges.

2. Application for a three month WECHI Resident/Part-time Resident/Non-resident Membership

- a. ____ Complete and Submit a WECHI Application which includes the Vow of Commitment Agreement.
- b. ____ Complete and Submit a WEI Health Form & Waiver-of-Claim Sheet.
- c. ____ Complete and Submit a Commonwealth of Massachusetts CORI Form (Attached to the Health Form).
- d. ____ Submit a "working draft" of a WEI MOU, Memorandum of Understanding of Rights and Responsibilities.
- e. ____ Participate in a Membership Meeting with one or more members of the Leadership Team and/or WEI Board designate to discuss all elements and conditions of the application.

IF APPROVED:

- f. ____ Prepare to agree to a three month involvement with all the "Rights and Responsibilities" of full community and/or staff involvement.

NOTE: Candidates shall be in contact weekly with their WEI Contact and shall participate around the 2nd month in a comprehensive discussion and action plan for full membership.

SUBMIT AND COMPLETE ALL REQUIREMENTS TO

WECHI Leadership Team - Larry@UofWild.org www.UofWild.org

Wild Earth Community Household International (WECHI) **Application**

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____

Residency Status:

Residency (residents of WECHI households/communities)

☐ Full Time ☐ Part-time

OR

Non-Residency (those who are WECHI members, but not WECHI residents)

☐ Full Time ☐ Part-time

Please answer the following questions for both RESIDENTS and NON-RESIDENTS:

1. Why are you interested in the WECHI Wild Earth Household & Community International?
2. What skills, abilities, and gifts do you bring to WECHI and work in the world?
3. What do you believe are the greatest challenges facing humanity, the planet, and all life at this time?
4. What solutions and actions do you personally commit to at this time?
5. What is your view of community during this time of great personal and planetary transition?
6. Is there other information that you would like to share? You may attach a resume and/or other documents that will further introduce you.

For RESIDENTS only:

1. Why do you desire to live in an Earth-based, intentional community?
2. What may be your greatest challenges and greatest opportunities being part of the community?
3. What gifts, abilities, and skills do you bring to the Eco-Hamlet?

Three (3) Personal and/or Professional References:

1. Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____
2. Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____
3. Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Please RETURN to: WECHI Leadership Team

<Larry@UofWild.org> www.WECHI.earth www.WildEarthCommunities.org

WECHI Founding “Core Group” Biographies

Dr. LARRY BUELL, Founder, WECHI, Interim Coordinator

Founder and former Executive Director of Earthlands

Founder and present Executive Director of *University of the Wild* and *WEI President*

Dr. Buell is founder and former director of Earthlands (1997), an Earth-centered intentional community and ecological study center and the University of the Wild (2000), an alternative higher education curriculum with its “Semester-on-Earth” living and learning program. Larry received his BS from Springfield College, his Master’s Degree in Outdoor Education from Penn State University, and his Doctorate from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

He established and formerly directed the internationally recognized Outdoor Leadership Program (1980-2020) at Greenfield Community College, MA where he taught from 1969 to adjunct faculty status today. He retired as a full-time Professor Emeritus of Human Ecology in 2004.

Larry served on the 2019 successful UMass Alumni Committee of Divest UMass from fossil fuels. He has taught at a number of schools and colleges, including Friends Academy, Locust Valley, NY; UMass/Amherst; Fitchburg University; and the Audubon Expedition at Lesley College, Boston. Larry co-founded the Massachusetts Environmental Education Society in 1976. He is a consultant to numerous schools, colleges, universities, community agencies, and Indigenous Native American groups. Larry frequently provides workshops and addresses regional and national conferences, including the Association for Experiential Education (AEE) and the American Camping Association (ACA). He has an extensive background in international travel and work-study, including a trip around the world with the Springfield College Basketball Team as cultural ambassadors in 1965 and a solo trip to Russia and Siberia in 1991.

He is the author of *The Outdoor Leadership Competency Manual*; *The 24-Hour Experience: An Outdoor Adventure Program*; *Human Ecology: Roots of Our Worldview and Foundations for a Sustainable Future*; *Return to the Meadow: Poetry, Prose, and Images of Place* and *The Season of Ingenuity: Ethics in Experiential Education*, co-author, *AEE Journal Proceedings*, 1986. He is writing three important books: *The University of the Wild: Vision, Practice, Promise: A New Roadmap for Earth-based Living & Learning*; *Earthlands Experience: A Lived Experience in Intentional Community and Earth-based Education*; and *The Swift River Valley: A Natural & Cultural History of Place*.

Larry lives with his native-of-Netherlands ritualist and videographer wife, Katja Esser, at the original 1777 Buell Homestead in Petersham, MA

QUOTE. Today, climate disruption and social fragmentation finds the Planet swinging on a precarious thread between awareness and ignorance, opportunity and challenge—the future of life on Earth is at stake. We are in radical times, which will take extreme and deep-seated change. People must reinvent themselves as teachers, leaders, and transformers of culture

toward living in ecologically sustainable and regenerative ways. One of the greatest obstacles is the present educational system that disconnects the individual from Earth and fellow living beings. We must create new ways of learning guided by a balance of Indigenous Wisdom, so interconnected and harmonious with the natural world, and state-of-the-art social and natural science research and practice so that we all may reinvent ourselves as "Global Ecological Citizens" - so necessary at this time!

BARBARA MELVILLE, UofWild Marketing, Fundraising, and WEI Board Member

Co-founder and former co-director of Student Hosteling Program, an outdoor travel company, from 1971 to 2010, planning 2-8 week bicycle camping trips for students throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe and 5-day leadership training courses for outdoor travel leaders.

Marketing Director for the Massachusetts International Festival of the Arts for many years, helping bring domestic and international performances to the Pioneer Valley.

Owner and Director of her own company, Publicity & Graphic Services, providing visual design services as well as marketing and publicity consultation for non-profit arts organizations, wildlife centers, environmental groups, and other outdoor, and animal oriented places. Her graphic designs have won the Governor's Award for the Best Tourism Creative Execution in both the Performing Arts and the Tours categories.

Experience with alternative educational models, such as homeschooling and the Waldorf school. A graduate of Mount Holyoke College.

The combination of raising children who needed to learn differently and running over 4000 outdoor trips has given her significant expertise in experiential and expeditionary education. With additional interests in environmental issues, countryside preservation, and history, she hopes to contribute to the development of the University of the Wild as an important alternative to traditional education and a crucial component of the fight to change minds and preserve the planet.

ANTHONY BROGNO, UofWild Expedition Leader, Outdoor Educator, and WEI Board

Member Anthony Brogno is an expedition leader and outdoor educator, with thousands of hours logged guiding and teaching in remote areas of the world. His experience developing and leading programs and expeditions range from acting as the guide of a crew of filmmakers on a four month long adventure through the wilds of the Chilean Andes (unboundedthefilm.com); to facilitating domestic classes and programs for youth, in collaboration with organizations such as Smith College, Amherst College, The Boys & Girls Club, The Young Marines, The Boy Scouts, University of the Wild, and independent Homeschool groups.

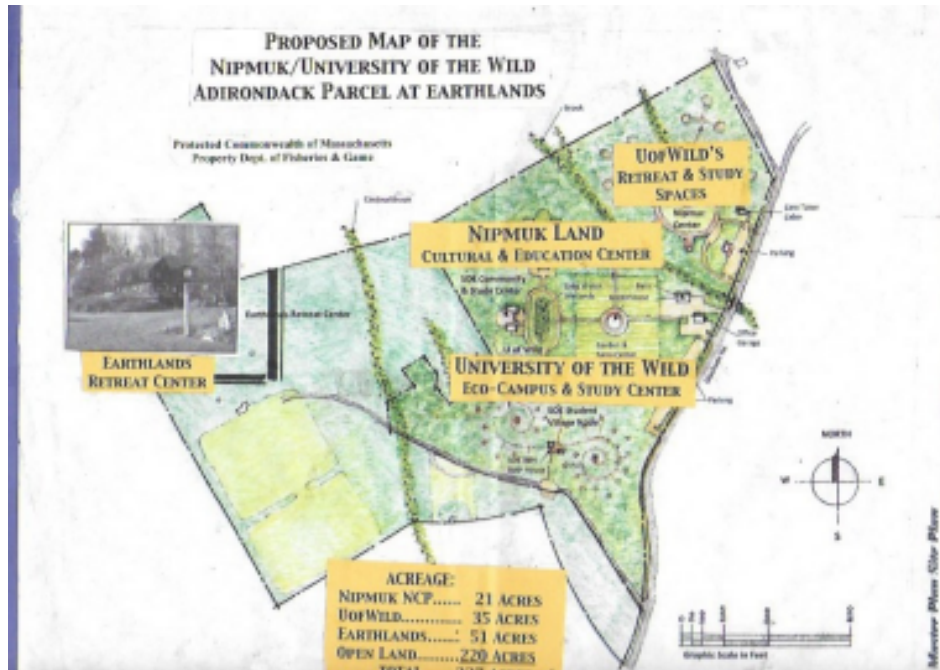
Anthony incorporates and practices wilderness medicine, wilderness survival, and ancient living skills teachings with students in many of these programs. Careful planning, awareness, and mindfulness are central to many of the programs that he teaches.

MARGARET ARNDT, WECHI Member, Co-Facilitator, and Administrator, Wild

Earth Institute (WEI) advisor. Member of a Unity Team, dedicated to conceiving and co-creating the world we know in our hearts is possible. An Agent of Conscious Evolution (ACE) through trainings with the late Barbara Marx Hubbard. A steward of Conscious Evolution Boston. A community facilitator. A Financial Consultant since 1982.

"As we dwell in presence, we allow for an evolutionary creative impulse to prompt, inspire, and guide us into 'awakened doing' in service of the whole."

Map of the UofWild WECHI Ecovillage Campus



"...community is where we can find ourselves and learn how to contribute our gifts to the world and to All Life – we are the ones we have been waiting for – we are here NOW!"



***The Quabbin/Nichewaung Bioregion Site of the Founding
WECHI Partner - UofWild***

Wild Earth Community RESOURCES

Model Ecovillages:

Sirius Ecovillage, Shutesbury, MA
Ecovillage at Ithaca, NY
Dancing Rabbit Ecovillage, MO
Ecovillage at Loudoun, VA
Sawyer Hill Ecovillages
Village at Crest Mountain, NC

Ecovillage Books:

Together Resilient: Building Community in the Age of Climate Disruption, Ma'ikwe Ludwig, 2017
Sacred Instructions: Indigenous Wisdom for living Spirit-based Change, Sherri Mitchell, 2018
Ecovillage Living: Restoring the Earth and Her People, Edited, Hildur Jackson & Karen Svensson, 2002
Directory of Intentional Communities, A Guide To Cooperative Living
Community, The Structure of Belonging, by Peter Block

UofWild's "Semester-on-Earth" Suggested Reading

University of the Wild Reader: Philosophy, Content, & Methods, Vol I, Ed., Dr. Larry Buell
Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder, R. Louv
Thinking Like a Mountain: Towards A Council of All Beings, John Seed, Joanna Macy
Sacred Instructions: Indigenous Wisdom for Living Spirit-based Change, Sherri Michell
Permaculture: Principles & Pathways Beyond Sustainability, David Holmgren
Reading the Forested Landscape: A Natural History of New England, Tom Wessell
Radical Simplicity: Small Footprints on a Finite Earth, Jim Merkel
Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life, Marshall B. Rosenberg
Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages & Intentional Communities,
Diana Leafe Christian
The Handbook of Sustainable Literacy: Skills for a Changing World, Arran Stibbe

Ecological Links:

<https://www.footprintnetwork.org/our-work/ecological-footprint/>
<https://www.footprintcalculator.org/home/en>

"There is nothing more important, none at all, than the deepening civilization crisis of climate change, climate disruption. All of us need to do what we can, speak out, whenever we can and then challenge ourselves to do even better. Our children and future generations are counting on us." - Ted Click, Progressive Activist

Prepared by:

Dr. Larry Buell, WECHI Founder and Interim Director
<Larry@UofWild.org> (978) 724-0412 (O) (978) 855-1420 (Cell/Text)
Margaret Arndt, WECHI Member, Strategic Planning Team Member, and Administrator
<margaretsarndt@gmail.com> (203) 405-3276 (landline)



The Wild Earth Community Land Trust and the WECHI Projects

VISIT: www.WECHI.earth, www.WildEarthCommunities.org, and www.UofWild.org