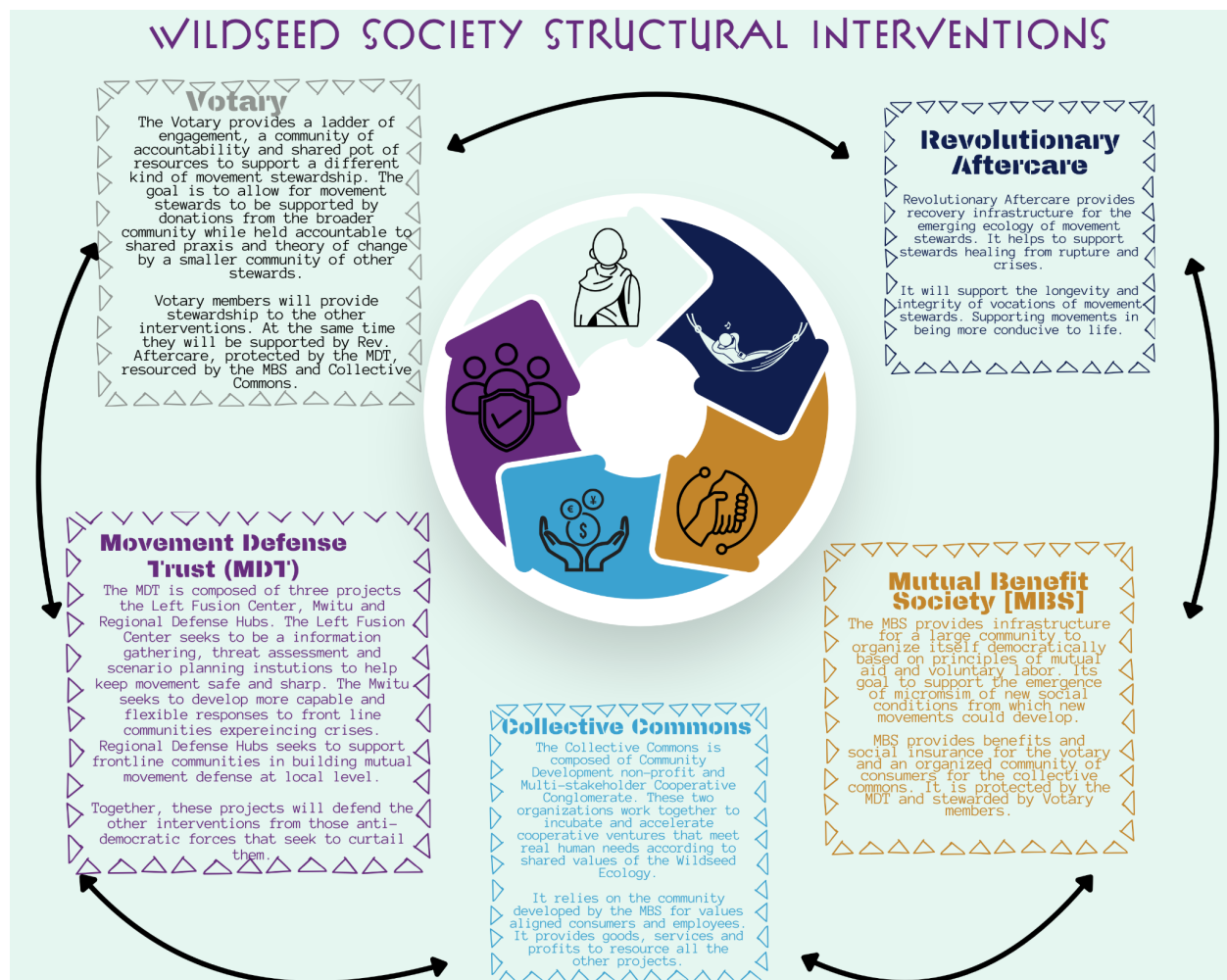


WildSeed Mutual Benefit Society

This is a white paper that seeks to outline both the need for and one possible structure of a project that seeks to allow for both large scale mutual aid and build an autonomous economic space. The goal would be for that autonomous economic space to support a ladder of engagement moving people towards working to build a better world as a full time vocation. The main audience of this white paper are people already engaged in the work of thinking about, prototyping or organizing around alternative economies [so its more jargony than a public document]. It hopes to galvanize conversation and eventually support to flesh out this idea and then work to make it a reality. This means it's not a prescriptive paper on how things should happen but rather a generative paper about how things could happen. It is part of a series of white papers the WildSeed Society is working on.



Overview

The WildSeed Mutual Benefit Society [WMBS] is a proposed sister/daughter organization to the [WildSeed Society](#). It would be a fraternal order [legal term] and benefit society organized for people who are descendants of colonized people, descendants of survivors of genocide, members of persecuted religious minorities, members of marginalized genders or members of indigenous communities and committed to the mission and vision of the [WildSeed Philosophy](#). [Mutual Benefit Societies are legally required to be organized around cultural, ethnic or occupational affinity.]

Its legal purpose is to provide support and mutual aid to people working in alignment with the Philosophy of WildSeed and seeking to live in alignment with the [WildSeed Way](#) so that we can move toward the collective liberation of all sentient beings. It is predicated on the belief that people who have faced the brunt of oppression by the modern world system need spaces to ground, gather, heal, release the lies about themselves that capitalism has forced them to internalize and resources themselves before they build a larger project to make a world truly capable of holding all beings.

It is part of the larger Build/Block/Be strategy for creating scalable solutions to what the WildSeed Society sees as the central contradiction of western societies: our material overdevelopment vs our spiritual and social underdevelopment. Ideally, the Mutual Benefit Society would work in tandem with other proposed interventions like the [Collective Commons](#), [Votary](#), and [Revolutionary Aftercare](#) to resolve [the three crises](#) that stem from this central contraction:

- Crisis of Belonging
- Crisis of Unacknowledged History
- Crisis of Social Reproduction

WMBS is an intervention geared at building the infrastructure to resolve the Crisis of Belonging by offering a space for people to intentionally create liberatory, mutually supportive relationships in a conscious context. It seeks to create democratic social spaces in which rituals of initiation, celebration, belonging and decision making can be co-created in a liberatory way. It also hopes to provide a basis for large scale financial mutual aid and philosophically aligned care that does not need to be earned. Its ultimate goal is to empower people to co-create their social, economic and vocational lives outside the constraints of capitalism. This in turn would allow them to build new forms of direct democracy in their social and economic lives in scalable ways.

Problem Statement:

Human beings, like all mammals, are social creatures. This is something that our highly individualistic society often ignores. We expect people to thrive as islands in the archipelago of society, self-contained but sometimes trading with each other. Then we seem surprised that we are all so lonely and that more people die from suicide than war. In fact, one of the leading causes of death is overdose from opioids

which work by mimicking the same chemicals we get from social interaction, particularly positive physical intimacy like a hug. We are, as a society, literally dying from lack of belonging.

As Peter Gabel discusses in his book, "The desire for mutual recognition," the desire to belong, to experience co-presence with another living being, is a central motivation of human life. All humans seek mutual recognition. It's something we need to thrive. Yet real mutual recognition requires us to be vulnerable enough to really be seen. This vulnerability is scary as there is always a possibility that the other will not see us. So the need for mutual recognition is deeply tied with our fear of the other. We try to mitigate this tension with masks. Simple facades that we view as more immediately acceptable or worthy of recognition. Unfortunately, the recognition of the mask does little to meet that human need for mutual recognition.

Additionally, as many cultures acknowledge, humans have a need for communal recognition. Not only do we want other individuals to see us, but we want to be seen by our broader society. We want our unique contribution to our community to be of use and recognized. This is why it is so critical to find purpose-driven activities that provide us a sense of giving something of ourselves to the community that makes our life possible. It allows for a feeling of social interdependence or deep belonging that liberates us rather than constraining us.

Over time, many societies have emphasized the fear of the other over our inherent desire to connect with each other. This age-old problem was exacerbated with the rise of racial and gendered capitalism which uses both the fear of the other and desire for connection for control and profit.

We are told we must conform and "earn a living" to have respect and social recognition. Our very identities are constructed to naturalize or justify our exploitation. This leads to us constantly navigating bias and bigotry while trying to belong to spaces set up to exploit us. It denies us mutual recognition at the interpersonal and social level. Without mutual recognition that basic humans need to be seen and respected by people and society, the fear of the other and denial of our full self becomes the norm.

Even our attempts to build a better world are plagued with the same problems. People often enter into movement spaces seeking deep authentic belonging without the skills, rituals and shared understanding that would allow us to collectively take off our masks. While masked, it is difficult to build the sense of solidarity that mutual aid requires. Thus we are often left materially and socially alone, invested in strategies that further our alienation. Our cultural reliance on these masks instead of authentic co-presence makes it nearly impossible for us to build the kinds of movements capable of bringing about collective liberation.

Background:

In reality, this problem of lack of mutual recognition is only one aspect of a much wider problem. As we stated in our [article on the three crises](#), we agree with the assessment of James and Grace-Lee Boggs about the central contradiction of U.S society: **We believe that the central**

contradiction of U.S society is between our material over-development and our spiritual, cultural, social and political under-development.

In other words, we are really good at extracting things from the earth and each other to make tons and tons of widgets but we are really bad at making intentional, values aligned, skillful and collective decisions about what to make, how to make it, how to distribute what we made, and how to relate to each other and the earth as we make it. This leads to massive inequality, the “peaceful” maintenance of which requires increasing investments into carceral systems of control. This ultimately results in three distinct but interrelated crises: **the crisis of social reproduction, the crisis of unacknowledged history, and the crisis of belonging.**

The crisis of social reproduction is fundamentally economic. It is about the ways we organize the means of reproducing our way of life. We work too hard making widgets no one needs so that other people can get rich while we struggle to pay rent. We work so hard to make others profit that we barely have the energy for social reproduction, that is all the care and nurturing work that makes life livable. On top of that, all our hard work is literally killing us and the planet.

The crisis of unacknowledged history is fundamentally social. It is about our way of life. We lack the cultural practices to really acknowledge our actual history and prefer watching myths of an inherently good or infinitely improving "America" on TV while consuming away our sorrows by buying more and more. We refuse to recognize the U.S. as an empire and, like all empires, it is based on our unwillingness to live within our means coupled with our history of taking resources from subjugated populations at home and abroad. This way of life leads us deeper and deeper into financial and spiritual debt while training us to project our intergenerational trauma onto each other and blaming each other instead of the legacies and institutions that caused and profit off of our pain. Furthermore we lack rituals expansive enough to create shared stories big enough to contain our multitudes.

The crisis of belonging is fundamentally spiritual. It stems from our fundamental (mis)understanding of what it means to be human. Our social and political spaces are not made for real people trying to live and thrive (to get *the thing* together) but rather to pacify us while they extract as many resources and as much compliance from us as possible. Our very identities are constructed to naturalize or justify our exploitation.

At the heart of this problem is something we call Genrecraft which is the way society--that is, institutions like schools, legislatures and corporations as well as narrative creating spaces like movies and books—craft, reify and perpetuate types or genres of people. It's not just about stereotyping or bigotry. Its also about the concrete material goods and relationships to institutions and social protection that some identities are routinely denied so that emotional energy, culture, labor and land can be extracted from them more readily.

Whether we are talking about race, class, gender or other identities, genrecraft consists of 5 realms or categories of social scripts.

1. The **Sumptuary Codes** that police behavior, speech patterns and clothes of each genre
 - a. e.g. Racial codes that make hip-hop Black or Country white and make blue a boy's color or pink a girl's.
2. The **Embodiments** of those codes that we are trained to enact and perform our genre roles through postures, mannerisms, cultural signaling and conditioned patterns of thoughts and feeling
 - a. E.g. Male sexual pleasure being reduced to genitals only with nipple play or prostate stimulation being seen as effeminate or gay respectfully.
3. The **Rituals of Dominance and Deference** that are expected in everyday interaction
 - a. E.g. The expectation that people raced as Black make way for people raced as white on the side walk or that women smile in public or respond to harassment politely.
4. The **Gaze** through which we are taught to view each other and make sense of social actions
 - a. E.g. practice of seeing children raced as Black as older than white children of the same age or sexualizing the bodies of the young.
5. The **Kinship Structures** (the ways in which power and mutual expectations—including expectations of care, belonging, and labor—are arranged in social relationships) based on what genre a person is seen as
 - a. E.g. both ideas and relationship practices. Ideas like that care is women's work or that Jews are naturally good with money and relational practices like restricting marriage by gender, race or class.

Genrecrafting complicates real human connection by conditioning us to place ourselves and others in boxes that distribute worthiness, access to care and material resources, protection from harm, rights to comfort and autonomy over our own bodies in unequal ways.

This leads to us constantly navigating bias and bigotry while trying to belong to spaces set up to exploit us. It denies us mutual recognition at the interpersonal and social level. Without mutual recognition—that basic human need to be seen and respected by people and society--the fear of the other and denial of our full self becomes the norm.

Genrecraft is often a tool of colonization of indigenous cultures, causing ways of being human together to be destroyed and replaced by new identities that leave us without the tools to articulate our humanity on our own terms. You can see this in attempts to racialize native tribal identities through blood quantum, where indigeneity stops being about relationship to land, and cultures of adoption and kinship and becomes about blood ties.

Thus, according to the logic of U.S. genrecraft, you can be indigenous anywhere (if its not about ties to specific land) so removing you from your land is not genocide (though it most certainty is as it destroys a deep social, cultural and spiritual bond that for many tribes is nearly definitive of who they are). Over time, people come to embody, in deep somatic and unconscious ways, the genre stories that have been told about us.

Fundamentally, genrecraft prevents us from experiencing co-presence and meeting our basic need for mutual recognition, to be fully seen and accepted by peers and society at large. At its best it turns what would otherwise be socially important roles that anyone could take into rigid categories that people have no choice but to accept.

At worst it creates categories of worth that teach us to trade the possibility of mutual recognition for promises of material and emotional comfort at the expense of the other. Thus people who are socialized as white are taught to forget the indigenous languages and practices of mutual recognition their ancestors practiced in order to achieve a level of access to land and comfort that is conditioned on their policing of themselves and non-white people.

Ritual as an Antidote

The use of genrecraft for exploitation and the failure to recognize our need for mutual recognition means that our material progress will always outpace our social, cultural and spiritual progress because our material advancement is predicated on not seeing each other as fully human.

Yet knowing this is not enough to change it. The processes of decolonization and re-indigentity towards radical belonging are not primarily mental processes. They are cultural in the deepest sense: they are based on how we choose to relate to our bodies, each other, other beings, labor, the land and the unseen world. The antidotes to genrecraft are concrete rituals of belonging, material production and distribution.

Here we mean ritual in the sense of emotional laden interactions that get linked by participants to symbols. We can see the rituals in the socialization of genrecraft all around us. Girls are socialized into thinking of themselves as patriarchal nurturers through gifting of dolls and easy bake ovens. Boys are taught heroic leadership and followership through “action figures” and toy guns. As adults our workplaces are full of rituals of dominance and coordination. Team meetings, evaluations, strategic planning, team building retreats etc are all rituals that seek to create roles within a defined hierarchy that we can step into. These roles then make it possible for us to move around orgs charts in ways that suit particular modes of material production. Anyone who has ever witnessed a “work to rule strike” where workers do only what is explicitly required of them in the contract can tell how much information is coded in our ritualized but unspoken understanding of what our role at work is.

We have to replace the rituals of deference inherent in asking women to smile or expecting Black people to step aside on the street with rituals of belonging where shared humanity is recognized and valorized. We have to replace economic rituals of promotions and award ceremonies, clocking in and out of economies of time, or shareholder meetings with rituals of common stewarding of resources, worker self organizing and community determined production. To do this successfully we need to offer people new ways to get their social and material needs met so that people are free to release the mythical narratives of worth and status that we connect to our jobs.

Strategic Considerations

Unfortunately, this also means that marginalized identities forged by genrecraft are too caught in inevitable webs of coercion and domination. All racial identities inescapably stem from projects of exploitation and domination. The sense of belonging we feel in them is inherently tied to a sort of trauma bond forged in rituals of remembrance and reenactment of wounds. As Sheldon George says in *Trauma and Race*, “What the signifiers of race do, therefore, whether emanating from the racist other or whether willfully embraced as a source of identity, is to rearticulate the subject’s sense of self around an unveiled lack once defined in the racist past.” (pg 16).

To overcome the obstacle that genrecraft plays in our collaboration, we need to build alternative rituals for people to co-create identity, status and belonging along more liberatory lines. We also need to develop better tools for decision making that don’t replicate what Cedric Robinson calls, “the myth of leadership.” That is, the belief that leaders are some sort of positive deviants whose inborn talent and training combined with their structural power make them better at making decisions for other people. In other words, that leaders are a genre of people and not a role.

At the same time, one of the constant failures of horizontal organizations is the mistaken belief that people who just entered a space are somehow already prepared to offer leadership (here defined in line with the think of intellectual Miki Kashtan as unilateral actions that care for the whole). We need ways to democratically decide on the qualities, skills and commitments that demonstrate the ability to skillfully navigate a specific level of responsibilities that are not based in fictional stories of human genre.

Lastly, all of this work of creating new identities, roles and ways of being will be extremely emotionally and intellectually taxing. These spaces where this labor is done will have to be attached to deep resourcing of people to free up their capacity to build new self-conceptions and social relationships. The way that people receive those resources must be aligned with and reinforce those new self-conceptions and social relationships if the transformations sought by this project are to be long lasting and sustainable.

Basic Proposal:

To that end, we propose that we create a 501(c)8 non-profit organization called the WildSeed Mutual Benefit Society (WMBS). Its mission will be supporting the creation of a beloved community and society of financial, health and social aid for descendants of colonization, genocide and indigenous people who seek the liberation of sentient beings through living in accordance with the Philosophy of WildSeed [the IRS requires a benefit society to be organized around an cultural, historic or vocational affinity]. For legal, pragmatic and strategic reasons, the WildSeed Society and WMBS are separate entities.

As stated in the Philosophy of WildSeed and the WildSeed Society Program, the WildSeed Way and Vision of the WildSeed Society are only one of many possible ways to interpret and seek to live in alignment with the Philosophy of WildSeed. It would be in the best interest of all who want a world in alignment with the Philosophy to allow for multiple organizations to try and build aligned worlds. For the interests of the WMBS it should be built with the possibility of those organizations existing in mind.

The WMBS will be the home for the House System, the Mutual Aid Society and the collective funds to support the mission of the WildSeed Society and its daughter organizations (like the collective commons). The governance of the WMBS will be directed by a *High Court* elected by the lodges (seasonal courts). The lodges (a legal term used by the IRS) will be the entry point for new members. They exist to hold the yearly carnival festival during which initiation occurs and people become new members. At the yearly carnivals members will also vote for lodge and society various stewardships.

The first two lodges will be the Summer Court and the Spring Court. They will initially be composed of Cadre Fellowship participants [you can read more about that program in [the Votary](#) white paper]. These cadre members will be receiving a basic income and benefits to support their work in building this institution. Each lodge will have a home location for gathering and initiation rituals once the lodges are open to new members outside the cadre. This home location need not be owned by the WMBS; it need only be a regular meeting place.

Once members are initiated, they will pay monthly dues. These dues support the work of the WMBS including staff salaries and member benefits. Members will also be offered a series of benefits including:

- Health insurance
- Concierge Medical Services
- Retirement plans
- Discounts for a wide range of services.

In addition to these benefits there will also be a Producer Commons where members can take advantage of a curated list of aligned practitioners, professionals, and retailers. The hope is that this Producer Commons will be composed of members of the [Collective Commons](#).

Members will also have access to a hiring hall where they can offer their services as employees or independent contractors to the Producer Commons in exchange for a living wage or barter. Similarly, the hope is that this be a portion of the [Collective Commons](#) as well.

These exchanges will be aided by a complementary currency produced through positive social action whose value decreases over time [decays with demurrage rate.] The goal of the currency to be a counter cyclical financing mechanism. It seeks to support economic development through the inevitable crises of capitalism.

Eventually, the Society will launch its own credit union specifically designed to give out no-interest loans to allow for economic development without accumulation, i.e. an alternative economy aligned with principles of degrowth. The goal would be to help members advance their career or businesses in aligned and trauma-informed workplaces and build the financial stability of members and thus the community as a whole.

The hope is that these financially stable and philosophically aligned members will be able to be the funding bases for the [Votary](#) members as well. As WildSeed members who choose to work in productive ventures instead of the spiritual or secular orders would tithe their income to those institutions. The Order members of the Votary could also get benefits through the WMBS.

The ultimate goal of the WMBS is to lay the groundwork for the emergence of the WildSeed Confederacy: An international democratic, anti-capital, non-state alternative to nation-state.

Goals

WMBS's strategic purpose is to make a structural intervention into the social reproduction of social movements so that they can gain enough cultural and economic autonomy from the collapsing neoliberal capitalist order and the emerging techno-feudal order to effectively and resiliently challenge both. Its main interventions will be to:

1. Build a space of voluntary belonging and ecological kinship to people who want a better world so that they are free to enact liberated social relationships.
2. Disconnect benefits and long term financial security of organizers, cultural workers, spiritual workers from employment, leading to practical abolition of work (in movement spaces at least).
3. To give organizers the power to co-create their social, economic and vocational lives outside the constraints of capitalism. By building relationships based on consent, free association and shared purpose a new culture of social solidarity can flourish. This in turn always allows them to build new forms of direct democracy at scale.
4. Scale up communal wealth prototypes to seed and nurture the emergence of the Liberated Commoning Class.

Its practical purpose will be to

1. Offer affordable health and retirement benefits, social insurance as well as communal luxury for its members regardless of their employment status or legal status.
2. Be the legal home for the house system of the [Votary](#) [new infrastructure to support the building of chosen families of mutual support and shared risk.]
3. Allow the WildSeed Society to remain organizationally weird and values-aligned while having a more traditionally organized body handling the more technical aspects of its vision.

Constituent Parts

Producer Commons

The Producer Commons will start as a list of aligned businesses and practitioners. At first most of these services providers would be in the business and usual economy. The hope is that the Collective Commons could incubate or accelerate more values aligned alternatives that would find a steady base of consumers with the WMBS membership.

There will be four tiers of members. The bronze tier is for organizations in which members have a stake. That is cooperatives or businesses in which one or more members or partners is also a member of WMBS. The silver tier is for businesses in which all the workers-owners or owners are members of the WMBS. The gold tier is ventures that qualify for the silver tier and also operate along the principles of the WildSeed Way (of similar scheme) in the hiring, culture and ownership structures. The platinum tier is for ventures that are in whole or in part by the WildSeed Society [or organization aligned with the Philosophy of WildSeed] or the WMBS.

Each venture in the commons can offer discounts or special offerings to the members. Ventures can also apply for loans or grants from the WMBS. These ventures would also receive investment from [CDI connected the Collective Commons](#) to grow and move higher up the tier (i.e become more aligned with the shared culture of the WMBS) or be purchased by the Cooperative Conglomerate of the Collective Commons. The goal would be for the platinum tier to eventually include all of the ventures that offer benefits to the members including mutual insurance companies, investment cooperatives and concierge healthcare.

The producer commons would be stewarded by elected stewards from the general membership. All degrees of membership can vote for the stewards of the producer commons.

Hiring Hall

The hiring hall would be a place for members who are seeking employment or labor opportunities with trauma informed and politically aligned ventures to find work. Initially it would just be a service that held on to the resumes and hosted a job board for producer commons ventures. Eventually it could turn into a worker-managed temp, job placement and workforce development organization that served WMBS society members. Its goal would be to support members in getting vocational aligned work that allowed them to thrive financially and spiritually. It could also support lower income members to get stabilized enough to join the Collective Commons and move out of the capitalist economy altogether.

Complementary Currency

This currency could be called the WildSeed Lagniappe (WL) [Lagniappe means "something given or obtained gratuitously or by way of good measure."] The currency would be created through a unique process based on the self-reported actions WildSeed members actions like offering care to loved ones,

going to a protest, composting, reading WildSeed materials or sharing things on social media (i.e., any social action WMBS wants to encourage.) Once “minted” through the self-reporting of gift economy activities that are the core of any economic system, the Lagniappes could be purchased by members and used with partnering organizations for goods and services.

The currency would include a built in discounts (each Lagniappe would cost less than dollar be redeemed for dollars worth of goods and services) and demurrage rate. This means that the money would decrease in value over time, encouraging spending, preventing it from being a store of value and letting it mirror the living world that decays and renews instead of the abstract world of financialization and supposed infinite growth.

It would give the complimentary economy built by the WMBS and Collective Commons the ability to counter economic crises and recessions of the business as usual economy.

Credit Union

The credit union would be a member owned non-profit financial institution that would, over time, offer many of the same types of services as a typical bank. It would start as a consumer loan operator supporting members in getting financially stable. As it grows it would offer zero interest commercial loans to the Collective Commons to purchase or invest in cooperative ventures. It would do this by taking donations to cover the borrow fee from the federal reserve or taking loans from organizations like the [Seed Commons](#) and offering financing to Collective Commons and other aligned entities.

Membership

For sake of legal clarity, WMBS should use membership structures that are familiar to the fraternal order movement. We suggest that we use degrees of membership. The membership journey starts with associate members. These are folks that want to be in the WMBS. They do not need to have any prior connection to WMBS or WildSeed Society to join. The application process should include a vetting process to ensure they are not tied to colonial or police organizations and make sure they don’t have a history of infiltration or community violence.

The application process would also include signing up for an introductory course that explains the Philosophy of WildSeed and WMBS. The course will also raise money for the WMBS. Once the course is completed and vetting past, they are invited to become associate members. Associate members must buy the lodge regalia of the lodge they wish to initiate in. These regalia purchases help raise money for the carnivals. To become first degree members, associate members must come to carnival and pay the carnival registration fee.

Alternatively, anyone seeking to be an associate member can apply with letters of support from an existing WMBS member certifying that they are of limited means and they can receive a scholarship. They should also be able to submit some information to show that joining WMBS would be an undue

financial burden without support to receive scholarships. WildSeed staff will always be available to write sponsorship letters and supplemental documents for prospective members who come to WildSeed Society's free events or paid programming to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to entry.

First Degree Members

First Degree Members are members of the lodge or court they are initiated into. They can be initiated into as many courts as they like. While they only have to be vetted once they need to buy the regalia of each court, they want to be a member of. They have access to all the benefits that the WMBS offers. They can also be observers to the Carnivals of the courts that are not initiated in but cannot partake in the core rituals of that court or the planning of that court's Carnival.

Second Degree Member

Second Degree members are those who aspire to be in deeper, accountable relationships with people aspiring to live in alignment with the Philosophy of WildSeed. Second Degree members must go through a deepening process with an organization in explicit alignment with the Philosophy of WildSeed. [Remember: the WildSeed Way is only one of many ways to be in Alignment with the Philosophy of WildSeed and the WildSeed Society is one possible way to organize being in alignment with the Philosophy.] Until other organizations in alignment with the Philosophy of WildSeed are created, second degree members would have to become Fellow Travelers within WS in order to be eligible for second-degree membership. Second degree membership allows them to nominate themselves to become stewards within the Producer Commons or Hiring Hall and as well as any positions that lodges open up to members of that degree.

Third Degree Members

Third Degree members have decided to explore dedicating their vocational and spiritual life to the WildSeed Way and Philosophy of WildSeed. This means that they have become aspirants in a House as part of the [Votary system](#). The initiation, development and accountability for Third Degree Members is tied to the House in which they are aspirants. They can be nominated and elected for positions higher up in the hierarchy of WMBS work.

Fourth Degree Members

Fourth Degree members have confirmed their desire to dedicate their vocation and spiritual life to the WildSeed Way and the Philosophy of WildSeed. They have taken vows within a House and are therefore Avowed members of the WildSeed Society or sister org. They can be nominated and elected to positions higher up in the hierarchy of WMBS work.

Fifth Degree Members.

Fifth Degree members are the highest level of membership in the WMBS. They are Avowed members who have decided to exit capitalism and step into the gift as Cadre members. As Cadre members they are supported by the WildSeed Society [or sister organization] in addition to benefits of WMBS. The Cadre members must approve any proposal for changes to by-laws before it can be brought to the general membership. However, any veto can be overwritten with a vote of 2/3 of the total membership. Only Fifth degree members can sit on the High Court of the WMBS. As whole 5th degree members are referred to as the Congress. This is to ensure the stewardship of the organization has a particular class character of people with a demonstrated investment in anti-capitalism who have rescued private wealth building. It is not intended to blunt the wishes of the general membership.

Carnival

Carnival is a yearly gathering of a lodge/court. It is a ritual enactment of the world we seek to build. It's purpose is to:

1. Provide a temporary world in which people can more fully step into and experience the Philosophy of WildSeed.
2. To provide a praxis space for people to build the skills of creating and maintaining such a world.
3. Provide a space for IRL administration of the lodge/court.

Carnival should be fun, magical, and based in ritual. Regalia should be required at most meetings. The purchase of regalia would fund carnival. They should have at least 4 parts: world building, initiation, voting and celebratory rituals.

In some ways, Carnival brings us back the original vision of WildSeed (before the start of the pandemic) of conceiving WildSeed as a series of ritual enactments of a more beautiful and just world.

Why A Benefit Society?

We believe that a Benefit Society is the perfect legal structure of the house system, mutual aid society and wrap-around support for organizers. We believe that it would allow us to pursue the democratic implementation of our mission in a legally protected way with minimal creative compromise and no ethical ones. It is also a structure that is familiar to many and the historical basis for much of the welfare state in western countries and China.

Its low bar of for associate membership would allow for its members to represent such a large social base that it would be politically costly for governments or corporations to seek to undermine. At the same time, its internal structure would make it difficult for those same entities to co opt it as they so often do with institutions they cannot destroy.

Specifically, it would have the following advantages:

1. Organizers would not need to stay in organizations that don't serve them/aren't in alignment with their beliefs just for healthcare or retirement benefits.
2. It provides a legal way for us to collect money and collectively decide how to best use that money (pertains to the mutual aid society).
3. It provides a structure to put the House system in.
4. It creates a structure to handle the technical and financial aspects of the WildSeed Society in ways that are more traditionally professional and honestly less weird than WildSeed is becoming.
5. It further delineates the role of the WildSeed Society in pursuing the vision as well as the role of the Sacred Warren in that vision. [The Sacred Warren would not play a role in the governance WMBS with the exception of the initial approving houses and holding Cadre members accountable.] This would allow it to have an even larger social base than WildSeed.

What Is A Benefit Society?

From the IRS court history:

"A fraternal beneficiary society ... would be one whose members have adopted the same, or a very similar calling, avocation, or profession, or who are working in union to accomplish some worthy object, and who for that reason have banded themselves together as an association or society to aid and assist one another, and to promote the common cause. The term "fraternal" can properly be applied to such an association for the reason that the pursuit of a common object, calling, or profession usually has a tendency to create a brotherly feeling among those who are thus engaged. It is a well-known fact that there are at the present time many voluntary or incorporated societies which are made up exclusively of persons who are engaged in the same avocation. As a general rule, such associations have been formed for the purpose of promoting the social, moral, and intellectual welfare of the members of such associations and their families, as well as for advancing their interests in other ways and in other respects.... Many of these associations make a practice of assisting their sick and disabled members, and of extending substantial aid to the families of deceased members. Their work is at the same time of a beneficial and fraternal character because they aim to improve the condition of a class of persons who are engaged in a common pursuit, and to unite them by a stronger bond of sympathy and interest."

How Do They Work

According to the IRS:

To be described in IRC 501(c)(8), an organization must meet the following requirements:

- It must have a fraternal purpose;
- It must operate under the lodge system; and
- It must provide for the payment of life, sick, accident, or other benefits.

For more information on [lodge system](#)

Structure and Relationship to the WildSeed Society

Structure

The High Court

The purpose of the High Court is to place the head and heart of the WMBS firmly in Liberating Common Class. It is not about establishing a hierarchy of authority and more about establishing class control. While the society should be open to everyone, its purpose is also to provide a ladder of engagement towards the Liberating Commoning Class. They are not an executive committee but rather the keepers of the touch stone (the felt sense of what WMBS should be when it is operating in alignment with its purpose).

They are there to support members creating proposals for the congress, general membership and lodges to vote on. They provide quarterly reports to the general membership passed on surveys, conversations, and forums that they run to solicit a diverse array of perspectives. These reports help the lodge membership think of tensions that can be resolved by proposals (a tension is merely a gap between what is and better future possibility.)

The High Court is comprised of the ascended seat of each lodge. They are each supported by a retinue of courtiers: an elected administrative steward, an appointed lieutenant for when they aren't available, an appointed safety and security advisor and an elected member liaison to help coordinate surveys, forums and one-on-one meetings. Each lodge will have its own administrative structure full of 3+ degree members. Their representatives on the high court should have themed titles (i.e. Rook, Bishop, Knight or Abbot, Monk, Friar or Griot, Chief, Captain etc.)

Retinue

The retinue is the main administrative body of the WMBS. They hold the governance roles of fiduciary and legal compliance responsibilities. They ensure the proper and democratic administration of the WMBS. They manage the elections and proposal voting systems for any whole Society proposals. high court retinue embers may or may not have dual roles within their seasonal courts.

The retinue is composed of the elected members of the High Court Seasonal Support Staff. Retinue will offer its own deepening course for members. This will allow members to ascend to 2nd degree and take on some administrative roles without being a part of the WildSeed Society at all. The retinue will also support 2nd degree members create aligned organizations that can ascend 3rd, 4th and 5th degree members.

Commons

The worker and productive commons will be self-managed programs of the High Court. The stewards of the commons will be voted on by the general body of members.

Seasonal Courts

There will be a total of four lodges or courts. Each court will be based in the 4 seasons of [Ecocycle Stewardship](#) (Summer, Spring, Autumn, Winter.) Briefly, ecocycle stewardship is a governance model based on understanding that organizations have life cycles that each season of that life cycle have their own style of stewardship that is best suited for that season. The distinctions between the courts are mostly cultural and ritual based. They exist to allow people to find like-minded peers. People choose which lodge to join based on the tenor and activities of their carnivals and the rituals associated with degrees. These aspects will be determined mostly by the cadre members that create the court.

Each court will have its own Ecocycle Stewardship systems that can be idiosyncratic to its own court. They must all have elections for an administrative steward, member liaison, and security and safety advisor to support the *High Court's Retinue*. These positions must all be at least three degree members expects for security which must be a 4th degree.

Each court can also establish clubs. These clubs are interest or activities based on small groups like a book club or sports team.

Summer

Created by movement clergy, this court will be spiritual life focused.

Spring

Created by gift and offerings cadre this court will be for those who are interested in innovation, prototyping and experimenting with new structures, particularly financial structures.

Autumn

T.B.D

Winter

T.B.D

Court Governance

Each lodge (called a court) will be governed by an elected Ecocycle stewardship model. The stewards must be voted on by all the members of the lodge in good standing. Though here, voting does not mean campaigning, politicking and simple majorities. Rather potential candidates must be nominated by at least 2 other members and receive unanimous consent at lodge caucuses to be on the ballot. The administrative aspects of the lodge (those pertaining to the creation of policies) must all be at least 2+ degree members. Each lodge will have its positioned themed and with their own regalia and initiation rituals.

The Votary

The Votary is a cross lodge social structure that exists as the community of 3rd, 4th and 5th degree members. This means it is composed of aspirants, avowed members, and cadre members. Their purpose is to hold higher level members living in alignment with the tradition of the Philosophy of WildSeed (POW) that they ascribe to (again, the WildSeed Way is one tradition of the POW).

Houses include both secular and spiritual orders in which members co-create intentional ways of being and support themselves in gentle but rigorous accountability. Members are supported by the community donations and profits of the institutions like the Collective Commons so that they are increasingly unchained from the need to accumulate wealth for financial security. This frees them up to organize themselves outside the logic of capital and exchange. This indifference to the logic of capital is why they are entrusted with organizational stewardship.

The Votary will be administered by the High Court's Retinue and will legally be a program of the national structure. The funds for votary activity should be drawn from contributions from the houses. While the Votary will initially be composed of WildSeed Society members the Retinue can approve other Societies that can create parallel house systems that promote higher degree members.

Houses

Houses are affinity groupings of votaries' members based on identity, movement lineage, profession or spiritual tradition. They help organize votary members into support or kinships pods [chosen families and mutual care pods]. They also help orient and mentor aspirants. Aspirants and Votaries can be members of multiple Votary Houses.

The purpose of Votary houses is to host social, political and spiritual events that bring joy, accountability, growth and integration into the lives of Votaries and Aspirants. Each house has a home court that they are formally associated with. Many of these events can be open to 1st and 2nd degree members or even the general public.

Any member 3rd degree or above can make a proposal to their lodge to start a new House. If approved they will have to submit a handbook of principles, ritual and accountability as well as nominate an avowed Charismatic Steward (someone responsible for stewarding the liberatory culture and touchstone of the house). Once approved they are allowed to self-manage. Every year, their stewards are responsible for checking in with their Court to update them on the inner workings of the House.

Houses should have their own regalia accessories.

Each house will be its own non-profit through its home court. It will have its own bank account and officers. Each house should have a hall or physical place that functions as a regular meeting place and (if resources allow) a house of hospitality and, eventually, ecovillage.

Startup/Timeline

We suggest that we start building this organization towards the end of initial Cadre Fellowship. Thus it will be started by people who have already gone through a [Revolutionary Aftercare](#) process of healing and started existing the logic of capitalism by receiving basic income.

Phase 1 (2024)

The first phase should focus on building the capacity for Cadre who will be the initial 5th degree members who will found the courts. These cadre should also finalize a comprehensive overview of the Philosophy of WildSeed including an introduction course. Our hope is that at least five members of the [Cadre Fellowship](#) agree to help start this institution.

The first step is to bring together vendors who can offer services to members at a discount rate and planning the initial carnivals and key rituals of the courts.

They should also seed the beginning of the productive commons and hiring hall working with WildSeed Society and Collective Commons to pull together aligned businesses and solo-prenuers who might want to be affiliated with the mutual benefit society later on.

One of the first big tasks will be piloting a complementary currency. This currency could be called the WildSeed Lagniappe (WL) ["something given or obtained gratuitously or by way of good measure."] Lagniappe would be created through self-reported WildSeed members actions like offering care to loved

one, going to a protest, composting, reading WildSeed materials or sharing things on social media (i.e., any social action WMBS wants to encourage.)

The algorithm (how many points for which action) for Lagniappe can be controlled via quarterly [loomio](#) polls. Once created Lagniappe's could then be purchased with US dollars. The price of the Lagniappe should be used to give a discount to the user. So 100 WL could be purchased with \$90. This would give the purchaser a 10% discount as WL would be spent as dollar equivalents (i.e. 1WL=\$1 at point of sale). The WMBS could buy back WL at \$85 per 100WL. This would encourage folks to keep the money in the economy.

Eventually, aligned organizations could pay a portion of their salaries in WL which would help them save 10% while building the alternative economy. Once the velocity of the money (how often it is recycled in the economy) and the volume of the currency (the total amount being exchanged) reaches a certain predetermined threshold a proposal for a demurrage rate can go out on loomio. The Demurrage rate (negative interest) would prevent the money from being a store of value (thereby reducing inequality).

Thus we would have a mode of efficient interchange that is based on the gift economy that (like all natural things) decays. Further controls could be democratically implemented to ensure that the currency plays a counter-cyclical purpose. That is to say that it would counteract the downturn in the mainstream economy [like raising the buyback price or lowering the selling price of WL in response to inflation].

Projected Members: 2 at the start (as) 7 at the end (e).

Phase 2 (2025-27)

We imagine it will take 12-18 months of meeting and planning for the initial courts to develop and set up the WMBS. One working committee will have to work on the cultural and ritual structure of the organization while another works on the benefit structure. In early 2026 they can start to invite people to become associate members. By fall 2026 they should have their inaugural carnivals.

The initial benefits will include health care, life insurance, retirement plans, education savings plans and a mutual aid fund. The WildSeed Society (or its future sister orgs) will cover these expenses for Cadre members (5th degree). Other members will be able to sign up for these benefits at a discounted cost.

The productive commons and hiring hall will be small but growing, working hand and hand with WildSeed Society and Collective Commons.

Projected Members: 7(as)-400 (e)

Phase 3 (2028-32)

Once the courts are established, effort can be put into building out the producer commons and hiring hall. A committee can be created to set up a proposal for how the spaces will be operated and what would be needed for them to be stewarded. There can then be an election for the stewards in mid-2028. They should be able to start the commons and hiring hall in early 2029. Hopefully by then the Collective Commons has already been up a running and will have list of values aligned ventures that can join the Productive Commons. Ideally, they would have a few that they have already invested in or launched.

The WMBS should be able to be an institutional investor in the Collective Commons. By using member dues to fund the Collective Commons investment there should be more and more benefits being brought to bear for its members. In addition, the WMBS should start to offer financial education, planning and advising for its members. The goal should be to help get as members to be financially stable and “successful” enough to become members of the Collective Commons.

WMBS should offer health insurance, disability insurance, life insurance, concierge medical care, and revolutionary aftercare.

Projected Members: 400-4,000

Phase 4 (2033-40)

By stage 4 the WMBS should function as a mass on-boarding vehicle for new people into the alternative economy created by the 4 structural interventions of the WildSeed Ecology. It should offer comprehensive social insurance, healthcare, and revolutionary after care services to members at a steep discount. It should also begin to venture into social housing and food sovereignty for a significant portion of the society (20%). thus lowering the cost of a thriving communal lifestyle. The House system should be fully developed. Each house should have a physical house of hospitality at one of a handful ecovillages run by aligned organizations (WMBS, WildSeed or sister orgs).

The Lagniappe should be a fully functional countercyclical complimentary currency. By this point the expectation is that WMBS is mostly focused on climate collapse mitigation, adaptation and crisis response. We should be focused on building ecovillages in sustainable locations around the world as well as purchasing property in urban areas that have advanced ESG and adaptability. These properties could allow for WMBS to be semi-nomadic if the seasons become too intense for year round habitation.

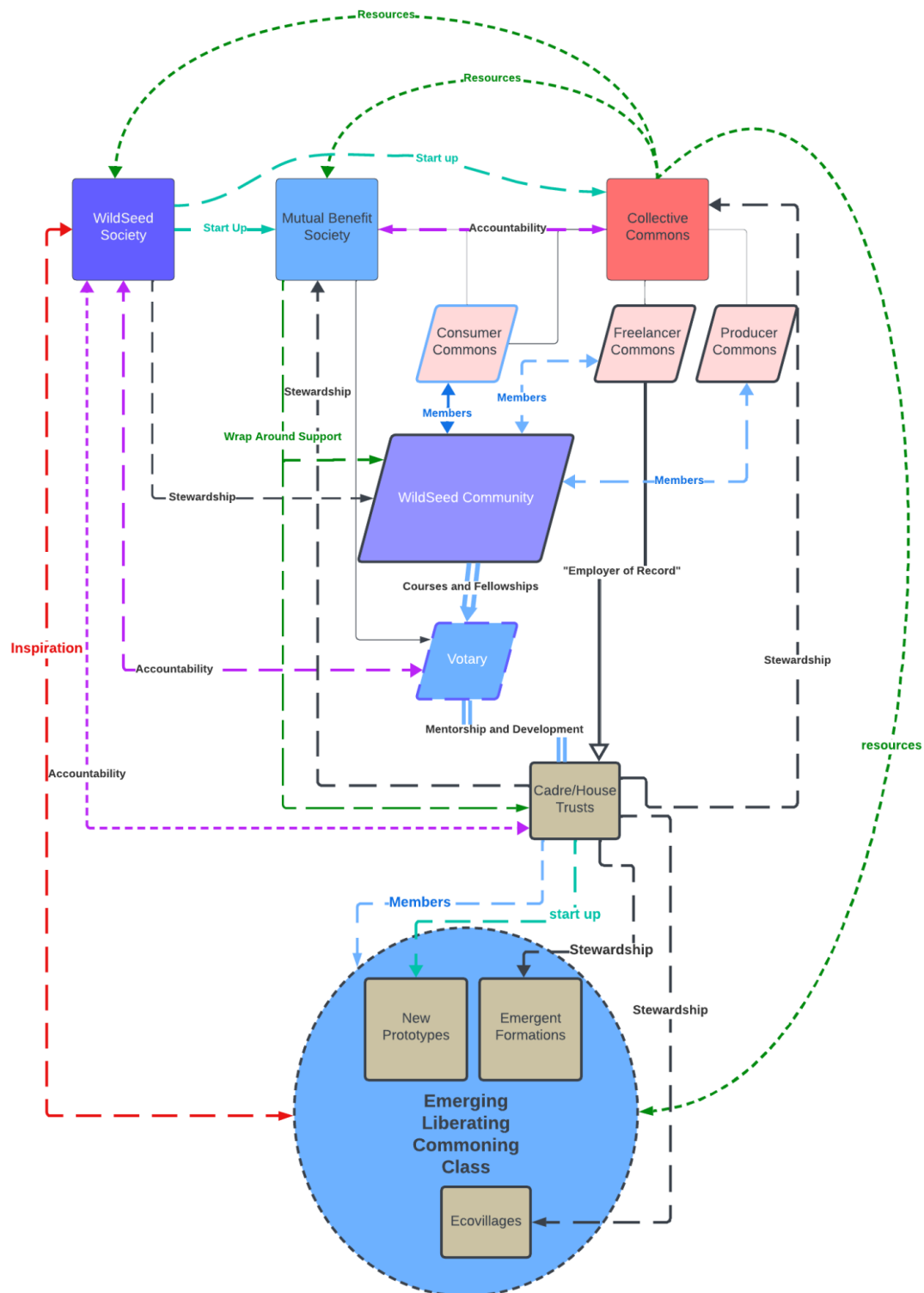
The WMBS should also extend its organization structure internationally to not be solely tied to political futures of the U.S or even the west writ large.

There should be enough 5th degree members to start to build out infrastructure for the Liberating Commoning Class that is legally separate from the WMBS so that as an ecosystem of loosely connected but deeply aligned organization structures would be secure and resilient.

The Congress would be a mature democratic entity developing the skills of liberatory governance. Eventually the goal is for the Congress to dissolve the WMBS and reconstitute the aspects that are viable into the WildSeed Confederacy.

Projected Members: 4,000-10,000

End Goal



The end goal is to be a distributed confederacy of economic and social subsidiaries and aligned organizations that could, over time, present a robust, democratic alternative to the market centric-nation-state: The WildSeed Confederacy.

The WildSeed Confederacy is our vision of a socially, economically and spiritually democratic alternative to the Nation-State. It replaces liberal democracy with democratic confederacy, capitalism with a regenerative solidarity economy and kyriarchy with liberatory kinship.

It is a distributed community of shared risk based on voluntary association where constituency is available to members of the Liberated Commoning Class and constituents collectively own land, businesses and other property; are supported by collectively managed social insurance programs; protected by Social Reproductive Defense Formations; and pay tithes to the indigenous communities on whose land they reside and reparations to the communities whose exploitation built the infrastructure or wealth they rely on.

Its a regenerative society that heals as it grows.