

CENTER for LARGE LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION

2020 Spring Newsletter

Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

In 1995, I began working with colleagues at Wildlife Trust, Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine, and Harvard Medical School to create a new field of health investigation that studied the ecological drivers of infectious disease emergence. We called the initiative Conservation Medicine – Ecological Health in Practice. The program was revolutionary at the time, bringing together human and animal medicine with ecology and conservation. Disease ecology was an emergent field and we could see that it was only a matter of time before spillover events such as SARS, MERS and now COVID-19 would have pandemic implications. We also knew these events were tied to unabated human disruption of ecological systems, including wildlife trade.

Going forward, Conservation Medicine and its rebranded parallel One Health are now a curriculum staple in many medical, veterinary and public health institutions around the globe. Wildlife Trust transformed its organizational mission to focus solely on Conservation Medicine/One Health and is now known as EcoHealth Alliance. Many current experts trying to mitigate the COVID-19 outbreak and prevent the next pandemic are products of this interdisciplinary training.

While Conservation Medicine/One Health focused on the disease outcome of ecological disruption, there was no organization focused on the maintaining the ecological integrity of nature and wildlife populations with the goal of preventing spillover circumstances in the first place. If you read our website, you will see the Center for Large Landscape Conservation was designed to address ecological health by saving nature and its critical processes at planetary scales. While the world sees the COVID-19 outbreak as an imminent existential threat, isolated from its origins, we see the ecological conditions that led to this problem.

Saving nature is often portrayed as an activity separate from human well-being. We exist to educate society and advance innovative conservation practices that promote large-scale nature conservation. We work to heal nature through connectivity conservation because our efforts are essential for the planet's health and humanity's survival.

In this regard, 2020 has become a pivotal year for human health and global conservation. In the near term, COVID-19 will dominate society's efforts. Longer term, the world will need to begin a series of diplomatic processes to learn how to better deal with global threats like the next pandemic, climate change, and the loss of biodiversity. While COVID-19 is an acute threat, the realities of ineffective efforts to stem climate change and loss of biodiversity are looming just behind.

In these times and for the future, our work matters. Public health begins with planetary health. We work tirelessly to save nature's vital functions at scale. Read our newsletter to get a taste of our work. But more importantly, ask us questions. Reach out to our staff. Tell us what you think. We are all in this together.

Warm regards,

Gary Tabor, on behalf of the entire staff and board



COVID-19 Update

Now more than ever, human connection is key to humanity's individual and collective wellbeing. At this time, the Center is committed to continuing our work in a socially responsible manner. As we shift to home offices to do our part in social distancing, we remain dedicated to our mission, our partners, and our vision for the future. We will not allow these challenging times to distance us from the people and communities we work with; rather, we are using a range of creative solutions to stay connected while taking precautions to flatten the curve.

Program Updates

Community Resilience Program

Last month, our Community Resilience Program Manager Angelina González-Aller was named one of Bozeman's "20 under 40" recipients for 2019. "20 under 40" recognizes leading professionals who are working to improve the quality of lives for others in the community. Throughout her career, Angelina has demonstrated a commitment to community-based health, environmental justice, and health equity, through her policy work and research. At the Center, Angelina supports communities in their efforts to build resilience through climate adaptation planning to prepare for a changing world. Congratulations, Angelina, on the well-deserved award!



Corridors and Crossings Program

On Thursday, March 5, the Center co-hosted a *Wildlife Crossing Opportunities* briefing in Washington, D.C. Attended by Senior Policy Officer Renee Callahan, the briefing assembled a panel of engineering, wildlife, and policy experts who discussed wildlife crossings and their benefits for people, wildlife, and landscape connectivity. During the briefing, Renee urged the House to build on the solid legislative foundation laid last July by the Senate Committee on the Environment and Public Works when it unanimously passed Senate Bill 2302, "America's Transportation Infrastructure Act" (ATIA). Included in ATIA is the first-ever, \$250 million wildlife crossing pilot program aimed at reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions while improving habitat connectivity.



Roads are one of the greatest threats to our nation's wildlife, but there are proven solutions. If adopted, the wildlife-related provisions in ATIA would set a new precedent for supporting habitat connectivity across the U.S. — all while saving lives and dollars. The Center has been a proud collaborator throughout this effort, working with Congressional staffers, policymakers, and a coalition of NGO partners to provide technical and policy expertise and build a broad constituency of supporters. We look forward to sharing further updates as they become available. *(Image credit: Joe Riis)*

International Connectivity Program

The International Connectivity Program has spent the last year preparing for the 2020 IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Marseille, France. Originally scheduled to bring together 10,000+ participants during June 11-19, the conference is unfortunately postponed until an uncertain date. Until we do meet in Marseille, the Center is inviting existing and new partners to work together to start an "Ecological Connectivity Stream" of online meetings and webinars to highlight and continue advancing collaborative efforts for large-scale conservation gains around the world.

Recent Travels

Nairobi Infrastructure Workshop

Infrastructure like roads, rails, power lines and fences are critical to economic growth in underdeveloped nations—but wildlife and related tourism revenue are also important. Can the two coexist?

In February, the Center co-hosted a workshop in Nairobi, Kenya that addressed this question, and the rising need to balance infrastructure

development with healthy ecosystems in environmentally-sensitive areas. The workshop, titled “Designing Linear Infrastructure for Sustainable Outcomes,” brought together nearly 70 stakeholders including practitioners, agencies, conservation groups, academic institutions, and major infrastructure funding organizations. Participants spent two days exploring ways to communicate the impacts that roads, rails, and pipelines have on wildlife and landscape connectivity, and shared design solutions for ecosystem-friendly infrastructure. Those in attendance left with actionable next steps for continued collaborative engagement.



We’re grateful to workshop co-hosts, including the African Conservation Center, Grevy’s Zebra Trust, Ewaso Lions, and Endangered Wildlife Trust. We are also grateful to the National Geographic Society grant program for their support.

30x30 Campaign for Nature Event

On February 7th, to mark what would have been Stewart Udall’s 100th birthday, his son Senator Tom Udall hosted an event on reigniting American conservation leadership. Kendall Edmo, Conservation/GIS Associate and Blackfeet tribal member, was invited to sit on a panel alongside Senator Udall, Former Secretaries of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and Sally Jewel, and National Geographic Society Explorer-in-Residence Enric Sala. Together, the group discussed the 30x30 Resolution to Save Nature, which creates a roadmap for reversing the climate and biodiversity loss crises as ecosystems and wildlife species near the point of no return. In her comments, former Secretary Sally Jewel highlighted that this can only be done by connecting the protected areas we already have, which requires being inclusive of the multi-use lands of ranchers and communities around protected area. In particular, we need to consider indigenous communities whose interests have historically been discounted or ignored. Below is an excerpt of Kendall’s speech:



“In terms of the challenges that 30x30 presents to tribal communities, I think primarily traditional conservation has separated local indigenous communities from their landscapes, when in fact tribal communities have unique and living connections and relationships to their homelands that reach back thousands of years. As the Deputy THPO [Tribal Historic Preservation Officer], I have visited sites that date back over 13,000 years of Blackfeet occupation. If we’re going to achieve 30x30 we are going to be working on many people’s homelands, that date back millennia. Conservation will have to evolve quickly if we are going to ensure that cultural integrity remains intact for future generations. This can’t be achieved through the traditional wilderness and national park designations.”

In The News

Yale 360 Article

Check out the recent [article](#) published on Yale 360 titled, “Salvation or Pipe Dream? A Movement Grows to Protect Up to Half the Planet,” in which the Center’s president Gary Tabor is quoted. The article presents a compelling case that leading conservationists and scientists are proposing: protect up to 50 percent of the Earth’s oceans and land in the next decade to preserve the natural systems upon which life depends. Read more [here](#).

Around the Web

- [Fighting extinction through wildlife corridors](#)
- [Corridors for migrating wildlife work to bring us all together](#)
- [New wildlife crossings in the West designed to save animals' lives](#)
- [Slashing speed limits doesn't slow roadkill, study says](#)
- [New website showcases large-scale animal migration](#)

Partner Highlights

WellBeing International

We're pleased to recognize a partner organization, [WellBeing International](#). Their work focuses on relationship-building between people, animals, and the environment, recognizing that successful conservation of one requires successful conservation of all. In addition to global awareness-raising and advocacy efforts, WellBeing International publishes two monthly newsletters: *WellBeing News* and *Tales of WellBeing*.

The Center was honored to write an article for the April 2019 edition of *WellBeing News* highlighting our Corridors and Crossings program. If you missed it, you can read that article [here](#).

[Sign up](#) to receive WellBeing International's newsletters, and stay informed of recent trends in connectivity, human wellbeing, wildlife, oceans and marine conservation, land use, and more.

The Center for Large Landscape

The Center for Large Landscape Conservation is the hub of a growing global movement to reverse the fragmentation of the earth's landscapes and restore nature's resilience to climate change.

We network and collaborate with experts, practitioners, and local communities. The work of landscape conservation restores human connection, civility, and respect. It is essential to our survival and the quality of our lives. Learn more at largelandscapes.org.

[Donate Here](#)