

## Unity With Nature Committee Report to Pacific Yearly Meeting Annual Session 2016 Walker Creek

June 15, 2016

Dear Friends of Pacific Yearly Meeting,

Unity with Nature's committee's function is to encourage, support, share, and bring forward Pacific Yearly Meeting [PYM] Friends' concerns, witness, and leadings for Earthcare. Central to our concerns for the last many years is to slow and eventually stop global warming and its horrific proliferation of dire consequences for both humans and the whole ecosystem. Transitioning to sustainable living systems, net zero energy use, keeping fossil fuels in the ground, permaculture, acting locally, and a carbon free future are among the solutions that many Friends envision.

It has been a hopeful year of some progress. Several Friends from Quaker Earthcare Witness [QEW] and Quaker United Nations Offices [QUNO] both in NYC and Europe, including PYM member and Quaker Earthcare Witness [QEW] General Secretary, Shelley Tanenbaum attended the Paris Climate Summit in December 2015. Shelley (Strawberry Creek) will be here with us at Walker Creek. As one wit, George Monbiot, described the Paris COP 21 Climate Summit agreement, a historic first for the world's nations to unite to slow and hopefully eventually stop climate change, *"By comparison to what it could have been, it's a miracle. By comparison to what it should have been, it's a disaster... The talks in Paris are the best there have ever been. And that is a terrible indictment."* According to the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions ([www.c2es.org](http://www.c2es.org)), if the Nationally Determined Contributions [NDC] submitted so far by 188 countries were fully implemented; it would result in a warming of 2.7 degrees Celsius. The Climate Summit's reaffirmation of the commitment to keep global warming to a 2 degrees Celsius over 1850 levels should keep 80% of the world's fossil fuel reserves in the ground where they belong (see [350.org](http://350.org)'s website for details). Many environmentalists feel that we really need to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius. The big surprise at the summit agreed is that the goal in principle is 1.5 degrees. We are already almost a full degree Celsius over 1850 levels. To meet the moderate goal of holding to 2 degrees Celsius of warming means we need to take strong steps forward now.

We hope Friends in Pacific Yearly meeting can discern together what is needed and support each others leadings and actions to live our Earthcare testimony and save the Earth from turning to toast.

In the 2015-2016 cycle Unity with Nature committee [UwN] is down to only four active or semi-active members, which limits how much we can do. But all of our members are passionately engaged in caring for the Earth and working to stop climate change. We would welcome new members who want to help with our goals and tasks or who bring to UwN their own Earthcare and Sustainability-related leading or project for support and nurturance. We would especially welcome new members from Southern California Quarterly.

In previous years, we have had a weekend retreat to plan our year's activities. This year we met and communicating in phone conference calls and emails. This worked well because we already knew one another.

We have continued with our usual activities of sponsoring interest groups at College Park Quarterly and PYM's annual session, appointing and supporting the Quaker Earthcare Witness representatives, and bringing information to PYM such as the 2015 QEW suggestions embedded in its epistle, *"The Three Challenges,"* and the FWCC Pisac 2016 Sustainability Minute, similarly urging concrete actions.

## Interest Groups

- This year at Walker Creek we are sponsoring the interest group [IG], "*Environmental Justice: What are we called to do*" led by Shelley Tanenbaum and Carl Magruder on Wednesday at 8 AM.
- We, along with QEW Reps are supporting Peace and Social Order Committee's IG exploring the FWCC Pisac 2016 Sustainability Minute on Saturday immediately after dinner on Saturday.
- Instead of another IG, on Saturday at 8:30 PM we are offering an affinity group for meetings and individuals to share what they are doing to reduce dependence on fossil fuels as per our last annual session's minute, "*We hold a deep concern for over-reliance and investment in fossil fuels. We ask monthly meetings and individuals to engage in discernment on how to reduce their dependence and investment in fossil fuels. Meetings and individuals are asked to share their efforts with the greater community.*" (Minute 2015-5). Sharings may also include actions and experience about reducing carbon footprints, divestment strategies, and earthcare in general. If there is interest, the **Reducing Dependence on Fossil Fuels Affinity Group** could continue on another evening.
- Instead of an experiential walk, opening the senses, and Worship in Unity with Nature IG this year during the day, we are supporting the outdoor worship in nature before breakfast. We hope you can join us.

## Appointments

We appoint the PYM representatives to Quaker Earthcare Witness [QEW], the continent wide organizations to bring forward Friends' concerns for the Earth and for Climate Change. They are:

2 representatives serving 2-year terms, appointed by Unity with Nature Committee.

2017 Rick Herbert, Strawberry Creek (2014)

2018 Catya de Neergaard, Berkeley (2014)

2018 Meagan Fischer, Chico (2016)

Note: UWN's plan is that the 3 Reps will share (take turns) with the full funding currently provided for 2 Reps for the 2 QEW steering committees yearly. UWN will help the unfunded Rep find alternate funding sources. This plan meets with the approval of QEW's general secretary. UWN trusts that PYM is OK with this plan.

Muriel Strand, Sacramento MM, is UWN's appointee to the Earthlight Board.

## Fundraising, Mini Grants, and other Nuts and Bolts

- We deeply appreciate your participation in the carbon-offset education and fundraising project in this year's and last's year's PYM registration. Another education and fundraising project from

last year that we hope to repeat is the dime-a-gallon project. Thank you all – meetings and individuals - who contributed to UwN's special project's funds. Among other things, the UwN special projects fund supports the UwN Mini-Grant program. It could also be for special young Friends (under 30) scholarships to environmental actions or conferences.

- We hope you can visit UwN's and QEW's table in Maple for free tri-folds and other offerings and projects.
- We are planning to bring out the new round of mini-grant applications in the near future.
- After we re-wrote our charter and goals (Proposed Unity with Nature Charter, October 2014) using the 2005 Charter from PYM as a template, Presiding Clerk Diego Navarro suggested we send it to Nominating Committee for review and possible approval. This we have done and look forward to Nominating Committee's feedback.
- Having a PYM maintained list of monthly meeting worship group email addresses available online or by email, would be a big help in communicating with monthly meetings and worship groups.
- Please see our March 2016 report to Representative's Committee March for more information on our activities this year.

Gratefully submitted,

Catya de Neergaard  
Clerk, Unity with Nature Committee