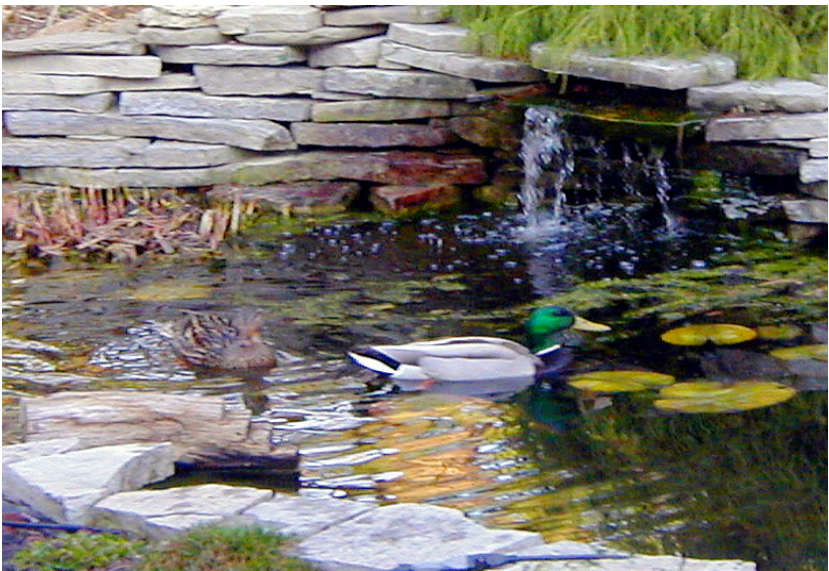


Getting Started!

**Growing Our Sense
of Spirit-Home the
Bioregional Way**



**Lake Erie Yearly Meeting
Earthcare Committee, 2008**

Getting Started!

Growing Our Sense of Spirit-Home the Bioregional Way

Prepared for attendees of the Lake Erie Yearly Meeting of Friends in June, 2008, especially for those attending the EarthCare Committee Workshop. All others are encouraged to read and be inspired.

“Once there is a certain degree of Presence, of still and alert attention in human beings’ perceptions, they can sense the divine life essence, the one indwelling consciousness or spirit in every creature, every life-form, recognize it as one with their own essence and so love it as themselves.”

From Eckhart Tolle’s A New Earth: Awakening to Your Life’s Purpose

From George Fox:

“Look after the place you live in, so that you each become aware of the spring of water emerging in the light from the Lord, and aware of the source of your nourishment and refreshment. It is this that waters the plants and makes them grow in the Lord, from whom indeed these pure springs of life all come.”

“To those who love the light and live their lives in it and wait in dependence on it, power is given and strength. And as you obey it and remain faithful to what little you have, you will grow to be responsible for something much bigger.”

(Translated into modern English by Rex Ambler, Truth of the Heart)

Written by Judy Greenberg with much-appreciated help from The LEYM EarthCare Committee: Jim Crowfoot and Phil Clampitt, Co-Clerks; Al Connor, Dick Hogan, Helen Soderberg, Ann Sprague; and extended committee Bill Bliss, Margaret Kanost, and Karen Vigmstad. Special thanks to Jim and Phil, and to Judy's sister Bonnie Watkins.
2/2008

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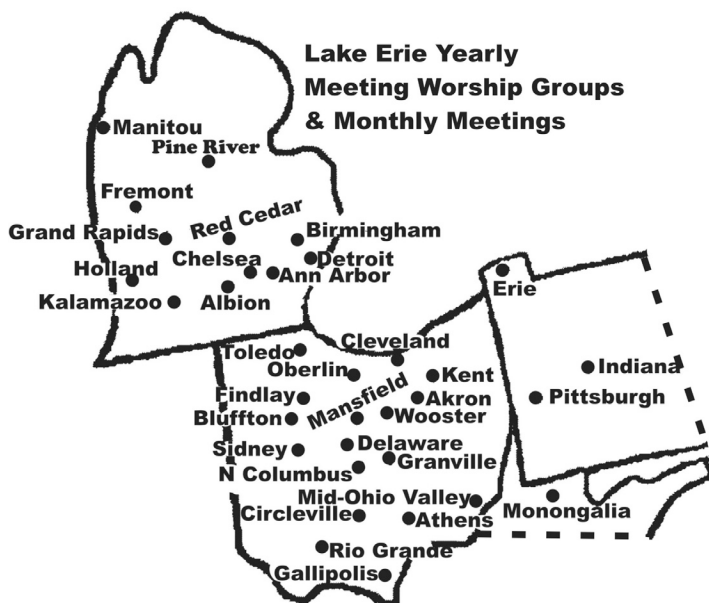
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**Any friend of the Earth is welcome to copy this
booklet for non-profit purposes.**

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Introduction: The Why And The What Of This Booklet

The phrases “deep centering in our home place,” and “A new way of being” were mentioned in our yearly meeting earthcare committee recently as we were planning a workshop for June. We were interested in the bioregional movement as a possible way to focus our earthcare efforts. At the same time many of us were feeling a sense of urgency to GET GOING. We want to roll up our sleeves personally and get started in some more systematic, serious way to bring change.

How could we educate ourselves and our prospective workshop participants a little about what “bioregional” means beforehand, so we could spend more of our limited workshop time delving deeper into this way of living? This became the inspiration for this booklet. Later, we realized to our pleasure it might also be useful in other ways or even for [gasp!] non-Quaker groups! In which case we say, you’re very welcome to use this material in any good-for-the-Earth way you like. Studying, talking about the ideas, using for a workshop, starting a local study-action group: spreading the word is what we’re all hoping for.

This is about finding a better gauge for our concept of home and neighbors: not too small, not too large, but just right! Like Goldilocks. And about committing our efforts there, for our spiritual well-being as well as for our planet. If you, like us, feel the need to get better focused and mobilized and at the same time realize we have a lot of self-educating to do, we invite you to join us in this small crash course. We hope you’ll think about whether you’d like to “get your feet wet” with us in this direction even before we totally understand what the heck we’re doing. The one thing we know for sure is that with the great creating spirit of the universe to guide us and with friends to join us in this adventure of discovering our “home,” it won’t be boring. From all of us on our committee, we hope you’ll find the booklet useful, and we look forward to seeing many of you at LEYM this year! Let’s get reading, get planning, and GET STARTED!

From Kirkpatrick Sale

“I came across a wonderful Spanish term—*querencia*—usually translated as “love of home.” It is that, to be sure, but colloquially it means much more than that too, as I came to learn. *Querencia* is the deep sense of inner well-being that comes from knowing a particular place on the Earth; its daily and seasonal patterns, its fruits and scents, its soils and bird-songs. A place where, whenever you return to it, your soul releases an inner sigh of recognition and realization.

“That is pretty much what bioregionalism is.”

“No work of human ingenuity, however perfect otherwise, can possibly be successful if it is too small or, more to the usual point, too big, just as a door fails if it is too small to get through, a doorknob if it is too large to grasp; just as an economy fails if it is too small to provide shelter as well as food, a government if it is too large to let all its citizens know about and regularly influence its actions.

“At the right scale human potential is unleashed, human comprehension magnified, human accomplishment multiplied. I would argue that the optimum scale is the bioregional, not so small as to be powerless and impoverished, not so large as to be ponderous and impervious, a scale at which, at last, human potential can match ecological reality.”

Both of the above were written by Kirkpatrick Sale, author of Dwellers in the Land: The Bioregional Vision, and an important voice in the bioregional movement.

1. *Bioregion*: A New/Old Concept of Home

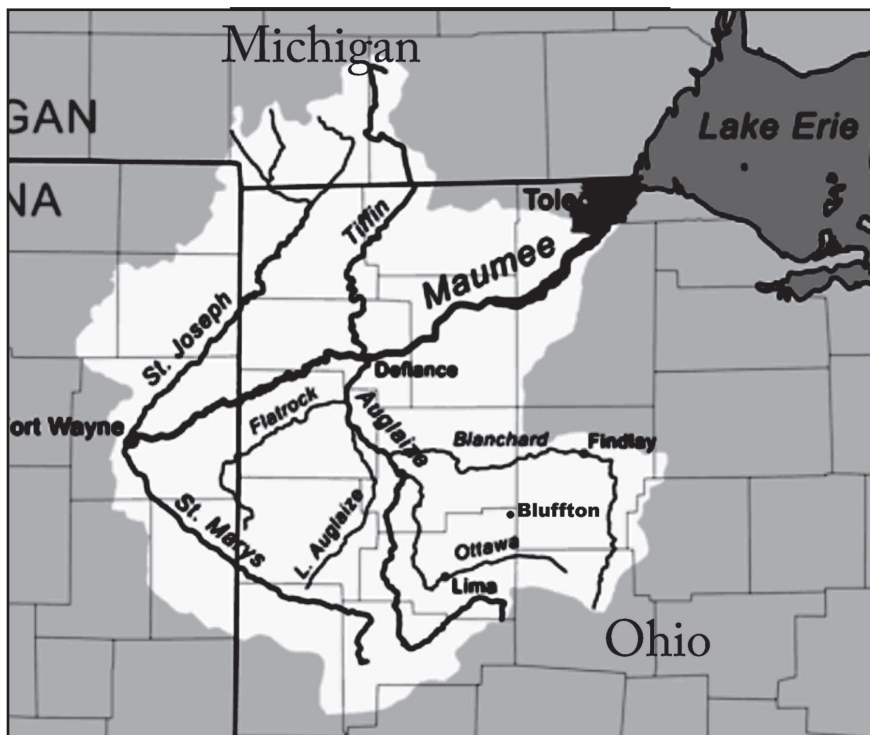
The concept “home” has for millennia meant to our forebears the area in which they lived: not just the cave or tepee, but the clan, the river and wildlife and forest or plains around them. In our era, “home” has come to be equated with the structure in which we spend most of our free time. Now, people working for environmental, social, and economic justice, and many other good causes that desperately need attention, are being drawn to the idea of redefining “home.” They’re focusing their efforts on where they live in a way that gives all a more vivid sense of relatedness to the earth and life cultures (including human) in the area.

The word bioregion, or “life place,” was coined in the 1970’s by Californian Alan Van Newkirk, who observed that nature seemed to organize itself into regions that shared similar physical and ecological associations. Newkirk reasoned that these areas should become the territorial unit within which humans protected and restored natural ecosystems. Another Californian, Peter Berg, extended this idea: the bioregion could be more than a focus for ecological restoration, it could also become the territorial “container” within which human societies might live in sustainable balance with surrounding natural systems. Their vision has grown to be of the planet covered in a network of these regions, where people are learning new ways of being in their own place that are in harmony with the earth and each other. As Berg says, the bioregional movement aims at “saving the whole by saving the parts.”

Jim Crowfoot, our Earthcare Committee co-clerk, points out that a bioregion extends down into the earth’s subsurface and up into the relatively thin layer of atmosphere as well as on the earth’s surface, making our area a living unit of the earth’s biosphere, or “envelope” of life.

Now, some thirty years later, there are dozens of bioregional groups in North America (and some in other continents) working to change their own and other people’s ways of looking at “home,” and of being in relationship to the land and its inhabitants. The bound-

aries of a bioregion are defined by the interested group not according to governmental boundaries (states, counties, etc.) but according to natural criteria: often by watershed, but sometimes by landform, flora and fauna, or elevation, or whatever criterion seems appropriate to them. For purposes of this booklet, since the whole of Lake Erie Yearly Meeting is part of either the Great Lakes Basin or the Ohio River Basin, and since water shortages are already becoming a serious threat in the States as well as in the world, it seems sensible for us to generalize that LEYM's "bioregions" will probably often be decided on the basis of our watersheds. (If you decide to accept this definition, it will save a lot of time and energy in defining your bioregion, which would otherwise be your first problem!)



Welcome to Bluffton/Broadmead's watershed: the Maumee River watershed – all the area that “sheds water” into rivers that feed into the Maumee River.

Note: Watersheds collect and distribute water to groundwater aquifers as well as rivers and lakes, so working to keep them clean is working to keep all our water clean. Yearly Meeting's watersheds have lost many wetlands to human interests. Wetlands are critically important to the health of our water supply: aside from providing habitat for many species and acting as a giant sponge to manage flooding, their great function is to act as a filter for all the water passing through them and into rivers and lakes. Wetlands with their plants are perfectly designed ecologically to clean and clear water. This is why loss of wetlands is a disaster to the rivers and lakes and aquifers into which they feed. And why we need to learn how to protect and restore wetlands.

Every bioregional group, being based on its own ecological systems and the people there, has its own complexion. Each group works for change according to the needs of the land and the human cultures there. One of the things all have in common is mapping their region: a lot of mapping of many different characteristics, as they learn and locate what the needs of their region are, both natural and human. Along with this goes the emphasis on learning more: more about the natural systems in their region and their needs, more about the human and wildlife cultures and their needs, more about what others have learned and tried – more books, articles, videos, shared, passed around, mined for information.

What is the power of maps? From earliest times, people scratched maps into the dirt, into pieces of bark and wood, representing and showing the location of the things that nurtured their lives – where the most nourishing roots were, the most likely routes to good fishing, where the neighboring tribes were, the places of “good medicine”: where wondrous healing events took place. Many of these preserved early maps illustrate people’s ingenious ability to observe and communicate their surroundings. Islanders tied sticks and shells together in patterns to indicate colors and currents and temperatures of the ocean waters around them, the distance particular water birds could be found

from land, the use of constellations to find their way in their watery world. These maps represented the vitality of peoples' connection with their natural world, the fullness of their participation in it.

All the aspects of human experience can be represented with maps: the emotional and spiritual, the physical and social. Mapping and adapting and changing maps enable people to participate in the evolution of the natural world in an intentional way. (It behooves us to realize that maps are used very intentionally by political and corporate interests for purposes which may not be promoting the community of life that we hope for!) When we identify and locate key habitats, key sources of pollution, church communities that are "thinking green," small family farms that are trying to farm in ecologically respectful ways, locally based stores and restaurants, we are helping each other to recognize what our own life community needs to thrive. And to begin to discern where we might be led next to participate in, and experience, life more abundant. To individually and collectively express what we know and hope for, to identify and locate and protect and nourish what is important, to remember what is important and venerate, celebrate, praise it – what could be more life-affirming? Our respectful participation in our creation community has to be one of the most worshipful ways of acknowledging the sacred around us.

Another thing the bioregional groups seem to have in common is an awareness that they can start acting on this vision, but they won't live to see it totally completed.

It is going to take more than one generation to learn, demonstrate, and persuade people to protect and give the earth space to heal. Their sense of urgency seems to propel them to get started, even though they don't know everything about how to do it yet. Bioregionalists are in the journey for the long haul, which should take off the pressure for "success." At the same time, the seriousness and complexity of the breakdown of our natural systems make it imperative for us all to identify key issues, through study and leadings, on which to focus our main efforts.

We on LEYM's Earthcare Committee are moved and inspired and hopeful about this way of "being the change we seek in the world." We'd love to see Friends learning about this movement

and, either in groups or individually, getting started and getting mapping! We think this is important enough in light of our testimonies (all of which presuppose the rich, vital creation, which is so threatened, around us!) that we are dedicating our Yearly Meeting Earthcare Workshop in June to the subject. We plan to have a real hands-on workshop with Friends working together to learn more about this movement, and about our own watersheds and what we might do when we get back “home” to them. Our great hope is that we will find ourselves centering with a new depth and sense of relatedness as we experience more and more awareness of our larger home.



Some Ohio watersheds, outlined in grey. Those north of bold black line flow into Lake Erie. Watersheds south of black line flow into Ohio River. Dotted black lines outline subwatersheds. For more info, Google “Surf Your Watershed Ohio” or for this and other states go to www.EPA.gov/surf.

2. “Speaking for Douglas Fir” by Gary Snyder

“The bioregional movement is an educational exercise, first of all. Next, when you really get down to brass tacks, what it really means is that you have people who say: I’m not going to move. That’s where it gets new. People say I’m going to stay here, and you could count on me being here 20 years from now. What that immediately does is make a politically-empowered community possible. Bioregionalism has this concrete base that it builds from: human beings that live in place together for the long run. In North America that’s a new thing!

“Human beings who are planning on living together in the same place will wish to include the non-human in their sense of community. This also is new, to say our community does not end at the human boundaries, we are in a community with certain trees, plants, birds, animals. The conversation is with the whole thing. That’s community political life.

“The next step might be that you have an issue, and you testify at a hearing. You say: I speak as a local, a local who is committed to being here the rest of my life, and who fully expects my children and my grandchildren to be living here. Consequently, my view of the issue is a long-range view, and I request that you have a long range view in mind. I’m not here to talk about a 20 year logging plan. I’m here to talk about a 500 year logging plan. Does your logging plan address 500 years? If not, you are not meeting your responsibility to local people.

“Another person by this time takes the stand, from your same group, and says: I’m a member of this community who also intends to live here in the long run, and one of my friends, Douglas

Fir, can't be here tonight. So I'm speaking for Douglas Fir. That point of view has come to me by spending time out in the hills, and walking with the trees, and seeing how it seems with them. Then speak a sensitive and ecologically-sound long-range position from the standpoint of the tree side of the community. We've done this in Northern California, in particular a character who always calls himself "Ponderosa Pine." You can see how it goes from there. It's so simple. Such common sense. And so easily grasped by children."

Thanks to poet - environmentalist Gary Snyder for permission to use "Speaking for Douglas Fir", and for his tireless, eloquent voice on behalf of the planet.



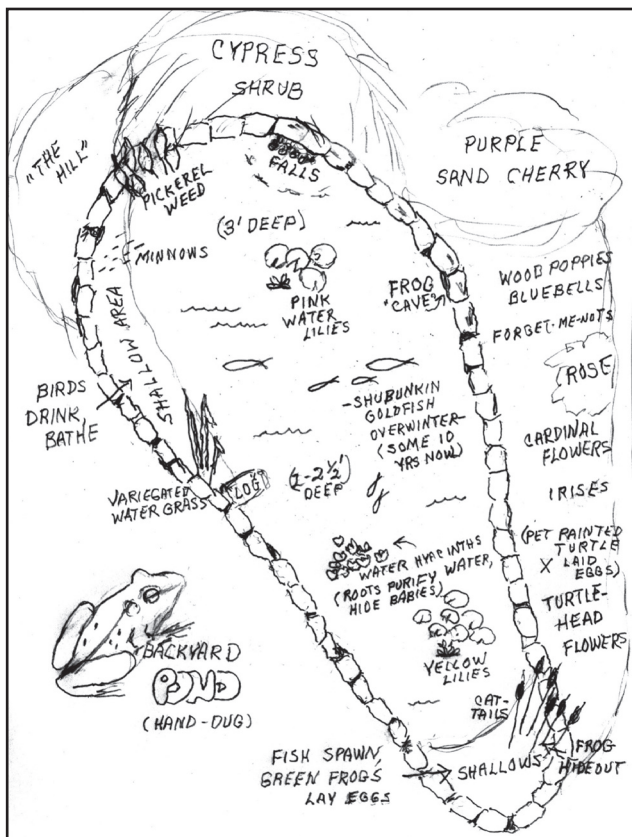
3. The Educational Part – Educating Ourselves, Our Families, Our Meetings, Our Friends

(C'mon in, the watershed's fascinating! Bring some of these things to share with us and work on at yearly meeting!)

A. Personally/Spiritually: Start by walking out the door! Think about what keeps us indoors so much; think about how vital, fresh, and energized people look when they come inside from being outdoors for awhile. Identify places in your yard, in your neighborhood, in your area that feed your spirit and imagination, exercise your body and your curiosity, quiet your restlessness and anxieties. When you center down, take time to orient yourself to where you are in relation to Mother Earth, to your relatives the creation's plants and animals and birds and rivers and rocks, and know that we are all here for the long haul, in one way or another! Were we really meant to live indoors, or only to shelter there? What could we simplify in our homes and lives to make it more easy and inviting to spend time outside? How much less “stuff” would we need to buy, trip over, clean, store, and worry about how to get rid of, if we spent more time outside? How much less would we have to hop into cars if we enjoyed walking a lot, if we rode bikes and trikes as we did when we played as children? As our culture gets more and more alienated from the land, are we allowing ourselves to slip into a sort of dim reflection of authentic, vital, “abundant life”? If so, THIS at least is something we can really fix all by ourselves! Let's get outside and think about how to start! Hmmmm, maybe a tri-cycle for the “mature kid”... ?

B. Start collecting maps and info! Maps of your watershed, your state, your area: elevation maps, soil maps, park maps, road maps, maps of flora and fauna, political districts, bird migration maps, glacier maps, maps, maps, maps! The Internet is your friend in this project. Also, start making your own maps: your backyard with the branches where the hawk keeps an eye on your bird feeder, the woodpile where the chipmunks hang out, the rock pile

where the columbine blooms first. Your neighborhood, your favorite park, whatever: make them from sketches, draw pictures on them, make them with fabric, with clay, play with them: real people need to start taking back mapping from the “experts.” Maps have power! The Broadmead Earthcare Interest Group is beginning to map places in our watershed where we can get locally grown food.



C. Start files: photos of your favorite places (make a great collage!); lists of endangered wildlife, watchable wildlife, invasive plants, etc; articles from your newspapers about your local waters, parks, land disputes, historic things about your area: anything about your area that moves you or interests you. Use colorful folders with pockets: live it up!

D. Watch videos about exciting things going on to help people relearn how to live with the earth. This is a good way to engage F/ friends/neighbors: have “learning about the land” video parties. Be on the watch for solutions to human energy, economic and social needs that work with instead of against land needs. Have good

eats. For bonus points, have the goodies made from foods grown locally! Start to learn the newly evolving language of earthcare; start a vocab list.

E. Talk to people about your life place, walk with naturalists, read about the bioregional movement, about permaculture and watersheds. Find out what your park systems can teach you about the natural systems and habitats of your area. Share your interest in what you're learning; excitement is catching.

F. Pay attention also to human cultures and needs in your area: to economic influences, to poverty and wealth, to health issues, home ownership issues, etc. Ask who and why and what is on the "other side of the tracks" in your area?

G. The less fun part: think about starting to attend local governmental meetings that affect land use: "most crucial land use decisions are made at the county level by boards of supervisors ... Go to your share of the generally boring meetings and hearings." (Jim Dodge, *Home! What is Bioregionalism?*) The meetings might even be interesting! Take courage! Take a friend! Take a book (in case of true boredom)!

H. Explore! Draw! Paint! Take pictures! Learn the movie-making features of your digicam so you can see how it all moves every moment! Know your parks and rivers and creeks and your old trees, your beaver dams, where the leopard frogs lay their eggs, where the eagles nest! This is a lifelong travel activity which doesn't require a passport or a different currency, and every bit of new familiarity and involvement with your "life place" brings new vitality and depth to your sense of home.

I. Locate other environmental groups in your area. Many watersheds have groups already focusing on their area. Check www.EPA.gov/surf.

J. Think about ways to enlist kids in these activities. Exploring and mapping are "naturals" for children, and we hope this will be THEIR home place too!

K. Beware of getting stuck only learning and never acting! We need to keep a close watch on the little “nudges” we feel to act, to discern if we should be taking them seriously.

Ohio Cross State Bicycle Maps



Cardinal Trail - Richmond Indiana to Petersburg OH (Youngstown area)

Route A - Cincinnati to Toledo

Route B - Cincinnati to Marietta

Route C - Cincinnati to Cleveland; includes part of the Little Miami Scenic River Bikeway

Route E - Portsmouth to Toledo

Route F - Richmond Indiana to Moundsville WV, an alternate to US 40

Route J - Marietta to Conneaut

Route KN - Monroeville IN (near Ft Wayne) to Cardinal Trail at Mifflin (K) or Cleveland Metro Parks (N), includes side trip to Cedar Point

4. Getting Our “Group” – Human and Otherwise

You may start out by yourself, or with a F/friend or two, or with a group of interested folks – maybe your Meeting’s Earthcare Group, or local environmental organizations wanting to learn about bioregions, or school or community education groups that want to learn about what they can do for the environment. All three ways have advantages; **there’s hardly any wrong way to start!** As the Snyder piece pointed out, eventually the group will have most political influence if there are a core of a few people who are able to commit to living “here” for the long term. Don’t worry if you’re not in a position now to make that commitment! There’s plenty of fun to be had before we get to that point. The self-education projects listed before are ongoing, probably lifelong activities, and as you learn and practice this “different way of being,” you’ll want to share these things more and more. Things will occur to you: how about seeing if your local chapter of the Sierra Club (or other local environmental group) would be interested in your maps and bioregional ideas? Why not see if some classrooms would like to have us visit (4th grade is the traditional year children study about their state)? Would people in this or that church be interested in seeing what we’re up to here? If you’re excited and focused, that fact will attract others.

Remember the charms of food and eating together! Food attracts people and sharing food is a powerful community-building activity. Inviting people to eat with you, whether you make the food, or it’s a potluck, or you eat at a restaurant that has simple, delicious food, is a siren call to spending time together and getting to know each other. How about having picnics in different places around your watershed? This is also a good time to talk about where our food comes from, the cost of machinery and fuel to grow and process it, then truck it, often under refrigeration, the average 1500 miles that every item in a typical U.S. meal travels. Food is so central and emotional an issue in our lives; it will be one of the first things a new bioregional group will likely consider. Have fun discussing “free range eggs” and shade-grown, free trade coffee ...

Also, remember the power of music! Find a troubadour if you can, collect and write folk songs about your region, and work singing together into as many activities as you can. For bringing people really together, getting a message out, and getting the spirit moving, not much can beat singing. See the Pete Seeger: The Power of Song documentary (Resource list) to help yourselves get moving!

Start lists of the needs you see in your “naturehood”; start asking/looking for/thinking about possible solutions, and Friendly ways to work toward them. Who might be resource people to share knowledge; who might be people willing to help? Notice which needs particularly move you, and which move other people who might join you. Beware of the idea that any one person or even a group can – or should – try to change everything! Don’t even start down that path. Tending your own inner light faithfully, the check and balance of community, and taking the long view will help to keep you on track. Remember the Iroquois Confederacy, in which the matriarchs of the council had this saying: “In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.” Some other thoughts about the “neighbors”:

A. Make sure you know your own human neighbors! Attend or arrange a block party, no agenda except for “getting to know you,” or have them over a few at a time for pie and coffee, but do it!

B. Invite some new “neighbors”! Think about how you might increase habitat in your own yard: A monarch garden? A small pond? A native plants area? What might happen if you did this?

C. Spend time on your sense of relatedness to, as well as acquaintance with, plant and animal neighbors. What nocturnal animals and birds frequent your area? What home needs do they share with you? What native trees and shrubs and plants depend heavily on the rivers in your area? What contributions do these plant neighbors make to our common home? The old Native American custom of referring to trees and animals as Brother and Sister

was both an affectionate expression and a reminder of our relatedness to these members of our earth family. The language we use does affect our feelings. (Read Thos. Berry and Brian Swimme about the new understanding of our universe to get an inkling of how related we are! See *The Universe Story* and / or film 'Awakening Universe' in the resource list.)

D. Be on the watch for people from your area (watershed, region, neighborhood, Meeting!) who plan to stay, who say "I'm not going to move." And talk with lots of people about what stands between us and that commitment. (More about this later.)

E. Look for interested senior citizens who have always lived in your region, who might be great resources about simpler, more respectful ways people interacted with the land here. Historical societies should be a gold mine!

Note: Focusing on our own life-place does not mean we ignore the rest of the planet! We still do what we can to promote life-giving policies in the larger arenas of politics and law, but investing ourselves more fully in our local region seems to clarify the larger issues as well. In the Maumee River Watershed, the prevalence of heavy agriculture and agribusiness have made our earthcare group more aware of the importance of educating ourselves about, and working for change in, the federal Farm Bill. (At last count, we have 22 factory farms, which we'll need to map.) And we are always aware that our dominant culture is hurting the planet and its life communities through its customs and policies, and we must continue to try to discern where our way lies to apply "the stubborn ounces of our strength" to bring positive change to our own national culture.

5. Some Thoughts About Effecting Change In Our Life Place (And Ourselves!)

A. Ponder the “staying here” commitment with friends. Think through what stands between us and that commitment, if we are reluctant to make it. There are many good reasons we might not be able to stay where we are forever. But what if after soul-searching we realize the reasons we won’t commit are: It’s so polluted around here, and getting worse, I might not want my kids to grow up here. There’s not much wild space left. Got to go find some. The political climate here doesn’t work for me. There’s too much crime. Pesticides blow across from the neighbors. --At a minimum, if we bring those thoughts to the forefront of our minds, we might have a less passive stance. Could we possibly make a difference? Could those problems occur elsewhere too?

If we catch ourselves thinking of our area as something we CAN just leave anytime we want—well, what if we couldn’t? It costs money and other losses to move. What would we do differently if we were absolutely unable to move? Why is eternal mobility so important to Americans? If you WERE going to move, what is the farthest distance you would want to go, and why? That is, what holds you “here,” and how? Maybe those about to leave have valuable insights for those planning to stay, and those staying forever could use that as motivation for action. In every case it seems like being more intentional and aware about our options and our plans for home places is a good fit with Friends’ ways of living. (A certain wag likes the word “bioregionalistas,” or farther out, suggested we should call our Watershed Interest Groups “WIGs”; that way Lake Erie groups could be called “EAR-WIGS”).

B. Think about making walks more mindful, going deeper into the experiences. How do I walk, do I like walking alone or with someone? Where do I NOT go walking, and why? Might there be something of interest to discover in wastelands like old parking lots, in smelly farm sloughs ... ? Even if you don’t like what you find there, at least you will know what is there!

C. How about “envisioning circles”? –In which you invite people over, or visit schools or church groups or decision-making folk, etc. and lay out a map of the watershed, and/or the immediate neighborhood, and invite everyone to share how they’d like to see the area be, for wildlife, for the land, for the people ...? Then, maybe:

D. Consider beginning to compile a list of working principles, with the idea it’s ok if members of your group don’t agree with every one, as long as they don’t actively work against any of them. “Keeping the waters clean has to be top priority” might be an example. “Good economics and good ecology go hand in hand” might be another.

E. One grim thought, and one more hopeful consideration for us to address as we see fit: What if things really fall apart? What would our watershed need to keep going? Energy? Seeds? Water purifiers? Transport? Farm networks? Trade/bartering systems? Could we start working on any of these things now? The more positive consideration: what would it take to help the watershed restore/regenerate itself? There’s a wealth of information available to help us with these considerations.

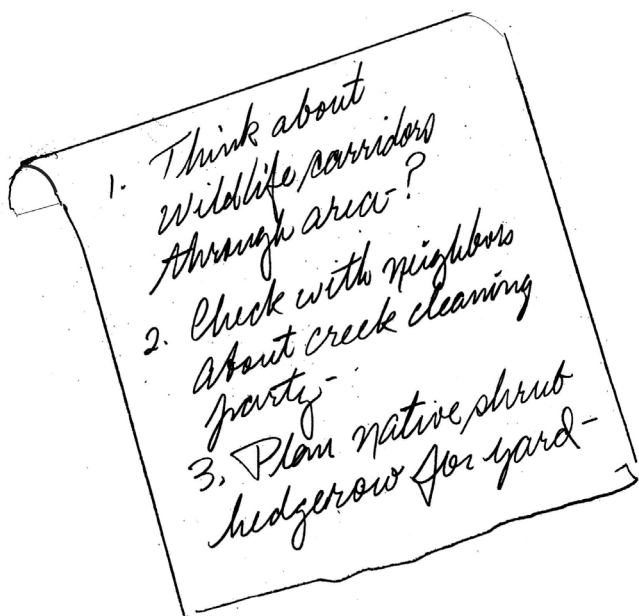
F. Economics: The first priority of the bioregional economy is to sustain that region ecologically, economically and socio-culturally. That means processing and using bioregional resources as sparingly as possible for the purpose of sustaining the region. A second priority is exchanging products with other bioregions. Very few bioregions have all the resources needed to be sustainable. What’s needed is an economy that takes into true account the cost of biospheric destruction and at the same time feeds the family. People must be convinced that it’s in their best economic interest to maintain healthy biological systems.

G. Social issues: Think diversity. Get acquainted with members of different cultural groups in the region and listen! Find out what they’re excited about, what they’re sad about. What food & music do they love? Try to learn where their interests and needs come into conflict with those of other groups (including ecological groups!), and where they are in harmony. Again, beware of implying you can

help “fix” things if you’ve not really tested your particular leading in this respect.

H. Politically: Work to get sympathetic elected officials in your community and county. Support the good ones that are already there, and / or BE one. When attending meetings, be as friendly as possible, but challenge faulty information. Remember, the focus of resistance is against continuing destruction of natural systems, not against people or parties. Create alternatives. Stand your ground.

I. Keep looking to find other local groups already working on some aspect of sustainability that moves you, and consider volunteering your own skills and time as well as contributing other resources. For lists of these as well as other good info about your watershed, check www.EPA.gov/surf.





(Google "Michigan's Major Watersheds")

- | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Au Gres | 14D Thornapple | 25 Pere Marquette | 32D Tittabawassee |
| 1A E. Br. Au Gres | 14E Flat | 26 Pigeon | 32E Chippewa |
| 2 Au Sable | 14F Rogue | 27 Pine | 33 Sebewaing |
| 2A Pine | 15 Huron | 28 Platte | 34 St. Joseph |
| 3 Belle | 17 Kalamazoo | 29 Raisin | 34A Paw Paw |
| 4 Betsie | 18 Kawkawlin | 30 Rifle | 34B Pigeon |
| 5 Big Sable | 19 Lincoln | 31 Rouge | 35 Stony Creek |
| 6 Black | 20 Manistee | 32 Saginaw | 36 Thunder Bay |
| 7 Black | 21 Maumee | 32A Cass | 37 White |
| 8 Macatawa | 22 Muskegon | 32B Flint | 38 Willow |
| 9 Boardman | 23 Oqueoc | 32C Shiawassee | |
| 10 Pine | 24 Pentwater | | |
| 10A Boyne | | | |
| 10B Jordan | | | |
| 11 Cheboygan | | | |
| 12 Clinton | | | |
| 13 Elk | | | |
| 14 Grand | | | |
| 14A Red Cedar | | | |
| 14B Looking Glass | | | |
| 14C Maple | | | |

Bold black lines indicate which cluster of watersheds flow into which lake; lower right area flows into Lake Erie, etc. Black lines show boundaries of watersheds. The palest lines indicate boundaries of subwatersheds. Watershed areas with 'L' at the end denote those which flow into the lake directly.

6. A Note About Our “Namesake” Lake, Lake Erie

Sandy Bihn, Executive Director of Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper, sent the following as a key issue currently plaguing the lake. (We know there are many challenges - water diversion and the Great Lakes Compact and other difficulties the lake is struggling with now, including chemical runoff from agriculture and industry, invasive nonnative plants, fish and mussels that come in to the lakes via the holds of ships, and heat from coal-fired power plants and other sources, all of which upset the fragile balance of the lake's ecology.) We hope this information will start Friends looking into the situation with “our lake” in more detail.

Stewardship for the water we drink and the environs it comes from is our responsibility. The Great Lakes provide 20% of the world's and 95% of the U.S. surface fresh water supply. What an awesome place to live and what a responsibility we all have. The Western basin of Lake Erie has the warmest, shallowest, fishiest part of all the Great Lakes. Because of their nature, these waters are the most vulnerable and serve as the ‘canary in the coal mine’. In late summer 2006 a new matted hair-like algae, *Lyngbya*, known as the ‘beast of water algae’, woke up. (*Lyngbya* is reportedly covering many areas in the bottom of the bay and lake and is eliminating the aquatic life in the sediments. This dramatically reduces the food chain for the fish. Dr. John Rodgers of Clemson University considers it among the top ten worst environmental enemies he's seen in his thirty year environmental career.) *Lyngbya* has grown to the size of a house out in Maumee Bay and exists in the area where the Toledo shipping channel is located. Dredging up the sediments with the *Lyngbya* and then open lake dumping them (as the Army Corps of Engineers plans to do) will spread this beast quicker and faster throughout Lake Erie. Please help to have the sediments contained rather than open lake dumped. Contact state and federal elected officials. The people to contact are Craig Forget, Army Corps of Engineers and Chris Korleski, OEPA Director. Here are their email addresses Craig.M.Forget@usace.army.mil, chris.korleski@epa.state.oh.us

This information is also available at westernlakeerie.org –Sandy Bihn, Western Lake Erie Waterkeeper, Licensed Keeper

THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

— *Wendell Berry*

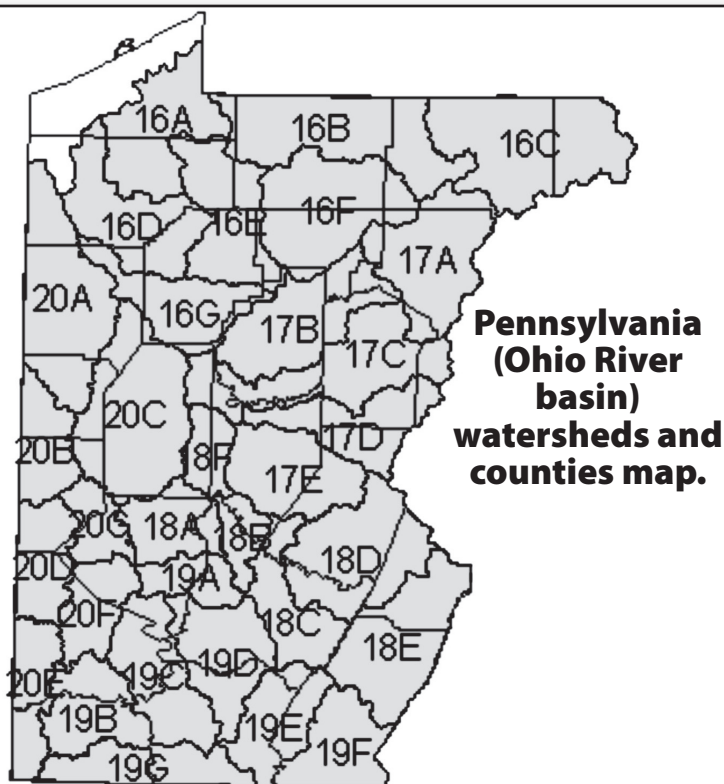
7. Some Thoughts About Friends' Spiritual Journey

How do we practice deep centering in our “new” home place? As we explore and deepen our relationships with our larger neighborhoods, it will be natural to experience wonder and gratitude. At the same time, we may find ourselves needing to mourn and accept diminishment, suffering and loss. Anxiety, fear, panic—all these intense feelings will need to be recognized and held up both individually and with our faith communities.

It needs to be said that in spite of all we do in faith, fundamental processes have been set in motion that are bringing unusually swift change to the planet. We will face more loss of our Earth family as we know it; in truth there are hard times ahead of us. This truth needs to be brought out into the light of our meetings, and we must try to understand what this means for us as Friends. Discerning our way forward—our “new way of being”—envisioning healing, acting to realize new possibilities through resistance and creation of alternatives – all will require us to open our hearts to the spirit within and “in whom we live and move and have our being.”

Strengthening our recognition of our community with all that is can hardly help but affect our sense of ourselves. That in turn will deepen our sensitivity to what it might mean to recognize that of God within us and all around us. As the sense of relatedness grows, the impulse to conserve and restore communal relationships seems like a natural longing to restore our own vitality.

Our faith communities are naturals for encouraging cooperative use of essentials, sharing costs and benefits of preserving life support systems locally, as well as globally. Concentrating on preservation and restoration of ecosystems, on our food, water, and shelter, on our right livelihood / work / income, on things easily shared, and on enhancing our vision – all are things that Friends have been inclined toward from the beginning, but perhaps now with a more specific focus, namely right where we live!



Upper Allegheny Subbasin

- 16A, Upper French
- 16B, Kinzua - Brokenstraw Creeks
- 16C, Potato - Oswayo
- 16D, Lower French
- 16E, Oil
- 16F, Tionesta
- 16G, Sandy

Central Allegheny Subbasin

- 17A, Upper Clarion
- 17B, Lower Clarion
- 17C, Redbank
- 17D, Mahoning
- 17E, Cowanshannock -

Lower Allegheny Subbasin

- 18A, Lower Allegheny
- 18B, Kiskiminetas
- 18C, Loyalhanna
- 18D, Conemaugh

- 18E, Stonycreek

- 18F, Buffalo Creek, Knapp and Hill Runs

Monongahela Subbasin

- 19A, Turtle Creek
- 19B, Tenmile
- 19C, Middle Monongahela
- 19D, Lower Youghiogheny
- 19E, Upper Youghiogheny
- 19F, Casselman
- 19G, Upper Monongahela

Ohio Subbasin

- 20A, Shenango
- 20B, Beaver River
- 20C, Slippery Rock
- 20D, Raccoon Creek
- 20E, Wheeling-Buffero
- 20F, Chartiers
- 20G, Upper Ohio River

8. Some Questions To Get You Started

1. Can you trace the water you drink from precipitation to tap?
2. What was the total rainfall in your area last year?
3. Is there an area in your neighborhood that pops out in your mind because of pollution, waste of raw materials / energy, or other need related to nature and human beings?
4. What were the primary subsistence techniques of the culture that lived in your area before you?
5. Can you name five edible plants in your region and their season(s) of availability?
6. Where does your garbage go?
7. How long is the growing season where you live?
8. Can you name five grasses in your region. Are any of them native?
9. Can you name five resident and five migratory birds in your area?
10. What primary geological event/process influenced the land form where you live?
11. What county boards of supervisors are in your watershed?
12. Can you find senior citizens who have lived in your region all their lives who remember how things were done long ago?
13. What ways can people travel through your watershed?
14. How long were you planning to stay in this area and why?

9. Beginning Resources List (Some Of Our Favorites):

Bioregional Basics:

Map Set #2. Bioregional Mapping Bundle from Planet Drum:
Three books: *Boundaries of Home: Mapping for Local Empowerment*, edited by Doug Aberley; *Giving the Land a Voice: Mapping our Home Places*, edited by Sheila Harrington; and *Discovering Your Life-Place: A First Bioregional Workbook*, by Peter Berg. This trio of books contain essential mapping information and examples. Only sold as a set.....\$39.95 plus \$4 postage within U.S. or \$7 outside U.S.

Home! A Bioregional Reader, New Society Publishers

Dwellers in the Land, by Kirkpatrick Sale

More Bioregional:

Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities, Michael Shuman, Free Press, '98. conceptual thinking, practical ideas for import substitution; a more self-reliant economy

Business Alliance for a Local Living Economy --North American network creating support organizations for local economies, communities <http://www.livingeconomies.org>

The Smart Mart Revolution: How Local Businesses Are Beating the Global, Michael Shuman, – The viability, advantages of local businesses compared with multi-nationals.

Noah's Garden: Restoring the Ecology of our Own Back Yards, by Sara Stein

Noah's Children: Restoring the Ecology of Childhood, by Sara Stein

Who Speaks for Wolf: A Native American Learning Story - Underwood
Pete Seeger: The Power of Song – video documentary about the importance of music in any peoples' movement

Simple Living Network – The organization that maintains this site also puts out a newsletter. The issue for Jan. - Feb. 2008, #62 is their 12th anniversary issue and includes "The natural competitive

advantage of bioregions” by Spencer Beebe from the Green Money Journal. Don’t miss this! <http://www.SimpleLiving.net>

Water, Food, Oil:

Thirst, Bullfrog Films – powerful. Communities struggle against privatization of water.

Animal, Vegetable, Miracle – Barb. Kingsolver – A family “eats local” for a year.

King Corn (2007) “...a feature documentary about two friends, one acre of corn, and the subsidized crop that drives our fast food nation.” <http://movies.go.com/king-corn/d915466/documentary>
(Good companion book: *Omnivore’s Dilemma* - Michael Pollan)

The Future of Food (2004) -documentary on genetically engineered foods, and the roles of multinational corporations, governments, international economic organizations and impacts on farmers and consumers. (88 minutes) <http://www.thefutureoffood.com>

The Power of Community: How Cuba Survived Peak Oil (video)

A Crude Awakening (2007) (video) Focus on human civilizations’ dependence on oil and the human chaos that is likely to follow when or as this resource is depleted. <http://www.oilcrashmovie.com>

Sustainable Societies

A Passion for Sustainability (2008) (video) Experiences of 14 businesses in Portland, OR that committed themselves to pursuing sustainability by using the Natural Step: a tool widely used in Sweden to transform their businesses. (80 minutes) – <http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B00112E5BG>

Black Gold (2005) (video) Story of one man’s fight for the economic and social survival of Ethiopian coffee farmers and how they were impacted by international markets. (77 minutes) Discussion guide available. <http://www.blackgoldmovie.com>

Excellent videos about fair trade: <http://www.transfairusa.org/content/resources/videolist.php>

The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community – David Korten, ‘06, paperback.

Yes, Magazine, by Positive Futures Network, supporting people's active engagement in creating a just, sustainable, compassionate world. Spring 2008 issue devoted to Global Solutions. <http://www.yesmagazine.org>

Ode Magazine, European pub. (founded '95 in Netherlands) includes articles on sustainability unavailable elsewhere. <http://www.odemagazine.com>

Resurgence, periodical associated with EF Schumacher Institute; excellently written articles <http://www.resurgence.org>

The Great Transition Initiative Project of the Tellus Institute-- analyses of the history of soc. and environ. changes; alternative scenarios <http://gtinitiative.org>

"The Story of Stuff" with Annie Leonard, 20 minute animated video-- the underside of our production/consumption patterns. <http://www.storyofstuff.com>

Sustainable Communities Network - a website of interesting resources: creating community, smart growth, sustainable economy, governing and living sustainably. <http://sustainable.org>

Toward Sustainable Communities; Resources for Citizens and Their Governments, revised edition – Mark Roseland First class resource; Roseland has helped communities become more sustainable.

Center for Sustainable Communities -grown out of Stelle, Illinois, an intentional community that's become public. Inspiring values, ideas and info. <http://www.centerforsustainablecommunity.org>

Religion and Sustainability

Inspiring Progress: Religions' Contributions to Sustainable Development – Gary Gardner, Paradox of progress accompanied by degradation; how religions may help.

Quaker Earthcare Witness This site includes the current newsletter of this organizations as well as a host of resources for Meetings and individuals. <http://www.quakerearthcare.org>

Forum on Ecology and Religion Outstanding resource on the relationship between major religions of the world and caring for the environment. <http://environment.harvard.edu/religion/main.html>

Renewal (2008) (video) Described as “the first feature-length documentary to capture the breadth and vitality of America’s religious-environmental movement...[it] shows individuals and communities driven by the deepest source of inspiration-- ...being called to reexamine what it means to be human and how we live on this planet. (90 minutes) One of the partners in this project is the highly respected Forum on Religion and Ecology. “<http://renewalproject.net.s17607.gridserver.com/film>

Permaculture Basics:

Global Gardener – Bullfrog Films – Excellent, about Bill Mollison, designer of Permaculture

Gaia’s Garden: A Guide to Home-scale Permaculture, Toby Hemenway
Introduction to Permaculture, Bill Mollison

Permaculture Activist Quarterly magazine --knowledge base that includes principles, practices of practical and sustainable ways for humans to live with nature. <http://www.permacultureactivist.net>

Permaculture Institute Founded in 1997 in Sante Fe, New Mexico. Good basic information. build natural homes, grow our own food, restore diminished landscapes and ecosystems, catch rainwater, build communities and much more.” <http://www.permaculture.org>

Permaculture the Earth -Website for this organization allows you to connect directly into 2 different ongoing forums of people who are practicing permaculture. <http://www.permaearth.org>

The Beginning!

Notes

Notes

The Big Picture



Mississippi River Basin

