

RSF quarterly

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「What is the earth
asking of us?」

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 FOOD & AGRICULTURE

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 ECOLOGICAL STEWARDSHIP



LETTER FROM DON

Financing Ecological Stewardship

Dear Friends,

This issue is focused on Ecological Stewardship, a topic of great urgency in the midst of what one could call “climate chaos.” We are working very hard to find and fund those social entrepreneurs who have demonstrated success in solving ecological challenges and are supporting a restorative economy. Their work is needed now more than ever, and we would like your help in identifying and directing such enterprises to us.

As Kenny Ausubel, co-founder of Bioneers, says in his sobering and hopeful guest essay, these are critical times for action by those who care for the earth and our place in it: “Everyone is called to be a leader, to be a healer. Inquire within.” This last call speaks to the personal transformation each of us will need to engage in if we are to shift whole economic and environmental systems in time to keep the earth inhabitable. On a personal note, the annual Bioneers conferences in the 1990s were an important influence on my life and how I imagined transforming the world.

In the area of Ecological Stewardship, we would like to make more loans to help mitigate climate change, reverse the depletion of natural resources, and support biodiversity. We are particularly interested in green building, resource recovery, and the restoration and conservation of water and water systems. Current examples of RSF borrowers working in these areas include EcoScraps, New Leaf Paper, and RecycleForce (featured in this issue as one leader building the next economy).

In the abundant beauty of Northern California, it is hard to keep present the very real challenges facing farmers in drought conditions, or manufacturers who

depend on depleted supply chains. We need your help in connecting with proven innovators who need loan capital to catalyze their capacity to solve these and other ecological problems we face.

We also continue to expand our portfolio in our

focus areas of Food & Agriculture and Education & the Arts.

Our investors remain excited about the innovative work we are doing here, all of which is

We have much to do to assure
that our world remains a healthy
place to be enjoyed by all.

dependent upon a healthy environment and thriving earth systems. I am reminded of E.B. White's famous quote: “I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.” We have much to do to assure that our world remains a healthy place to be enjoyed by all. ☺

All my best,

Don Shaffer,
President & CEO



Drivers of Change

Q&A with Sandy Wiggins, RSF Senior Advisor

Sandy Wiggins is a renowned sustainability leader. Here, he shares how green building became a worldwide movement.

How did you come to work in this field—why green building?

I would say it actually chose me. I needed to make a living and through a series of what seemed at the time random events, I stumbled into a career building things. I quickly discovered that I was good at it and enjoyed the challenges it presented. It was also creative and financially rewarding, so I followed that course for the next 18 years, allowing one challenge to lead me to the next and soaking up success. Then I woke up one day and realized that I was living a mercenary life and that all of the joy and meaning had gone out of it.

In 1995, shortly after this realization, I was having lunch with a friend who was also the architect for a project I was developing. He handed me a tiny article he had run across on the environmental impact of buildings. I was dumbfounded. I had never before that moment considered that the decisions I was making every day as a businessperson were having such a direct impact on the world.

That was when green building chose me. Understanding those impacts became an itch that I couldn't stop scratching. As my understanding of the magnitude of the suffering inflicted by the building industry grew, I felt compelled to do something about it; with knowledge comes culpability. And I found that my experience and success in the industry opened both doors and ears so that I could act on that impulse.

What were the key drivers that moved the green building movement along?

As with most movements, there wasn't a plan. But, I have spent a lot of time thinking about this in order to understand the drivers that might be replicated in support of other sweeping changes.

From its outset, the green building community was inclusive and operated on consensus. Everybody was welcomed into the tent to join in the conversation about what it meant to build green and how to go about it. That's messy, but it generated broad industry buy-in early on in the movement's development.

Another early driver was the brilliant distillation of the impacts of the built environment into clear, concise, and memorable data points. The elevator pitch that never fails to open people's eyes is: In the U.S., building accounts for 40% of all raw material consumption, 40% of all of the waste in our landfills, and buildings

are responsible for 40% of our energy consumption and carbon production.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), of course, has been a major driver. Establishing a system that measured the "greenness" of a build-

ing and also rewarded the building's owner completely changed the game. It created a common language, where none existed before, for what it meant to be green. It also became a brand that drove market awareness and competition.

Addressing the economics of building green coupled with broad education about those economics slowly changed the way that people in the industry talked about cost. It enlarged the field of view and brought capital projects and operations people together, often for the first time, so that operational costs and Life Cycle Assessment crept into decision-making that had formerly been made solely on a first-cost basis.

As a third party verification system, LEED also made the adoption of public policy possible, which turbocharged the growth of green building. The US GSA

I realized that the engine driving this sweeping change wasn't the buildings or their impacts, it was the people.



 GUEST ESSAY

We Make the Road by Walking

by Kenny Ausubel

In this epic moment of radical environmental and social disruption, the world is experiencing the dawn of a revolutionary transformation to becoming an ecologically literate and socially just civilization. The existential gauntlet is to make the shift fast enough to outrun global cataclysm. The next five to six years will be the once-in-a-civilization window to change course. We can move from breakdown to breakthrough.

The Mayan people call this the “Time of No Time.” From here on, we’re on Earth time. Mother Earth is shaking to her core. It’s a time of madness, disconnection, and hyper-individualism. It’s also a time when new energies are coming into the world—when people are growing a new skin. The Mayan vision says we in the West will find safe harbor only if we can journey past a wall of mirrors. The mirrors will drive us mad, unless we have a strong heart. Some mirrors delude us with infinite reflections of our vanity and shadows. Others paralyze us with our terror and rage, feeding an empire that manufactures our fear into resignation. But the empire has no roots and it’s toppling all around us. In this time, everyone is called to take a stand. Everyone is called to be a leader.

To get beyond the wall of mirrors, the final challenge is to pass through a tiny door. To do this, we must make ourselves very, very small. To be very humble. Then we must burrow down into the Earth, where indigenous consciousness lives. On the other side is a clear pond. There, for the first time, we’ll be able to see our true reflection.

We’re re-imagining a civilization in the Age of Nature that honors the web of life, each other, and future generations. It’s a revolution from the heart of nature. For decades, brilliant scientific and social innovators such as the bioneers (biological pioneers) have patiently been creating the alternative models and systems for how we can live on Earth for the long

haul. For the most part, the solutions are present, or we know what directions to head in. It’s not that we need more solutions—we need to rapidly spread and scale, where possible, what we’ve already got. We need to mobilize in a way historically done in times of war.

In 2012, two rude awakenings started to open the floodgates of transformation, and they are not unrelated.

The first is the onset of conspicuous climate disruption. As Bill McKibben points out, scientists have underestimated the speed and scale of early climate disruption, at a rise of just 0.8 degrees Celsius. Even if we stopped pumping carbon right now, the temperature will rise by another

0.8 degrees Celsius. But we’re not stopping—we’re putting record amounts of CO₂ into the atmosphere. At this rate, in 16 years, the planet could become uninhabitable. Meanwhile the major oil corporations

The hardest thing to change in a system is the paradigm, yet that’s exactly what we’re seeing. Emergence in an emergency.

hold reserves five times higher than the amounts of carbon we can burn to keep below the hopefully “safe” threshold of 2° Celsius of warming. They’re planning to burn it all. As McKibben warns, rapid transformative change is the only way through—picture the civil rights movement in fast forward. The key is stopping the fossil fuel oligarchs before they poach the planet.

The second awakening is the need to break the stranglehold of the greatest extremes of wealth ever seen in human civilization. As the International Forum on Globalization observes in its report *Outing the Oligarchy*, “Today’s single biggest threat to our global climate commons is the group of billionaires who profit most from its pollution and, in turn, push government policies that promote more fossil fuels... Cooperative global action to address the most daunting challenge humanity has ever faced is being held hostage by a handful of profiteers who wield decisive power over our governments.” Globalization has

triggered a tectonic shift of financial wealth and political power upward to a group of multi-billionaires. According to Jeffrey Winters, the author of *Oligarchy*, wealth in the U.S. today is "two times as concentrated as imperial Rome, which was a slave-and-farmer society." Call it bottom down and top up—bread and circuses. Yet, as Nobel Laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz points out, more equal societies are better for everyone, including the wealthy.

Jeremy Grantham, the far-seeing Chairman of the \$100 billion GMO Capital fund, asserts that global warming will be the most important investment issue for the foreseeable future, and advocates very large immediate investments in renewables and smart grids. He says humanity's vexed relationship with the planet is the great economic story of our time. He concludes that, "If we maintain our desperate focus on growth, we will run out of everything and crash – Peak Everything Else." That's the nub—Boom and Doom—the final throes of an oligarchic economic system bedeviled by its original sin of unlimited growth on a finite planet.

Climate change compounded by the concentration of wealth (and subsequent distribution of poverty) is pushing natural and humans systems to a perfect storm of tipping points. Nature does not favor centralization because one shock can crash the whole system all at once.

One key is to build resilience from the ground up through a radical decentralization of our infrastructure, energy and food systems. It means a greater devolution of political power to local and regional levels. It means democratizing wealth and access to capital and it's do-able based largely on what we already know.

Using off-the-shelf clean technologies, we can radically increase energy conservation and rapidly ramp up distributed renewable energy. We know how to feed the world using ecological agriculture that sequesters carbon, restores natural capital, and builds local economies. We have a good idea how to begin to restore ecosystems on a large scale, fairly quickly in some cases. We're rapidly learning how to deploy biomimicry to emulate nature's designs and recipes with green chemistry, cradle-to-cradle industry, living buildings, and smart growth. We can conserve and use water wisely. We're reinventing finance as well as governance, instituting rights for nature and revoking corporate constitutional rights. In this Age of Nature, we're looking to nature as mentor and model, rather than physical resource.

The vanguard of the banking industry, including the Bank of England, is studying ecological networks and disease patterns to understand how nature avoids cataclysmic systemic shocks. One conclusion is simple: Too big to fail means too big. Break up the big banks, as the conservative Chicago School of Economics originally proposed.

A 2012 study funded by the Rockefeller Foundation compared the performance of 17 values-based banks against 29 banks considered too big to fail. The study showed the values-based banks outperformed traditional mainstream banks in return on assets, growth in loans and deposits, and capital strength. The smaller banks delivered better returns. The report concludes their success is precisely their values, and they're smaller.

Twenty states are now studying how to create a state public bank based on the Bank of North Dakota, a major success story. This publicly owned bank receives all state revenues and promotes local commerce and industry, makes student loans, and supports new farmers. It was largely unaffected by the banking crisis.

Business also appears to be reaching a tipping point. Two-thirds of companies are turning to sustainability for a competitive edge and higher profits. For the first time in 2010, investment in renewables exceeded that in fossil fuels. According to McKinsey & Company, solar energy will come back strong after 2015, driven by the rapid spread of distributed energy with miniature community power stations and home solar. Google has

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KENNY AUSUBEL

is Co-CEO and Co-Founder of Bioneers, along with his business partner and wife Nina Simons. He is an award-winning social entrepreneur, filmmaker, radio producer and author. His recent book, *Dreaming the Future: Reimagining Civilization in the Age of Nature*, won the Grand Gold Nautilus prize for Ecology/Environment. He co-founded Seeds of Change in 1989. He was also a central advisor to and appears in Leonardo DiCaprio's feature documentary *The 11th Hour*.



IMPACT STORY

RecycleForce

by Melinda Cheel, Senior Manager, Partnerships & Communications and Jillian McCoy, Senior Associate, Communications

Since 2006, Indianapolis-based RecycleForce has paid over \$10 million in wages and employed 650 ex-felons to recycle over 20 million pounds of electronic waste. RecycleForce, a non-profit social enterprise, has a dual mission: to help people coming out of prison successfully transition back into civil society, and to keep as much electronic waste as possible out of Indiana's landfills.

RecycleForce deconstructs electronic waste and other recyclables provided by residents and corporate partners, separates the reusable materials, and disposes of the waste safely and cleanly. The scrap metals and other recyclables collected are sold to help pay for job training programs and employment opportunities for formerly incarcerated men and women.

employed ex-felons. By having the staffing agency be liable for the employees, he was able to get his clients a foot in the door, but finding them steady employment was a struggle. When he lost a big contract because the manufacturer decided to outsource to China, and then had to make those painful layoffs, Keesling decided he'd had enough: "I no longer wanted to be at the mercy of someone who just wanted to make money and throw these people away."

With his business partner, Tom Gray, Keesling set out to found an operation that would offer steady employment for the ex-felons he was committed to helping re-enter society. He was in the midst of failing negotiations on a prospective opportunity when he stumbled upon a literal gold mine. "The owner of the building we were meeting in took us down to his basement and asked us if we could do something with all of his junk," Keesling recalls. This "junk," which filled a 100,000-square-foot warehouse, floor to ceiling, was the remains of a computer refurbishing business. "It turns out there was more gold in a ton of that junk than in 55 tons of ore from the ground."



Founder Greg Keesling (center) with members of the RecycleForce team

Photo courtesy of RecycleForce

INSPIRATION

The day he laid off 150 men was Gregg Keesling's last straw—and the genesis of RecycleForce. For several years Keesling had been running a staffing agency that

INNOVATION

When RecycleForce opened in 2005, employing a marginalized workforce by recycling what most viewed as trash was unexplored territory. Keesling and Gray, building on the foundation of their newfound goldmine, created a new system of working with ex-offenders that would support them in their re-entry and prepare them to succeed in the workforce.

Ex-offenders face a myriad of challenges upon release. They often have no home to return to, no job prospects, and no job skills. When they do find a job, they have to fit work hours around court requirements like drug testing or counseling, and most employers aren't flexible

enough to accommodate that. “They’re faced with tough decisions: go to work or go back to prison,” says Keesling. “It’s a catch-22.”

Minor parole violations, like missing a court appearance or not paying child support, are the primary reason people go back to jail. RecycleForce addresses this issue with a comprehensive program allowing ex-felons to earn a living while complying with strict supervision. Participants receive six months of transitional employment with on-the-job training, plus additional services focused on job skills, character development, and personal counseling.

RecycleForce sources its “trash” through contracts with city and state agencies, public drop-off locations for toxic waste, collection events with local business and churches, and reverse logistics—products that are returned or never make it off retailers’ shelves.

IMPACT

In the fall of 2010, RSF provided crucial financing for RecycleForce to purchase an industrial shredder, affectionately known as “the Beast.” That investment has improved productivity, dramatically increased the amount of material RecycleForce is able to recycle (6.3 million pounds in 2012 versus 3 million pounds in 2010), and opened up new markets. But it almost didn’t happen. “We went to bank after bank after bank,” Keesling says. “RSF offered us a loan when no one else was interested or able to understand our model.”

The Beast is a massive piece of equipment, measuring around 60 feet high by 120 feet long. It allows RecycleForce to disassemble electronics that can’t be broken down by hand. Once the large electronics are shredded, a heavy-duty magnet removes the metals and staff “pickers” sort through the remains, separating the materials they then sell for recycling: copper, aluminum, plastic, steel and precious metals such as gold.

“When you toss out electronics you might as well be throwing away money,” notes Keesling. Electronic waste contains many valuable materials, and countries that don’t have much of them or can’t mine them are eager to purchase the millions of pounds of materials Americans get rid of every year. RecycleForce generates over \$50,000 per month in sales of gold and other precious metals.

The Beast has equipped RecycleForce to divert millions of tons of electronic waste from the landfill. The organization quickly surpassed its goal of 600,000 pounds of processed materials per month;

its new goal is 1 million pounds per month. That’s an immense positive environmental impact, and RecycleForce is achieving remarkable social benefits as well. The recidivism rate in Marion County, where RecycleForce is based, is 52 percent in the first year following prison release. RecycleForce’s goal is to cut that to 25 percent for the ex-offenders who go through its program, and it’s on track to do much better than that. For the current cohort of 250 ex-offenders, the recidivism rate when results are tabulated later next year is expected to be well under 20 percent.

“We embrace a labor force on which the rest of the country has turned their backs,” Keesling says. “Without effective support, we can’t expect folks with limited job skills to feed their families and overcome a host of mandates that challenge their ability to improve themselves.”

HELP US FUND NEW PROJECTS

Today, severe weather, drought, and high incidences of famine (or obesity) are just a few symptoms and constant reminders of how we have pushed ecosystems beyond their limits. RSF seeks to change this system by financing organizations and projects devoted to helping meet the world’s future resource needs while regenerating and preserving Earth’s ecosystems. Specifically we’re looking for borrowers:

1. Reducing the environmental footprint of the built environment like the Seattle Waldorf School
www.seattlewaldorf.org
2. Increasing resource recovery like EcoScraps
www.ecoscraps.com
3. Reducing the energy footprint of our water system like Lotus Foods www.lotusfoods.com

All borrowers must have at least 3 years operating history and loans range from \$200,000 to \$3 million.

Spread the word and contact us if you know of any great organizations in need of financing. Contact Mike Gabriel at 415.561.6192 or mike.gabriel@rsfsocialfinance.org



CLIENTS IN CONVERSATION

What's on the Line

Interview with Scott Hackenberg, Lending Manager

Sustainable fishing is gaining traction in both the environmental and food movements. Sarah Rathbone of Community Seafood, an RSF grantee, and investor Monica Jain discuss what this means for all stakeholders – fisherman, consumers, entrepreneurs, and investors.

Scott: Thanks for joining us. Can you both share what kind of work you're doing in the sustainable fishing industry?

Monica: I have a company called Manta Consulting. We work on ocean conservation issues with philanthropists, non-profits, fishing communities, and corporate entities. My particular passion is for sustainable fisheries and community development.

Fish 2.0 is a project we started this year aimed at addressing the need to connect investors with sustainability focused seafood businesses.

Sarah: I'm the Director of Community Seafood. We're working with a new business model called the Community Supported Fisheries (CSF) program. It's modeled after Community Supported Agriculture. CSFs are similar except they connect fishermen with consumers. So every week, whatever fish comes into the harbor is what our clients receive. There are about 30 CSFs nationwide.

In general, there is a problem in the supply chain. From the fishermen to the buyer, to the distributor, to the shipper, to another distributor, to a fish market, to the consumer, the price of fish gets inflated so high, yet fishermen receive well below what they should. CSFs are designed to shorten that chain to ensure that fishermen are getting fair trade prices for their seafood.

Scott: How many fishermen does your CSF work with?

Sarah: We have a very diverse group of 25 to 30 fishermen. We bring in halibut, white sea bass, yellowtail, black cod, rockfish, king salmon, ridgeback shrimp, mussels, oysters, rock crab, all sorts of seafood.

Scott: What factors make it difficult for small fishermen to be rewarded for sustainability efforts?

Sarah: I appreciate what programs like Marine Stewardship Certification and Monterey Bay Seafood Watch are doing. They're trying to take out the guesswork for the customer—what is and isn't good seafood. However, they have all these requirements, like stock assessments, which small artisanal owner-operated vessels can't afford.

Monica: In the work that I do, I see a lot of different grants and financing available for small scale fishermen to get some of these certifications.

But it is difficult, and as Sarah mentioned, one of the problems is that there are long and complex supply chains—with everyone taking a cut along the way. Small fishermen are often left without much profit and without the ability to see premiums for their sustainability efforts. I think CSFs are great because they give fishermen the incentive to organize their businesses so that they have more power in the supply chain and direct links to customers who care about stewardship and quality.

A lot of the businesses that we're seeing in Fish 2.0 are using new technologies and business models to disrupt the existing, inefficient supply chains. These changes will enable stronger resource stewardship, autonomy, and choices in who fishermen sell to.

Scott: Can you help the layperson understand what you mean when you talk about a "sustainable fishery?"

Monica: A sustainable fishery is one that considers the long-term sustainability of the fish population and the whole ecosystem those fish rely on. But also, it's

having a thriving local fishing community that's able to make choices in how they harvest so they can manage their operations in a sustainable way, economically and environmentally.

Sustainable fisheries also provide consumers with fresher fish and a story they can tell and trace back to local communities. I think that's something retailers and consumers are recognizing.

Scott: When we hear "sustainable seafood," what should that mean to the consumer?

Monica: It should mean that the fish on your plate has come from a population that's not declining—a population that's being fished in an environmentally friendly way and is not threatened by destruction of its habitat.

Sarah: It should also mean a closer connection between the harvester and the consumer. If you think about food miles, packaging, or energy use for freezing and storage, the closer the consumer is to the person who harvested that food, the more sustainable that food source is.

What you really want to know is that you're purchasing seafood from businesses that have sustainability as one of their strategic business values.

One of the goals of Community Seafood is educating people on how to ask retailers these questions about sustainability.

Monica: The more questions consumers ask, the more accountable these retailers have to become.

Another one of the great things about CSFs is that they really help consumers to learn about new types of fish. Having a diversity of fish that consumers are interested in helps a range of fishermen and fishing communities.

Sarah: It's similar to the concept of polycultures versus monocultures in the agricultural industry: utilizing the soil to harvest many different things versus just having a massive monoculture of one particular species. With Community Seafood, we source not only the product that the fishermen were aiming for but also the by-catch.

Scott: So, what are some primary challenges to financing sustainable fisheries?

Monica: Investors are interested in fisheries and food systems, but they don't know a lot about them because

there is not much deal flow. At the same time, businesses are interested in finding investment and growing their operations, but they don't know a lot about investors. This disconnect has been around for decades.

We're working on closing that gap, both with investors and with businesses, so that people can understand each other better, have better conversations, and find out how they can support one another.

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MONICA JAIN

is Executive Director of Manta Consulting Inc. She is also the Founder of the Fish 2.0. She has worked with ocean conservation and fisheries over the past 18 years, developing innovative programs and strategies for philanthropists, NGOs, corporate clients, multilateral organizations and community cooperatives worldwide. She has also worked in finance with positions in venture capital, private banking, and emerging private enterprises. Monica holds a B.Sc. from Stanford and an MBA from Wharton.

SARAH RATHBONE

is Director of Southern California's first CSF program, Community Seafood (a 2012 RSF Seed Fund grantee). She came to Santa Barbara to study fisheries at and after graduating ended up working in the fishing industry itself. After a season on a lobster and crab boat, she decided to keep a little drier by focusing on increasing accessibility and awareness about local seafood through the CSF. Sarah holds an MS from UCSB's Marine Science Institute.

> “Drivers of Change”
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started this trend, which was quickly picked up by hundreds of other national, state, and local agencies.

Another driver was the publication of a series of seminal studies that linked green building strategies to improved human health and performance. The first of these studies, published by Heschong Mahone in 1999, linked student performance to daylighting in green schools. This was quickly followed by studies linking green building strategies to the performance of office workers, increases in retail activity, reductions in absenteeism, reductions in nosocomial disease, and improved public health. All of these phenomena could easily be translated into economic as well as quality of life benefits and became powerful motivators for change.

The most powerful driver, however, is one that is least talked about. From 2005 through 2007, I spent much of my time traveling across the country speaking to and meeting with business people from every sector of the industry. It was during this period that I realized that the engine driving this sweeping change wasn't the buildings or their impacts, it was the people. Everywhere I went, I met architects, engineers, developers, bankers, manufacturers, and builders whose lives had changed as a result of their engagement with green building. Like me, most of these people had reached a point in their lives and careers where they had lost their sense of purpose and joy. Green building was waking them up, connecting them with a larger purpose and each other, and infusing their lives with meaning. 

Visit the [Reimagine Money](http://www.rsfsocialfinance.org) blog to hear more from Sandy Wiggins on green building and other sustainability movements. www.rsfsocialfinance.org

SANDY WIGGINS

During his three-decade career in the real estate industry, Sandy Wiggins has led the development and construction of projects totaling over one billion dollars. He is Past Chair of the U.S. Green Building Council, Founding Chair of the Green Building Certification Institute, and co-author of LEED for Neighborhood Development. He serves as a Senior Advisor to RSF Social Finance and is a member of the board of RSF's Social Investment Fund.

> “We Make the Road by Walking”
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capitalized two solar residential funds of \$365 million apiece.

The hardest thing to change in a system is the paradigm, yet that's exactly what we're seeing. Emergence in an emergency. Breakdowns to breakthroughs.

As Naomi Klein wrote, “The real solutions to the climate crisis are also our best hope of building a much more enlightened economic system—one that closes deep inequalities, strengthens and transforms the public sphere, generates plentiful, dignified work, and radically reins in corporate power. It demands a new civilizational paradigm, one grounded not in dominance over nature but in respect for natural cycles of renewal—and acutely sensitive to natural limits.”

In this Time of No Time, what we don't have is time. Can we dodge the point of no return by ramping up the emergent shadow civilization fast enough?

In this Time of No Time, what we need to get past the wall of mirrors is a strong heart. Andy Lipkis of TreePeople sees it this way:

“I believe every single one of us has a scanner on board that's operating in our body that nature must have installed. It's our heart, and it's asking the question, ‘Where am I needed? How can I help?’

“When something hits your frequency, my frequency, it converts to adrenaline, a biochemical response. It might be a drip. It might be a shot. When we're given a shot of adrenaline, like when we see a car accident, it gives us the power to go help lift a car off the injured person. It looks like a miracle, but it's nature's gift to us. When the ecosystem is hurting, we get the drip. We're hardwired for this. The love that's there can sustain us. It's what really feeds us.

“I've come to believe nature has adapted us to be its healers. It has raised us from being infants that were helpless to brilliant, powerful, compassionate beings. We've got to take care of the mom, Earth, because she has given us everything to raise us to this point—not so we can kill ourselves.

“Where am I needed? How can I help? Your heart will answer. You're big enough. We can do this.”

At no time have we ever before faced what confronts us today. Will we muster the healing forces fast enough? Can we convert what lives in our hearts and conversations into action on a large scale to revitalize nature and transform our human institutions and communities? In this time, everyone is called to be a leader and a healer. Inquire within.

We make the road by walking. It's an honor to walk this road with you. 

> “What's on the Line”
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Scott: Can you cite some examples where investment capital has come together to help support these efforts?

Monica: The Cape Cod Fisheries Trust is one example. They've been able to work with a number of investors—foundations, grantmakers, individual investors, and debt providers—to purchase a pool of fishing permits and quota that can be leased on an annual basis. Being able to lease quota and permits helps fishermen work efficiently and effectively, maximizing the amount they can capture legally on each trip to sea, so that they don't waste fuel.

We're hoping to grow the number of successful investments in this sector. We have about 80 investors in our network and more than half of those are offering us advisory hours for the Fish 2.0 businesses. They are really excited to learn more about fisheries through these businesses.

Scott: Sarah, what was most helpful for you in getting your CSF launched?

Sarah: With the fishermen themselves, it definitely helped that I'd already formulated relationships by being a part of that community. There was inherent trust. It is about being a part of that inner circle and having people know that your purpose is to support the community.

And then, there's the financial incentive. We're paying more.

Scott: I recently met with Ecotrust Canada and one interesting initiative they're working on is traceability—using tags that follow fish from its source all the way to the consumer's plate. Where do you see the most exciting areas of momentum for positive change?

Monica: Traceability is an exciting trend. It's becoming increasingly important for retailers and consumers to be able to trace the origin of their fish, and this isn't an easy task. There are several companies competing in Fish 2.0 that have traceability technologies. I'm also seeing really interesting technologies for data capture and solutions to resolve supply chain challenges.

The most exciting thing for us is there's investor and business interest in moving the field forward. For a long time, people have doubted that there were viable opportunities here, but we are seeing many sustainable

businesses that have a history of operations and are cash flow positive.

Sarah: What's most exciting is that consumers, now more than ever, want to know where their fish comes from, and care about sustainability. Once that knowledge rolls in, there's no stopping the public. This is going to send shockwaves through our supply chain.

Scott: Do you have any final thoughts for members of the RSF community that are really interested in this industry?

Monica: Let the investments in your portfolio reflect the food on your plate. As an investor interested in the food system, seafood should be a part of your portfolio, because seafood is a huge protein source across the world—it's on the plate. The engagement of more investors with experience in both fields is really going to move us all forward.

Sarah: The empowered consumer is going to change the way our food system works. I encourage everyone to learn as much as you can about fishing methods and the fisherman supplying your food.

Monica: The main thing is to vote with your dollar as a consumer or as an investor. Support these businesses, fisheries, and entrepreneurs that are trying to serve as strong stewards of the oceans. ♻️

RSF REIMAGINE MONEY PODCAST

Reimagine Money is a monthly investigation into the power of money to support social enterprises that are changing the fields of Food & Agriculture, Education & the Arts, and Ecological Stewardship. Listen to the podcast at: [rsfsocialfinance.org/newsroom/podcast](https://www.rsfsocialfinance.org/newsroom/podcast) or subscribe on iTunes.

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WHAT'S AHEAD

The next RSF Quarterly theme is Food & Agriculture and it will be published in October 2013. We like hearing from you! Send any comments on this issue or ideas for the next to jillian.mccoy@rsfsocialfinance.org.



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