

Report to Illinois Yearly Meeting from Quaker Earthcare Witness
by Roy Treadway and John Hackman, ILYM representatives
June 2012

Quaker Earthcare Witness (QEW) Steering Committee has had a busy year. Anne Mitchell, in her second year as General Secretary, steered us towards refocusing our QEW priorities. The priorities for QEW grew out of our statement of VISION AND WITNESS: "... WE WORK to integrate into the beliefs and practices of the Religious Society of Friends the Truth that God's Creation is to be respected, protected, and held in reverence in its own right, and the Truth that human aspirations for peace and justice depend upon restoring the earth's ecological integrity. ... WE PROMOTE these truths by being patterns and examples, by communicating our message, and by providing spiritual and material support to those engaged in the compelling task of transforming our relationship to the earth."

In 2011, QEW's Annual Gathering met at the Cenacle in Chicago October 20-23, focusing on "Food and Biodiversity." Our three speakers were: Marcia Cleveland – FCNL's Legislative Representative for the Environment; Laurel M. Ross – Urban Conservation Director, Environment, Culture and Conservation, The Field Museum; and Molly Anderson – Partridge Chair in Food and Sustainable Agriculture Systems, College of the Atlantic.

Individuals on the Steering Committee have also taken part in national and international political issues, including The Keystone XL Pipeline and the Occupy Wall Street Movement. A few members of QEW protested the pipeline and got arrested both in Ottawa, Canada, as well as in Washington D.C.

During the Spring of 2012, QEW has been involved in several national and international environmental issues.

In January 2012, QEW approved a Statement on the Repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery, which many European countries, the United States, and Canada adopted to extinguish all rights of indigenous peoples. QEW encourages Friends' Monthly Meetings and Churches, and Yearly Meetings, to renounce the Doctrine.

Several members of QEW helped draft materials on earthcare and attended the World Conference of the Friends World Committee for Consultation in Kenya.

In March 2012, QEW urged the United Nations "to create the water 'Future We Want' which must include respect for water as a human right, public trust and commons."

QEW has been involved with FCNL in addressing the role of economic growth on climate change, overuse of the world resources, and economic disparities.

QEW representatives to the United Nations have kept members aware of events and challenges of the Rio+20 environmental summit in Rio De Janeiro in June 2012, focusing on an undefined "Green Economy."

QEW is reconsidering how its website can best serve as a source of environmental information for the public and the needs for communication by QEW.

QEW and Pendle Hill are cosponsoring a Young Adult Conference, called "Continuing Rev_l_tion" on "Ministry, Earthcare, and Social Action" at Pendle Hill, June 15-20.

QEW is hosting the Earthcare Center at the Friends General Conference Gathering, July 1-7, Kingston, RI with guest speakers on a variety of current earthcare issues, displays, informal discussions, and videos.

During June 20-24, 2012, the Steering Committee meeting of QEW will be held at the Friends Meetinghouse in Cambridge, MA, prior to Friends General Conference Gathering in Kingston, RI in July 2012. While QEW has held its Steering Committee meeting near the Gathering in the past, we also want to attract Friends from all branches of Quakers by meeting in various locations.