

# Press Backgrounder

## EarthWorks Expo 2010

### Introduction

The message of living gently upon the earth is heard by many at church, on TV, at school or work, from friends and in the media. But how to live a green life beyond simple recycling is not often explained nor taught. Diminishing world resources have created an urgent need to show communities and the people who populate them how to integrate renewable energy, green building, green transportation, resource conservation and Earth-friendly products and services into our lives, now.

Recognizing this need, Michael Lindemann, a long-time supporter of sustainable initiatives, launched EarthWorks Expo in Denver in 2007 to serve as a venue for Colorado-based green businesses, advocacy organizations and educators. It has become a place to learn, explore and discuss green living in all its aspects. The goal of the Expo is to inform, inspire and empower its attendees to incorporate sustainable products and practices into their homes and workplaces to improve energy efficiency, reduce waste and impose a smaller carbon footprint upon the planet.

Compared to green festivals and trade shows that pass through Colorado from other parts of the country, EarthWorks Expo is an authentically local event. It is organized exclusively by local citizens, features locally-based exhibitors and presenters, and seeks to serve the residents and small businesses of Denver Metro, Boulder and surrounding Colorado communities.

Every year since its inception, EarthWorks Expo has offered a wide array of exhibitors, speakers, workshops and special programs to demonstrate to adults and children everything they need in order to green their home or business. The Expo features:

- 140 or more green exhibitors
- 45 or more informative workshops
- Real solutions for going green
- Special programs for kids
- World-class keynote speakers
- Organic & vegetarian food
- Comprehensive resource recovery (“zero-waste”) during the event
- Low ticket prices & free parking

Keynote speakers featured at EarthWorks Expo since 2007 include:

- Dr. James E. Hansen
- L. Hunter Lovins
- Frances Moore Lappé
- Richard Heinberg
- Dr. Elisabet Sahtouris
- David Johnston
- Peter Barnes
- Michele Weingarden
- Albert Bates
- Woody Tasch

The core vision of EarthWorks Expo can be expressed in three interrelated themes. Educational messages fall into seven primary subject areas.

### EarthWorks Expo Major Themes:

#### **1) Reduce Our Ecological Footprint** □

In a sustainable world, society's demands on nature are in balance with nature's capacity to meet those demands in terms of resources consumed and waste products returned to the environment. But today, humanity as a whole is consuming at least 23% more biological productivity than the Earth can sustainably produce, while the average U.S. citizen is consuming and producing waste at a vastly higher rate. If everyone on Earth consumed at the U.S. average, we would need at least five "Earths" to sustain today's population. In short, we must reduce our Ecological Footprint soon or face disastrous consequences. Luckily, there are many things each of us can do to improve the situation.

#### **2) Relocalize** □

In the face of such destabilizing threats as climate change, rising energy costs and global financial turmoil, relocalization calls upon individuals and communities to reclaim the self-sufficiency, resilience and security that comes with producing the essentials of life locally. This means more investment in local renewable energy; more reliance on locally grown food; more local craftspeople and small manufacturing companies producing essential goods and meaningful jobs; all toward minimizing dependence on energy, resources and goods from far away,

and optimizing the sustainable productivity of local land, resources and people.

### **3) Green the Economy** □

Greening the economy starts with promoting energy-efficient, environmentally friendly buildings, business practices, products and services, but it goes much farther. EarthWorks Expo envisions a green economy that will one day measure value in terms of quality of life delivered rather than quantity of stuff produced and sold. This economy will be genuinely sustainable and will support full employment without requiring persistent growth. It will reward less consumption rather than more, and greatly reduce unjust and dysfunctional income disparities. It will function in synergy, rather than destructive competition, with the natural world. Such an economy is predicated on major changes in societal values and priorities, and such changes take time. But they are beginning to occur.

## Seven Primary Subject Areas

### **1) Renewable Energy** □

We can meet future energy needs and be good stewards of the planet by using all forms of energy more efficiently while making the broadest possible use of renewable energy sources, including photovoltaic and thermal solar, wind, hydroelectric, geothermal, biofuels and more.

### **2) Green Transportation** □

Hybrid cars reduce exhaust emissions and improve fuel efficiency without sacrificing utility. Better: all-electric cars and trucks, neighborhood electric vehicles, electric scooters and human-powered vehicles. Also important: mass transit, ride-share and vehicle-share programs.

### **3) Green Building** □

Our homes and buildings can be far more efficient users of energy, water and other resources. Strategies include optimizing insulation, foundation to roof; use of innovative and recycled materials; super-efficient windows; solar hot water and electricity; geothermal heating and cooling; low-flow showers and toilets; xeriscape landscaping.

### **4) Sustainable Agriculture** □

Farming based on monoculture crops, chemical fertilizers and pesticides is

ruinous to soil, over-dependent on fossil fuels and less productive than some traditional methods. Sustainable agriculture includes broad adoption of organic farming, permaculture principles, mixed crops, super-efficient irrigation and judicious use of mechanized equipment coupled with appropriate animal and human labor.

### **5) Green Consumer Products** □

Many consumer products are now available in green, socially responsible versions: paper and plastic goods with recycled content; clothing made from organically grown fibers; fair-traded, sweatshop-free goods; non-toxic cleaning products; organic food; E\*Star appliances, etc.

### **6) Resource Conservation**

As society outgrows its throw-away habits, we can greatly reduce waste and conserve water, soil, timber, metals and other key resources. Most disposable materials are recyclable. Decaying waste can produce energy. Organic matter can be composted. In the natural world, “waste” does not occur — this is the ideal toward which human society must strive.

### **7) Relocalization** □

Today, much of our food, fuel and consumer goods originate thousands of miles away. A promising alternative is relocalization: bringing production of food, energy and basic necessities back to our communities, thereby creating jobs, promoting local commerce and enhancing local self-sufficiency, resilience and security.

## 2010 Expo

The 4<sup>th</sup> annual EarthWorks Expo takes place May 22-23, 2010 at the Denver Merchandise Mart, Expo Building, 451 E. 58<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Denver.

## EarthWorks Expo Management

### **Michael Lindemann, Expo Director**

Michael founded EarthWorks Expo in the fall of 2006 and has served as Expo Director from the beginning. Prior to founding EarthWorks, he worked for decades as a freelance journalist, futurist, educator and activist with emphasis on

environmental issues and global peace and security. He was executive director of the nonprofit Peace Resource Center of Santa Barbara, California during the mid-1980s. Later he was founding editor and publisher of the twice-monthly online journal Global Situation Report, then senior editor for future studies at OneCosmos Network, a new-media company in San Francisco. During 2005-2006 he convened and facilitated a monthly public seminar series in Fort Collins, CO called "Things to Come" to explore trends shaping the human future. He also published a future-focused novel titled *Excelsior* in 2003 under the pen-name Michael Paul.

**Lisa Olivas, Expo Assistant Director**

Lisa has worked with EarthWorks Expo as Assistant Director since its inception. She is a community activist, social entrepreneur, freelance event coordinator and founder of NOCO Hours, a community complimentary currency. In 2009 she also founded the Front Range Permaculture Institute with a mission to educate and encourage individuals and communities to use the principles of permaculture in their lives.

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