

## **AGENDA**

### **Envisioning a Just Future in Community Forests: A TreeVitalize Partners Conference**

Wednesday May 5 and Wednesday May 12, 2021

12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (EST)

For Registration Information <https://extension.psu.edu/community-forests>

#### Overview

This panel-style conference is the first Pennsylvania TreeVitalize Partners Conference, a conference to bring together partners working in community forests. The conference theme is diversity, inclusion, and justice in community forestry. The panels will focus on agencies, organizations, and practitioners who are creating solutions for people and communities. The conference will help encourage and inspire solutions and strategies that can help you address issues facing your own communities. You will leave these discussions seeing how goals for justice, diversity, and inclusion serve both people and the environment. This conference will also kick-start our series of follow-up weekly webinars that continue to explore issues and opportunities surrounding these topics.

#### Conference Format

Each panel discussion will be 90 minutes and will contain presentations from panelist concluded with 30 minutes for moderated question and answer with participation from participants. We plan to charge \$10 but will offer an option to waive the fee for participants that request it.

#### **Panel 1: Wednesday May 5, 2021**

##### **People and Place: United Under Environmental Justice**

##### Workshop Introduction and Welcome (10 min.)

Bill Elmendorf

Joseph Ibberson Professor of Community Forestry

Penn State University

Ellen Shultzabarger

State Forester and Director, Bureau of Forestry

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

##### Panelist 1 (25 min.)

People, Diversity, and Equity: A Keystone of Ecosystem Management and Public Engagement.

Tina J. Terrell

Acting Deputy Chief

USDA Forest Service, Washington, D.C.

*Ecosystem management encompasses both social justice, environmental protection, and economic returns on land use. This talk will discuss important concepts of social justice incorporated into Forest Service management philosophy including engagement in decision making and land policy, fair procedures for allocation of resource management benefits and uses, and equal access to ecosystem services (what does the land provide to humans).*

Panelist 2 (25 min.)

*Factors Impacting Environmental Decision Making in South Atlanta Communities.*

Cassandra Johnson Gaither, Ph.D.

Research Social Scientist

USDA Forest Service Southern Research Station, Athens, Georgia

*Forest patches have emerged on vacant land that contained public housing projects in the City of Atlanta. Communities adjacent to these spaces are mostly lower-income, African American, and renters. These patches can offer ideal opportunities for expanding ecological nodes. However, resident engagement is likely circumscribed by neighborhood transiency, in particular evictions. Involuntary household moves are rarely considered in initiatives aimed at improving poor residents' access to urban green spaces.*

Question and Answer (30 min.)

*Moderator*

Patreese Ingram

Assistant Dean Multicultural Affairs

Penn State University

**Panel 2: Wednesday May 12, 2021**

**Justice in Motion: Equitable Community Practices**

Workshop Introduction and Welcome (10 min.)

Bill Elmendorf

Joseph Ibberson Professor of Community Forestry

Penn State University

Patreese Ingram

Assistant Dean Multicultural Affairs

Penn State University

Panelist 1 (20 min.)

Talk Title: *Just Recovery in the time of COVID19*

Yudith Azareth Nieto

Environmental Justice Organizer, Language Justice Worker, and Multidisciplinary Artist. Another Gulf is Possible, Houston, Texas.

*Yudith will talk about the grassroots efforts of Another Gulf is Possible, a movement for a just transition for people and planet. Their collaborative members engage in community-centered cultural organizing, art and storytelling, language justice, direct action, advocacy, healing and transformative justice, popular education, and locally led capacity building that is rooted in the Just Transition and Just Recovery frameworks. We explicitly center anti-racist, decolonized, and abolitionist frames and lenses for the work we undertake together.*

Panelist 2 (20 min.)

*The Principles and Practice of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Land Conservation Movement*

Karena Mahung

Senior Consultant

Indufor North America

*Karena will present a framework for embedding the principles and practices of diversity, equity and inclusion within conservation organizations, and cover a case study highlighting the Common Ground Initiative of the Land Trust Alliance.*

Panelist 3 (20 min.)

*Tools and Strategies to Achieve Tree Equity*

Sarah Lillie Anderson

Director of Career Pathways

American Forests, Washington, D.C.

*Research shows significantly less tree cover on public right of ways in neighborhoods with higher black, low-income, and renter populations. Join this session to learn about how American Forests' tools- Tree Equity Score- and strategies- Tree Equity: Career Pathways- help correct the current state of inequitable tree canopy cover in most U.S. cities. When we all work together to achieve Tree Equity, we can ensure everyone reaps the many benefits of trees for health, wealth, and climate response.*

Question and Answer (25 min.)

*Moderator*

Rachel Reyna

Section Chief Rural and Community Forestry, Bureau of Forestry

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Closing Remarks (5 min)

Matt Keefer

Assistant State Forester, Bureau of Forestry

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

