



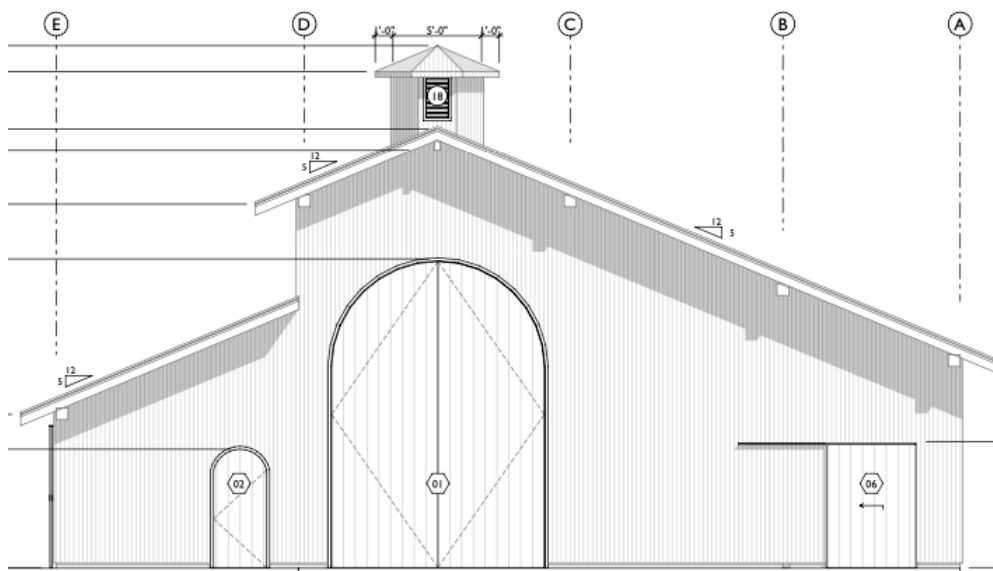
FIRE DESTROYS OAEC'S HISTORIC BARN

In late April 2020, OAEC's beloved barn burned down in a tragic fire. The cause of the fire remains unknown and the structure and everything inside were a total loss. Fortunately, all our people and animals escaped harm. The barn was originally built by the Farallones Institute in the 1970s as part of a four-week timber framing workshop, culminating with a community barn raising that included nearly 200 hundred people. In 2011, OAEC made extensive renovations, turning the old animal barn into our main workshop and the hub of creativity, craft, and celebration for the Center and community.



From the barn/workshop, we maintained the more than 40 structures on-site and during our recent redevelopment campaign, the barn supported the major renovation of a dozen of our buildings and the construction of our new guest housing and meeting hall. The barn hosted countless parties and celebrations, offering a gathering place for our community and a place of release and rejuvenation for retreats and courses working hard at OAEC.

While we mourn the loss of our old barn, we are excitedly moving towards raising a new barn with the same beauty, craft, and functionality. The original Farallones barn was built out of reclaimed wood from old posts of an Oakland pier. Keeping with that re-use tradition, we will mill and construct our new barn out of beautiful reclaimed Douglas fir from old foundation posts of the original Transbay Terminal in San Francisco, which have been generously donated to OAEC.



Our new barn will be built in the same timber frame style of our old barn, and will be nearly the same design with some minor improvements that come out of our 25 years of using the space. We look forward to a new barn that will serve the Center and all who come for the next 50 years and beyond!

BEAVER CAMPAIGN PARTNERS WITH TULE RIVER TRIBE TO RETURN BEAVER

Beaver were once abundant across California, altering riparian ecosystems in ways that increase water quantity and quality in streams and meadows, and provide critical habitat for myriad species. To return beaver back to watersheds starved for their improvements, OAEC's [Bring Back the Beaver Campaign](#) has worked tirelessly to make beaver relocation possible in California. While widely practiced in other western states, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) continues to disallow beaver relocation, citing liability and other concerns. Yet the [Tule River Tribe](#), a sovereign nation with a nearly 60,000 acre reservation spanning the South Fork of the Tule River, has long sought to return beaver to their homelands. The Tribe has one of two known beaver pictographs in all of California, dated to 500-1000 years old. To return this cultural and ecological keystone species, the Tribe reached out to OAEC to ask for support asserting their Tribal sovereignty to relocate beaver to the reservation. After an in-depth site visit by OAEC staff to the reservation to determine feasi-



OAEC's Kate Lundquist and Tule River Tribal Councilmember Kenneth McDarment survey the proposed location for reintroducing beaver to the reservation.

bility (which was very positive!), the Tule River Tribe, with support from OAEC, the Tulalip Tribes in Washington, and other state and federal partners, are fundraising and planning for a two-year project that would result in the relocation of beaver to the Tule River on the reservation! We plan to extensively document the process with the Tule River Tribe in hopes that this relocation will provide a blueprint for relocations elsewhere across California.

REWILDING CALIFORNIA CONVENING AT OAEC

In September, OAEC, along with the Center for Biological Diversity and The Rewilding Institute, are convening a Rewilding California meeting (now virtually) that will, for the first time ever, bring together many of the leading advocates, academics, and practitioners of rewilding, including Tribal nations in California, across the general California geography, focusing on terrestrial and riverine species. We are particularly interested in critically important species for whole ecosystem health, such as beaver, condor, pronghorn, elk, wolves, mountain lions, salmon, and grizzly bears. Rewilding means helping missing native species, particularly top carnivores and other keystone species, to return; securing core conserved habitat areas with connectivity between them; and allowing natural processes and cycles, like fire, water, and carbon, to restore functional, stable ecosystems. In a time when a survivable planet is not a given, ecological restoration is a necessity. Working together with our animal kin and the natural processes that enable life to exist on this planet can not only stop further extinction and collapse, but restore fecundity, beauty, and stability to our one home. Facilitated by OAEC staff, the overall goals of the convening are to support a shared, inclusive, and courageous vision for what rewilding is and can be in California.

MOVEMENT BUILDING RETREATS IN 2020



Asian Pacific Environmental Network in the OAEC Garden, January 2020

Due to Covid-19, we had to abruptly close our retreat center in mid-March and must remain closed for the foreseeable future to follow county and state ordinances and guidelines and for the health and safety of the thousands of change-makers who visit OAEC each year, as well as of our staff and residential community. Fortunately, we were able to host and collaborate with some remarkable groups this year prior to closing, including:

Amazon Watch - Amazon Watch protects the rainforest and advances the rights of Indigenous peoples in the Amazon Basin, partnering with Indigenous and environmental organizations in campaigns for human rights, corporate accountability, and the preservation of the Amazon's ecological systems.

Asian Pacific Environmental Network - APEN brings together Asian immigrants and refugees in Oakland and Richmond to stand up to big polluters, bring power to the frontlines, make possible safe, stable, and affordable housing, build climate resilience in working class communities of color, and mobilize the power of Asian voters.

Center for Story-based Strategy - CSS is a national movement-building organization dedicated to harnessing the power of narrative for social change, offering training and strategic support to social justice organizations and alliances to change the story of the issues that matter most.

Pachamama Alliance - With roots deep in the Amazon rainforest, Pachamama Alliance's programs integrate indigenous wisdom with modern knowledge to support personal and collective transformation that is the catalyst to bringing forth an environmentally sustainable, spiritually fulfilling, socially just human presence on this planet.

GAIA - GAIA is a worldwide alliance of more than 800 grassroots groups, NGOs, and individuals in over 90 countries that aims to catalyze a global shift towards environmental justice by strengthening grassroots social movements that advance solutions to waste and pollution, where people are free from the burden of toxic pollution, and resources are sustainably conserved, not burned or dumped.

Break Free From Plastic - BFFP is a global movement envisioning a future free from plastic pollution, with more than 8,000 organizations and individual supporters from across the world demanding massive reductions in single-use plastics and to push for lasting solutions to the plastic pollution crisis.

Sunrise Project - Driven by the imperative of climate justice, The Sunrise Project works to scale social movements around the world to drive the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy as fast as possible.

Food For Thought - Fostering health and healing with food and compassion, Food For Thought is dedicated to meeting the nutritional needs of people living with HIV and other serious illnesses in Sonoma County.

Our retreat center will likely remain closed through 2020 and into 2021. As soon as we can open, thanks to the generous support of foundations and donors who have contributed to our [Movement Building Retreat Fund](#), we will work with our existing Black-led partner organizations to prioritize and offer low-to-no cost retreats for groups affiliated with the [Movement For Black Lives](#). We look forward to welcoming leading social and environmental movement organizations back to OAEC as soon as possible for refuge, rest, reflection, and creative and courageous strategic planning in these critical times.

NURSERY NAVIGATES CHALLENGES TO OFFER FOOD & MEDICINE TO COMMUNITY

OAEC worked very hard this spring to keep our [Mother Garden Nursery](#) open to offer beautiful, healthy, and biodiverse organic plants safely to the public in the midst of the pandemic. The Nursery originally opened selling plants 'take-out' style and we received an overwhelmingly positive response amidst the renewed enthusiasm for gardening during the early days of sheltering-in-place. In early June, we reopened for covid-safe, in-person shopping, and we have since ended online take-out orders.

We really do believe that spending time in the garden growing food and medicine is one of the most valuable things we can do for our collective health and security. The Nursery offers an incredibly unique and diverse collection of certified organic plants, many of which come from our own seed collection or cuttings from our gardens, and all of which are appropriate to our Northern California bioregion. We continue to provide more and more perennial plants, especially those that are edible, used as culinary and medicinal herbs, as dye and fiber plants, and are pollinator and habitat enhancing. In an era of climate chaos, increased aridity, and decreasing biodiversity, moving away from water and nutrient-hungry annuals towards drought-tolerant and hardy perennials will be an important transition for gardeners to make. We seek to provide the plants and knowledge to help steward that transition.



Mother Garden Nursery staff Marley Peifer and Doug Gosling tend to thousands of plants amidst pandemic and fire.

SUPPORTING THE MISKITU IN NICARAGUA AND THE FIVE FOREST ALLIANCE

OAEC has joined [Five Forests](#), an international alliance working to protect the five majestic Mesoamerican rainforests, which combined, are second in size and ecological/cultural importance in the Americas only to the Amazon. The indigenous Miskitu people of Nicaragua, guardians of these forests, are under siege from armed resource exploiters who are pushing thousands of Miskitu people off their traditional territories and deforesting the area for cattle ranching. Since 2017, OAEC's [Resilient Community Design](#) program has supported a women's agro-ecology program that provides Miskitu women within the zone protected by the InterAmerican Court on Human Rights with resources to grow food for their families in the relative safety of the village centers. As part of the Five Forest alliance, OAEC is now expanding our work to map the cattle supply chain to identify the entities and processes that propel deforestation and injustice in this area. To support this work, we collaborated in the publication of the two articles: [Nicaragua's Failed Revolution: The Indigenous Struggle for Saneamiento](#) by the Oakland Institute, and [Nicaraguan Beef, Grazed on Deforested and Stolen Lands, Feeds Global Demand](#) by Mario Rautner and published by Mongo Bay.



Miskitu agroecology leader Elvia Barrios of San Jeronimo shares her cabbage pest eradication methods.

PEAK PLASTIC FOUNDATION JOINS OAEC

OAEC has brought on the [Peak Plastic Foundation](#) (PPF) as a new fiscally-sponsored project, continuing OAEC's involvement in the movement to end the plastic crisis. Peak Plastic Foundation works to accelerate a decline in plastic production and pollution by developing integrated storytelling campaigns toward global collaborative action. Specifically, PPF is focusing their efforts on building diverse coalitions at every level of the extraction-to-waste chain between the US petrochemical sector and the proliferation of sachet-style packaging in Asia. PPF's co-directors created and produced [The Story of Plastic](#) film, which is now being shown and distributed by Discovery Channel. In May, OAEC hosted an online screening of The Story of Plastic followed by a virtual gathering attended by over 600 people. Most recently, PPF made five short videos to highlight the #BreakFreeFromPlastic movement's Covid-19 Just Recovery Principles, and we encourage you to watch them [here](#). We look forward to supporting and collaborating with PPF!



PPF and Green Army in Trivandrum, India conduct a 'brand audit' to trace plastic pollution to manufacturers and demand corporate accountability.