

Canvassing goes deep!



by Jeriel Clark
Political & Organizing
Director

As organizers, we face a changing world where the devices we have relied on for years now sometimes fail us. But a new approach to connecting to communities has shown real progress in other parts of the country, and points to a new tool for organizing in our Alliance.

Some background...

Prior to joining Western Colorado Alliance as a community organizer, I spent a number of years running political campaigns ranging from statewide ballot issues, to congressional candidates, to local county races. My specialty was working with volunteers to engage in direct voter contact. That's why, when our Alliance first hired me on as a consultant, I came on as their canvass director for a statewide ballot issue. I brought a depth of knowledge on how to word a script to keep a voter at the door, and how gentle social pressure, when used correctly, could turn a voter out. And we used the same talking points recommended across the nation to persuade a voter to support an issue.

We used these tools and more as I moved into my full-time role with our Alliance, first as a community organizer, and then as the Political and Organizing Director. When it came time for us to engage in elections and Get Out The Vote efforts, these tools remained useful. However, election after election, whether for candidate or ballot issue, vote margins remained the same. Sure, we

were helping turn people out in an election, but were we actually persuading anyone?

The science behind persuasion

In 2016, candidates, political parties, and special interest groups spent a collective \$6.4 billion on the federal election.

Following that election, two political scientists — David Broockman (a Stanford University assistant professor) and Joshua Kalla (a doctoral student at UC Berkeley) — analyzed data from 49 state, local, and federal campaigns to evaluate the effective persuasiveness of their campaign methods. And what they found was shocking.

No matter the tactic — a flyer, a canvasser, a phone call, a yard sign, a billboard — there was no measurable change in voting outcomes. And even memorable interactions tended to quickly fade from voters' minds and were generally forgotten by Election Day. For example, they discovered that the impacts of a political television ad can fade from a voter's memory in just a week. So at this point, one might be tempted to ask, should I even bother to knock another door again? The answer is, "Yes, yes, my friends, yes."

Despite these disappointing results, Broockman and Kalla did find one voter contact method scientifically proven to shift the mindset of a voter, and that's deep canvassing. But before I jump into what exactly deep canvassing is, I want to take one step back and talk about deep *listening*.

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CONNECTING THE DOTS ANNUAL CONFERENCE AUGUST 14



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Our opportunity to connect the dots



by **Andreya Krieves**
Alliance Chair

We're so excited for the upcoming Annual Conference, because it's such a great time to connect with you, the members who are the lifeblood of Western Colorado Alliance. It's been a while since we've been able to meet in person, but our common cause remains unchanged as we emerge strong from the last year and a half of COVID.

COVID has rocked us. It has challenged our collective resolve and shaken loose our expectations of "life as normal." The ever-changing patchwork of reactions, restrictions, and social norms filled us with uncertainty, illuminated and exacerbated inequities, and introduced a rethinking of the very ways we live our life.

Among other things, the pandemic has helped us see our own true colors. The initial

shutdowns and restrictions shot cracks in our expectations and long-held beliefs about work and social interaction. The fits and starts of reopening have forced a consideration of things that just weren't working before and allowed us to begin envisioning a new way to forge ahead. We've become more resilient and honed the skills of pivoting and being flexible with ourselves and our communities. Though we've felt more isolated than ever before, we realized how deeply interconnected we all are through our health and behaviors. Nothing like a global pandemic to appreciate the multiplicative impact of our actions on others.

Out of the haze of the pandemic, our priorities, and the things we value become clear.

Now is our opportunity to connect the dots on the many lessons learned and realities uncovered with our deep-rooted values to craft our vision for a

better and more just future.

Just like each of us as individuals, our Western Colorado Alliance has examined what works, what doesn't, and what needs a second look within the organization. We're looking forward to connecting the dots with you at this year's Annual Conference on August 14.

You're warmly invited to join us for this virtual conference and workshop series. We'll be excited to work with you to

connect the dots on what's most important to you, to learn from each other, and to chart our path forward together.



Western Colorado Alliance
Chair Andreya Krieves

The handshake economics of farmers markets



by **Nick Allan**
Community
Organizer

Farmers like to refer to it as "handshake economics." The idea is for consumers to connect more with where their product comes from, and who's growing it. In a world where shopping is more about the clicks of the mouse than conversations of the mouth, meeting with the producer of your food is a special experience.

Growing that relationship is what makes farmers markets so special. Farmers markets are not only a fun way to connect with a multitude of local producers, but are also a major economic boon for growers, and are quite available

to people across the west.

In our pursuit of a more equitable food system and self-reliant economies, farmers markets are a resource to keep in mind.

For many local farmers, farmer markets are their biggest money maker. Producers typically earn about 15 cents on the dollar from purchases made at a traditional grocery store, whereas farmers take home nearly all of the income from a farmers market sale.

A study by Cornell Extension adds that not only does more money go into the lands of a local grower, every dollar has a

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brings people together to build grassroots power through community organizing and leadership development.

Our Alliance's vision for the future is one where engaged local voices are leading communities across Western Colorado that are healthy, just and self-reliant.

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Solving coal debt offers a path forward



by Joel Dyar
Community
Organizer

As American energy innovation marches forward, advanced energy technologies like wind and solar are plummeting in cost, rendering legacy industries like coal uneconomic and uncompetitive. Communities across Colorado are making the shift to clean energy contracts and saving millions.

Holy Cross Energy of the Roaring Fork Valley has already saved \$16 million with clean energy contracts. Glenwood Springs is saving a half-million dollars each year. When it declared independence from supplier Tri-State Generation & Transmission, the Delta-Montrose Electric Association estimated it would save ten million dollars each year. DMEA is now building a solar facility large enough to power 18,000 homes as part of that journey. Municipalities powered by Xcel Energy have a variety of flexible options to evolve their supply. Some are taking advantage of this freedom and some are not.

Communities that can't make the switch are losing out, passing on millions in savings, new property tax revenues from local solar, and the jobs and economic energy new technologies bring. Some continue to make ideological choices to deliberately subsidize uneconomic coal with their rate-payers' pocket-books. Others have little choice.

The latter communities are those



locked into the Tri-State system. Five rural electric co-ops covering a third of the Western Slope fit this bill. Tri-State's costly coal-heavy energy supply has been insulated from demands for reform by long-term contracts and no small amount of sabotage from the top-down — including recent tactical delays by Tri-State to answer co-op requests for contract buyout numbers. A historic lack of visionary co-op leadership from the bottom up deserves part of the blame as well, though that's quickly changing.

Some of Tri-State's current quandary is self-inflicted. But Tri-State is also a casualty of the country's past energy policy. Tri-State is trapped in coal debt. For decades, Congress supported loans and incentives for coal industry development that helped many suppliers like

Tri-State bring power to rural areas and made coal a foundational employer for many remote regions. Today, Tri-State is stuck with over \$3 billion in coal debt from this era. This debt has led to several downgrades in Tri-State's credit worthiness and threatens future rate hikes.

Tri-State's coal debt trap puts it in a hard place. Bottom-up demands for reform are mounting and the organization needs capital to finance the hundreds of millions of dollars of next generation energy technology it needs. Wiggle room on the balance sheet is hard to come by.

As our representatives toil to find a least common denominator agreement on infrastructure investment in today's obstructionist partisan era, a solution to the coal debt trap belongs on the

menu. Federal loans or other investment can give Tri-State the space to reboot the balance sheet and bring cleaner, cheaper power to our communities and catalyze a new generation of energy jobs in rural America.

There are many opportunities that could be created with such a solution — requiring that struggling Colorado economies are first in line for new investment and jobs, for example.

Western Colorado Alliance has recently begun holding webinars to discuss proposals for solving the coal debt trap, what kind of terms we might like to see, and how we can challenge our representatives to bring solutions home for Western Colorado. Our most recent webinar was on July 22. Watch for upcoming events on our website and in your inbox.

The handshake economics of farmers markets

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multiplier effect of 48 cents that is put into the local economy. For many farmers in our Alliance, a majority of their profit comes from farmers markets.

Farmers markets are not only beneficial to the producers, but also the consumer. For instance, shopping at farmers markets is a great way to improve your diet:

- Producers enjoy speaking with their customers, and often will share tips and best practices for food preparation.

- At many farmers markets, one can find an assortment of foods that may be new to the buyer's palate.
- Adding variety to a diet is a great way to increase one's health.

Buying from a farmers market also lowers your carbon footprint. Many grocery store purchases travel thousands of miles to land in your cart. Because small producers must shoulder 100% of travel costs, they are incentivized to stay closer to their farms. Our eating foods grown nearby not only helps the

planet, but the nutrition level is also higher, as food is fresher.

There is some room for improvement of farmers markets, access being a major one. Though farmers markets are generally located in highly populated areas, through gentrification, many divested populations are pushed farther out of the city centers, limiting their access to the freshest foods. Ideas for increasing access to farmers markets include increasing public transportation opportunities on market days, rotating areas of the market, or having smaller satellite markets.

There are programs available for low-income families shopping at farmers markets. For example, Colorado, as part of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), will match purchases of up to \$20. If you, or someone you know, uses SNAP, check in with a farmers market representative, and they should be able to help.

While farmers markets are compatible with and reflect many beliefs of our Alliance, we can continue to advocate for improvements, especially if those improvements help make them more equitable to all.

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The 41st Annual Conference of



AUGUST 14, 2021

For more information, please visit:

westerncoloradoalliance.org/annual-conference-2021

or call (970) 256-7650

We've seen a lot of changes in the world over the past 18 months, and we know there are changes still to come as we regather into more familiar patterns of life. The members of our Alliance have been reflecting on these changes and what it means for the future. The world has changed and it is important that our work is driven by the current knowledge of both the problems and aspirations of our communities. For that reason, the theme for this year's Annual Conference is **Connecting the Dots**, where we aim to connect what we are hearing and learning from communities across the country to better organize for healthy, just and self-reliant communities here in Western Colorado.

Out of an abundance of caution, the Conference will be online again. We hope next year, we can once again join in face-to-face camaraderie and solidarity. But in the meantime, we promise we'll do our best to make this year's online conference fun and engaging! We'll kick off a series of online workshops on **August 3** with a series of four workshops leading up to the annual business meeting and keynote on **August 14**. See below for all the details!

WORKSHOPS

THE PURPOSE OF POWER

Our Path to Victory

Tuesday, August 3

6:30 - 8 pm

*"Power concedes nothing without a demand."
— Fredrick Douglass*

As members of our Alliance work to build more just communities, there is a constant pull from those in power with different motivations. To reach our goals, we must understand our individual power, our collective power, and the power of others. This workshop breaks down those dynamics and put us on the path to victory.

REVEALING THE PICTURE

A Closer Look at Deep Listening

Tuesday, August 10

6:30 - 8 pm

You're handed a page filled with numbered dots, but the picture isn't clear yet. You carefully draw lines between the dots until the hidden image reveals itself. The needs of our communities are on our page and the full picture is waiting to come into view. We've got the page, now we need to connect the dots. Deep listening is the pen we'll wield through conversations and active listening. Our intent won't be to draw the picture through persuasion, but instead to discover it through questions. This workshop is an introduction to deep listening — how it works, what's our intent, and how you can lead this work with us.

STORYTELLING

The Narratives that Connect Us

Thursday, August 5

6:30 - 8 pm

Each of us has arrived at this moment with a lifetime of relationships, triumphs, heartbreaks, adventures, failures, and dreams that shape who we are, what we value, and what moves us to action.

This workshop will explore the power of storytelling in community organizing, and how to identify, connect with, and build relationships upon the foundational elements of human identity. Topics will include understanding how individual narratives build power, the components of individual stories, and how to open the door for sharing experiences.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION

A West Slope Perspectives Panel

Thursday, August 12

6:30 - 8 pm

In today's world the structure of our lives means we don't often have a chance to deeply connect with, and listen to, people who are living very different lives from our own. Our Western Slope Perspectives panel will feature a chance to go in-depth with several diverse voices from our communities. Topics will include how people view unmet needs in their communities and their lives, their perspectives on today's political system, and what shapes how and when they engage or don't engage in civic life.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS FROM PEOPLE'S ACTION!

Our keynote speaker wasn't confirmed by the date the **Clarion** went to press, but we're excited to be joined by one of the leaders from the **People's Action Network**. They've woven deep canvassing as a tool through the country for years now and have first-hand experience with the impact this tool can bring to a community!

Our 2021 Draft Platform

From 1983 through 2017, Alliance members adopted resolutions at our annual conference to shape the organization's policy and issue work. While the resulting 100+ resolutions covered a wide range of topics, they did not easily convey our values and purpose which are bigger and more inspiring than any one issue or position.

At our 2016 annual conference, we adopted a resolution to transition from this resolution-based process to a platform that would be reviewed and reaffirmed each year. The 2021 Draft Platform is the product of an ad hoc committee that has taken feedback from last year's annual conference, additional comments from committee members, and formed it into this document.

This draft platform has the proposed changes **highlighted** for easy comparison with the current platform.

We now seek additional feedback from the membership before we bring the document to the Annual Conference for approval. If you have any feedback, please send it to us at platform@westerncoloradoalliance.org.

MISSION: Western Colorado Alliance for Community Action brings people together to build grassroots power through community organizing and leadership development.

VISION: We believe that right now, today, we have the ability and

opportunity to create a future where engaged local voices are leading communities that are healthy, just and self-reliant.

1. We believe in an authentic **GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY** where each one of us has an equal right and opportunity to impact public decisions that affect our lives, and where government is open, honest and responsive to the needs of the people. More specifically, we support:

- a. Reducing the influence of moneyed interests in elections and the legislative process.
- b. The protection of individual voting rights and fair representation practices (e.g., in drawing legislative district boundaries and in reforming the Electoral College).
- c. The protection of a free press as an integral part of any democracy.

2. We believe that global **CLIMATE CHANGE** is the most important world-wide environmental crisis of our time. Science has shown that human activity is a major cause of climate change and, as such, we have an immediate and urgent responsibility to act to address its causes and impacts. We recognize that **while** climate change **affects the entire world, it** has a disproportionate impact on communities of color and

low income communities and so any solution must be based in **CLIMATE JUSTICE**. Specifically, we support:

- a. Pro-active policies, regulations and practices that:
 - promote biologic carbon sequestration (See also planks under Local Foods & Agriculture and Public Lands);
 - **eliminate-minimize** the emission of carbon dioxide, **methane** and other greenhouse gases;
 - minimize the environmental, economic and social impacts of climate change (climate justice); and
 - foster societal and ecological resiliency to adapt to and survive climate change.

Genuine consideration of the cumulative impacts of climate change in all decision-making in every sector of our society.

3. We believe in the inalienable right of individuals and communities to a **CLEAN AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT** including air, water, land and food supplies. More specifically, we support:

- a. The protection of the world's water quality and availability, as well as the integrity of aquatic ecosystems.

b. The protection of our air quality, including the reduction of toxic emissions and those that contribute to climate change.

c. The principles of "reduce, reuse, **share** and recycle" to conserve the world's limited resources and limit the harmful effects of production and disposal of consumer products.

d. Establishing a program with adequate ongoing funding to clean up "legacy" pollution sources including orphaned oil and gas wells, abandoned mines and contaminated former industrial sites.

4. We believe in **SOCIAL JUSTICE** that respects human rights, uplifts all people

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Candidate for Vice-President: Kevin Kuns



Kevin Kuns worked as an executive in the restaurant industry for 28 years.

For the last 16 years, he has served as president and principal of his own executive management search firm. He and his wife Bobbie moved to Montrose three years ago.

Kevin is co-chair of the Wyoming Fallen Hero Scholarship Fund and a member of the Montrose

County Commissioners Advisory Board.

Kevin and Bobbie enjoy spending time in Colorado's great outdoors and have run 9 ½ marathons and two 180-mile relays.

Kevin is a candidate for re-election to the Western Colorado Alliance Board of Directors, where he has served the past two years as Vice-President.

SECRETARY POSITION

The WCA Board of Directors is reviewing and accepting applications for the **Board Secretary** position. Please contact **Emly Hornback** (emly@westerncoloradoalliance.org) if interested or with questions.

The Routt to victory over pollution



by **Brian Williams**
Community
Organizer

By now, devout readers of *The Clarion* know how important it is that we get the orphaned well crisis in Colorado and the United States under control. For those of you who might have missed the last few publications, here's a quick recap: Colorado has over 50,000 oil and gas wells; of those, over 10,000 are producing less than one barrel of oil or equivalent per day. These wells are kept in "production" so that their operators aren't forced to spend money to plug and reclaim them, which is required by Colorado at the end of a well's life. All too frequently, large operators drill wells, pump them nearly dry, and then sell them to small operators to eke out the last barrels of its productive life. Once the small operators completely exhaust the wells, they declare bankruptcy, and pass the abandoned wells to the state for taxpayer dollars to clean up.

Our Alliance has been hard at work seeking to drive the creation of robust, protective financial assurance rules that

way to the small town of Hayden in Routt County, where we met up with our friends Nathalie Eddy and Andrew Klooster of Earthworks. From a cosy table nestled within Wild Goose Coffee at the Grainery, we plotted our expedition in search of orphaned and polluting wells in Northwest Colorado.

It wasn't long before we found ourselves making our way down south toward Rio Blanco County, stopping along the way at various well sites that stood out in stark contrast to the lush environment around them due to their moonscaped and dilapidated condition. With the skill of seasoned pros, Nathalie and Andrew went about the careful, patient business of capturing video footage of the sites we discovered using a forward looking infrared camera, which is a complex instrument that is capable of visually recording the plumes of methane venting from these sites that are otherwise invisible to the naked eye.



Indeed, even those wells we found which had been declared orphaned still showed signs of venting gouts of the climate change inducing gas into the air.

Pollution Control Division is on the precipice of beginning in earnest a rulemaking process that will set the tone and trajectory for our state's larger Greenhouse Gas Reduction Roadmap, which is the plan for Colorado to do its part to fight the scourge of climate change. Our Alliance stands ready to protect our home on both fronts.

After making sure to take many photos and capture an ample amount of footage, we made our way back to Hayden, sunburned and tired, but ultimately successful in our quest. Earthworks would go on to curate the video and send the results of our investigation to the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (COGCC). For his part, Rodger has been working tirelessly to draw the attention of local officials to the problem we discovered in their own backyard.

As for our Alliance, ours is a mandate driven by the will of our members: to expose these hazards to public and environmental health wherever we might find them, and to organize for meaningful change and demand accountability for both the industry that made this mess and the decision makers who enabled it. Even as the COGCC wrestles with the crafting of financial assurance rules, Colorado's Air



will require oil and gas operators to post a bond for the full cost of plugging and reclaiming a well before they are permitted to drill. In pursuit of that goal, the chairman of our Alliance's Oil and Gas Committee, Rodger Steen, and yours truly made our

Before long, I was handed the delicate piece of machinery to see them for myself. Words can scarcely describe my surprise and dismay as I saw for myself the billowing clouds of methane emitting from what I previously perceived to be benign wells.



Canvassing goes deep!

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Listening matters

Today, there seems to be the assumption that all voters will resonate with the same formula of prescribed issues across the board. We've gotten so lost in the numbers, we've forgotten to lead with a sense of shared humanity through conversation. In the words of community organizer George Goehl, instead of listening to understand, many of us have fallen into the habit of "...listening to confirm. Confirm how the person is wrong and bad in exactly the ways we thought they were."

Deep listening is the art of hearing an opposing viewpoint, and instead of defaulting to argument, asking questions to seek understanding — learn more about what they're up against, what troubles they experience, and how their reality has led them to this perspective. And maybe most importantly for us, what are the resounding concerns in our community coming up repeatedly, that we as a grassroots organization, can help effect change?

So, why deep canvassing?

Our Alliance has known for years that we need to get out of our issue isolation and get into our communities. But the "how

to do this?" was a little more up in the air. COVID slowed us down, but it also allowed us an opportunity to connect with organizations that are already doing this highly impactful work.

Since 2016, there's been a buzzword about a "new" community contact tool called deep canvassing. And while our parent network, WORC, had participated in a trial, trying to find the organizations championing this new effort was a little like stumbling around in the dark. As the Alliance's Organizing Director, I was asking questions, building what little I knew about the theory into some of our trainings, and reading articles on the process organizers in Georgia used to shift mentalities in their communities. And then, coincidentally, in the process of this search, I was invited to a deep canvassing training hosted by the national organization, People's Action, and was welcomed into trainings, meetings, and phone banks coordinated for attendees to learn how deep canvassing works to shift mindsets.

George Goehl, the organizer quoted earlier, is a leader in the movement. Earlier in life he experienced homelessness, then worked his way to a job in the soup kitchen he'd frequented, and eventually became a community organizer to effect change in his rural community. He is now the Director of the National People's Action organization. And

while Goehl didn't create deep canvassing — that credit goes to another great organizer, David Fleisher from Leadership LAB — Goehl, and many other seasoned organizers who make up the group, have created a network that weaves deep canvassing throughout communities across the country. Western Colorado is currently missing from the picture, but with encouragement and coordination from the organizations already in action, we are ready to bring deep canvassing and deep listening to our communities through Western Colorado Alliance.

A closer look

The success or failure of deep canvassing isn't judged by doors knocked in an hour. It's judged by the quality of the conversations. Typically, a volunteer might be encouraged to spend 3 minutes or less to "persuade" a voter during a conventional canvass, and later, they might return to that same door and spend two minutes helping that voter form a voting plan during Get Out The Vote efforts.

Deep canvassing, on the other hand, occurs long before elections are in full swing. Conversations can last ten, 15, 20 minutes. And the "win" isn't committing a voter to vote a certain way; instead it's encouraging voters to think more deeply about their relationship to local issues.

So often in our western world of rugged individualism, local voters vote against policies that would benefit them (as well as against policies that would support marginalized members in our community), in fear that it might put themselves at risk. Deep canvassing is the next step in our quest to connect the dots, between "us" and community members who aren't "like" us.

It goes beyond deep listening in that it encourages the canvasser not only to ask questions, but to offer vulnerability themselves. The canvasser shares themselves, allowing both parties to identify mutual interests or connections they might not have otherwise known they had. The conversation becomes a heart-to-heart between two strangers.

And while people are resistant

to changing their mind during an argument, thoughtful persuasion can happen when, in talking an issue through themselves, the voter realizes they have a more tolerant attitude than they realized.

The big question: Does it work?

The political scientists, Broockman and Kalla, published their findings on deep canvassing in 2020 in the **American Political Science Review**. In their study, they found that 78% of people who came to the door for a canvasser ended up staying for the entire conversation. And 75% of people who started a conversation shared a story about their own lives. This tells us just how willing many people are to having an open conversation.

And after following up with voters who were canvassed during this study, not only was there a seven-percent increase in persuasion for an issue, but the effect was lasting — three and six months following the conversation.

And if that's not convincing enough, one particular deep canvassing study (which included 700 interactions) proved to be 102% more effective than brief interactions during a typical door-knocking campaign. The bottom line is: Many voters have been left out of the conversation, and they're eager to be heard.

We're just getting started in this work, and our Alliance is preparing to hire organizers to support this effort in our communities. But deep listening and deep canvassing doesn't work without our members. We're sure you have lots of questions, and I hope you're excited to get started. Join our Annual Conference and its corresponding workshops this August to learn more about deep listening and deep canvassing, and how our Alliance plans to spend the next few years digging "deep" into our communities.

And if you want to hear more from George Goehl, and organizers on the ground who have been doing this work, check out his podcast "See Each Other" — a short six-episode series spotlighting deep canvassing efforts happening now in rural white America.

FURTHER READING

The Atlantic

"Most Campaign Outreach Has Zero Effect on Voters" by Emma Green
<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2017/09/campaigns-direct-mail-zero-effect/541485/>

MWI.org

"Deep Canvassing and the Power of Active Listening"
 by Megan Winkler
<https://www.mwi.org/deep-canvassing-and-the-power-of-active-listening/>

Vox

"How to Talk Someone Out of Bigotry" by Brian Resnick
<https://www.vox.com/2020/1/29/21065620/broockman-kalla-deep-canvassing>

Commondreams.org

"Groundbreaking Study Shows Deep Listening Over 100 Times More Effective" by Julia Conley
<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2020/09/15/ground-breaking-study-shows-deep-listening-over-100-times-more-effective-winning>

Our 2021 Draft Platform

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to their potential and values everyone's participation in their communities and in decision-making processes. Our belief in Social Justice requires us to not only support equitable policies but also to eliminate systemic oppression and racism. More specifically, we support:

a. Systems that equitably value the contributions and dignity of all workers, including the right to collective bargaining, substantial paid family and medical leave, and an adequate living wage.

b. A comprehensive approach to creating health equity that encompasses a wide range of social and economic factors such as education, social welfare, housing, income, environmental conditions, nutritious food, social and emotional health care, and universal access to health care.

c. Environmental justice policies that protect poor and minority communities from bearing an inordinate burden on their health from industrial development.

d. Comprehensive and thoughtful reform of our nation's immigration and refugee policies to reflect the values of the United Nations' Global Compact for Migration (https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf).

5. We believe in HOME-GROWN ECONOMIC PROSPERITY, reflected in a Western Slope that is home to diverse and resilient local economies that work for all of us while protecting the natural environment that makes our communities desirable places to live. **To that end we support policies and actions that:**

a. Invest in local, community-based leaders to help communities plan and respond to changing economic conditions.

b. Invest in entrepreneurs and locally owned small businesses to grow diverse economic sectors that contribute to stronger, more resilient communities, improved public

health, restored ecosystems and equitable opportunities for all people.

c. Provide a broad system of support for workers and viable pathways to quality, family-sustaining jobs.

d. Invest in physical and social infrastructure to stimulate economic development and build a foundation for change.

e. Empower local communities by providing direct access to state and federal resources to make change possible.

6. We believe our communities have exciting opportunities to shape **A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FUTURE**. We believe we can substantially reduce energy usage and, through the use of clean and renewable sources, reduce air pollution, eliminate the harmful effects of fossil fuel extraction, create new jobs and industries, and lessen our contribution to climate change. More specifically, we support:

a. Governmental policies that provide incentives for clean energy projects, and regulations that require/encourage energy conservation and efficiency practices in homes, transportation and industries.

b. Restructuring/scrapping of utility contracts that are prolonging fossil fuel use and discouraging increased renewables.

c. Regulation of public utilities in a manner that protects both consumer interests and environmental sustainability.

d. Proactive upgrades of energy delivery systems to anticipate changes in energy technology.

e. Distributed energy sources that are locally owned and small scale.

7. We believe that our nation's **PUBLIC LANDS** must be managed in ways that respect our collective histories and recognize the Native peoples who have called these lands home for millennia. These

lands connect our cultures and communities and we all depend on them for a sustainable future. Public lands support healthy wildlife populations and their habitat and forests crucial to the health of our atmosphere. They protect the headwaters of many vital watersheds and provide the safest refuge for essential biodiversity. These lands also sustain a strong and growing outdoor recreation economy that enhances everyone's quality of life and nourishes the human soul. More specifically, we:

a. Recognize that public lands are the ancestral territory of Native peoples who have called them homes since time immemorial. For this reason, we insist on their involvement in the decision making for our public lands.

b. Insist that public lands remain public. Transfer of federal lands to states, or worse, private interests, compromises all of the values mentioned above.

c. Support responsible management of public lands that prioritizes ecological integrity and resilience of those lands and our climate.

d. Support maintaining the size and integrity of existing wilderness areas, parks and monuments along with connecting wildlife corridors, as well as expanding such protections to other areas that have appropriate characteristics.

8. We believe that food production and marketing systems that prioritize **LOCAL FOODS AND AGRICULTURE** are best able to sustain healthy communities and economies, protect the environment and safeguard the rights of farm workers. **The creation of a decentralized food system protects family and independent producers and processors who are the key to feeding local peoples with local foods.** More specifically, we support:

a. Policies and practices that support soil health and regenerative agriculture to reduce greenhouse gas

emissions, **chemical use** and water consumption, improve crop yields, drought and flood tolerance, and air and water quality.

b. An individual's rights to be able to make informed food choices through improved labelling on how and where their food is raised and processed.

c. Livestock production systems that are as humane as possible and minimize the need for antibiotics and other chemical intervention.

d. A Farm Bill that includes the programs and policies prioritized by the WORC Farm Bill Platform. (www.worc.org/media/2018-Farm-Bill-Platform.pdf)

e. International trade and domestic policies that strengthen human and environmental health, food sovereignty, workers' rights and competitive marketplaces in all countries involved.

9. We believe that local communities should have a fair say in where, how, and if **NATURAL RESOURCE EXTRACTION** occurs in their area, and that when these economic activities are permitted, they should employ the best available technologies for protecting public and environmental health. Specifically, we support:

a. Comprehensive bonding and reclamation fees so impacted areas can be restored as much as possible to their pre-development conditions.

b. Requiring royalty payments from private industry that reflect the full worth of the public resource being extracted or harvested.

c. Stringently enforced regulation of all extractive practices using evidence-based safety and environmental standards, including setbacks from industrial activities and the emission of contaminants to air and water.

d. Transparent and inclusive processes for decision-making that genuinely and adequately address the concerns of the community in the final decision.