

Community Changes Everything: How to Build Community That Inspires and Sustains Action**September 17, 2026****Link to the recording:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YjVZq39T-zc>**eePRO post:**<https://eeepro.naaee.org/learning/community-changes-everything-how-build-community-inspires-and-sustains-action>**Speaker:** Esteban Gast**Presenter Resources:*** [Presentation materials](#)**Highlights of the chat transcript:****14:59:55 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Host and panelists:****Welcome to the webinar!!****14:59:57 From Cara Davenpo to Everyone:****Hi! I'm Cara, joining from Merck Forest in Vermont 😊****15:00:07 From NAAEE Staff, Anne Umali to Everyone:****Hello! It's great to be here. Joining you all from Wilmington, North Carolina 😎****15:00:15 From Gitanjali Paul to Everyone:****Hi everyone, Gitanjali and Serafina calling in from TX, USA****15:00:22 From Sam Hoffman to Everyone:****Hi, I'm Sam. Joining from Indianapolis, Indiana****15:00:22 From TERESA COLE to Everyone:****Hi! Teresa from Richmond VA!**

15:00:24 From Elena Santos to Everyone:

I'm also at Merck Forest in southern VT!

15:00:28 From Abbey Matre to Everyone:

Hi there! I'm abbey, joining from Chicago, IL 😊

15:00:31 From Luke Griffith to Everyone:

Hi everyone I'm Luke From College Station Texas

15:00:30 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

Preethi Mony from Columbus, OH

15:00:43 From Heidi McAllister to Everyone:

Heidi from Maryland. Hi Everyone!

15:00:45 From Megan Woodruff to Everyone:

Hello! Thank you for having me!

15:00:49 From NAAEE Staff, Anne Umali to Everyone:

Great to see some familiar names here today!!

15:00:53 From Kimberly Mattson to Everyone:

Hi. Kim from Roanoke, VA

15:00:59 From Adrienne Rajna to Everyone:

Hi from Eastern Pennsylvania

15:01:00 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

Hi everyone! I'm currently listening from Olympia, WA.

15:01:05 From Heidi McAllister to Everyone:

❤️ Hi Judy!

15:01:06 From Peter Pasterz to Everyone:

hello from Portland, Ore. Looking forward to the Research Symposium

15:01:11 From Melissa Mazurkewicz to Everyone:

Hi, joining from Panama

15:01:13 From Kimberly Mattson to Everyone:

Thank you and good to be here

15:01:19 From Julia Kjelland to Everyone:

Hi, I'm Julia! Listening from City of Wilmington, NC

15:01:22 From NAAEE Staff, Anne Umali to Everyone:

Replying to "hello from Portland, Ore. Looking forward to the ...":

Yay!! Just a few weeks!

15:01:27 From Alexandra Webb to Everyone:

Alex Webb from Central MA

15:01:37 From Samantha Young to Everyone:

Hello from San Diego, CA!

15:01:45 From Ben Lepley to Everyone:

Hi everyone, thanks for joining! Ben from NAAEE, based in LA 🙌

15:01:49 From Celeste Royer to Everyone:

Celeste Royer from CA Central Coast

15:02:06 From NAAEE Staff, Anne Umali to Everyone:

I see a lot of CEE-Change Fellows here!!

15:02:09 From Janice Milanovich to Everyone:

Greetings from Chicago, IL

15:02:17 From Jessie Freeland to Everyone:

Jessie Freeland from Northern VA

15:02:30 From Elba Mora to Everyone:

**Hello from Oak Glen Preserve! Elba from the ancestral homelands of the
Maara'yam**

15:02:32 From Norsham Yaakob to Everyone:

Morning, from Malaysia

15:02:44 From Marguerite Bishop to Everyone:

Marguerite, joining from Kings Mountain, NC outside of Charlotte

15:03:22 From Connie OConnor to Everyone:

Hello from Cincinnati Nature Center!

15:04:08 From Esteban Gast to Host and panelists:

Go Anne!!!

15:04:08 From Ben Lepley to Everyone:

Thank you, Anne!!

15:04:10 From Kyra Stephenson to Everyone:

Hello from Helmer Nature Center in Rochester NY

15:05:34 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Retired physician in Pittsburgh. Western PA Area Wild Ones Chapter

15:07:28 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

If I can do it at 68, you have no excuses!

15:07:29 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

Brooklyn in the house!

15:08:33 From Connie OConnor to Everyone:

mountain

15:08:34 From China Rubiano to Everyone:

Forest!!

15:08:34 From Adrienne Rajna to Everyone:

forest

15:08:35 From Emily Jacobs to Everyone:

MOUNTAIN!!!!!!!

15:08:35 From Tiffany Brocco to Everyone:

forest

15:08:36 From Sam Hoffman to Everyone:

forest

15:08:36 From Julia Kjelland to Everyone:

Mountain

15:08:36 From Jimena Cuenca to Everyone:

forest

15:08:37 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

Beach

15:08:37 From Joellen Lampman to Everyone:

forest

15:08:37 From Katy Fenn to Everyone:

Beach

15:08:37 From Alisa Selivanova to Everyone:

Forest

15:08:38 From Ben Lepley to Everyone:

Beach!

15:08:38 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Forest

15:08:38 From Kyra Stephenson to Everyone:

Forest!!!!

15:08:39 From Samantha Young to Everyone:

Beach

15:08:39 From Melissa Mazurkewicz to Everyone:

mountain

15:08:39 From TERESA COLE to Everyone:

Mountain

15:08:40 From Allison Carr to Everyone:

beach!!

15:08:40 From Janice Milanovich to Everyone:

beach

15:08:40 From Celeste Royer to Everyone:

Beach

15:08:40 From Heidi McAllister to Everyone:



15:08:40 From Luke Griffith to Everyone:

Beach

15:08:41 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

beach

15:08:41 From NAAEE Staff, Anne Umali to Everyone:

BEACH of course! 🕶️

15:08:41 From Megan Fink to Everyone:

beach

15:08:41 From Margaret Baillod to Everyone:

forest

15:08:41 From Gitanjali Paul to Everyone:

Forest

15:08:41 From Norsham Yaakob to Everyone:

Forest

15:08:42 From Peter Pasterz to Everyone:

mountain

15:08:42 From Alexandra Webb to Everyone:

Forest

15:08:43 From Gabriela Boscio Santos to Everyone:

Beach

15:08:44 From Cara Davenpo to Everyone:

beach

15:08:46 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Everyone:

Mountain!!!!

15:08:46 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

Forest!

15:08:47 From Abbey Matre to Everyone:

forest!

15:08:48 From Megan Woodruff to Everyone:

Forest !!!!!

15:08:48 From Tom Boone to Everyone:

Forest

15:08:49 From Amy Riley to Everyone:

Forest! 🌲

15:08:50 From Elena Santos to Everyone:

beach

15:08:51 From Marguerite Bishop to Everyone:

forest

15:08:53 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

more ocean than beach

15:08:54 From Jessie Freeland to Everyone:

Mountain !

15:08:54 From Elba Mora to Everyone:

Sorry, I can't pick! I love them all!

15:08:56 From Alisa Selivanova to Everyone:

Forest can be in both of those places!

15:08:58 From Kimberly Mattson to Everyone:

mountain and beach

15:09:00 From Cindy Wilems to Everyone:

BEACH

15:09:16 From Ben Lepley to Everyone:

Forests and mountains can be haunted! Not beaches though.

15:09:27 From Cindy Wilems to Everyone:

the waves relax me

15:09:35 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

Whales!

15:09:36 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Everyone:

I've been to a haunted beach!

15:09:41 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Urban forests!

15:09:43 From Samantha Young to Everyone:

the ocean is magic

15:09:48 From Cara Davenpo to Everyone:

Beach has all the macro and micro

15:09:51 From Luke Griffith to Everyone:

Very Calm and can do multiple things while on the beach

15:09:53 From Ben Lepley to Everyone:

Replying to "I've been to a haunted beach!":

I suppose Widow's Bay has proved me wrong

15:09:53 From Cindy Wilems to Everyone:

there's a story there, Judy!

15:10:04 From TERESA COLE to Host and panelists:

All my favorite activities happen on mountains - climbing, skiing, hiking

15:10:04 From Julia Kjelland to Everyone:

migratory birds in the mountains!

15:10:08 From Peter Pasterz to Everyone:

They get you HIGH!

15:10:12 From Julia Kjelland to Everyone:

and best hikes

15:10:13 From Sarah Bodor to Everyone:

the view is worth the work

15:10:13 From Kimberly Mattson to Everyone:

different ecosystems depending on the mountain

15:10:14 From Jessie Freeland to Everyone:

The best views

15:10:17 From Melissa Mazurkewicz to Everyone:

coffee grows on mountains :)

15:10:20 From Connie OConnor to Everyone:

there are no words

15:10:22 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Everyone:

Climbing, cool weather, vistas, incredible wildlife, and so much more!

15:10:23 From Emily Jacobs to Everyone:

**Mountain= an opt to live in the shadow of things. Skiing, hiking, climbing,
stunning scenery— what else do you need?**

15:10:24 From Heidi McAllister to Everyone:

Above timberline!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

15:10:25 From Melissa Mazurkewicz to Everyone:

yes!

15:10:27 From TERESA COLE to Host and panelists:

Solitude and disconnection

15:10:42 From Kyra Stephenson to Everyone:

I can hug trees in the forest...LOVE LOVE LOVE

15:10:49 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

forest

15:10:50 From Adrienne Rajna to Everyone:

Forests: Regulates the Water Cycle

15:10:51 From Tom Boone to Everyone:

FOREST: Patients in hospitals with forest views do better.

15:10:52 From Sarah Bodor to Everyone:

forest bathing

15:10:53 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

**Mount Washington in Pittsburgh is not what most would consider to be a
"mountain".**

15:10:53 From China Rubiano to Everyone:

biodiversity!

15:10:53 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

MOSS!!!, duh :)

15:10:53 From Tiffany Brocco to Everyone:

Nothing better than when the sunlight hits the trees in the morning

15:10:54 From Megan Woodruff to Everyone:

Being surrounded by so much life

15:10:54 From Joellen Lampman to Everyone:

green light

15:10:57 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

beach is awesome enough to go twice!

15:11:03 From Marguerite Bishop to Everyone:

easy to get to...doesn't have to be a special trip....great in all seasons

15:11:05 From Sam Hoffman to Everyone:

Forests have so much life in them to explore and are constantly changing

15:11:19 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Everyone:

So many cool insects!

15:11:20 From Heidi McAllister to Everyone:

Shade, protection from rain, wildlife

15:11:34 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

Water filtration

15:11:39 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Trees can hug me- well, maybe not.

15:11:40 From Kyra Stephenson to Everyone:

Hugging trees

15:11:45 From Joellen Lampman to Everyone:

spring ephemerals!

15:11:51 From Gitanjali Paul to Everyone:

Forest bathing

15:12:54 From Celeste Royer to Everyone:

Beach - waves are mesmerizing, a vast ocean stretches the mind for possibility, sounds soothe the soul

15:14:03 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

If they can insult one another and know that it's in fun!

15:19:57 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Is it "comedians" or "comics" ? Comics think people who say comedians aren't insiders.

15:23:13 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

I've had people say- I'm a stand-up comic, not a comedian. Well , OK then!

15:24:09 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Everyone:

Love the friendship connection!

15:24:22 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

Building trust! so smart

15:24:57 From Megan Fink to Everyone:

We move at the speed of trust 🌱💖

15:29:01 From Cara Davenport to Everyone:

Reminds me a lot of "The Art of Gathering" ideas, an amazing book about getting people together as a leader

15:29:58 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

I could not access

15:30:05 From Samantha Young to Everyone:

this resonates a lot but I've never thought of it this way, as a facilitator

15:30:08 From Adrienne Rajna to Everyone:

Are people pulled to join too many things, and feel they don't have the capacity.

15:30:11 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Have food (environmentally friendly with no single-use plastics)) at events whenever possible !

15:30:12 From Gitanjali Paul to Everyone:

It always exceeds my expectations! For example- at things like 'unconferences', the things people come up with for sessions are awesome.

15:30:19 From Kayla McCurry to Everyone:

Making space for our introverted colleagues 😊

15:30:20 From Kyra Stephenson to Everyone:

Invitation!!! Give space for people to engage how one feels comfortable

15:30:38 From Megan Woodruff to Everyone:

I think the friendship part makes it so much more warm and meaningful.

15:31:13 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

Found it!

15:31:38 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

I would not go if there were a free T-shirt- actually I just wouldn't take one. I have about 30 already.

15:32:35 From Gabriela Boscio Santos to Everyone:

Zoom does have a whiteboard feature...

15:32:46 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

Would we do the problem tree with the group? This would be so cool

15:33:23 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

No capacity

15:33:25 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Incapacity!

15:35:22 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

scheduling

15:40:55 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

doesn't sound like it is for me

15:41:14 From Heidi McAllister to Everyone:



15:41:50 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

With native plants, most people are volunteers. However having a robust network of professionals to provide all of the the necessary components is what we need to grow the movement exponentially.

15:42:57 From Gabriela Boscio Santos to Everyone:

Also, as a mom of a small human now, I also don't want to trade time away from my kid in addition to my work. Even if there's childcare.

15:43:22 From Gabriela Boscio Santos to Everyone:

100% a negotiation with partner

15:43:31 From Melissa Mazurkewicz to Everyone:

We see people from our community (smithsonian bird friendly) maybe once a year, we have to find ways to keep them engaged during the year - email updates, highlighting community members, webinars are just a few ways.

15:43:33 From Megan Woodruff to Everyone:

I would love opportunities to get the kids involved as well

15:43:46 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

thank you for recognizing the stress on family is also a factor

15:44:06 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

YES - kids are people too!

15:46:22 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

The specificity of groups is reminding me of an SNL skit about Portland

15:47:18 From Judy Braus, NAAEE to Everyone:

Please add any questions in the chat for Esteban! :-)

15:48:39 From Cara Davenpo to Everyone:

YAYYY

15:48:46 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

Thank you for this super engaging interactive presentation!

15:48:52 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

Are you related to Gloria Esteban, lol.

15:49:00 From Elena Santos to Everyone:

Gracias Esteban! Tengo ideas nuevas 😊

15:49:03 From Megan Fink to Everyone:

I wanna see dads active in the climate space!! (Thinking of Moms Clean Air Force and Mothers Out Front - I know you're out there dads!) Thank you so much for your leadership, Esteban, and extending specific invitations so that everyone is included!!

15:49:04 From Samantha Young to Everyone:

Love all this, it's so true and on point. But advice for narrowing down which communities to specifically invite? Yes, people like myself but we want to serve everyone!

15:49:06 From Esteban Gast to Host and panelists:

Gloria Estefan

15:49:13 From China Rubiano to Everyone:

You're wrong about the beach. Forest all the way

15:49:13 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

BFF

15:50:38 From Samantha Young to Everyone:



15:50:41 From Samantha Young to Everyone:

yes!

15:50:48 From Cara Davenpo to Everyone:

Do you have advice for finding trusted ambassadors when you're working to create space for groups that you are not actually a part of?

15:51:04 From Kimberly Mattson to Everyone:

do you use this approach for workshops or meetings or another scenario?

15:51:05 From Tiffany Brocco to Everyone:

Do you have advice for making invitations specific without being exclusive?

15:51:31 From Gabriela Boscio Santos to Everyone:

This loneliness question is one I haven't heard before and is getting me thinking. The "you can't get specific enough" too. Thank you.

15:53:04 From Cara Davenpo to Everyone:

That's super helpful to hear, thank you!!!

15:53:27 From Elena Santos to Everyone:

Could this be applied to building and strengthening community among coworkers, and improving workplace culture?

15:55:26 From NAAEE Staff, Anne Umali to Preethi Mony, host and panelists:

Like our People in Color coffee meet ups at the conference!

15:56:06 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

Maybe focused more than specific?

15:56:06 From Edward Wrenn to Everyone:

This has been great, Estefan! I learned a little and was reminded of a lot!

15:56:57 From Tiffany Brocco to Everyone:

That was helpful, thank you!

15:56:58 From Gabriela Boscio Santos to Everyone:

wait, you grew up in PR? weeeepaaa. that's why i voted beach too

15:58:45 From Sandy Gibbons to Everyone:

**a barrier = exclusive vs focused = a specific group and open to natural
expansion**

15:59:26 From Adrienne Rajna to Everyone:

**We are inviting people who are being regenerative / doing regenerating
processes to meet each other, so that regeneration moves from many collaboration
to becoming the system.**

15:59:38 From Jennifer Palmer to Everyone:

Amazing!!!

15:59:42 From Preethi Mony to Everyone:

eeWEBINARS: Bringing New Ideas and Innovation to the field of Environmental Education

This was awesome! thank you