



Speaker Profiles

Dr. Mark Anderson



Mark directs TNC's Center for Resilient Conservation Science which provides science leadership and ecological assessments for conservation across 50 states. He holds a Ph.D. in ecology from University of New Hampshire and has worked as a conservation scientist for 35 years. Mark manages a team of six spatial ecologists, and over the last decade, led the effort to identify and map climate resilient lands and waters across the continental US. For this work,

Mark received TNC's Conservation Achievement award in 2017 and the Land Trust Alliance's Kingsbury Browne Conservation Leadership Award in 2021.

William (Bill) Ardren



Bill Ardren is Director of the Science Applications Program for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Northeast Region, which covers 13 states from Maine to Virginia. He prioritizes working in partnership — especially with Tribes, states, NGOs, industry, private landowners, and other federal agencies — to advance conservation from the Northern Forest and the Appalachian Mountains to some of the most densely populated areas in the country along the coast. His focal areas include landscape conservation, at risk species and climate change. Bill has a Ph.D.

from the University of Minnesota and is a visiting scholar in Environmental Studies at Dartmouth College.

John Austin



John Austin is the Director of Wildlife with the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department. John oversees the department's wildlife, lands and habitat conservation and management programs. He has been engaged in the regional Staying Connected Initiative since its inception and was co-chair to the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premier's ecological connectivity working group to advance the interests of Resolution 40-3, directing the states and provinces to develop a plan to maintain the region's biodiversity. John has been a practicing wildlife scientist for over 35 years with a focus on habitat and landscape conservation.

Gordon Batcheller



Gordon Batcheller is the Executive Secretary for the Northeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies, representing the interests of the northeastern states, the District of Columbia, and the eastern Canadian Provinces on fish and wildlife conservation issues of regional significance. He is a Certified Wildlife Biologist, and worked as a professional wildlife biologist with the New York State Division of Fish and Wildlife for 34 years, retiring in 2015 as their Chief Wildlife Biologist.

Renee Callahan



Based in Bozeman, Montana, Renee Callahan has over 30 years of professional experience in federal, state, and administrative law, policy, and research. As Executive Director for ARC (Animal Road Crossing) Solutions, Renee leads an interdisciplinary non-profit partnership working to ensure wildlife crossings are built whenever they are needed. In addition to raising awareness about proven solutions to reduce wildlife-motorist conflict and reweave the treasured landscapes we call home, Renee spearheads ARC's work to inspire innovative, nature-based policies and climate-smart wildlife infrastructure solutions.

Mikael Cejtin



Mikael Cejtin is the lead coordinator of the [Staying Connected Initiative](#) – a visionary, cross-cutting partnership whose mission is to conserve and restore landscape connectivity in the globally important Northern Appalachian to Acadian region. Prior to his current role at The Nature Conservancy, Mikael managed a portfolio of climate adaptation and resilience projects for the New York State Department of State Office of Planning, Development and Community Infrastructure. Mikael also conducted wildlife research and field studies on wildlife connectivity, large carnivore conservation and human-wildlife conflict reduction. Mikael lives in southern New Hampshire and spends as much time as he can outside growing and foraging food with his family.

Benoit Charette



Benoit Charette has been the Member of the National Assembly for the Deux-Montagnes riding since 2008. He holds a bachelor's degree in history with a concentration in political science from the Université du Québec à Montréal and a degree in public administration from the École nationale d'administration publique. He began his career at the Ministère des Relations internationales in the Québec Government Office in Mexico City. He then worked at the Agence intergouvernementale de la Francophonie in Moncton. Mr. Charette was appointed Minister of the Environment and the Fight against Climate Change in January 2019. In October 2022, he was appointed Minister of the Environment, the Fight against Climate Change, Wildlife and Parks, in addition to being given increased responsibilities regarding the energy transition.

Deb Davidson



Deb serves as the Chief Strategy Officer at the Center for Large Landscape Conservation and provides executive leadership to the Network for Landscape Conservation and the NLC Catalyst Fund. Deb directs communications, fundraising, strategic planning and program implementation, external relationships, and partnership development. Deb has worked in conservation philanthropy and large landscape conservation for over 20 years, including at the Wilburforce Foundation and American Wildlands. Her work has largely focused on the protection of wildlife corridors and ecological connectivity, with a specific focus on network development, connectivity policy and science in North America. She has served on numerous boards including as the Board President of the Bozeman Community Food Co-op, and as an advisor to the Gallatin Valley Land Trust.

Marie-Lyne Després-Einspenner



Marie-Lyne has a Bachelor's degree from the Université du Québec à Rimouski in Biology, Wildlife and Habitat Management, as well as a Master's degree in Environmental Sciences from the Université du Québec à Montréal. She has been working since 2010 in the fields of research, management of conservation projects, and ecological connectivity, and has worked in Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Germany, and Québec. Her achievements include creating numerous botanical and faunal inventories, designing and writing conservation plans according to the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, modeling and validating ecological corridors, as well as raising awareness and enhancing dialogue with local stakeholders and conducting outreach to private landowners.

Heather Furman



Heather Furman is the Appalachians Director at The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a position she has held since June 2023. In this role, Heather guides continental scale conservation for one of the Conservancy's four global priority landscapes, leading teams and initiatives across 18 states and 3 Canadian provinces. Prior, Heather spent a decade as TNC's State Director in Vermont, where she grew the visibility, influence, and scope of the chapter's conservation programs. Throughout her career, Heather has provided strategic leadership in conservation, working to integrate equitable approaches, and strengthening the partnerships, funding and scientific research needed to protect biodiversity and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Heather has held positions in both federal and state government, and with local and international NGO's including the World Wildlife Fund in Nepal. She has traveled extensively throughout Europe, Latin America and Asia, building on her formal academic training in Anthropology and Natural Resource Planning. Heather resides with her husband in the Winooski River watershed in rural Vermont, on the unceded land of the Western Abenaki that is known today as the Northern Appalachians.

Steven Guilbeault



The Honorable Steven Guilbeault was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Laurier—Sainte-Marie in 2019. He has previously served as Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Minister Guilbeault is a prominent advocate in the fight against the climate crisis, and has been leading the charge from Laurier—Sainte-Marie for years.

Minister Guilbeault's commitment to environmental issues started at the age of five, when he climbed a tree to protect it from real estate developers who were about to cut down the woods behind his home in La Tuque. Twenty-five years later, he scaled the CN Tower in Toronto to call for Canada to ratify the Kyoto Protocol.

In 1993, Minister Guilbeault co-founded Équiterre, the largest environmental organization in Quebec, and served as its Senior Director from 2008 to 2018. He also worked as a Director and Campaign Manager for Greenpeace, and was a Strategic Advisor for more than 10 years at Cycle Capital Management, a Canadian fund dedicated to the development of clean technologies. Minister Guilbeault also worked for Deloitte & Touche as well as Copticom, a consulting firm specializing in the green and social economy, and transportation.

Jens Hawkins-Hilke



program.

Jens Hawkins-Hilke is a Conservation Planning Biologist with VT Fish & Wildlife Department. He leads a program of technical assistance to VT municipalities on land use planning. As a partner in the Staying Connected initiative, he works to maintain a network of habitat connectivity across the state in active coordination with land use planning, conservation science, land protection, transportation and outreach partners across the Northern Appalachian region. He's actively engaged with the VT Department of Transportation on road ecology training, as well as prioritizing important wildlife hotspots in its infrastructure through a game camera and roadside tracking

Jodi Hilty



She is president and chief scientist of Y2Y. Specializing in ecological corridor and large landscape research, she has more than 25 years of experience managing large landscape conservation efforts. This work focuses on applying best available information to address complex challenges through community-based, collaborative efforts, and also centers Indigenous leadership in conservation. Author or editor of four books, she also led writing of the 2020 IUCN Guidelines for Conserving Connectivity as the deputy chair of the IUCN Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group.

Peter Howell



Peter is the Executive Director of the Conservation Finance Network, which seeks to advance land and resource conservation by expanding the use of innovative and effective funding and financing strategies. He has 30 years of experience in the conservation field as a practitioner and funder. As the Open Space Institute's Executive Vice President for nearly two decades, he helped design, capitalize, and implement multiple land acquisition re-grant and loan funds that facilitated the conservation of 1.5 million acres of land from Maine to Georgia.

Previously, he was the inaugural program director for the environment at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, where he oversaw the distribution of almost \$100 million for land conservation in the US and a program officer at the Wallace Funds, designing and implementing an \$18 million national initiative focused on creating and improving urban parks in 12 cities across the US

Phil Huffman



Phil Huffman has been a conservation leader in northeastern North America for more than three decades, with extended stints in the nonprofit and public sectors and as an independent consultant. His work has encompassed innovative, impactful approaches to landscape-scale conservation; cross-border collaboration; community-based river conservation; natural resources planning and management; private land conservation; community engagement; and public policy and advocacy.

Since 2009, Phil has played a leadership role in the Staying Connected Initiative (www.stayingconnectedinitiative.org), a dynamic partnership of government agencies, NGOs, and others working to sustain and enhance ecological connectivity across borders in the northeastern U.S. and eastern Canada.

Jessica Levine



Jessie Levine is the Appalachians Conservation Director – North for The Nature Conservancy / Nature United. In this role, she manages a conservation program across this bi-national region and co-leads conservation efforts at the full Appalachian landscape scale. Jessie previously coordinated the Staying Connected Initiative, a public-private partnership focused on sustaining a connected landscape in the northern Appalachians of the US and Canada. Additional prior experience includes managing local and international environmental partnerships in the US and Canada, coordinating biodiversity research for a Quebec-wide network, leading youth environmental education, and directing volunteer programs in Latin America.

Brenda Mallory



Brenda Mallory is the 12th Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality and the first African American to serve in this position. As Chair, she advises the President on environmental and natural resources policies that improve, preserve, and protect public health and the environment for America's communities. She is focused particularly on addressing the environmental justice and climate change challenges the nation faces while advancing opportunities for job growth and economic development.

Chair Mallory has decades of experience in both the private and public sector, including spending nearly 20 years at the Environmental Protection Agency and CEQ, serving in a number of senior roles. Chair Mallory first served as the General Counsel of CEQ under President Obama where she helped shape many of his signature environmental and natural resource policy successes. Now, as Chair, she is advancing President Biden's ambitious climate agenda and is particularly focused on addressing the environmental justice and climate change challenges the nation faces while advancing opportunities for job growth and economic development. Chair Mallory was the first in her family to attend college, graduating from Yale University with a Bachelor of Arts in history and sociology before earning a Juris Doctor from Columbia Law School.

Albert Marshall Sr.



Dr. Albert Marshall Sr. is a leading environmental voice in Unama'ki Cape Breton. He is advisor to and is a highly regarded spokesperson for Mi'kmaw natural resources and environmental issues.

Elder Albert and his late wife, Elder Dr. Murdena Marshall, travelled across Turtle Island to speak about Etuaptmumk / Two-eyed Seeing to a wide variety of institutions, promoting E/TES as a model for intercultural collaboration. Elder Albert advises and lectures internationally and has published widely, with his works serving as valuable guides that have shaped everything from environmental decision-making to health research to economic development.

Albert works to further positive work within Mi'kmaw communities, to seek preservation and understanding of cultural beliefs and practices among all communities and to effect a strong vision for his people and the future.

Jacob Martin-Malus



Assistant deputy minister for biodiversity, wildlife, and parks, Mr. Martin-Malus has been with the the Ministère de l'Environnement, de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques, de la Faune et des Parcs since 2017. He has a solid background in wildlife management, forestry and public administration. He has worked in economically oriented ministries, as well as government service organizations. Mr. Martin-Malus is currently in charge of coordinating government efforts to develop national parks network, wildlife management strategies and orientations, and promote the conservation of wildlife species, habitats and biodiversity, including protected areas, ecological knowledge, threatened plant species, invasive species, and natural ecosystems.

Kateri Monticone



Kateri Monticone has worked for the Nature Conservancy of Canada for more than 15 years. She has successfully led a wide variety of projects to conserve natural habitats throughout Québec. A biologist by training, she is the initiator of the Québec Ecological Corridors Initiative and is a certified strategic conservation planning coach. She is an executive committee member of the Staying Connected Initiative, as well as a member of the IUCN WCPA Connectivity Conservation Specialist group.

Julie Moore



Julie Moore serves as Vermont's Natural Resources Secretary, overseeing the Departments of Environmental Conservation; Forests, Parks and Recreation; and Fish and Wildlife. Since being appointed by Governor Phil Scott in 2017, Julie has worked to shape Vermont's environmental agenda focusing on climate resilience, water quality, conservation, and has supported a connected forest landscape throughout her tenure. Julie has a background in engineering and water quality, and prior to serving as the Secretary she worked in Vermont's public and private sector advancing clean water policy.

Patricia Nash



Patricia Nash is Director, Apoqnamatmu'k Wksitqamu (working together for Earth) at the Unama'ki Institute of Natural Resources based in Eskasoni First Nation, Nova Scotia. She grew up in the territory of her Haudenosaunee ancestors in southern Ontario, and has an Honours BSc in Zoology. Trish has worked with First Nation and Inuit governments across Canada to strengthen their voices, identities, and self-determination. Currently she is working for the Mi'kmaq to establish Nova Scotia's first Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area.

Darran O'Leary



Darran O'Leary has been working for the Peskotomuhkati Nation for over 6 years to establish the Skutik Indigenous Protected and Cultural Area. With experience in project management, team assembly, team management, coaching, negotiations, budget planning and budget implementation Darran brings diverse experience to the project. By working with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, biologists, naturalists, and youth in our own communities he is building relationships and bridging gaps between the Crown entities, NGO groups and individuals.

Tim Purinton



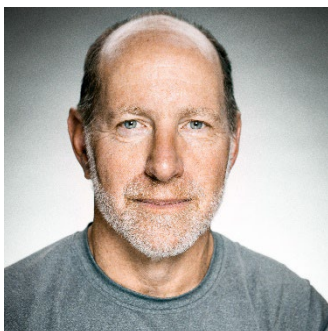
Tim Purinton is Senior Advisor to the Deputy Director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In this role Tim coordinates the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Keystone Initiatives (includes Appalachia) and assists with administration priorities, including the national seed strategy and the presidential directive to restore salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River. This work is made possible through a detail funded by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Tim works closely with the Associate Deputy Secretary DOI and bureau leadership. Tim was TNC's Maryland/DC Chapter Executive Director and was the founding director and co-creator of the Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration.

Nick Richardson



Nick Richardson is the Senior Vice President of Capital Strategies at OSI, overseeing the organization's conservation finance, capital granting, and applied climate science programs. Nick comes to OSI from the Vermont Land Trust, where he served for more than a decade, including, for six years, as its President & CEO. Prior to his work in conservation, Nick held leadership positions related to finance and strategy in the renewable energy and energy efficiency sectors. Nick has served on numerous boards and is a current Director at VEIC, a national leader in decarbonization strategy. Nick received his MBA at the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, where he was the recipient of the James Allwin Award for Community Service.

Gary Tabor



Gary Tabor is an ecologist and wildlife veterinarian based in Bozeman, Montana and Ithaca New York. He is Founder and CEO of the Center for Large Landscape Conservation – the 2024 Distinguished Landscape Practitioner Award from the International Association of Landscape Ecology. Gary is Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas' Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group. Gary has worked on behalf of large landscape conservation internationally for over 40 years. He is a Professor of Conservation Practice at Cornell University. Gary is a recipient of the Australian American Fulbright Scholar Award in Climate Change and the Henry Luce Scholar Award.

Darlene Upton



Darlene joined Parks Canada in 1996 holding a number of positions in three national parks and at executive levels in the Agency's National Office. She has a Bachelor of Science, an Honours Bachelor of Outdoor Recreation, and a Certificate of Tourism from Lakehead University. She worked for the Royal Ontario Museum and completed a Masters of Science from the University of Toronto. Darlene is an alumni of Singularity University Executive Leadership program and a Salzburg Global Fellow. She is very interested in how technology will affect the human relationship with nature and its opportunity to accelerate conservation gains globally.

Darlene has significant experience working with Indigenous, federal, provincial, and municipal governments, and environmental non-governmental organizations in the establishment and management of protected areas. Darlene is also working internationally to support protected areas management in the role of Chair for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Green List Panel. Darlene puts a focus on building team and leadership and has been a guest on the Adam Grant – Work Life Ted syndicated podcast on the subject of Compassionate Workplaces. Darlene is also involved in her community running an art program at a women's supportive housing initiative, sitting as a board member for the Centre de Service Communautaire de Vanier, and is on the Board of Governors for St. Pauls University.

Abby Weinberg



As Senior Director of Conservation Science & Planning for the Open Space Institute (OSI), Abigail Weinberg develops nature-based solutions to climate change and water quality. Her work translating science to conservation practice and policies informs foundations, state and federal agencies and land conservation organizations. Her recent focus has been on quantifying the impact of land protection on water quality and forest carbon mitigation. Abby has a Master of Forestry degree from the Yale School of Forestry and Bachelor's degree from St. John's College (the "Great Books School"), Santa Fe.

Alison Woodley



Alison Woodley is Senior Strategic Advisory at the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) National Office. For over two decades she has played leadership roles in successful national and regional conservation campaigns in Canada, including to secure a historic \$1.3 billion investment in nature conservation by the Government of Canada in 2018. Alison currently sits on Canada's national Nature Advisory Committee and on the Steering Committee of the pan-Canadian "Pathway" initiative working to protect at least 30% of land by 2030.

She lives in Chelsea, Quebec and is happiest out enjoying nature near her home or in other wild places around the world.

Andrea Wright



Andrea Wright has worked for the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) in an environmental capacity for 23 years. She has served in several roles primarily working with and leading teams to perform project reviews; conduct research; and develop tools, policies and procedures that avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts of transportation infrastructure on the natural and human environment. Andrea now serves as the Environmental Policy Manager where she is responsible for ensuring that transportation environmental policies are well-grounded, fair, and practical. She serves as a liaison to an array of government and non-government organizations to bring balance and perspective to a wide range of conversations that emerge and persist at the nexus of transportation and the environment.