



National Conservation Leadership Institute

Cohort 14

October 2019-September 2020

Conservation Leadership

VISION

The NCLI vision states that: “Because of the National Conservation Leadership Institute, conservation leadership in the future will be widely regarded as one of America’s greatest strengths. From the smallest government agency to the largest conservation federation, there will be a shared confidence that our legacy is safeguarded by extraordinary leadership with a conservation mission.”

MISSION

The NCLI successfully defies the ordinary, acting to preserve the legacy of our natural resources by developing extraordinary conservation leadership. The unique curriculum challenges assumptions, piques critical thinking, fosters high-trust relationships, and strengthens confidence.

The National Conservation Leadership Institute is an independent 501-(C)3 non-profit organization.





✦ OCTOBER 2019
First Residency
National Conservation
Training Center
11 Days

✦ SPRING / SUMMER 2020
June: Cohort Disrupted: Where Are We Now Webinar
July: Q&A Webinar
August: Presence and Purpose Webinar

✦ SEPTEMBER 2020
Second Residency
Virtual
3 Days

Cohort 14 Timeline

Let's Begin...

THE FIRST RESIDENCY...

The first residency of Cohort 14 commenced on a beautiful Fall day in October 2019 at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. It started with a welcome from NCLI Staff, one that included the history of the NCLI and recognition of the excitement for a new cohort just beginning their journey. The welcome also included an invitation for fellows to be open, remain present, and lean into the experience. Core faculty members Hugh O'Doherty and Jill Hufnagel kicked off with a round of introductions. While this first residency seemed to begin as others had before, it quickly became apparent this cohort was unlike any other. For there was a challenge at the heart of those introductions, and it was awe inspiring to witness the level and speed of courage and vulnerability at which it was met.



Capacity and Challenges



THE CAPACITY...

The capacity for Cohort 14 fellows to be courageous and vulnerable set the tone for the entire residency. There were challenges along the way, and conflict is inevitable...yet it was consistently met with curiosity, interest, understanding, tolerance, and sometimes a little humor. Cohort 14 was not afraid of the difficult conversations, even if it took a little push by Jill, Hugh, or the peer coaches to get there. The result was a bond that formed quickly and strongly. A bond they would need as not only the cohort, but the entire world was radically disrupted.

Compassion and Change



In March 2020, the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak was declared a global pandemic. With that came a cadre of life-altering situations for everyone – national and state level declarations of emergency, quarantine, stay at home orders, travel bans, the closing of unessential businesses, and most of all so much uncertainty about how it would all unfold. One thing that soon became obvious was the impact the pandemic would have on the second residency scheduled for June. In May, the NCLI Board approved the postponement of the second

residency until September in hopes it could still be held in-person. NCLI faculty and staff put together a plan to keep the cohort engaged. NCLI alumnus and C14 peer coach Michelle Doerr offered her “Self-care and Compassion During Epic Adaptive Challenge” webinar for all C14 fellows and coaches. Hugh and Jill facilitated three webinars covering a myriad of topics to bridge the gap between the residencies. These additional offerings became increasingly valuable as the decision was made in June to switch the in-person second residency to virtual.

Culmination and Courage

THE SECOND RESIDENCY

The NCLI had never held a virtual residency. Cohort 14 staff, faculty, coaches, and fellows met this challenge head-on by embracing the core of the NCLI curriculum, Adaptive Leadership. The cohort convened for 3 days in September 2020 with Hugh and Jill at the helm, exploring what it meant to practice Adaptive Leadership not only in this new setting but in this new world. With an adaptive lens, we could see a way through the chaos and uncertainty. While there was a sense of loss, there was also gratitude...and yes, a bit more courage and vulnerability.



And we leave you with this....

*"This is for the powerless, the wounded and the weak;
This is for the immigrant, and those who cannot speak;
If the ground beneath your feet feels unstable;
There's a place, there's a place for you,
At my table."*

Lyrics from At My Table by JJ Heller, 2017.

Diversity Scholarship



A COHORT 14 INITIATIVE

During the first residency of Cohort 14, the value of building a broader coalition of stakeholders in the conservation community sparked a key topic of introspection and discussion. After those initial discussions, a core team made up of NCLI alumni, staff and board members met regularly to continue these discussions and find ways to expand representation of diverse groups at NCLI. As a “first step” in building diversity in this space, it was decided to focus on removing barriers to participation, starting with financial burdens. To this end, a scholarship fund has been established and donations are actively being sought to fully fund up to two Native American fellows in each future cohort.

Another potential barrier that this group identified was a lack of support through the application process, particularly for applicants representing groups or agencies with no past fellows. A mentorship program is being developed at this time which will match applicants to a volunteer alumnus to assist them as needed. By focusing on new partners, we are hoping to increase the diversity of thought at NCLI, creating a more diverse and inclusive atmosphere that will enhance discussions, expose fellows to alternative views, and begin building bridges to a future where all people can enjoy healthy, resilient outdoor resources.





Cohort 14 Fellows

First Row: **Brett Albanese**, Georgia Department of Natural Resources; **Stacy Armitage**, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; **Mike Bednarski**, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries; **Craig Bonds**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; **Chris Cantrell**, Arizona Game and Fish Department; **Ken Cunningham**, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

Second Row: **Devin DeMario**, Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies; **Amy Derosier**, Michigan Department of Natural Resources; **Jenny Dickson**, Connecticut DEEP Wildlife Division; **Will Dillman**, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; **Lauren Ferreri**, Pennsylvania Game Commission; **Dakus Geeslin**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Third Row: **Steve Gomez**, Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department; **Cory Gray**, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission; **Jim Hedrick**, West Virginia Division of Natural Resources; **Mark Hennelly**, California Waterfowl Association; **Carrie Kennedy**, Maryland Department of Natural Resources; **Victoria Lockhart**, Resource Management Service

Fourth Row: **Jonathan Lowery**, The Westervelt Company; **Chris McLeland**, Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever; **Kimberly Millett-Marshall**, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; **Nate Muenks**, Missouri Department of Conservation; **Mark Ohm**, South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks; **Frank Quamen**, U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Fifth Row: **Jamie Rader**, Ducks Unlimited; **Sri Rangan**, Shell Energy North America; **Mike Ruccio**, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; **Jack Scott**, Nestle and Nestle Purina; **Ely Sprenkle**, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism; **Matt Steffl**, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Sixth Row: **Jeff Stoddard**, California Department of Fish and Wildlife; **Christy Vigfusson**, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; **Rick Ward**, Idaho Department of Fish and Game; **Linda Weir**, U.S. Geological Survey; **Jake Weltzin**, U.S. Geological Survey; **Jeff Yanke**, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Peer Coaches

The NCLI experience would not be complete without the generous and incredible support and dedication of the NCLI Peer Coaches. Coaches and/or their agencies contribute their time and expertise pro-bono.

Dale Caveny, Retired (Peer Coach's Coach); **Steve Chadwick**, Michigan Department of Natural Resources; **Michelle Doerr**, Anavah Consulting; **Jennifer Nguyen**, California Department of Fish and Wildlife; **Kevin Pope**, U.S. Geological Survey; **Deb Schlafmann**, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; **Charlie Sperry**, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks



FACULTY & STAFF



Jill Hufnagel



Hugh O'Doherty



Eric De Nijs



Jack Owens



Tom Kalous



Bettina Fiery



Gina Jackson



Amanda Myers

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A few words from the Fellows...

"This will be a lifelong
learning experience"

"I was challenged
and changed"

"I am completely
overwhelmed with
the rich and
rewarding
experience."

"This has been an incredible journey –
unforgettable powerful coaches/facilitators
with powerful messages."

"I am already looking
at myself and my
professional life in a
very different way"

"This has begun a change in me."

Contact Us

www.conservationleadership.org

National Conservation
Leadership Institute
P.O. Box 503
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

T: (304) 876-7988

E: info@conservationleadership.org

