

The 10th Continental Bioregional Congress



October 3-11 2009
Summertown, TN

ANNOUNCING: the 10TH CONTINENTAL BIOREGIONAL CONGRESS (CBCX)
OCTOBER 3-11, 2009
The Farm, Summertown TN
www.BioCongress.org

*Amidst the hills and hollows, tribes and councils new and old
will gather to share and collaborate finding ways to re-inhabit mother earth.*

What: Founded 25 years ago, Continental Congresses have brought together earth natives from all generations in sacred celebration and deep connection with the earth and our diverse human family. The 10th Continental Bioregional Congress (CBCX) will be a landmark event focused on unifying and strengthening the global effort to preserve, restore and enhance life. Individuals and organizations participating in the Congress will envision, exchange and spark realistic, restorative strategies for living in the bioregions of the Americas.

Why: With the recent escalation of ecological devastation and the current global economic and political crises, the answers bioregionalism offers are more important than ever! The Bioregional Movement has been a catalyst for social and political change defined by the decentralization of power to smaller units of population and land. Many global efforts have been seeded through this powerful tradition over the years including the formation of the Green Party, ecovillages and ecological and social restoration efforts. This year's Congress will include training on the Transition Town Movement, and will be a powerful nexus for leaders from various ecological and social networks to synergize their efforts for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Who: Hundreds of people from diverse bioregions and fields such as policy, agriculture, restoration, art, education, business, and healing will participate in this year's Congress as delegates. Thousands more will tune in to the proceedings of the Congress online, expanding the ripple effects of the inspiration and synergy catalyzed by this historic event. Audiences everywhere will benefit from getting a glimpse into Bioregionalism, and the profound hope that it provides for the world in actualizing sustainable, long-lasting positive change.

Where: This year's Congress will be hosted by the Farm, a thriving ecovillage founded in 1971 in Summertown, TN. The Farm spans over 2,000 acres, houses many green businesses, hosts bioregionally-related events year-round, and provides a living model of sustainable development and consensus-based living.

How: This nine day residential event will include a bioregional certification curriculum, small and large group discussions and activities, a youth program and a toolbox of workshops and speakers focused on building, sustaining and re-localizing communities, reinvigorating culture and arts and organizing for ecological restoration, economic prosperity and policy change.

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What is Bioregionalism?



Bioregionalism embodies the effort to preserve, restore and enhance life. It represents a comprehensive way of defining and understanding the places where we live, and of living there sustainably and respectfully through integrative ecological design. At the same time, Bioregionalism's essence has been reality and common sense for native people living close to the land for thousands of years; even beyond human experience, bioregionalism is rooted in the ecological principles of all life. In recognizing that we live in watersheds, ecosystems and ecoregions, we can find a context for how to craft our lives in balance with our communities and eco-communities. We recognize that we are part of the web of the life, and that all justice, freedom and peace must be grounded in this recognition.



The modern tradition of the Bioregionalism has been a catalyst for social and political change in government toward decentralization of power to smaller units of population and land to: keep wealth in local communities, preserve and enrich natural systems, and live in ways that foster sustainable resource use. Bioregionalism pioneers new modes of relatedness to the mystery and wonder of the natural world. Over the years, the Bioregional movement has helped spawn and support many other powerful movements and trends, such as the Green Party, Permaculture, Ecovillages, Ecological Restoration, Eco-Poetics and much more.

What is the Bioregional Congress?

The Tribes of North and South America have been gathering in councils and encuentros for thousands of years, and in that tradition, the Continental Bioregional Congress has been a gathering of the environmental, social and native movements since the first Continental Bioregional Congress in 1984.



This year's Congress will spark and strengthen ecological and social networks to exchange information, strategies, and approaches about how to forge meaningful lives in balance with our local ecosystems and communities. The congress will be packed with informative speakers covering diverse topics related to earth care, community development and economic resiliency. We'll also share and celebrate stories of place, model the communities we wish to support and create, and replenish ourselves, so that we leave CBCX empowered with new tools, strategies, support and inspiration to further manifest our social change efforts. Together, participants will create transformations that ripple out from their lives into their homes, communities and bioregions.

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PROPOSED PROGRAM

In general, the congress will include:

- Mornings of small talking circles, big group circles, and plenaries
- Afternoons of hands-on workshops and open space discussions
- Evenings of cultural sharing and celebration.



During The Plenary Sessions, we are proposing an agenda to create a unified vision for bioregionalism in the world, pushing for a 10-point document outlining our commitments as a body politic and our next steps towards furthering the vision of bioregionalism in the world.

The Congress operates by consensus, collectively developing the agendas and fostering a common commitment to the process. The open consensus-based process is balanced by the skills of deeply experienced facilitators who know how to guide large groups toward consensus in efficient, compassionate ways



In addition to the traditional consensus-based forum of large and small group discussions and activities, this year's Congress will include a youth program and a bioregional certification curriculum – a toolbox of workshops that focus on building, sustaining and relocalizing communities, reinvigorating culture and arts, and organizing for ecological restoration and policy change.

Bioregionalism Certificate Program

A certificate in Bioregionalism will be awarded to participants who complete 15 hours of training, including both Monday and Tuesday sessions, and at least six hours of workshops of their choice throughout the congress.



Bioregionalism (Monday)

History of the Bioregional Congresses
Decentralization and Ecoregional approaches to sustainability
Reinhabitation and Ecocentric philosophy
Decision-making: inclusion and empowerment
Action learning
Pageantry and Celebration
World Café



Reinhabitory Tools (Throughout)

Relocalizing Communities Toward Sustainability

- Transition Town Movement
- Ecovillages
- Permaculture
- Renewal Energy/Energy Conservation
- Re-storying the Landscape and Communities
- Relocalizing Education



Tools for Sustainable Communities (Tuesday)

Bioregional grassroots community organizing and stewardship
Strategic planning
Bioregional right livelihood
Group process and consensus-based meetings
Community-making through the arts, ecological
Outreach and Web-tools for organizers
Event planning
Rites of passage and other ceremonies



Reinhabiting and Restoring Local Ecosystems

- Landscapes and Bioregional Mapping
- Orienting to Watersheds
- Ecoregions
- The Seasons and Migratory Patterns: Charting
- Planetary Connections
- Reinhabiting the Body: Health, Wellness and Restoration



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Bioregional Congress Youth and Children's Program

The Farm School will be running a youth program in bioregionalism and permaculture education within a parallel youth congress. The youth will join the adults during several plenary sessions focused on Intergenerational Dialog to help craft a vision for the next seven generations to live in peace and justice.



Each day will start in circle, taking the opportunity to give thanks. Through the week participants will spend time learning wilderness survival skills, earth-based crafts and gardening. The core routines of the naturalist will be woven into each day. Games, theatre, song and story will become an outlet for expression and a medium for teaching. Each day will end in a circle just as it began.

In addition to creating a space for the youth voice and creating excellent opportunities for hands-on learning, The Farm School will also be hosting a workshop series on Community Schooling and bioregional education solutions. They will also provide information for parents with babies and toddlers who wish to find childcare or pool childcare with other parents during the Congress.

Venue

The 10th Continental Bioregional Congress (CBC X) will be held on The Farm in the Swan River watershed of the Cumberland Green Bioregion, Summertown Tennessee. Founded in 1971 by a caravan from San Francisco, the Farm started as a spiritual community that has served as a model for sustainable development and community living for over 35 years. The Farm now encompasses over 2,000 acres, houses many ecologically-based businesses (including the Ecovillage Training Center), and hosts bioregionally-related events of many kinds year-round.



Holding this event at a successful ecovillage allows us to experience life in a permaculture-designed village full of earth-friendly housing, cooperative forestry, and consensus-based decision-making.

The Farm is proud to be hosting the upcoming Congress and hopes to provide a loving and comfortable space for CBCX. While most people attending the event will camp, a variety of housing through the Farm Ecovillage Hostel and Farm homes will also be available. Food will be provided through local sources and providers. Health care and wellness services will be provided in cooperation with The Farm Midwives and community health practitioners.

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Participants

People working to create a sustainable and just human culture are invited to participate in this year's Congress as delegates representing bioregions across North America. From this inclusive invitation, a diverse experience of community will form allowing people to exchange multiple viewpoints to inform, inspire and celebrate the possibilities for harmonizing how humans live on earth. The Tennessee gathering will bring together hundreds of activists, artists, writers, permaculturists, farmers, entrepreneurs, policy-makers, scientists, researchers, children, adults, and others concerned about the state of this continent and the planet.



Regional Captains: Empowering individuals to organize within their "local" network

Local leaders from Bioregions throughout North America will be joining the CBCX team as Regional Captains to help identify and invite delegates from their communities, and/or coordinate regional events. Congress organizers are also raising money to bring delegates from under-voiced communities such to this important event. All delegates will be bringing information to and from the Congress to create a cultivate a collective intelligence, and unified platform for work across the globe.



Regional Captains embody the decentralized local empowerment that is core to the philosophy of Bioregionalism. Individuals and groups are encouraged to become Regional Captains by taking an active role in Congress development and outreach including:

- Distributing fliers
- Inviting local delegates
- Fundraising
- Coordinating regional events
- Organizing biofuel caravans
- Producing/distributing press releases

Regional captains are encouraged to identify at least ten leaders in the Bioregional, Transition, and/or Permaculture movements to bring to CBCX. Each captain will help raise the money from their own bioregion for the 10+ delegates to come, and through that work, gain a free entrance and a recognized position at the congress.