

The Environmental Support Center

Strategic Direction

Approved by the Board of Directors, June 2009

Vision and Values

All people regardless of race, ethnicity, or income level have the opportunity to determine the sustainability of their communities. Dynamic and effective activist organizations at the grassroots, state, and regional levels authentically represent the interests of the community residents to whom they are accountable; and elected officials and others in position of authority respect and advance those interests. As a result, all communities in the country are free from environmental hazards, enjoy a healthy natural environment, and offer employment through ventures that are environmentally and socially sustainable.

The Environmental Support Center will be the premier capacity-building institution that uses a racial justice framework to provide accessible, responsive assistance to community-based environmental justice and environmental activist groups.

Mission

To promote the quality of the natural environment, human health, community sustainability, and social justice, the Environmental Support Center builds the capacity of environmental justice groups and their allies.

Core Constituency

- Groups organizing on environmental issues and comprised of and/or led by low-income people and people of color
- Groups organizing on environmental issues with a social equity lens, and who want to be allies or partners with environmental justice groups

Strategic Goals

The Environmental Support Center can best support environmental justice groups, as well as their allies in the environmental movement and funding community, by building capacity within a racial justice framework, providing technical assistance with strategic transformative money, and convening groups across the movement within an economic and racial justice context.

1. Diversify, strengthen and transform the environmental movement by working with local, state and regional environmental justice groups and mainstream environmental activist groups within a racial and socio-economic framework.

2. Respectfully leverage ESC's position to support the environmental justice movement.
3. Help build the collaborative capacity of environmental justice groups, the mainstream environmental communities and other justice organizations, through programs, gatherings and special projects.
4. Develop and use reports, dialogues, gatherings and other activities to encourage grantmakers to support environmental justice organizing.
5. Develop and use reports, dialogues, gatherings and other activities to encourage capacity-builders to support environmental justice organizing.
6. Become a thought leader around issues of the environment, race, class and organizing.
7. Transform ESC's current relationships with our constituents so that we are more directly accountable to them and they have more ownership in ESC.
8. Strengthen ESC's board and staff capacity to reflect and advance ESC's strategic direction.
9. Ensure sufficient, appropriate, and diversified financial resources to support ESC's programs, staff, and strategic direction.

Integrated Strategy

- Provide small grants and culturally competent technical assistance for capacity-building, a focus on planning, fundraising, technology and "dismantling racism"
- Provide tools and special projects for bridge-building among ESC's stakeholders, such as:
 - research, reports and other materials;
 - forums to allow environmental justice groups and allies to exchange information, ideas, skills and expertise, within a racial and social justice context; and
 - working proactively to bridge the gaps between environmental justice groups, grantmakers, and capacity-builders