

Illinois Yearly Meeting Leadership Retreat 2006  
Proposed Activities  
Environmental Concerns Committee  
2006 February 11-12  
Roy C. Treadway, Clerk

The Environmental Concerns Committee of Illinois Yearly Meeting seeks to involve members of Illinois Yearly Meeting with the joys and preciousness of our environment and with ways to protect and care for the earth. In doing so, we will encourage all to respect God's creation and to live in a way of simplicity, sustainability, and balance with the earth that enhances peace and social justice throughout the world, as Quakers have tried to live for centuries.

In the coming years the Environmental Concerns Committee will undertake the following activities.

At the yearly meeting site, we will explore:

1. improving the natural setting with trees, prairie flowers, and other plants, enhancing the nature sanctuary of the site;
2. developing a nature trail on the boundary of the site for meditation, education, enjoyment, and exercise; and
3. creating a natural labyrinth as a sacred place among small hills, rocks, plants, bushes, trees, and walking paths for meditation.

In the surrounding countryside of the yearly meeting site, we will:

1. undertake bicycle rides at yearly meeting sessions inviting adults, youth, and children to enjoy the surrounding natural areas and the thrill of traveling without engines, thus conserving fossil fuel and enjoying the sounds of nature and
2. lead other nature experiences, such as, early-morning bird and nature walks and trips to nearby prairies, wetlands, woodlands, farms, and other natural areas.

For the buildings, new and old, at the yearly site, we will work with others to consider:

1. making them as energy efficient (Leadership in Energy and Environment Design [LEED] certified or "Green") as possible;
2. adding wind turbines and solar panels to generate electricity and capture heat;
3. conserving and reusing water; and
4. continuing to develop and support recycling and composting.

For wider outreach at yearly meeting, regional gatherings, and monthly meetings, we will conduct spiritually centered workshops focusing on our care of the earth:

1. in a time of destructive consumption, global warming, habitat loss, declining availability of fossil fuel, dangers of nuclear energy, and environmental stresses due to global population and
2. in a time with great opportunity to foster development of renewable energy, thoughtful population choices, helpful agricultural practices, and simple sustainable living that will enhance our personal spiritual growth and societal peace and justice in our world.