QEW is moving into an exciting period of its existence. At the October 2012 gathering, we reminisced about the first 25 years of the organization from its founding in 1987. Those at that first meeting in 1987 concluded, “There is a need for Friends to give forceful witness to the holiness of creation and to demonstrate in their lives the meaning of this testimony.” The epistle from that gathering went on to say, “We believe right relationship with our natural environment is basic to the achievement of peace and a just social order, and the equitable distribution of the world’s resources, both today and through generations to come.”

At our October 2012 gathering, we asked ourselves whether QEW had fulfilled its mandate. We concluded that we still have work to do but we need to figure out what QEW uniquely offers alongside other Quaker environmental and non-governmental organizations. We also talked about the need for long-range planning to help us figure out QEW’s future.

In January 2013 this was discussed again and in March 2013 we set up an ad hoc long-range planning committee (AHLRPC). The AHLRPC has a mandate of one year to work with the various standing committees and projects of QEW to develop a statement of where QEW wants to be in three to five years, along with the resources and skills needed to help us get there.

QEW wants to remain relevant to Quakers and others who are concerned with living in right relationship with Earth; yet there are many organizations with similar goals. What is unique about QEW?
Here are some of the answers we’ve heard so far: We want to engage and connect with Quakers, other faith groups, and secular organizations who share our concerns. We want to deepen spiritually. We want to live our testimonies, change what we do and how we do it, and get in right relationship with Earth. We want to speak out. We want to be more relevant to young people. We want to use our website and social media more effectively.

We want to turn to our roots, pose the right queries and questions, and develop a Quaker response plan that gives us hope. We have already started. At the beginning of April, we submitted a 500-word statement on science, technology, and innovation to the Economic and Social Committee (ECOSOC), which included three queries for government leaders to consider.

The Quaker Peace and Earthcare Committees of Australia have engaged in a similar quest. They have produced, “Towards a Vision of a Peaceful and Sustainable Australia: Quaker Voices,” available now at www.quakers.org.au. Additionally, we know that FWCC has put out the Kabarak Call on Peace and Social Justice, which is available at www.saltandlight.org.

QEW first needs to figure out a vision for itself and then we can work with others to see how we can connect the dots for a peaceful and sustainable future. If you have thoughts on what this vision for QEW should be or what you think is unique about QEW, please get in touch. You can contact me at anne@quakerearthcare.org or contact the clerk of the ad hoc Long Range Planning Committee, Roy Taylor at wrldpeas[at]mindspring.com.

Thanks,

Anne Mitchell, General Secretary

Contribute to the Long-Range Vision for QEW

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Anne Mitchell