



**CLIMATE
COLECTIVA
WATER & ROOTS
PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 2 & 3, 2016
SOUTHWEST WORKER'S UNION**

**COMMUNITY
REPORT**

#CLIMATECOLECTIVA



WATER & ROOTS: PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT ASSEMBLY

Welcome to Southwest Worker's Union, Welcome to San Antonio if you traveled to be here with us. We hope you find your time with us sincerely enriching, and informative and that the connections you make become part of a larger network of communities in the same struggle. We are not unique in our battles, but we are uniquely San Antonio in our approaches. We are a community that brings tacos in the morning of actions, we are a community that rebels against a long standing history of colonization and enslavement of indigenous and black ancestors. We are a community that prays with our water and understands the sacred struggles based around our water sources and protection of those for not just us but the many generations to come. We are a community that comes together to celebrate new life, and to celebrate the passing of elders. We are a community that uses cumbias to fundraise, we are a community that blends identities, we are a community that hurts and heals together. We are here today to remind you that everything we do is not because we love our selves, but because we love our community without distinction of borders or physical limits. We are here today to share in your wisdom, as you have the ideas that will continue this work after today and into the future.

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The battles we raise our voices against will not always be quickly won, and because of that we are excited to invest in our youth. During this time we encourage you to share your experiences with our youth, but also know that we have safe space child care available for anyone who may need it. We are building space for parents, and families of all types. These are the leaders of tomorrow, they are here today too and we ask that you share in their wisdom as well.

Food is Sacred, and Water is Life, we will cater your meals with delicious options for breakfast and lunch with options for our vegan family. While here we encourage you to visit our Water is Life interview, the area is a place to sit and a record your personal history on the ways you are concerned about water, floods, or any stories or songs that relate to Water. We will collect these stories as a digital archive for future generations.

Welcome to Water and Roots: Your Movement Assembly.



WATER & ROOTS SCHEDULE

Day 1 Overview – Friday, December 2, 2016

Time	Session	Location
6:00PM - 9:00PM	Dinner and Welcoming	The Movement Gallery



Day 2 Overview – Saturday, December 3, 2016

Time	Session	Location
9:00 AM	SWU Member Breakfast	The Movement Gallery
10:00 AM	Assembly Opens & Water is Life Panel: The Gulf South, Dakota Access and Big Bend	The Movement Gallery
11:00 AM	Workshop Session 1	Various Locations
12:00 PM	Workshop Session 2	Various Locations
1:00 PM	Lunch	Roots of Change Community Garden
2:00 PM	Workshop Session 3	Various Locations
3:00 PM	Workshop Session 4	
3:50: PM	SWU Membership Next Steps	The Movement Gallery
4:30 PM	Closing Thoughts	The Movement Gallery
	End at 5:00 PM	
6:00 pm	Queer The Cheer – Holiday Market	

WATER & ROOTS AGENDA

	Self Care as Resistance Corazon Space	Food Justice & Water Defense Roots of Change Community Garden	Land & Labor The Movement Gallery
11:00 AM- 11:45 AM	Limpias for Self Care <i>Presenter: Susana Ramirez</i>	Big Mama’s Kitchen Table: A Reflection of African-American Comfort Food Writing Skillshare <i>Presenter: Naomi Williams</i>	Comadre Economies Panel: Alternatives for Women Lead Businesses <i>Panel: Cristina Martinez (VeryThat), Trabajadoras del Hogar en Acción, Fuerza Unida</i>
12:00 PM- 12:45 PM	Women in Protest & Community Action Art Stencil Skillshare <i>Presenter: Rosallynn Warren</i>	Decolonizing your Diet Platica <i>Presenter: Dr. Lilliana Patricia Saldaña</i>	Emma Tenayuca & the Fight for a Living Wage: Screen Printing Workshop <i>Presenter: Ernesto Olivo</i>
2:00 PM - 2:45 PM	The Healing Symbolism in Beyoncé’s Lemonade <i>Presenter: Dr. Kinitra Brooks</i>	DIY Rain Barrels & Water Catchment Systems <i>Presenter: Brian Gordon, Roots of Change Community Garden</i>	Next Steps for Coalition Building: A look beyond 2016 Community <i>Brainstorm Session</i>
3:00 PM - 3:45 PM	Community Unschooling & Decolonizing Home Education <i>Presenter: Laura Rios Ramirez</i>		Community Brainstorm Session <i>(cont’d)</i>



"To understand our current climate, we have to understand where we have been, over the last 10 years that I have been part of Southwest Workers Union, we have always strived to unite in one collective struggle with dignity, respect and justice. Our families and members have been fighting for years for our homes, water, food access, land, and jobs, but where has the healing and understanding been? When does it become alright to labor our sweat and blood into a company that brings harm to our community when our current government and society has failed us many times. Families are forced to leave their culture and land to be able to provide for their family. As I myself have become a mother recently, I understand the desire to work hard to provide for your children. There is no boundary a mother would not reach to ensure the safety and well-being of their child."

Sandra Garcia,
Associate Director

COMMUNITY SESSIONS:

After talking with community we felt a strategic way to get more people involved was to personalize the effects of climate change. Climate Colectiva hosted three conversations that explored more directly how climate change and irregular weather patterns can disrupt every day life. In many of the sessions new bonds were forged and as new connections form more people became excited about focusing the conversations to create real solutions. This is the action we strive to see in our neighborhoods, people defining and organizing around problems today instead of waiting for someone else to do it. The Community Sessions offered participants an opportunity to explore climate change as it affects our Bodies, Food and Income. From there we took components and went a little deeper in our Agenda. The Assembly is an opportunity to go even deeper and build broader networks to fight for clean communities.



Reproductive Justice

The reproductive justice session began with an exercise with each participant drawing a map to the closest green space near their home. A majority of the participants noted that there were not parks or green spaces with close proximity to their home. Some noted that though there was a park, there were large highways or creeks that created barriers to accessing it. One participant noted while her more affluent neighborhood did have a park within walking distance where the police were called on Mexican American



Art: Arturo Trejo

We must
fight
to stay
in our
homes,
and for
more
unpolluted
green
spaces

children for looking suspicious at the playground. When there are limited green spaces, communities lose important tools to connect with the natural world and health benefits associated from exercise and fresh air.

As we continued the conversation we started realize there were also large distances between reproductive services and hospitals that in emergencies could be difficult to find. A community response was to ensure there be an investment in more community birth workers. Traditionally our region had long relied on parteras, or traditional midwives that is still prevalent but less utilized for various reasons from language barriers, to liability or certification reasons, or just a general misrepresentation and smear campaigns against traditional medicine. Aside from the physical limitations that can be imposed by strong weather emergencies like flash floods, another concern was about resource use from not utilizing proper birth control methods. One member had said without access to contraceptives and abortion services we increase our population and utilize more resources and while a family has the autonomy to be as large as they choose the reality is more people requires more energy, more water, more food and more waste. Reproductive



"As a youth coordinator, it is important for me to raise ambition in the youth to make the changes that we cannot make today and to carry on and spread the word to everyone they come upon. It is our duty and work to educate them about the realities of how climate change affects our communities globally. Learning at a young age will prevent them from facing environmental injustices. Education on formal and informal ways of envisioning a way of life for example limiting carbon emission, starting their own recycling, composting program and garden at their school/home to simply changing their lifestyle.

Bonnie Hernandez,
Youth Leadership
Organization
Coordinator

service access was considered to be deeply biased against race by not ensuring adequate support or safe clinics for women of color and migrants families. In many neighborhoods religious affiliated "crisis pregnancy centers"(CPC) have opened up with incorrect information about abortion and birth control or religious propaganda. The numbers of CPCs grew as the state of Texas passed HB2 which limited legitimate abortion services clinics by demanding expensive upgrades and in many cases medically unnecessary technology.

Some people also felt concerned about not just having safe pregnancies but the future beyond that step of parenthood. What about how we teach our children and how involved are we in the process? With our youth it is extra important to utilize their wisdom also in the fight for our land. We must continue conversations about climate and our bodies with the next generation. Training them with emergency skills as well as critical thinking. To have another generation of people working for healthy soil, healthy drinking water and healthy lands to continue the nurture the future definitions of family as we move into more unstable climate ground.



Food Access

We started by looking for the connections in how we saw climate change. Conversations rotated around intersectional issues such as labor, or dietary habits and how those connections had direct impacts to the over all health of the planet. One member expressed how climate change was responsible for extreme temperatures. This in turn equated



"As a food sovereignty coordinator, I believe climate change to have real and detrimental impacts to our food systems. With a constantly changing and unpredictable climate, we risk unstable crops and new problems, like water and temperature flows being interrupted. Record high heat waves prevent seasonal growing of annuals, and can even shift the climate enough to disrupt perennials accustomed to our region. Longer droughts or violent storms can wipe out crops leaving many workers and consumers struggling to keep up. We are being forced to evaluate new practices and abandon our ancestral regional knowledge in a frantic attempt to keep up. Climate change can shape the future of our fragile water and food systems, so we must be very conscious about the next actions we take in creating a viable and sustainable culture."

Brian Gordon,
Food Sovereignty
Coordinator



Water flows all around us and it is the center of lives. Without clean water we will not survive. Contamination of the water affects every aspect of our lives including our ability to provide a safe, healthy place for our children. Because of heavy industrialization, extreme extraction and privatization of resources our people are not only sick, poor, over worked but are also commodities in a war for profit. Right now our relatives from North Dakota are being attacked for trying to save sacred lands, sacred water. They are standing up against private business aided by the US government on their own land. Indigenous people continue to face effects of colonialism 500+ years later. From Big Bend to the Gulf Coast to Detroit to North Dakota we are rising up in defense of water and our right to live. Pa' Lante!

Diana Lopez,
Executive Director

to physical pain because excess moisture in the air or temperature fluctuations affected her rheumatoid arthritis. She said aside from the pain it also affect her career as a domestic worker which in turn affected her family. These personal connections had several members reflecting on a conversation around climate and health we are not having with our elders.

With the topic being food access and justice we started thinking about where our food comes from and how would we get it if there was no car, no public transportation or what if there was no store? These brought up an over all desire for people to learn the basics of gardening by creating or joining community gardens. It's not just reaching the store but also the quality of what lies within. Many members had discussed how not all grocery stores carry organics or vegan foods but always have plenty of junk food at lower prices than any farmer's market in the area. We need to demand that our stores are offering healthy options to all communities no matter the neighborhood. Investing in healthy options has been a difficult path in San Antonio, often people say healthy items don't sell. In many cases most low income families cannot afford the higher prices of organic fruit and vegetables, one person wondered if this was part of the a systematic health crisis for communities of color.

While many people spoke about gardens throughout this conversation there was a general concern about water. In Central Texas our can be severe floods to prolonged droughts, its important to discuss water management and requirement when talking about food. This of course also means healthy land that hasn't been contaminated is also important for a community garden. One pair wanted to



discuss how shipping of produce fro other countries is an often neglected concern of the food and climate conversation. This person said they noticed this occurs when things are grown south when the growing cycle was over in the north. Because of this local environments are changing with indigenous plants, medicines and foods being cleared for western palates. The combination of gasses produced by shipping and habitat destabilization eating foods out of season or geography can have lasting affects as well.

The conversation closed with an interest around decolonizing our diets as more traditional diets were considered to be more harmonious with the planet. From eating what was in season to domesticated varieties of local fruits and vegetables or foraging seasonal goods our ancestors used the days to dictate diet. In some cases returning to the foods our ancestors are accustomed to can mean less water use, less carbon released by eating locally and seasonal foods in season as well as building community.

We closed with 4 cooking demonstrations, teaching how to cook diabetic friendly nopal tacos, a skillshare on how to nixtamalize corn, a demonstration on how to make aloe & peach water, and garden tour with discussion on edible wild greens. The guests were given produce from the Roots of Change Community Garden and Recipe Cards.



Como trabajadora domestica el cambio climático me afecta en temporadas de calor por que cuando voy a mi trabajo tengo que tomar el autobus y para el area de donde trabajo. Los autobuses solo pasan cada hora, en esa ocaion me toco esperar 2 horas por que el autobus se descompuso y no tenia nadie quien pudiera recogerme. Y por estar esperando en el calor y el sol me enferme de la garganta que no pude trabajar en los siquinete dias. En temporadas de frio no es la excepcion por que cuando hace tanto frio y me subo al autobus trae la calefacion tan fuerte que me dan alegrías.

Alicia Pérez,
Organizadora de
Trabajadoras del
Hogar en Accion
Coordinator



Alternative Economies

Our conversation around Alternative Economies saw our members split into two groups and focus on creating co-ops. Each group chose a product or service, one choosing an organic farm and the other a spice and food company. The groups planned how leadership and accountability would be centered in each space and how payment would be dispersed. The teams created mini-business plans and were asked to consider alternatives to profits which eventually led to conversations around breaking away from traditional capitalist markets and communal living. While considering ways to implement their alternatives to capitalist supply and demand economies, the groups eventually realized that while engaging communities and community spaces that there was no reason why they couldn't support each others cooperatives by bartering fresh grown herbs for the herbal spice company for food, herbal medicines and various forms of physical support. These were exactly the kind of community-based ideas that create stronger forms of commerce for an area. When we question different manners of operating a business and what it takes to create a living wage for ones self, it continues to push the limits of the ways we make sustainable living for ourselves. When discussing climate change it's important to understand that often many of the residents of frontline communities in many cases rely on large corporations for jobs. This is a good reason why as one of our guests suggested, "its not just understanding what hurts a community, but also what it's going to take to help heal it."



SOLIDARITY CLINIC:

The Solidarity Clinic is a community healing lead response to systematic racism and injustice. The goal of the “clinic” was to create a safe space for people of color to come together and find tools for healing each other. Often times many people in the organizing sphere will work ourselves til exhaustion without ever really stopping to process or simply ask ourselves:

How do I feel about what just happened and what should I do to feel better?

It is the belief of many of the organizers who helped create the solidarity clinic that our ancestors had given us many of the tools we needed to face the challenges of a modern world. We have long histories of plant medicine to elevate us when we're feeling down, or to sooth us when we are sick. We understand the world to be a place of energies that can attach them to with every click of a Facebook article. We can be strong and firm in our actions and marches, but we often go home and cry too. Solidarity Clinic will continue because the need to expand understanding and access to traditional medicine is valuable regardless of what's happening in the world. This is about self-preservation, this is about healing wounded warriors, this is about reminding community that we are all trying to understand the same fears and can offer support.



The Clinic began with a host of medicines offered by different healers and healing collectives such as Sol y Luna Soaps, VidaLuna Botanicals, Dandelioness Botanicals, Kalpulli Ameyaltonal and Que Suavé Manos to mention a few. Information on self care was offered in the form of hand outs, coloring sheets, and of course prepackaged herbal remedies. Many people responded to the information and took check in forms for themselves, information on stones for healing, herbal remedies for organizers, first aid kit forms and the like. This was a successful piece of the project because we have seen time and time again access to information helps

support community healing. You take copies of what you learn and share it with your sisters and brothers and continue spreading the wisdom. We have continued to make this information available by living these pieces on display in The Movement Gallery.

We had four curanderas come and set up personal spaces to do one on one work with community members also. Two offered limpias, which are traditional cleansings that have been a long-standing part of traditional medicine prevalent in many of the indigenous and African Diaspora communities for generations. With the sweet smell and familiar white smoke of copal resin that is so often seen leading the way in our marches, people were given space to shed and talk. Connect and allow themselves to build rapport with people who have come to only offer their love and energy. It was a very transformative space, with people coming to discuss the recent police shootings, and those coming to just connect because they needed an opportunity to process. Our body workers also offered similar services in their area, offering both massage and reiki they are also trained sobadoras or traditional masseuses who could work through trouble areas in the muscles while also listening to the stress of the participant and offering medicinal support if necessary or just an ear to listen. The community was given opportunities to gather medicine, walk the Roots of Change community garden and connect with other Southwest Workers Union staff and members to discuss their concerns of safety, and desires to solidarity.



"The communities we work with are impacted by climate change through food access and displacement. With the surge of migration from rural to urban centers, due to white flight and climate change, working communities have limited access to resources including healthy food and affordable housing. As a cultural community weaver, our responsibility is to share and articulate these stories through art, cultural celebration and healing."

Kimberly Rendon,
Cultural Community Weaver



HEAL YOURSELF - TRADITIONAL MEDICINE RECIPES:

In a continuation of the love and spirit of the Solidarity Clinic, we would like to offer some traditional remedies for your continued healing.

For more information on herbal remedies discuss with your doctor, or a professional herbalist.



Herbs for Grief and Emotional Stress

- **Kava** (*Piper methysticum*)
- **Chamomile** (*Matricaria chamomilla*)
- **Passionflower** (*Passiflora incarnata*)
- **Rose** (*Rose spp.*)
- **Lemon Balm** (*Melissa officinalis*)
- **California Poppy** (*Eschscholzia californica*)

To make a tincture

fill a clean 16 oz. mason jar 1/2 with fresh herbs or 2/3 with dry herbs. Fill the jar with alcohol (80-90 proof such as vodka) or apple cider vinegar and close tight. Place in a dark area such as a cupboard or closet. Shake daily for 2 weeks up to 6 months. After it is opened you will drain the herbs from the liquid and pour into dosage dropper bottles. You can take your drops fresh usually 4-10 under the tongue, or a dropper full to a glass of water or tea.

Herbs for Pain:

- **White willow Bark** (*Salix alba*)
- **Arnica** (*Arnica montana*)
- **Yucca Flowers** (*Yucca elata*)
- **Valerian** (*Valeriana officinalis*)
- **St. John's Wort** (*Hypericum perforatum*)

To make a healing oil:

To make your own oil you will need a dry herb and a base oil, an easy ratio is to take a 16 oz. jar and fill half way with dry herbal material. You can tear pieces of the plant or gently crush with a mortar to help the plant absorb oil more efficiently. Fill the jar with a carrier oil such as olive oil, avocado oil, or almond oil to the neck leave about an inch of space inside the jar. Place in a sunny window and shake daily for 4 weeks to a month. Strain and utilize for massages, or to make salves or poultices.

To make a healing salve for pain:

Make an Arnica infused oil (see previous recipe) strain when finished setting. Create a double boiler (large glass bowl on top of a pot of boiling water) and add 8 oz of oil to the glass bowl. Add 1 ounce of shave beeswax (vegan recipe can be made with carnauba wax) and let melt into the warm oil. After it blended use caution and pour into your tin or baby food jars. Some people add essential oil to add scent or additional medicinal property. To your arnica salve you can add 10 drops of peppermint oil to help sooth aching muscles.

Stones for Protection:

*Obsidian, Tiger's
Eye, Smoky
Quartz*

Stones for Love:

*Rose Quartz,
Rhodonite,
Citrine*

Stones for Emotional Healing:

*Amethyst,
Bloodstone,
Malachite*



Herbs for women:

- **Red Raspberry Leaf** (*Rubus Idaeus*) Support for menstrual cramps as tea.
- **Nettle** (*Urtica dioica*) Strengthens joints and eases joint pain as tea or salve.
- **Estafiate** (*Artemisia ludoviciana*) Remedy for nausea and diarrhea as tea.
- **Alfalfa** (*Medicago sativa*) Assists in the production of breast milk as tea or supplement.
- **Motherwort** (*Leonurus cardiaca*) Support of anxiety and stress as tincture or tea.

Herbs for smudging/cleansing your space:

- White Sage
- BeeBalm
- Mugwort
- Cedar
- Lavendar
- Mullein



To make an herbal tea,

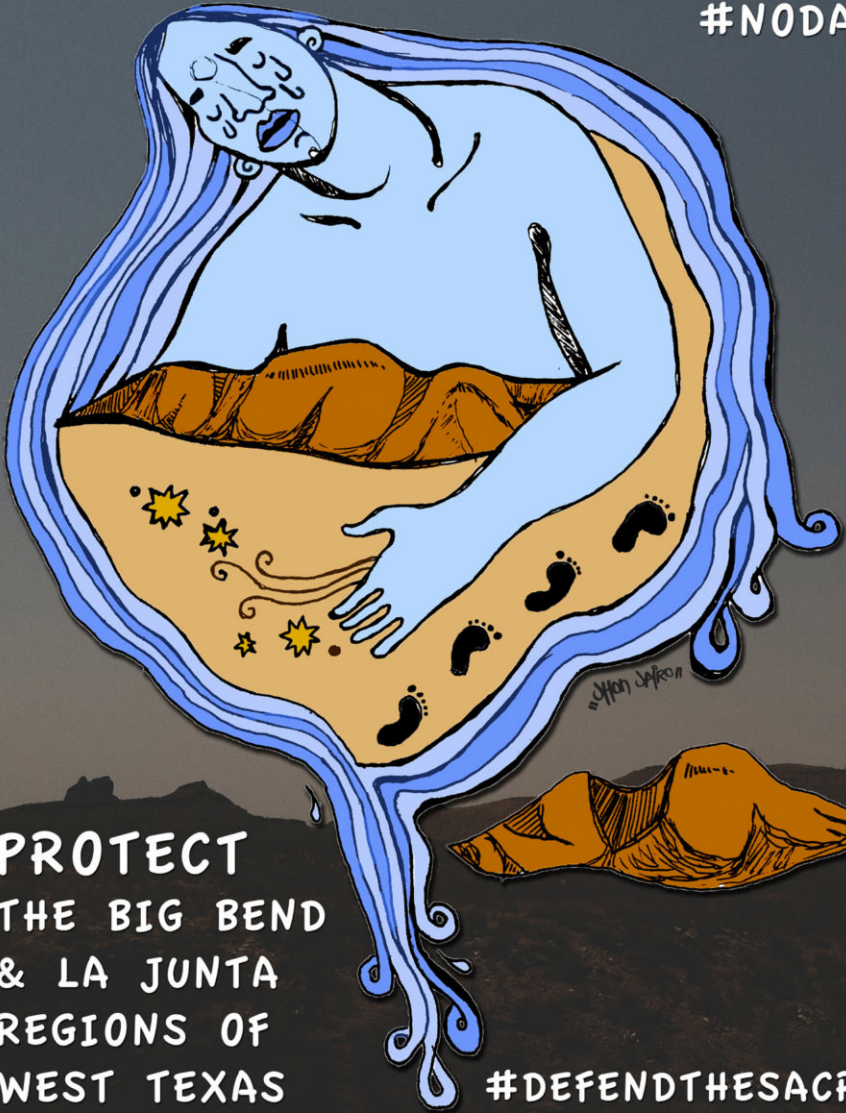
take a table spoon of your dried herb and add to about 2 cups boiling water. Strain with a mesh strainer and drink while warm. You can also heat your water and add 1 tablespoon of the dried herb to a tea infuser, cover for 2 minutes and drink. When drinking medicinal tea it is important to remember that adding sugar or honey can aggravate a condition and is best avoided.

To make a smudge bundle,

cut the stem of your smudge plant of choice with about 6 inches of length per cut stem. Place a small handful of them together and tie at the end closest to you using natural string or thread. Slowly tie up the bundle pulling all the leaves up ward to create a smooth cylinder. Tie at the top and allow to dry for about 10 days to 2 weeks, you can do this in a sunny window or any space where they wont be exposed to moisture.



#NOTRANSPECOSPIPELINE
#WATERISLIFE
#NODAPL



PROTECT
THE BIG BEND
& LA JUNTA
REGIONS OF
WEST TEXAS

#DEFENDTHESACRED

Art: Jhon Jairo Valencia 2016

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