



# Centering Those at Risk: Community-Led Research for Climate Resilience







*We are a peer-to-peer network of people and organizations working to conserve, restore and revitalize America's urban waterways, supporting our members' work through tools, training, mentoring and financial assistance.*



LEARNING SERIES

## Building Water Equity & Climate Resilient Communities for ALL

Six webinars hosted by the UWLN



**Centering Those at Risk:  
The Power of Community-Led  
Research...**

Wednesday 11/15 | 1pm ET

**3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday  
of each month  
thru  
Jan. 2024**

**Recordings  
available!**

# TODAY'S PRESENTERS



**Diana Toledo**, River Network  
Sr. River Programs Director



**Brian Midkiff**, Groundwork San  
Diego-Chollas Creek,  
Sr. Program Manager



**Evelyn Thillet**, Un Nuevo  
Amanecer, Community Field  
Researcher



**David Southgate**, Advisor to Un  
Nuevo Amanecer / Robert  
Schalkenbach Foundation Sr.  
Research Assoc.



TOOLS *for* **EQUITABLE  
CLIMATE RESILIENCE**

**FOSTERING  
COMMUNITY-LED  
RESEARCH AND  
KNOWLEDGE**




**Centering Those at Risk: The Power of  
Community-Led Research for Climate Resilience**




# RIVER NETWORK TOOLS FOR EQUITABLE CLIMATE RESILIENCE

TOOLS for EQUITABLE CLIMATE RESILIENCE


FOSTERING COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP



 **river**  
NETWORK  
connecting people · saving rivers

TOOLS for EQUITABLE CLIMATE RESILIENCE

FOSTERING COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE



 **river**  
NETWORK  
connecting people · saving rivers



# CLIMATE CHANGE, RESILIENCE & EQUITY

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Home / Environmental Health / News / City And Community To Map Urban Heat Island Inequities



### City and Community to Map Urban Heat Island Inequities

Newsletters

Donate

- > Online Services
- > News
- > City and Community to Map Urban

- News & Analysis
- Rural Life
- Podcasts
- Contact

THE DAILY YONDER  
KEEP IT RURAL

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

## Too Poor to Protect: When Cost-Benefit Analysis Leaves Towns to "Wash Away"

For decades, many communities were deemed too poor for federal flood protection. Now a new section of the federal water law could help them.



## Official: Disaster aid widens racial inequities

By CAITLIN REILLY

CQ-Roll Call

4 hrs ago 0



Federal disaster relief funding that prioritizes property value over need exacerbates existing racial inequalities, leaving poor neighborhoods and communities of color more vulnerable to extreme weather events, a Houston area official told lawmakers.

Latest

- UPI
- mur
- Hig
- pow

### Redlined, Now Flooding

## 5 years after Hurricane Harvey, many in Houston are still waiting for help

Texas turned disaster aid for Harvey into a competition. Guess who's losing out?

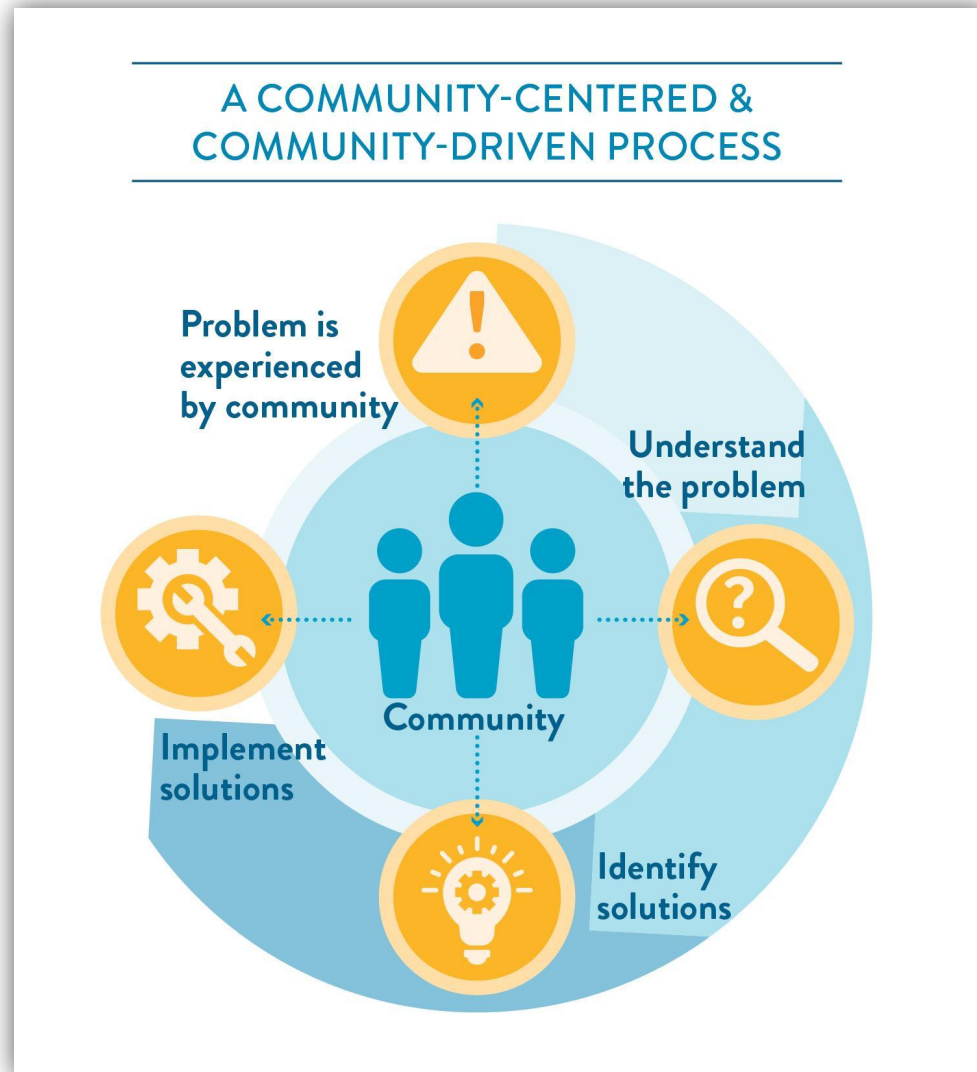


Berman/Chicago Tribune

show how  
the 1930s face  
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# WHAT IS COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH?



"NOTHING ABOUT US  
WITHOUT US"

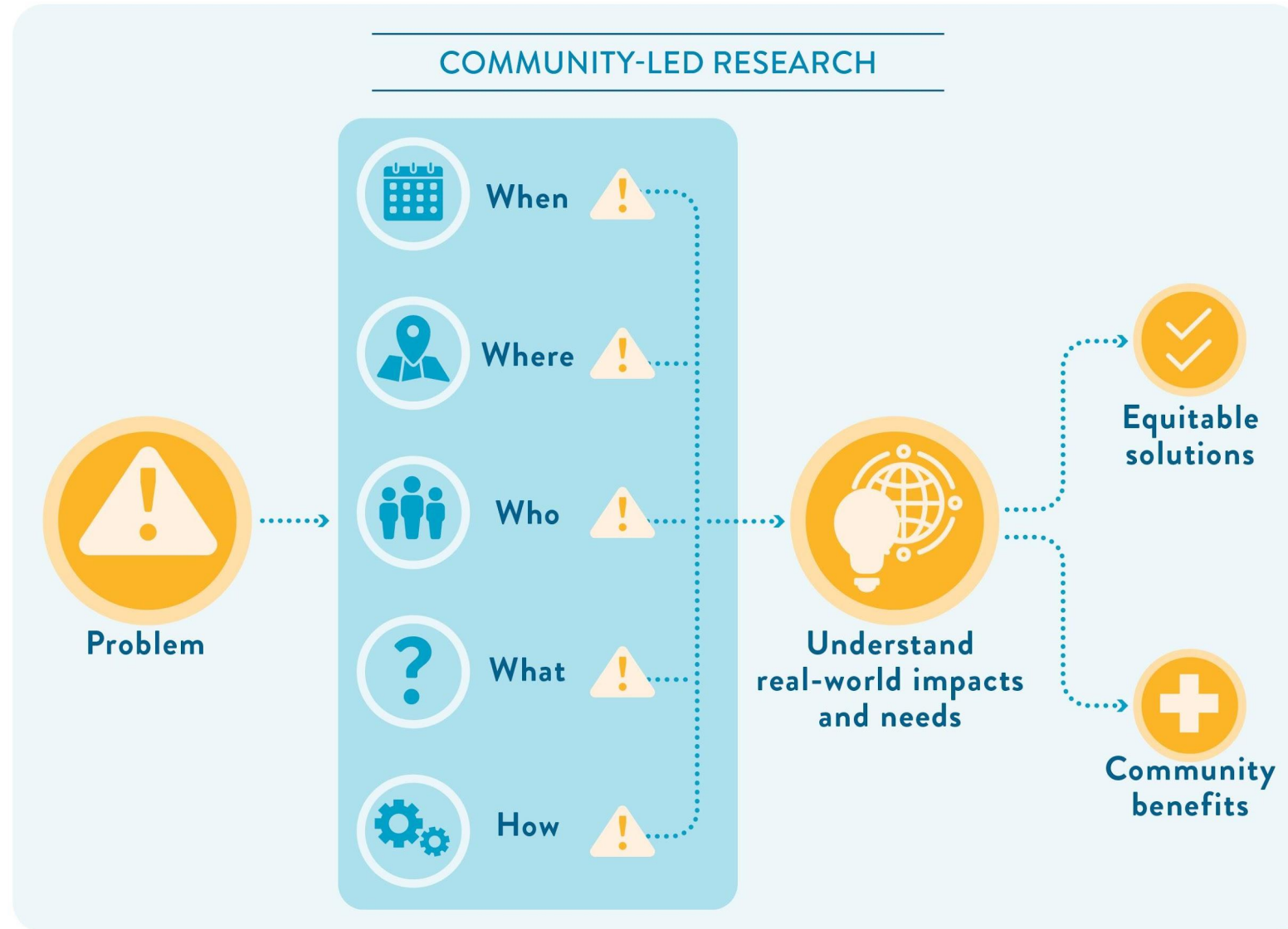


# WHAT IS COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH?

*“A process through which community members come together to gather and synthesize their collective wisdom and knowledge in order to more fully understand how a problem – or set of problems – impact their community, to identify solutions that will work best for their specific community, and to build a case for support.”*

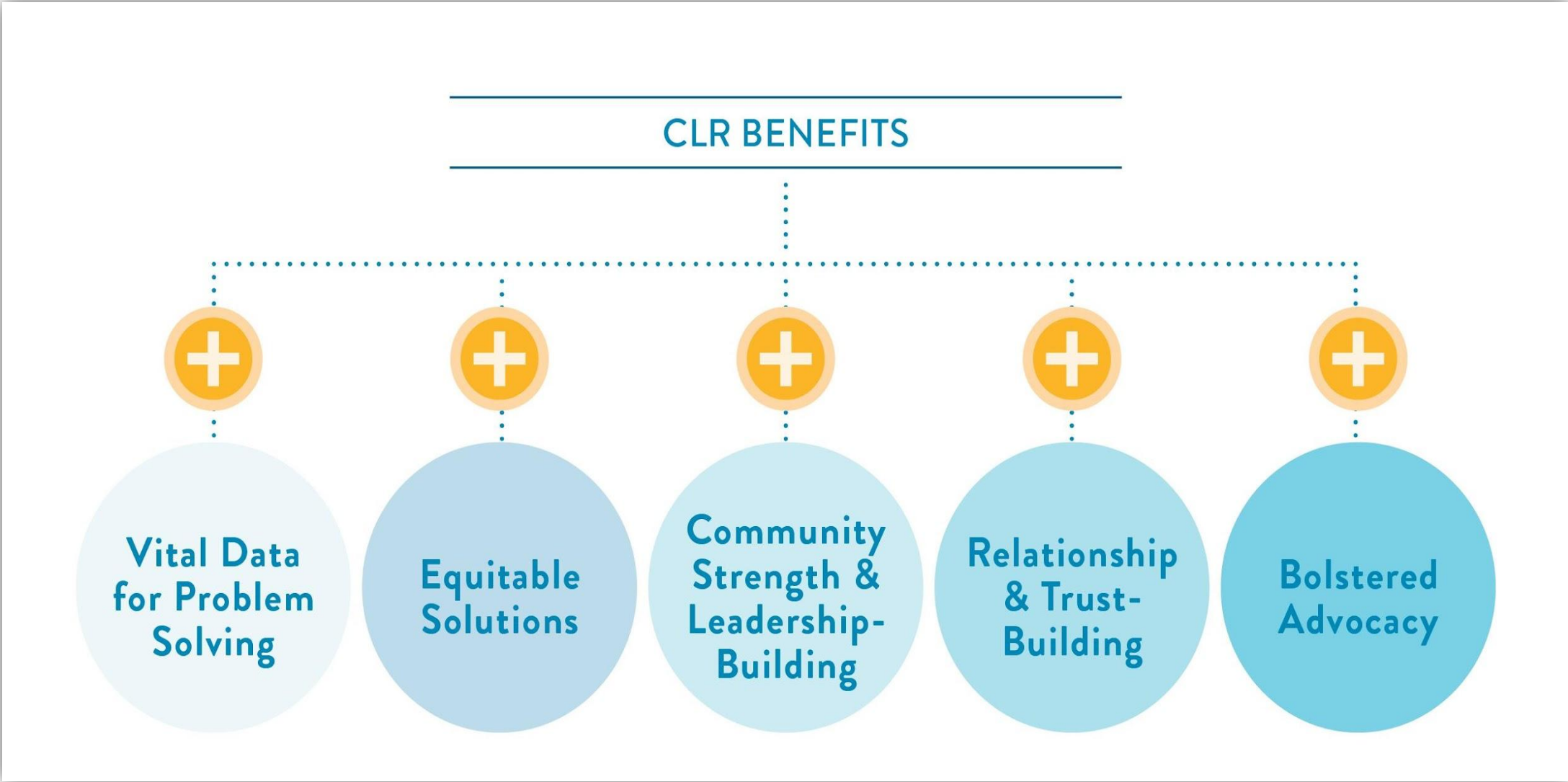


# WHY COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH?





# BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH





# RECOMMENDED STEPS IN A CLR PROCESS

## COMMUNITY-LED RESEARCH STEPS

1 Establish Project Team



2 Define Project Purpose



3 Scope Project



4 Design Project



5 Implement Project/Collect Data



6 Analyze Data/Take Action



# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

## APPENDIX 1:

## CLR PROJECT PLANNING AND FACILITATION GUIDE

### 1 Establish the Project Team

- Who will serve on the Project Team and help lead the CLR Project? How will the community help decide who serves on the Team?
  - e.g. impacted community members, community leaders, experts to bring additional validity to your results, etc.
- What are the Team Members' responsibilities?
  - e.g. attend regular meetings, help plan the project and make decisions throughout the process, support the project's implementation, encourage community members' participation in the project, etc.
- Will team members be compensated and, if so, how?
  - e.g. salary, grants, stipends, or other ways to compensate team members for their time
- Who will make decisions and how?
  - e.g. decisions may be made by the project lead or by some or all team members, using consensus, majority vote or, other processes
- How often will the Project Team meet or check-in, and how will you communicate about the project?

### 2 Define the Purpose of Your CLR project

- Answer the following questions with your team and, possibly, other community representatives:

### 4 Design Your CLR Project

- Choose your **CLR Method(s)**
  - Using the scoping questions above, and considering the advantages and disadvantages of each of the three methods outlined in the Community-Led Research Toolkit ([Remote Crowdsourcing](#), [Community Mapping Exercises](#), and [Person-to-Person Surveying](#)), which method(s) is/are most aligned with your project needs?
  - What methods and strategies will you use to get community input into selecting a CLR method?
- Plan Your Project
  - Thinking ahead to the analysis of the data you will collect; consider the implications of the types of questions you ask and the answers you'll receive. Asking open-ended questions will lend itself to storytelling and will require qualitative analysis. Providing answer choices (e.g. multiple-choice, scales, rating, etc.) will lend itself to producing graphs and charts and will require quantitative analysis.
  - What methods and strategies will you use to ensure robust community engagement in designing the project?

### Method 1 – Remote Crowdsourcing Planning Steps

#### Research and select your crowdsourcing platform

- Who can you recruit to your Project Team to advise you on selecting your crowdsourcing platform?
- What features and technology do community members recommend?
- Based on the answers to the scoping questions above, should you develop your own custom platform or use an existing platform to collect data from your audience?



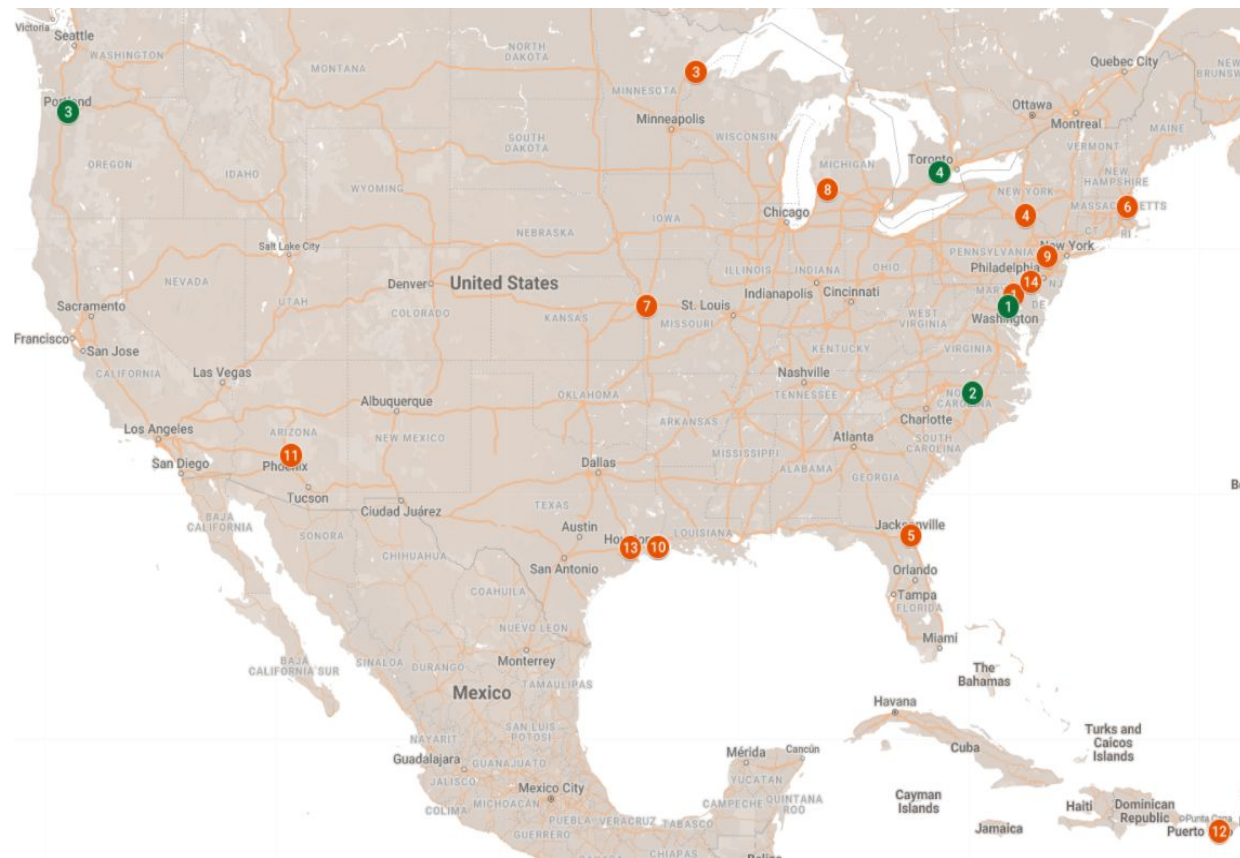
# Technical Assistance Grants

## Community-Led Research

1. **Blue Water Baltimore** – Baltimore, MD
2. **Community in Power & Development Assn** - Port Arthur, TX
3. **Ecolibrium3** - Duluth, MN
4. **Ellerbe Creek Watershed Association** - Durham, NC
5. **Groundwork Jacksonville, Inc.**, Jacksonville, FL
6. **Groundwork Somerville** - Somerville, MA
7. **Heartland Conservation Alliance** – Kansas City, MO
8. **Lower Grand River Org. of Watersheds** - Grand Rapids, MI
9. **Musconetcong Watershed Assn.** – Hackettstown, NJ
10. **Port Arthur Community Action Network** - Port Arthur, TX
11. **RAIL CDC** – Mesa, AZ
12. **Un Nuevo Amanecer** – Ponce, PR
13. **West St. Recovery and NAC** - Houston, TX
14. **White Clay Watershed Assn.** – Avondale, PA
15. **One Truckee River** – Reno, NV
16. **Coastal Watershed Council** – Santa Cruz, CA
17. **Luckiamute Watershed Council**, Independence, OR

## Leadership Development

1. **Defensores de la Cuenca** – Cheverly, MD
2. **Huron Pines** – Gaylord, MI
3. **Partners for Env. Justice** – Raleigh, NC
4. **Verde** – Portland, OR
5. **Wellington Water Watchers** – Guelph, Ontario
6. **Plaster Creek Stewards** – Grand Rapids, MI
7. **Lower 9th Ward Homeownership Association**, New Orleans, LA



**NPS RTCA**

RIVERS, TRAILS & CONSERVATION  
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

[www.nps.gov/rtca](http://www.nps.gov/rtca)



Diana Toledo – [dtoledo@rivernetwork.org](mailto:dtoledo@rivernetwork.org)





# CRREL Climate Resilience Barrio Playa de Ponce, Puerto Rico

David Southgate, MS, MPA. Advisor to Un Nuevo Amanecer Inc. /  
Senior Research Associate with Robert Schalkenbach Foundation

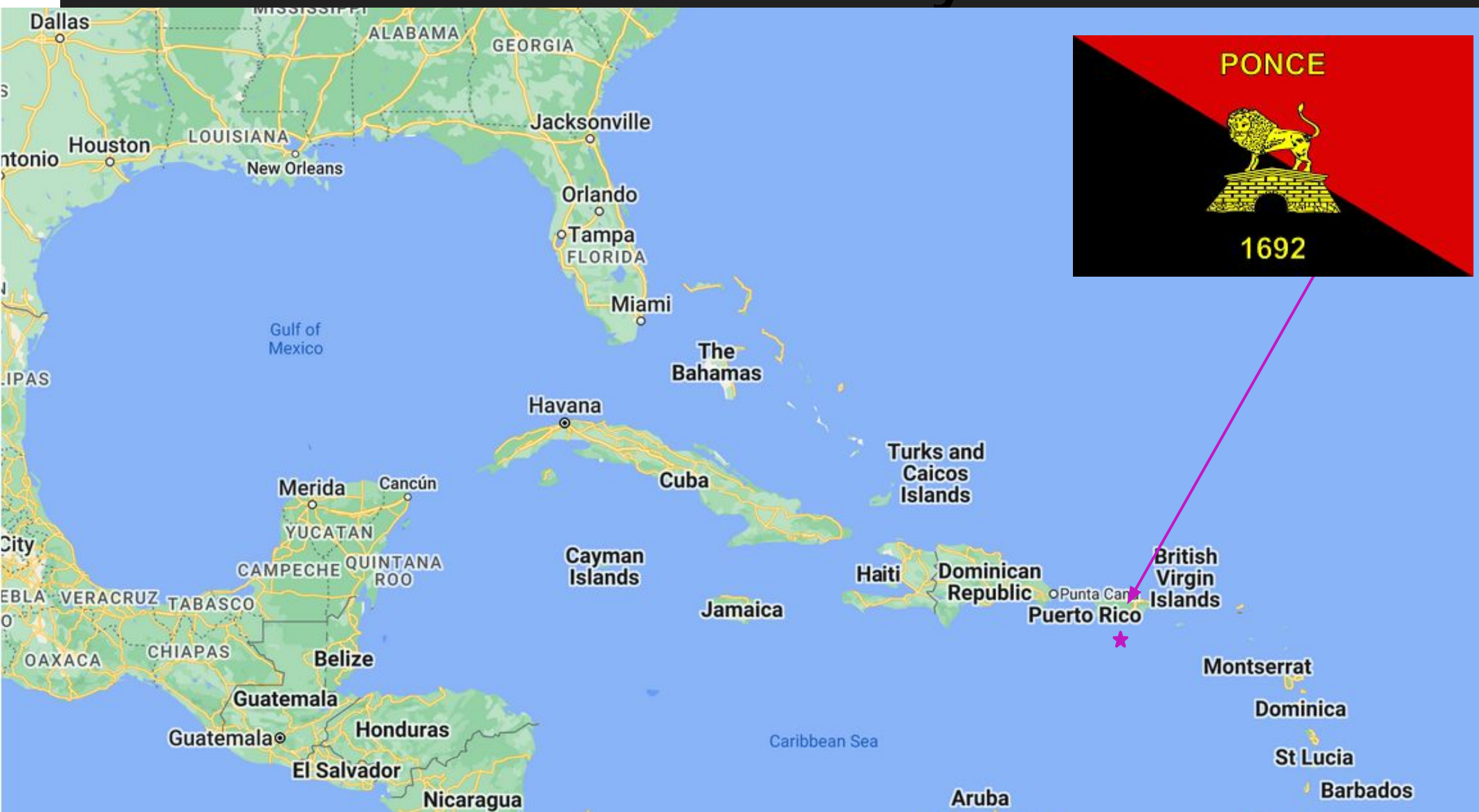
Evelyn Thillet, Community Field Researcher, Un Nuevo Amanecer Inc.



*Building Water Equity & Climate Resilience Series  
Session #4, November 15, 2023*



# Context for Barrio Playa de Ponce





# Problem definition: Socially produced climate

- Multiple factors influencing place abandonment in Playa de Ponce
  - State-imposed vulnerability and displacement
  - Insufficient protective infrastructure
  - Climate change
  - Entrenched poverty
  - Aging population



Septiembre de 2022 – Playa Centro



Septiembre de 2022 – Salistral



Septiembre de 2022 – Parcelas



Septiembre de 2022 – Porto Viejo

# Power, oppression & climate justice

- Power = “The power to decide what is decided” (Lukes, 2004, p. 116).
- Power-relations are socially produced and reproduced. Power is no where and everywhere (Foucault).
- Power is exercised over some groups against their interests (Lukes, 2004).
- Legitimized elite interests are embodied through state apparatus, elections, laws, and regulations. (Howe, 1992).
  - Racialized capital – equity/inclusion problems.



# Arnstein's Ladder of Participation

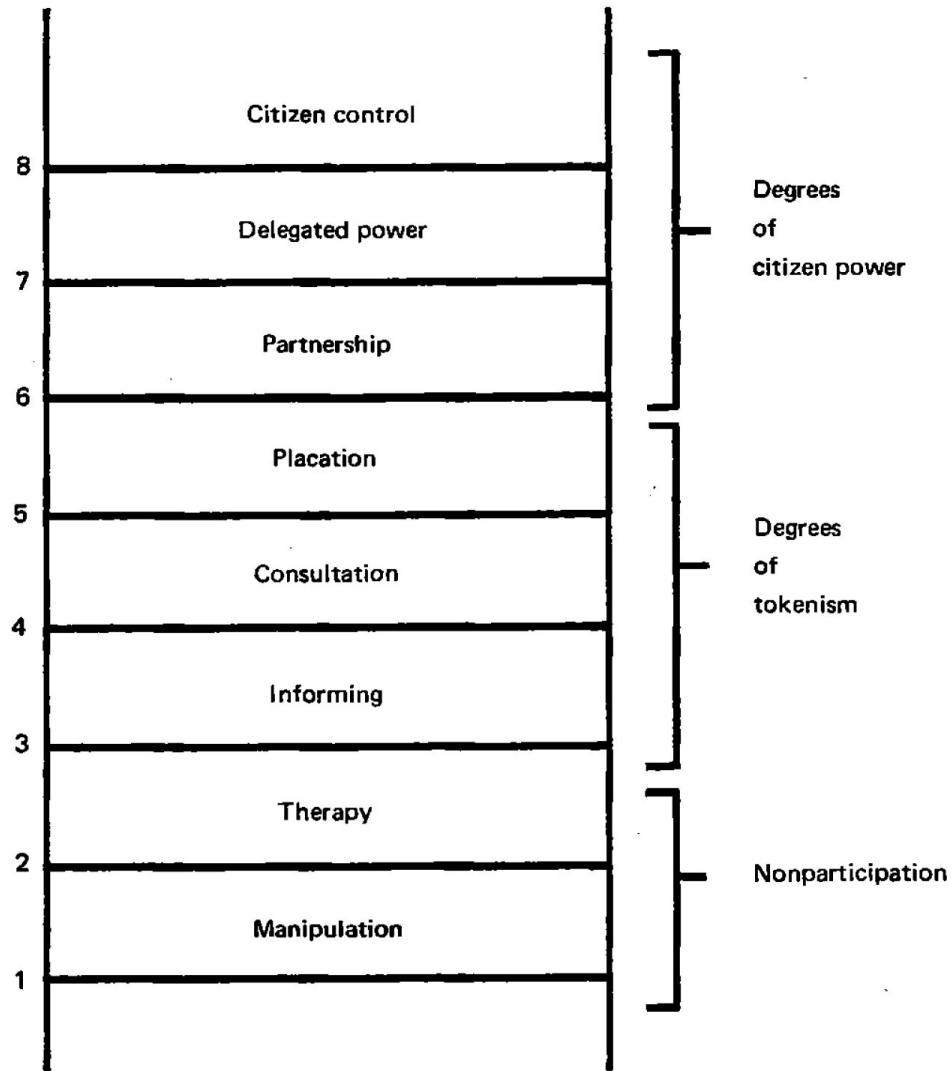


FIGURE 2 *Eight Rungs on a Ladder of Citizen Particip-*

- Citizen control: Citizens take over decisional and management powers.
- Delegated power: Participants negotiate with power.
- Partnership: Participants can advise, but the people in power decide.
- Placation: Participants may be “heard,” but have no power to affect real change.
- Consultation: Citizen advisory boards aimed at educating participants, rubber stamping decisions so powerful interests maintain their position.
- Non-participation

# What are the benefits of participatory action research?

- PAR facilitates research that responds to the particularities of place and culture
- PAR can elevate the importance of the lived experiences of climate change and can help to identify community priorities
- Offers the chance for centering decision-making about climate adaptation around community priorities





Left to right: UNA co-founders, Vice president, Pastor Roberto Ortiz, and president, Ramón Figueroa, along with resident/community developer David Southgate.

## Un Nuevo Amanecer, Inc. (UNA)

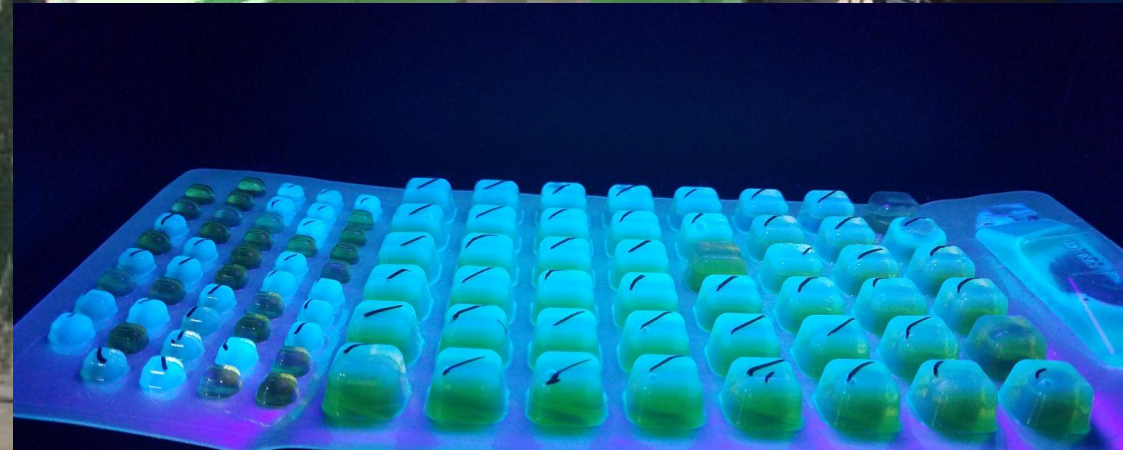
- A domestic non-profit, community-rooted all volunteer organization formed in March 18, 2018 to improve the quality of life for residents of Playa de Ponce, Puerto Rico. November, 2022 achieved 501c3 status.
- Hosts six other organizations tied to social resilience at its headquarters at 1530 Ave. Eduardo Ruberte in Barrio Playa de Ponce.
- The only CBO in Playa working on community resilience & adaptation.
- Represents and collaborates with leaders from across all 19

# Un Nuevo Amanecer's Community-Research GOALS

- Understand
- Design
- Gather and  
produce data
- Develop strategies
- Identify funds /  
technical resources
- Share knowledge

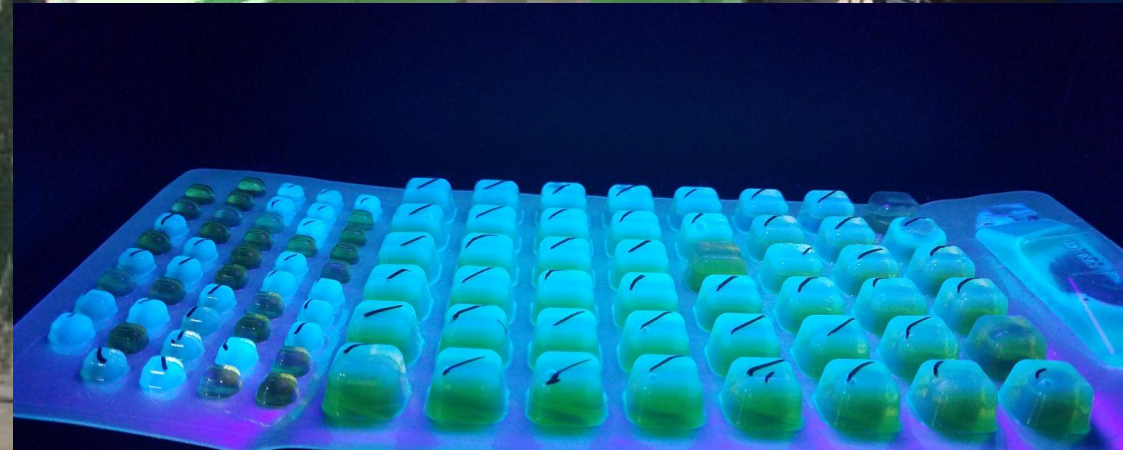


# Examples from Research: Water Quality





# Examples from Research: Water Quality





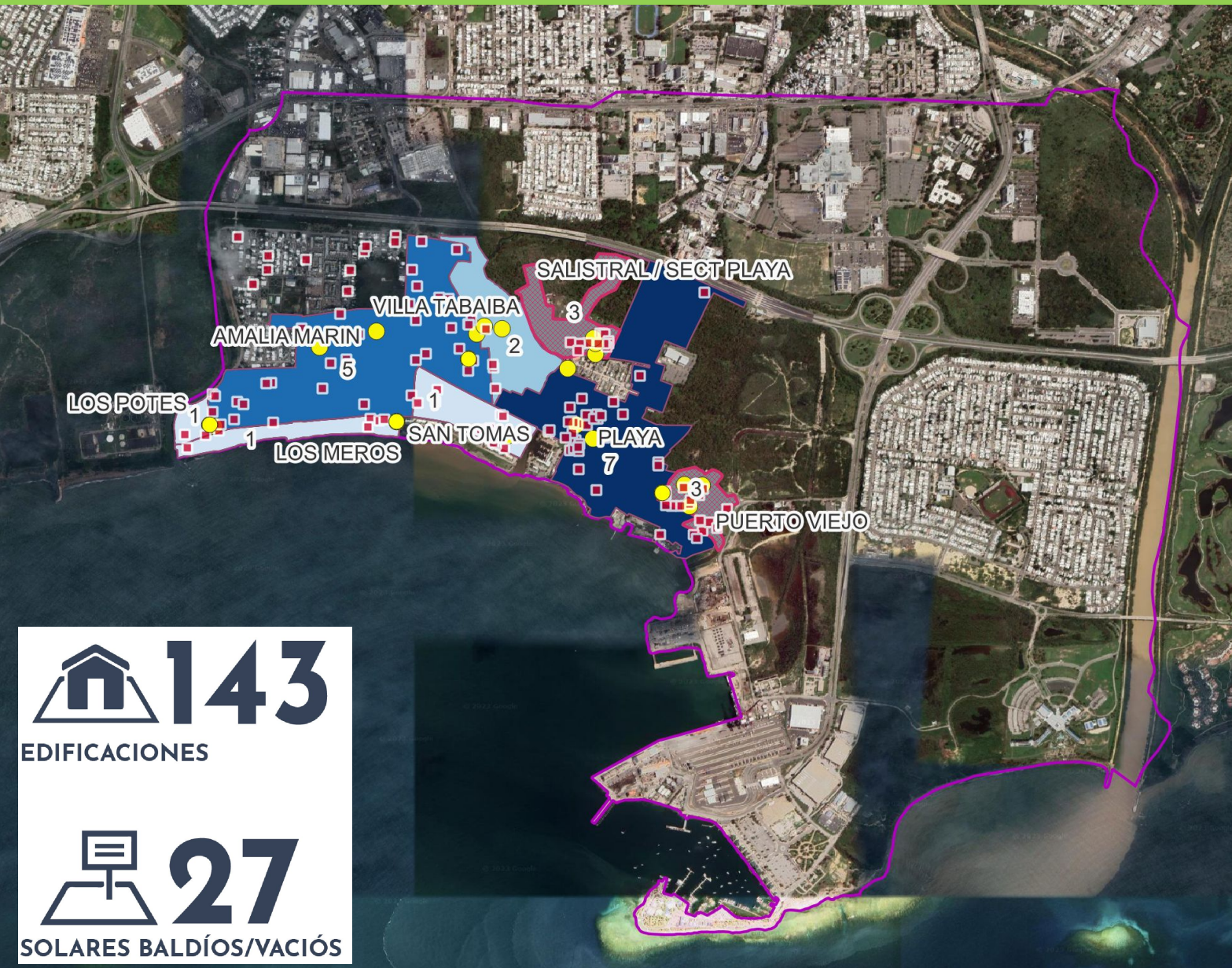
# Place abandonment (spatial documentation)

- What can we do? Vacant houses become neighborhood nuisances.
- Problem:
- Some 170 vacant/abandoned parcels on Ponce Playa were documented in April and March 2022.
- Inventory was conducted by Un Nuevo Amanecer and the Playeras.
- The Playeras were trained to evaluate these abandoned properties according to a set of criteria.
- The inventory was conducted with technical support from the Center for Habitat Rebuilding and funding from the Rivers Network.





# Place abandonment (spatial documentation)



INVENTARIO DE PROPIEDADES EN DESUSO  
**PONCE PLAYA**

 **143**  
EDIFICACIONES

 **27**  
SOLARES BALDÍOS/VACÍOS




# Local knowledge of flooding

## Percepciones de los residentes respecto a la inundación de la Playa de Ponce



### Leyenda

 Área de investigación de Un Nuevo Amanecer

### Fuentes de la Inundación Según los Residentes

-  Rio
-  Mar
-  Escorrentía

En marzo de 2022, encuestadores de Un Nuevo Amanecer hablaron con residentes de la Playa de Ponce para capturar la experiencia vivida con las inundaciones.

Mapa por David Southgate, MS, MPA  
13 de septiembre de 2023  
Todos los derechos reservados  
(c) Un Nuevo Amanecer, 2023.








# Contrast with FEMA FIRM maps

FEMA - Mapa (2009) Zonas de Inundaciones de la Playa de Ponce



## Leyenda

- |   |   |
|---|---|
|  ÁREAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN DE UN NUEVO AMANECER |  <b>FEMA National Flood Hazard Layer</b><br>Zona de inundación |
|  0.2 PCT ANNUAL CHANCE FLOOD HAZARD          |  AREA OF MINIMAL FLOOD HAZARD                                  |
|  FLOODWAY                                    |   |

Según las mapas de inundaciones de FEMA - la más actualizada de 2009 - casi toda la Playa de Ponce es inundable. Los gobiernos usan dichas mapas para informar su evaluación de riesgos.

Mapa por David Southgate, MS, MPA  
13 de septiembre de 2023  
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# Household Flood Survey – Method and timeline

- Cross sectional, exploratory, participatory action research
- Convenience sample, neighborhood selection based on neighbor feedback
- Coproduced survey
  - 11 Jan, 2022 to Dec. 2022;
    - CIDA, Inc (Port Arthur, TX)
    - LEAD Agency (Miami, OK)
    - Un Nuevo Amanecer (Ponce, PR)
- Surveying process
  - Interviewers trained in March 2023
  - Door-to-door surveys – 8 May, 2023 to 18 Aug., 2023
  - Digital surveys via handheld Android tablets connected to the cloud
  - Paper surveys distributed in San Tomás



El equipo entrevistando a dos residentes.



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# INUNDACIONES EN LA PLAYA DE PONCE

DESDE EL MES DE MAYO HASTA AGOSTO 2023, UN NUEVO AMANECER (UNA) HEMOS ESTADO EVALUANDO LA OPINIÓN DE LOS VECINOS SOBRE A LAS INUNDACIONES. ENTREVISTAMOS A CIENTOS DE HOGARES SOBRE SUS EXPERIENCIAS Y PARA PREGUNTARLES QUÉ SOLUCIONES QUIEREN.



## ¡VENGA A CONOCER LO QUE NOS DIJERON!

ESCOGE DESDE DOS FECHAS / LUGARES Y LA HORA QUE TE CONVENGA

### DÍA - LUGAR - HORA

19 de septiembre de 2023 - Teatro CSIF - Tabaiba

Secciones - 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

20 de septiembre de 2023 - Iglesia Metodista Playa - Ponce

Secciones - 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

### HABRÁN REFRIGERIOS Y SORTEOS

PRESENTADO POR:



AGRADECIMIENTO A LOS VOLUNTARIOS Y AL APOYO INSTITUCIONAL POR PRESTARNOS EL ESPACIO Y PERSONAL DURANTE LAS PRESENTACIONES



# What's next? What is UNA going to do with the data?

- The community-produced data informs climate adaptation planning:
  - Feasibility analysis
  - Public policy analysis – to identify government actions that increase climate vulnerability at neighborhood level
  - Informed communication and advocacy
  - Access to institutional resources, partnerships, and funding for implementation of community-supported adaptation



# Learning in 20/20 Hindsight

- What have we learned in practice while in the field?
  1. The dynamics of working in a field team
  2. Optimal characteristics of successful team members
  3. Be clear about who should be the owner of the community data / guard confidentiality



# Optimal dynamics of the field brigada

- 3 points for achieving success and avoiding problems
  1. Attitude – important to be committed to the research task and to working in harmony with others
  2. Provide supervision – someone with the authority to adjust work in the field inline with actual realities/circumstances
  3. Trained in both:
    1. How to use the research technology
    2. How to interpret observations / survey responses





# Optimal characteristics of community field researchers

- Personal commitment – Internal motivation to improve local circumstances
- Positive and focused on the work at hand
- Available – blocked time to be able to participate
- Knowledge of the neighborhood, as well as a person that neighbors recognize



# Institutional collaboration: Challenges within and outside of the

- Coordination with local leaders
- Territorialism vs. collaboration and reciprocity
- Putting divergent efforts and plans in order
- Organizing community power around common interests





# Despair is a luxury we can no longer afford. How to avoid despair? Perhaps through stubborn optimism



Christiana Figueres, architect of the Paris Climate Agreement

Stubborn optimism: an unfulfilled, courageous and resolute confidence that humanity can achieve the necessary change in the face of great challenges.

“The attitude of stubborn optimism is a necessary precursor to action. Adopting this attitude requires shifting the focus from the past to the future.”

This does not mean ignoring reality or becoming complacent.

Stubborn optimism requires working to find solutions.

# Groundwork San Diego Chollas Creek

Education, Empowerment & Climate Action



**GROUNDWORK**  
*San Diego Chollas Creek*



# Who we are...



Groundwork San Diego-Chollas Creek strives to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement and management of the physical environment through the development of community-based partnerships which empower people, businesses and organizations to promote **environmental, economic** and **social well-being**.

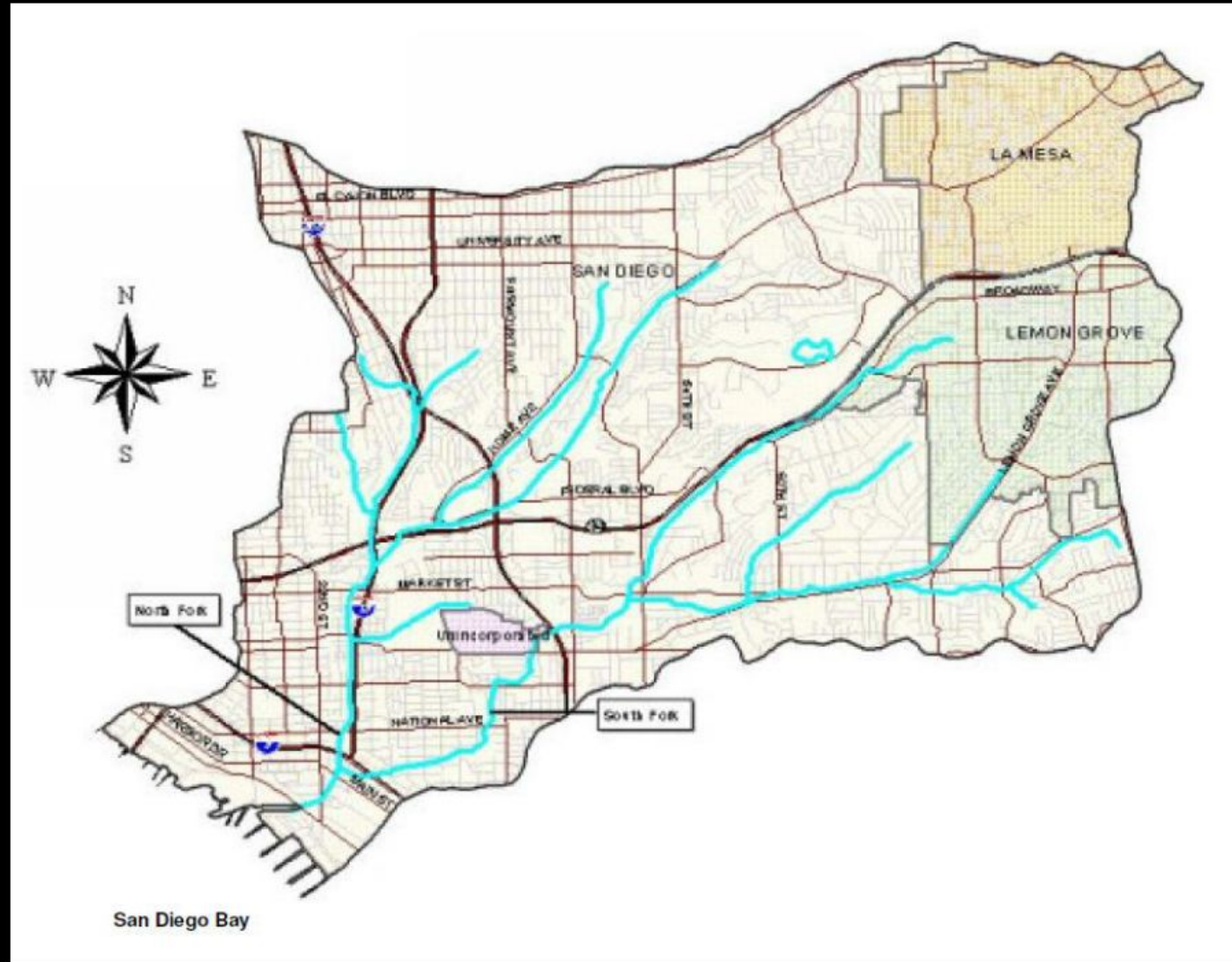


# What we do...





# Where we work...



# How we engage...



## New Federal Blvd Pocket Park Survey

### Activities

What activities would you like to see included at the new Federal Blvd Pocket Park?  
Circle the number that describes your preference (1= less desirable, 5=most desirable)

- 1 2 3 4 5 Public art project - integrated into park paving, walls, etc.
- 1 2 3 4 5 Seating areas with benches along a paved path
- 1 2 3 4 5 Picnic tables
- 1 2 3 4 5 Game table
- 1 2 3 4 5 Barbeques
- 1 2 3 4 5 Bike racks
- 1 2 3 4 5 Shade structure/trellis
- 1 2 3 4 5 Small group picnic/barbeque areas integrated with trees
- 1 2 3 4 5 Shade trees
- 1 2 3 4 5 Trash receptacles

Are there activities not listed above that you would like to see? Please list.

---

---

Safety: What elements do you think would provide park safety?

---

---

Other Ideas and Comments:

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*Help us keep you informed of Park Progress:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional)  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Survey Information will be sent to City of San Diego Parks and Recreation Director  
[Groundwork San Diego - Chollas Creek Contact](#)  
Patrice Baker, Community Outreach Director  
(619) 543-0430 Email: [patrice@groundworksandiego.org](mailto:patrice@groundworksandiego.org)






# Community-based Organizations

Chollas Valley Community Planning Group

HOME THE PLANNING GROUP GET INVOLVED YOUR COMMUNITY CONTACT

## Chollas Valley Community Planning Group



**Welcome!**

Let's make our City and neighborhoods a better place to live, work, and play!

[GET INVOLVED](#)

**Celebrate • Promote • Foster • Enhance • Create**

Formerly known as Encanto Neighborhoods, the Chollas Valley Community Planning Group (CVCPG) serves the neighborhoods of Alta Vista, Broadway Heights, Chollas View, Emerald Hills, Encanto, Lincoln Park, O'Farrell, and Valencia Park. Our MISSION is to support residents and community-based groups and organizations, communicate with government offices and their constituents, and advise the City on land use and infrastructure needs.

Our VISION is to create thriving, resident-led urban neighborhoods providing safe and healthy opportunities for youth and families to live, work and play.

We currently meet on the 3rd Monday of each month at the Valencia Park Malcolm X Branch Library at 5148 Market Street. These meetings take place from 6:00 to 8:00 pm and are hybrid via Zoom (subscribe below or email the group to receive the link). Planning Group meeting agendas are posted at the Library and uploaded onto this website below 72 hours in advance. After each meeting, minutes are then uploaded below.

SOUTHEASTERN SAN DIEGO PLANNING GROUP

## Helping People Improve Their Neighborhoods

One Street at a Time



### OUR WORK

- Task 1
- Task 2
- Task 3

### YOUR ROLE

- action item
- action item
- action item

### NEXT STEPS

- action item
- action item
- action item

### URGENT ITEMS

- action item
- action item
- action item

**CONTACT US:**

[SoutheasternSDCommunityPlanning.com/](http://SoutheasternSDCommunityPlanning.com/)    [SoutheasternSDPG@gmail.com](mailto:SoutheasternSDPG@gmail.com)

Websites  
Technology  
Newsletters  
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Engagement  
...and more!

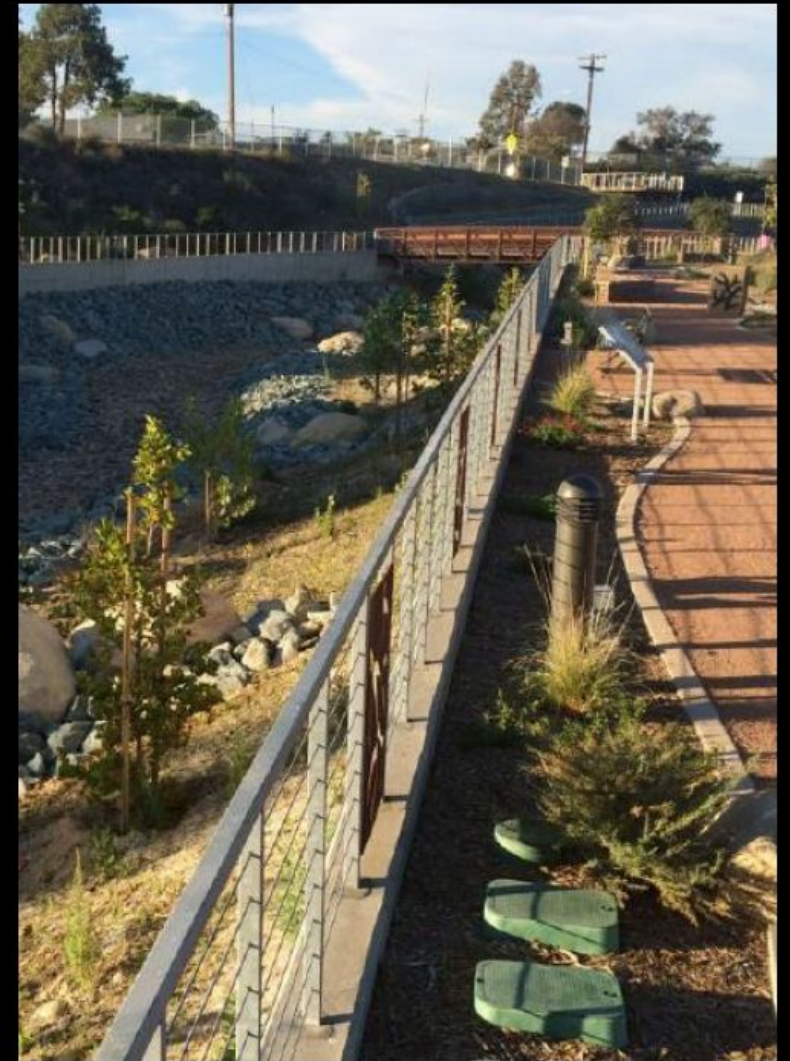
# Chollas Creek Coalition



2023-11-09 16:17:57



# Project 1 – Federal Boulevard





# Project 2 – Berardini Field



## We need your feedback!



The City of San Diego is developing a community-focused plan for Sunshine-Berardini Field to refurbish existing facilities and construct new features and attractions.

Groundwork San Diego – Chollas Creek is hosting a public feedback event at Sunshine-Berardini Field on **December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm**. We will listen to your ideas and concerns, display potential features for the open space, and suggest ways to elevate your voice with the City. You are welcome to RSVP for this event (e-mail is below).

If you plan to attend this event, please consider the following questions:

1. What existing barriers prevent you from visiting the park?
2. Sunshine Little League will greatly benefit from refurbished baseball field facilities. What *other* features and improvements would you like to see in the undeveloped spaces adjacent to the fields and creek?

Baseball Fields

Undeveloped spaces



Federal Boulevard entrance

Creek bed & trail

Chollas Parkway Open Space to the Oak Park Trail

If you cannot attend this event, please share your feedback with Groundwork San Diego staff. Thank you for your valuable time and interest in this amazing project!

Brian Midkiff, Senior Program Manager  
 Groundwork San Diego – Chollas Creek  
 Email: [Brian@GroundworkSanDiego.org](mailto:Brian@GroundworkSanDiego.org)  
 Office Phone: (619) 543-0430  
 Website: [www.GroundworkSanDiego.org](http://www.GroundworkSanDiego.org)





# Resident Empowerment Training







# Thank you for listening!

*Brian Midkiff, Senior Program Manager*

Brian@GroundworkSanDiego.org

GroundworkSanDiego.org



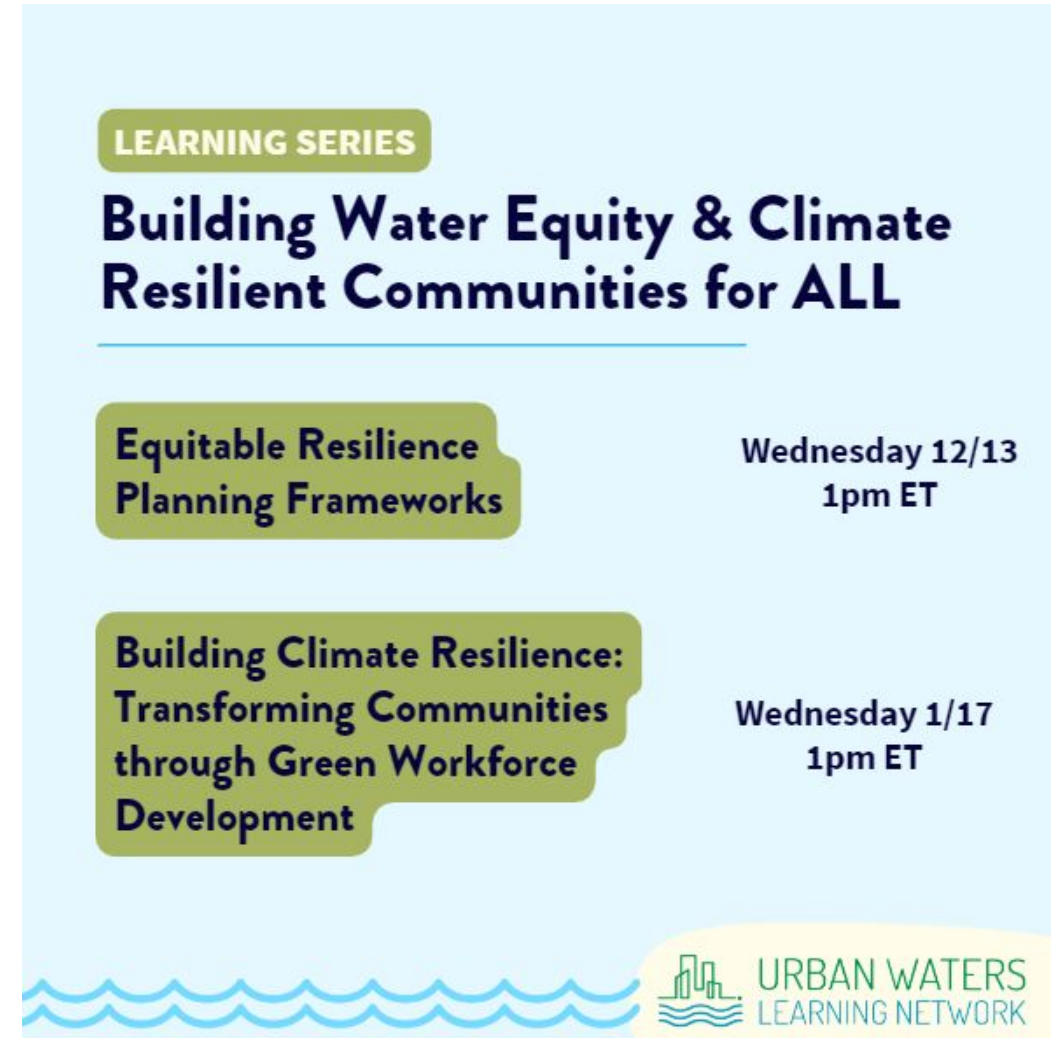
**GROUNDWORK**  
*San Diego Chollas Creek*

# BEFORE YOU GO...

**Connect!** Network with others on issues of equity in climate resilience

**Tell us what you think!** See evaluation survey

**Join us again!** Register for sessions #5 and #6, and other urban forestry-related trainings at <https://urbanwaterslearningnetwork.org/events/>


A graphic for a learning series. At the top, a green rounded rectangle contains the text 'LEARNING SERIES'. Below this, the main title 'Building Water Equity & Climate Resilient Communities for ALL' is written in a large, bold, dark blue font. A thin blue horizontal line separates the title from the event details. There are two event entries. The first entry has a green rounded rectangle on the left containing the text 'Equitable Resilience Planning Frameworks' and the date and time 'Wednesday 12/13 1pm ET' to its right. The second entry has a larger green rounded rectangle on the left containing the text 'Building Climate Resilience: Transforming Communities through Green Workforce Development' and the date and time 'Wednesday 1/17 1pm ET' to its right. At the bottom right, there is a logo for 'URBAN WATERS LEARNING NETWORK' which includes a stylized green building icon above wavy blue lines representing water.

**LEARNING SERIES**

**Building Water Equity & Climate Resilient Communities for ALL**

**Equitable Resilience Planning Frameworks** Wednesday 12/13 1pm ET

**Building Climate Resilience: Transforming Communities through Green Workforce Development** Wednesday 1/17 1pm ET

 **URBAN WATERS LEARNING NETWORK**



*Thank you!*

THE CLIMATE IS  
CHANGING  
WHY AREN'T WE?

*Share your feedback via the evaluation link in the chat!*