

Minute Recommending IMYM Consideration of QEW Affiliation

Living in a way that the natural systems of the earth can support, and sharing the earth's resources equitably, are expressions of the Quaker testimonies of peace, simplicity, equality and community. As Friends, we look for ways to reduce our own consumption and witness to careful stewardship of global resources and environmental quality as we seek a right relationship with God's Creation.

We recommend that Intermountain Yearly Meeting consider creating a tangible witness to responsible stewardship of the earth by establishing formal affiliation with Quaker Earthcare Witness for a three year trial period. This affiliation would involve appointing a representative to the QEW Steering Committee. The representative's responsibilities would generally be to: (1) attend the QEW annual meeting, (2) represent the Yearly Meeting's concerns to QEW, (3) report to the Yearly Meeting on QEW activities, and (4) support involvement by monthly and regional meetings in matters of environmental stewardship.

Background for the Minute

1. Quaker Earthcare Witness attempts to provide witness of Friend's concerns about the natural environmental and the uses of global resources through domestic and international projects, personal experiences, publications, liaisons with groups of similar nature, and community-building among Friends called to earth stewardship action. Information about QEW can be found at <http://www.quakerearthcare.org/>. An important QEW objective is to support the efforts of FCNL in their work with environmental and natural resource issues. QEW's relationship with FCNL requires that QEW have good representation from yearly meetings.
2. QEW also attempts to help Friends seek a deeper spiritual basis for our relationship with the earth to guide the Quaker witness in the complex and often politicized public consideration of environmental conservation and equitable resource consumption. Quaker concern for the proper use of God's Creation is explored in old (e.g., John Woolman) and new writings. The emphasis on God's manifestations and the belief that peace and justice are linked with sharing resources direct QEW's work to reflect Quaker value.
3. Intermountain Yearly Meeting has traditionally held to the principle that the Yearly Meeting should be prepared to fund the travel and other expenses incurred by its appointed representatives. Creating a new representative position incurs additional financial liability for the Yearly Meeting. (That QEW has a travel assistance fund for representatives may or may not be a relevant factor for Yearly Meeting consideration.)
4. Intermountain Yearly Meeting is currently reviewing the number of representative positions and the substantial cost of funding their activities. The impetus for this review is the reality that the Yearly Meeting is unable to fund the travel of all representatives in any given year, but rather depends upon a certain portion of representatives to travel on their own and another portion unable to fulfill their travel commitment (for reasons other than cost). During such a review may be an appropriate time to consider whether or not the Yearly Meeting should affiliate with QEW and add one more representative.