

Center for a Regenerative Future, University of Denver

WHITE PAPER LEADS – alphabetical order

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(Please see Appendix A for signatories of this white paper; all DU members are welcome.)

INTRODUCTION – Why this topic, why now?

Twenty thousand years ago *Homo sapiens* represented less than 1% of the mammalian biomass on Earth. Today we represent 36% of Earth's mammalian biomass and our livestock represent another 60%. Only 4% of Earth's mammalian biomass consists of wild mammals (Bar-On, Phillips, & Milo, 2018). This alarming expansion of humankind's impact on the biosphere is just one facet of what is described as *the 'Great Acceleration'* (Steffen, Broadgate, Deustch, Gaffney, & Ludwig, 2015) of socio-economic activities that are driving climate change, ocean acidification, land degradation, resource depletion, life altering pollution, and the 6th mass extinction. These global trends have created much human suffering and death and portend much more for the future if left uninterrupted. We are rapidly accelerating into an increasingly unstable, unsustainable, and undesirable situation unless immediate steps are taken to envision a different future that's informed by our best understanding of biophysical reality.

Envisioning an alternative future that remediates environmental degradation and human suffering requires heeding the wisdom of the Baseball Hall of Famer and People's Philosopher Yogi Berra: *'If you don't know where you're going, you'll end up someplace else'*. It requires identifying a broad suite of social, political, ecological, agricultural, industrial, educational, and urban practices that are *regenerative*, and mustering the collective will to implement them. Camrass (2020) emphasizes a definition of regenerative that is about rebirth, reformation, restoration, repairing of ecological damage and, perhaps most importantly, "reclamation of greater social choice." Current structural power is limiting and narrowing our choices for moving forward. The Center for a Regenerative Future (CRF) will leverage true expertise in the many areas that DU faculty work related to sustainability from the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. The CRF will challenge structural power and present 'choices' and 'alternatives' (grounded in biophysical reality) that are just, desirable, and sustainable.

Contemporary 'Green Growth', 'Smart Growth', and other development paradigms do not acknowledge the urgent need to address current climate realities and trends (IPCC, 2023) and are ill-equipped to do so. Alternatively, "degrowth" paradigms call for planned reductions of energy and resource use that bring populations and economies back into balance with the living world in just, equitable, and regenerative ways (Kallis, Paulson, D'Alisa & Demaria, 2020). It has been argued that degrowth will happen regardless of what we do, and that the challenge is how much we face up to it and take collective action to make it fairer and wiser.

Our proposed Center for a Regenerative Future will sponsor and promote a variety of activities including basic and applied research, curriculum innovation, science communication and environmental media making, and policy development for a re-imagined and regenerative future. The CRF will be transformative in its approach, and unique in the North American academy for its courage and capacity to face today's urgent challenges with an honest realism and practical idealism. It will be:

- Explicitly transdisciplinary and collectively owned.
- Cross-cultural and trans-historical in scope and approach to problem identification and Working Group formation.
- A dedicated space for Indigenous perspectives that are pioneering much Regenerative Futures work.

This proposal is responsive to student needs as well as a global moral imperative. Hickman et al (2021) in a survey of youth ages 16-25 across 10 countries and four languages found that nearly half of youth (n=10,000) surveyed state that climate anxiety impacts their daily lives, 75% say that 'the future is frightening', 64% said that their governments were not doing enough to avoid climate catastrophe, and 39% are hesitant to have children. Here at DU, within the Center for Sustainability, we have frequent discussions with students about the mental health ramifications of what they need to learn in courses ranging from biology to geography to social work about such issues as climate change and mass extinction. This content is not about the future, but the current state of Earth due to anthropogenic harms. Their anxiety about the current and future ability for Earth to sustain them is impacting many facets of their lives. Additionally, many young people are exploring alternatives to higher education, seeing the academy as antiquated, out of touch, and the debt incurred by attending as not worth their time and financial loss. They are urgently seeking mentors and role models willing and able to explore with them regenerative systems for working and living which the CRF will support.

Currently, the University of Denver has broad expertise in the areas of sustainability, conservation, and global environmental change, in the spheres of instruction, research, DU operations, and consulting (See Attached Figures, Pages 2-4), however it has not been well integrated (Page 1 of Figures). The Sustainability Council has been a mechanism in the past, but without enough support or power to engage all needed partners. Here we are proposing a new structure in which all activities related to these fields would be connected.

PUBLIC GOOD - How does this topic further DU's commitment to the public good?

The project of transforming the Center for Sustainability into an expanded Center for a Regenerative Future (CRF) honors the spirit of the university's Vision, Values, Mission, and Goals while updating them to meet the challenges of the modern age, including those related to global environmental change, massive human dislocations and migrations borne of climate change and economic deprivation, and rapidly growing cities awash with un-homed individuals and disenfranchised communities. These convergent, "terrificidal" trends (as described by scholars and activists in the Global South) have produced a crisis of habitability that's

unparalleled in human history (Escobar, 2019, 2022). The CRF will further DU's commitment to the public good by targeting the poly-crisis (Outlook for 2023 – Children in 'Polycrisis', 2023) with holistic, transdisciplinary approaches that forge a much closer connection between basic and applied research. It will serve as an incubator for curriculum and academic program development that engages with the alternative visions of habitability produced by decolonial and Indigenous critiques of traditional sustainability science (Sundberg 2014). It will explore, with students, new "imaginaries" for self and society, and produce what regenerative futures scholar Kimberly Camrass (2020) describes as "empowering narratives of hope and possibility." An example would be expanding upon the critical work of the Graduate School of Social Work in empowering and enabling community cohesion and mutual aid (<https://socialwork.du.edu/news/mutual-aid-collective>). The CRF will disseminate research results, innovative curriculum proposals, and policy briefs in modalities that can quickly reach broader publics and agencies, including via social media, video, and documentary film work, and modalities that perhaps were unforeseen by the original authors of our Public Good vision.

The original RFP for the Ideas for Impact initiative asked, "*How will this Big Idea change the world?*" The CRF's plan for changing the world is a bit more modest: *to foster a civilizational transition that begins to heal our ecosystems, cities, and Earth at large*. One way we intend to start tipping the scale is in addressing the student need for guidance by creating a forum within an institution that engages them in working towards a better future.

JEDI (JUSTICE EQUITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION)

Jason Hickel, an anthropologist and author of *Less is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World* says that degrowth is, ultimately, a process of decolonization: of lands, peoples, and minds (Hickel, 2020). He says that it stands for "*de-enclosure of the commons, de-commodification of public goods, de-intensification of work and life, de-thingification of humans and nature, and de-escalation of ecological crisis*." This is a holistic and powerful view. It's a view that has clear implications for the university's fulfilment of JEDI commitments. It charts a path forward that will break from business-as-usual.

When a question was posed to a finalist in our search for a University Sustainability Officer about what degrowth would look like at DU, the answer had to do with eliminating plastic cups, lowering classroom temperatures, and taking other measures to reduce our carbon footprint. Although difference-making, this is instrumentalist thinking in service of a traditional sustainability agenda. Un-mentioned were much bigger issues like re-structuring academics and policy to better facilitate interdisciplinary teaching and research, promoting workload equity (an aspect of "de-intensifying" faculty life), evolving curriculum to accommodate Indigenous ways of knowing (e.g., moving from "Environmental Science" to "Environment and Land Studies"), elevating voices that are not currently privileged, and investing in student explorations of deceleration of the human footprint and embracing of ecological economics within human carrying capacity.

Scholars have demonstrated the importance of cultural diversity to the long-term resilience of human societies (Middleton, 2017; Turner et al. 2003). Compositional diversity is emerging as key to the long-term survival of American universities. DU acknowledges its settler-colonial history and high cost of attendance, which limits compositional diversity. While there are no easy solutions, we will start by hosting Working Groups on topics that matter to, or at least intersect with, the existential concerns of marginalized communities; e.g., environmentally-just urban planning, Indigenous Knowledge for climate change adaptation, biodiversity regeneration and healing, food sovereignty, and more. If we make serious efforts to decolonize the university in the ways described by Hickel and make concerted efforts to actively promote what the CRF stands for, that compositional diversity will follow.

More tractable than the challenge of increasing compositional diversity is the challenge of increasing inclusion of faculty, students, and staff in Regenerative Futures work. The Center's name signals accountability to all people, the diversities of life on Earth, and future generations of all species including our own. It signals a serious interest in engaging with Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Indigenous wisdom, theory, and practice. Having the CRF centrally housed and not within the domain of a particular academic unit, or under the control of a particular faculty, is a significant decolonizing move. It indicates a serious interest in fostering collective ownership, stewardship, and guardianship of the Center's activities.

It's been said, by scholars doing environmental justice work, that our greatest challenges are not scientific and technological (e.g., Engle et al. 2022). Rather, they go much deeper: they are spiritual (in E.O. Wilson's sense of the sanctity of nature) and cultural. To increase compositional diversity and foster inclusion at DU we need to create *social infrastructures* that are welcoming, inclusive of diverse world views and research/teaching agendas, and truly participatory. Upon achieving status as a high activity research university, DU adopted the motto "R1 Our Way" which promises a research environment that is invested equally in becoming and belonging. Establishment and promotion of the CRF will be one critical step in turning these visions into sustainable realities.

CRF (Center for a Regenerative Future) STRUCTURE AND FUNCTION

We envision a leadership group to serve as the CRF's Executive Committee and would include the staff/faculty chairs of CRF Standing Committees dedicated to specific functions. See Figure 2 for details.

Committees:

- Executive Committee to coordinate and guide CRF sub-committees and guide decision making about structure and function
- Operations sub-committee to work with Facilities and the University Architect's Office
- Research and Grants sub-committee that explores funding in collaboration with various DU centers and institutes, and creates and coordinates external Working Groups

-Curriculum sub-committee that brainstorms academic program development in collaboration with leaders of academic units and Interdisciplinary Studies programs (majors and minors) that relate to sustainability and regenerative design

Possible Additional Committees:

- Data Visualization sub-committee
- Media Relations and Science Communications sub-committee
- Other standing committees established as needed/as the university requests

Synthesis Working Groups:

A primary function of the CRF will be to promote interdisciplinary research and application of knowledge through the creation of outward-focused and international Working Groups on critical topics germane to regenerative futures. Each of these would synthesize the available research on real-world problems of interest to donors and organizations, which would in turn be motivated to support their efforts.

Synthesis Working Groups will bring together experts from across our campus who have been largely siloed before now. Where appropriate, additional support from outside of DU will be sought to address specific needs. Examples of Working Groups and organizing research questions include the following:

Scientific Knowledge and Indigenous Wisdom

DU is home to Indigenous scholars already invested in bringing traditional knowledge to the forefront of tackling environmental injustices. Exploring common ground between Western/Scientific and Indigenous/Traditional approaches to regeneration is an unmet need and addresses two important goals: to learn from experience and expertise that has long been ignored, and to contribute to restorative justice for native peoples. At DU we have a particular obligation to listen and learn and ensure that the wisdom of Indigenous peoples is not lost.

Multi-species Entanglements

Modern human interactions with the more-than-human world is a scholarly interest that goes beyond the highly productive Institute for Human Animal Connection. A concern for more-than-human entanglements is forcefully emerging in fields from religious studies to anthropology to social work. What approaches to ecological justice recognize and respect the integrity of all species and their many interdependencies? Which ones promise a future with no more sacrifice zones?

Well-being Economies

What would an economy optimized for human and ecological wellbeing look like? Are there small-scale examples of regenerative economies that can be scaled-up into something more equitable and environmentally just (e.g., Spain's Mondragon Cooperatives)? What metrics would be appropriate for measuring resilience, desirability, sustainability, and equity? How

might governance have to evolve to establish and maintain an economic system that was designed to improve human wellbeing rather than economic growth as measured by GDP?

CRF DISTINCTIVENESS

The most novel day-to-day operations would revolve around logistics planning for the Synthesis Working Groups. Dedicated staff will take care of the logistics. The CRF will bring together 8 to 15 people from different fields (scholars, practicing professionals, policymakers), at different career stages, and with different life experiences, and join them as a team to produce results that transcend their individual talents, skills, and expertise. Each team will take on a current “wicked problem” (proposed by the leaders of the team and approved by the CRF executive committee) and have two to three years to work on the problem. Over that time, the team will meet in the Community Commons at DU or at the Kennedy Mountain Campus (or both) three or four times for intense collaborative research sessions of 5 to 10 days. In between, team members will continue collaboration remotely. The working groups will integrate multiple sources of data and different perspectives to generate research insights that are difficult to achieve through the study of a single case or from a single perspective.

Other day-to-day activities will include grant-writing to support the activities of the Working Groups, in-house publishing to disseminate research results and policy pieces that don’t find their way into the scholarly literature (e.g., creation of a periodic papers series and a CRF blog), and academic program incubation that’s informed by the results of the synthesis work. Resident Fellows and post-docs will pilot courses and give research talks to the campus community. Numerous community outreach events are conceivable, e.g., public lectures, conferences, symposia, and film screenings (e.g., ‘Don’t Look Up’ on 4/19/2023) followed by live Q and A with film directors, producers, and subject matter experts. These kinds of events would be “value-added deliverables” inspired by Working Groups.

DU has faculty with considerable expertise in the subject areas covered by this proposal. These faculty have substantial external connections to scholars working in the United States and abroad. The University has, with its current Center for Sustainability, an established structure that can be re-tooled to better meet an expanded set of goals, and a dedicated staff that can be expanded to support new functions. More importantly, this established structure occupies neutral ground— independent of any single school, college or other academic unit—upon which transformative and transdisciplinary work can be collaboratively seeded, nurtured, and evolved.

DU may be compared with the following university-based initiatives related to Regenerative Futures work:

- Lyle Center for Regenerative Studies at Cal Poly-Pomona:
<https://www.cpp.edu/env/lyle/index.shtml>
- Regenerative Futures Lab at the Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University:
<https://kenan.ethics.duke.edu/regenerative-futures-lab/>

- Institute for Regenerative Futures in the College of Education, San Jose State University: <https://www.sjsu.edu/education/community/irf.php>
- Open Future Coalition: <https://www.openfuturecoalition.org/>

None of these initiatives compete with what we propose. All seem to recognize that our political and economic systems are broken and that we need to explore structural alternatives. However, Cal Poly-Pomona's center and Duke's lab are largely focused on small student group projects. San Jose State's center is largely focused on being an advocacy institution for East San Jose residents. Aiming for broader appeal and impact, DU's CRF will promote an inclusive approach to social and ecological justice. As part of this, CRF's initiatives are involved in assembling relevant scholarly expertise for synthetic research that is required for making substantive and meaningful systems change on local, national, and global levels.

Our Center leverages true expertise in the many areas that our faculty work on related to regeneration (from the sciences, social sciences, and humanities). Our Center will challenge structural power and present 'choices' and 'alternatives' (grounded in biophysical reality) that are just, desirable, and regenerative.

One of the ways that the CRF will be differentiated from similar centers and institutes that exist nationally is in its "deep historical" perspective on issues around sustainability and regeneration, i.e., its engagement with archaeological knowledge relating to *Homo sapiens* use of the landscape and our species' adaptation to global environmental change over the last 300,000 years. In recent decades, archaeology as a discipline has sought to play a larger role in addressing contemporary issues. However, its impact has been limited. One reason is the field's slow progress in packaging archeological knowledge in ways that make it useful for comparative scholarship and policymaking. Another is scientific and popular pre-conceptions that archeology has nothing to offer contemporary sustainability science and policy. For example, a 2018 [National Science Foundation report](#) on urban sustainability science does not include a single reference to cities that existed in the past (Advisory Committee for Environmental Research and Education 2018). This short-sightedness misses an opportunity to evaluate the relative efficacy of technological and socio-political responses to urban sustainability/regeneration challenges, i.e., to evaluate outcomes that can be directly detected in archaeological evidence.

The relevance of archeological and other kinds of historical studies to sustainability science, and their unique potential to inform policy, is currently being explored by the [Center for Collaborative Synthesis in Archaeology](#) (CCSA) at CU-Boulder. This Synthesis Center is explicitly based on the model developed by the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS). The CCSA is located within CU's Institute of Behavioral Science, an interdisciplinary community of social scientists committed to advancing knowledge of society's most pressing challenges and pursuing solutions through "innovative research, education, and engagement in the world." CCSA funds, supports, and promotes research that leverages the inherent strengths

of the archaeological record—the most extensive compendium of human experience available—to address general issues facing humanity.

Some of the CRF functions would be similar, in particular the use of the Working Group model to promote synthetic research. The work conducted by the CCSA is shaped by a philosophy that is geared toward the production of general knowledge and covering laws about human behavior, human-environment interactions, and human development over the long term. For example, one focus of CCSA work is urban sustainability. CCSA scholars utilize an analogy from mammalian biology to argue that all cities are 85% alike in the way they look, function, and evolve as a function of size. In other words, cities are viewed as scaled-up versions of each other in much the same way that a whale is a blown-up elephant, which is a scaled-up giraffe, all the way down to a mouse and shrew. Center scholars argue that the key to understanding cities, and solving their contemporary problems, depends on understanding these universal properties and not the 15% of contextual aspects—the specific details of local geography, history, culture—that make cities individually unique.

The CCSA's nomothetic perspective is valuable, and it's important to appreciate the generalizing significance and predictive powers of this approach. However, equally valuable is an idiographic perspective that drills into the specific details and "stories" of human experience and adaptation over the long term and examines how successful efforts to cope with environmental change can be scaled-up to meet contemporary challenges. At the end of the day it's the 15% of contingent, idiosyncratic variation in urban form that critically matters to the lives of individual citizens, especially the urban poor and other historically marginalized groups. This is the stuff—including the quality and distribution of housing, public space, green space, connecting arterials, cultural amenities, social infrastructure, and governing structures—that can be manipulated by human beings to make a difference in how cities work and adapt to changing circumstances. In contrast to the CCSA, the CRF's approach to questions of urban sustainability will invite contributions from a range of scientific and humanities disciplines, numerous urban planning and design professions, and bodies of Traditional Ecological Knowledge/Indigenous Wisdom from the world over.

The CRF will be distinguished by an approach to sustainability research and policy development that seeks to bridge scientific and humanistic, nomothetic and idiographic, quantitative and qualitative, and Western and Non-Western ways of knowing. This holistic approach will draw on expertise to be found across DU's schools and colleges and make distinctive contributions to the landscape of Regenerative Futures research, education, and outreach, including via multiple outlets, including media produced by a team of DU filmmakers.

FUNDING

Federal External Sources:

NSF (National Science Foundation) funds Synthesis Centers. The Department of Energy funds "Urban Integrated Field Laboratories". NEH (National Endowment for the Humanities) funds

‘Climate Smart Humanities Organizations’ and ‘Collaborative Research’. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) funds ‘Environmental Sustainability’ and ‘Environmental Justice Thriving Communities’ and ‘Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (EJCPS)’.

Foundations:

We’ve identified the Gates Family Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and Gaia Foundation as possible funding sources. We are currently in conversation with the Gaia Foundation.

Sustaining the Funding Stream:

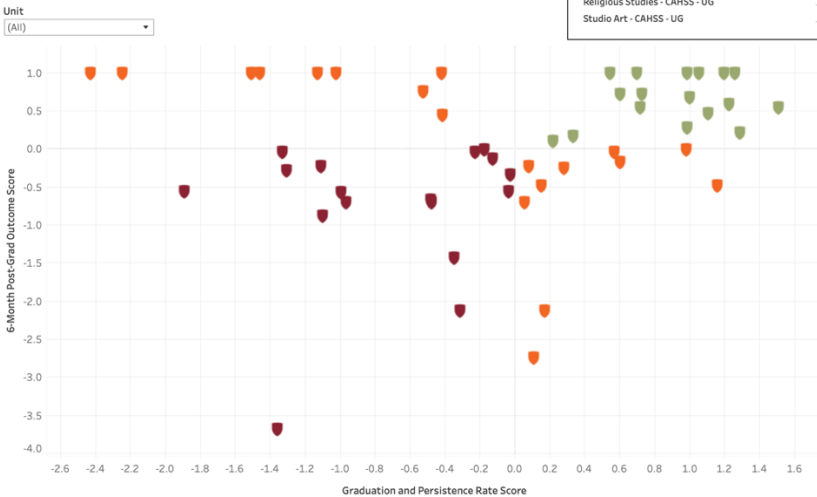
Globally, we’re facing student despair and fatalism. Our CRF initiative seeks to do something about that and in fact it has already begun through the creation of an undergraduate course to be offered through the Center for Sustainability in Winter Term 2024: *Eco-anxiety: From despair to action*. The Center for Sustainability is one of significant student engagement and enthusiasm. This critical foundation will be built upon as we grow our ability to respond to the youth mental health crisis through larger staff and programming supports and resources. The Center for Sustainability has become a trusted space among involved students, and we have the knowledge and the compassion to reach more students with appropriate resources.

The CRF will be an incubator of thought about new courses, curricula, degree programs, certificates, and more. These would have an inter- or trans-disciplinary character and establish cooperation between schools and colleges. The courses and programs can be structurally located wherever schools think it makes sense to place them. CRF personnel can help navigate the needed systems to bring these ideas to fruition.

In detailing the program incubation work, we propose using the results of the Academic Program and Unit Assessment (APUA) Task Force research that was conducted several years ago. The data indicate that interdisciplinary studies programs and other programs having an interdisciplinary character at DU are among the highest performers at the university. In fact, APUA Task Force members, appointed from units across the university, agreed that the relative success of interdisciplinary programming at DU is one of the strongest signals in a set of assessment data that is otherwise uneven in quality (see Figure 3). For example, the green shields in the upper right-hand quadrant of the APUA scatterplot provided below include a number of interdisciplinary programs such as International Studies, Public Policy, Integrated Sciences, and others. These data suggest that it would be wise to support interdisciplinary programs and degrees like those that might be incubated within the CRF.

UG Student Success Quadrants

The plot below shows DU undergraduate programs in terms of positioning within quadrants associated with two measures of student success. The axes of the plot are standardized weighted mean composite scores. The x axis score weights the five-year average one-year persistence score at 25% and the four-year four or more year graduation rate at 75%. The y axis represents a six-month post-grad outcomes score. This score is the standardized ratio of proportion achieving a satisfactory outcome to the proportion with a satisfactory outcome or actively seeking employment/graduate education. Red shields represent lower than average performance on both composites while green shields represent higher than average performance on both composites. Hover over the shields for additional program details.



CRF personnel can use these and other performance data, including data on graduate programs, to brainstorm new programs that can address student despair while also creating new revenue streams. Students are interested in interdisciplinarity, and a focus in traditional disciplines can limit career choices. At the same time, faculty are often frustrated by the non-support of interdisciplinary programming at the university. The CRF would provide neutral territory for involving faculty from across campus in curriculum-building activity. Some possibilities:

- Evolve the Sustainability and Urban Studies minors into academic majors or combine them into a single major in a “target or niche” area. For example, Regenerative Futures thinking is at the heart of new sustainable urbanism scholarship that promotes “Seven Generation Cities” (Engle et al. 2022).
- Create a program in *Regenerative Design* (around housing, transportation, green space, etc.) that pulls from REBE, CAHSS and NSM;
- Create a graduate (PhD) degree program in *Urban Science and Policy* that draws from CAHSS, NSM, REBE, and Korbel (the Scrivner Policy Institute); This would combine some struggling PhD programs (as revealed by APUA analysis) into something new that might gain traction.
- Transform Environmental Sciences into an interdisciplinary and JEDI-conscious program in *Environment and Land Studies (ELS)* that would further our commitment to Indigenous students and stakeholders. Or, create an ELS concentration within the existing Environmental Sciences program.
- Grow the ecological justice concentration in the Graduate School of Social Work to additionally offer certificates or pathways for all mental health providers to be ‘climate

aware' in their practice and learn emerging techniques for addressing the growing mental health ramifications of global environmental change.

- Create a certificate in Science Communication & Environmental Filmmaking in partnership with the Department of Media, Film & Journalism Studies.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

There is an emerging consensus among scholars, and a widening realization among younger generations, that the concept of sustainability has exhausted its utility as a framework for creating a viable future for humanity. Alternatively, regenerative paradigms offer holistic understandings of Earth systems along with commitments to social and environmental justice. They support development of resilient communities that allow for wider economic prosperity and global environmental healing.

This White Paper proposes to reinvent the Center for Sustainability as the Center for a Regenerative Future. This reinvention involves incorporating elements of what's proven to be a successful "Synthesis Center" research model into Center functions and activities. The CRF will promote regenerative futures theory, design, and practice by utilizing concepts such as systems thinking, mutual aid, and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. It will sponsor an array of international research collaborations, interdisciplinary curriculum-building initiatives, and public outreach events and activities. We propose a publication series for policy briefs, and dissemination of expert knowledge in other modalities including traditional peer-reviewed scholarship and the visual and performing arts.

The Center for Regenerative Futures will build on the successes of the Center for Sustainability while simultaneously strengthening collaborative relationships with all academic units, centers and institutes on campus. The CRF will take advantage of Denver's unique geographical location and our urban and mountain campuses. Development of CRF programming should produce many opportunities for attracting external funding and philanthropic support.

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APPENDIX A

DU Signatories:

- Dennis Whittmer, Professor, Department of Management, Daniels College of Business
- Daniel Trujillo, Assistant Professor of the Practice, Franklin L. Burns School of Real Estate and Construction Management
- Aimee Hamilton, Associate Professor; Destiny Capital Faculty Fellow, Department of Management
- Donald Mayer, Professor of the Practice, Department of Business Ethics and Legal Studies

- Vivek Choudhury, Dean, College of Business
- Alana Inlow, Teaching Assistant Professor, Sociology and Criminology, College of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences
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- Nathan McNichols, Chair of Sustainability Council
- Helen McGrath, Vice-Chair of Sustainability Council
- Annabeth Headrick, Associate Professor; Director, School of Art & Art History
- Cara DiEnno, Executive Director, CCESL
- Tom Romero, Faculty Director, IRISE; Associate Professor of Law
- Lynn Bailey, Director of Energy and Sustainability, Facilities Management and Planning
- Shannon Murphy, Professor, Department of Biology; co-lead of Global Environmental Change Institute
- Laura Perille, Executive Director, 4D Experience
- Julia Senecal, Assistant Director, Center for Sustainability
- Derek Brannon, Program Coordinator, Center for Sustainability
- Kevin Morris, Executive Director, Institute for Human Animal Connection
- Justin Marceau, Professor, Sturm College of Law
- Yavuz Yaşar, Professor & Director of Graduate Programs, Department of Economics
- Claude d'Estrée, Professor of International Law and Human Rights, Korbel
- Hillary B. Hamann, Teaching Professor, Sustainability Minor Director, Department of Geography & the Environment
- Kelly Fayard, Assistant Professor, Anthropology
- Rachel Forbes, Clinical Associate Professor, GSSW; Director, GSSW Glenwood Springs Campus
- Julie Morris, Teaching Professor, Department of Biological Sciences
- Joe Brown, Associate Professor, Department of Media, Film & Journalism Studies
- Ellwood Colahan, Associate Professor and Music & Performing Arts Librarian
- Lenore Alvarez, Grant Coordinator, Graduate School of Social Work
- Drew Mueller, Associate Professor, Burns School of Real Estate & Construction Management
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- Susan Daggett, Professor of the Practice of Law; Executive Director, Rocky Mountain Land Use Institute
- Amin Khodaei, Professor, Ritchie School of Engineering and Computer Science
- Juan Carlos Goethe Lopez, Associate Professor, Department of Economics

- William (Bill) Philpott, Associate Professor, History
- Anne DePrince, Associate Vice Provost of Public Good Strategy and Research
- Fritz Mayer, Dean of Joseph Korbel School of International Studies
- Andrei Kutateladze, Dean of College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics
- Michelle Sabick, Dean of Ritchie School of Engineering and Computer Science