For more than a decade, Pepperwood has forged experiential education pathways to connect children, youth, and adults with nature. As part of our 2020-25 Strategic Plan, Pepperwood will work with diverse partners to develop even more creative approaches to connecting our whole community with the outdoors and the wonder and awe that nature inspires. The purpose of our collective work Inspiring Connections with Nature is to inspire a lifelong conservation ethic through exploration, observation, science, and artistic expression across a spectrum of media and outlets.

This initiative builds upon programs including our elementary Students Conducting Environmental Inquiry (SCENIQ), TeenNat for youth ages 13-18, summer youth institutes, family-oriented outdoor experiences, and a host of community education classes and retreats. With a Native Advisory Council at Pepperwood advising on the incorporation of traditional ecological knowledge into all of our programming and a staff featuring bilingual and indigenous environmental educators, we are growing our engagement of local Native and LatinX leaders of all ages. New elements of this initiative will include deepening partnerships with artists from the film and performing arts and leveraging our recent advances into virtual programming.

“Being in Nature is more essential now than ever. Wild, outdoor spaces soothe the soul and tend to the weariness we feel with everyday news. Pepperwood has been a place for me to intimately connect to the land. Pepperwood offers a diversity of landscapes as well as educational opportunities to learn about that diversity – it’s been an important part of my life.”

Eleanor Guerin, Pepperwood Steward & Donor
**NEED**
Research shows more time spent in nature leads to improved emotional well being, a healthier lifestyle, and a deeper commitment to conserve natural landscapes.

Yet the amount of time both kids and adults historically spend outside is alarmingly low—only minutes per day.

A diversity of voices is needed to create successful conservation strategies, yet people of color are not well represented in conservation leadership.

**APPROACH**
Expand bilingual (Spanish-English) science programming and increase outreach to traditionally marginalized communities.

Sponsor career-building internships for junior college students.

Craft nature-based experiences and retreats with the whole community.

Forge partnerships with artists and arts organizations to expand ways to engage with the land.

**OUTCOMES**
An increasing number of our region’s youth and adults engage with the outdoors, live more sustainably, and champion nature.

The next generation of conservation practitioners and champions are representative of our region’s diverse demographics.

Performing and visual artists bring new perspectives to our exploration of the natural world, helping our community forge deeper connections with nature.

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Pepperwood Preserve sits within the traditional homeland of the Wappo people. We respect and honor past, present, and future generations of Wappo and their continued connection to this land.

2130 Pepperwood Preserve Road
Santa Rosa, California 95404
www.pepperwoodpreserve.org

@PEPPERWOODCA
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@PEPPERWOODPRESERVECA
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