



Mission and Culture

Mission Statement:

To better our community through partnerships that improve the lives of young people and further wildlife conservation.

Values:

- We believe education and knowledge are transformative
- We champion just and equitable systems and policies
- We manage our resources with integrity and transparency
- We honor the voices of marginalized communities
- We engage our work with humility and curiosity
- We celebrate courageous leadership
- We embrace the shared responsibility to better our community and protect our wildlife habitats

Racial Equity Imperative:

The Maddox Fund is committed to helping create a more just and equitable community. We fulfill this commitment with our partners by recognizing and addressing the systemic injustices that have marginalized communities and continue to leave many people behind. We engage in and reimagine partnerships to advance education, marginalized youth and wildlife conservation.

Undergirding this commitment is the conviction that all human beings are interconnected, not just with one another, but with all of nature – a belief that makes our desire to foster connection and a sense of belonging even more urgent.

Definitions:

Diversity – embracing differences in race, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship, age, faith tradition, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, ability or disability in order to diminish historic barriers and disadvantages and reduce bias.

Inclusion— elevating the values, voices, styles, experiences and identities of people who have continually been marginalized, thereby increasing shared understanding, dignity and the opportunities to belong and succeed.

Equity—providing the resources and support needed to help marginalized individuals and organizations thrive, thereby ensuring we can no longer predict advantages or disadvantages based on our differences.

Justice - dismantling historic systems that have marginalized our neighbors and creating new liberating systems to take their place.

***Liberation** - A world in which people and planet flourish together in regenerative systems free from oppression and threat.*

Organizational Culture:

The Maddox Fund strives to create an environment where all people and planet flourish. Through observation, we have found that nature teaches us what healthy systems look like and what it takes to sustain them. Maddox looks to nature to teach us how to work and live together.

What we learn from water – Bend, adapt and keep moving forward

From creeks to rivers, water is always moving toward the sea—but never on a straight course. Streams bend and burble. They respond to floods and droughts adapting to the environment around them. At Maddox we understand the value of assessing the terrain in which we find ourselves and altering course as needed. We are a learning organization, always exploring new possibilities in response to our changing community. Maddox is curious about what lies beyond the next bend and is willing to take risks as we chart a new course. To paraphrase the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, no one can step in the same river twice, because the river is never the same, and neither are we.

What we learn from trees – We are stronger together

From trees, we learn about interconnectedness, as below ground, tree roots are intertwined for strength and survival. When the wind blows, the trees hold each other fast. At Maddox we take our cue from trees, and believe that we are stronger together, rooted in our shared vision, mission and values while reaching for our shared piece of the sky. Like trees, the Maddox Fund believes our well-being is wrapped up in an inescapable network of mutuality – whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

What we learn from grasslands – Diversity feeds us

From grasslands we learn that diversity – indeed, biodiversity – is essential to healthy systems.

As the multiple varieties of grass and wildflowers are cross-pollinated by bees and breezes, grasslands show us how symbiotic relationships feed us. Grassland diversity contributes to soil health, water quality, carbon storage and wildlife habitat. The Maddox Fund promotes equity and justice by celebrating diversity, by finding joy in cross-pollinated ideas and by advocating for just systems, ecological and otherwise, when they are threatened. We nurture an environment of belonging for all people.

What we learn from animal communities – How to lead and follow

From geese that trade off leadership roles in flight to coyotes who play with and protect one another, we acknowledge that we can go further together and that no one can be left behind. From animal communities, Maddox is reminded that when we engage our partners/staff/board – when we listen to and trust their lived expertise – we thrive. At Maddox we are committed to leading, following, playing and cultivating an open and generous spirit.

What we learn from the earth—Seeds grow in fertile ground

Ideas, like seeds, are fruitful when they rest in rich soil. Maddox believes that the ground we live in requires time and tending with a commitment to the long-term benefits of on-going care. Our organic matter includes trust, honesty, authenticity, grace, forgiveness, generosity, acceptance, joy, sharing, curiosity, humility, passion and justice. We are committed to caring for the soil so ideas can flourish.

Dan and Margaret were most alive walking along creeks, exploring savannahs or sitting in tree stands. They became conservationists by listening to the wisdom of creation and recognizing that all human beings are interconnected, not just with one another, but with all of nature.

What does this culture look like in the workplace:

Bend, adapt and keep moving forward

We approach our work with a sense of curiosity and are committed to learning as an organization and individuals. We listen to our partners and to each other while recognizing that our different life experiences and expertise are part of a healthy workplace. Adapting includes taking risk and failing forward.

We are stronger together

Knowing that we are all interconnected, we strive to take part in creating a more just and equitable community. We do this through collaboration with other organizations and being present in the community. We nurture relationship and value community involvement. We also recognize our connection to the environment and are working to produce zero waste.

Diversity feeds us

We recognize the importance of diversity and seek it at all levels of our organization – from the nonprofit organizations we partner with to caterers for our meetings. Different cultural traditions and expressions are celebrated and all voices are welcome and essential.

How to lead and follow

Maddox knows that leadership is fluid and that there are times to lead and times to listen. To that end, we foster space for bold ideas by tearing down formal barriers, embedding participatory processes so people feel ownership in the work. We center for voices of our nonprofit partners and follow their lead even when we are required to move outside of our comfort zones.

Seeds grow in fertile ground

Maddox knows that creating meaningful change is a long-term and intensive process. We trust our partners and are responsive to their needs. We are also committed to the development of staff. To help create that fertile ground, we reflect on and analyze our work through a lens of power.