

PARTNERSHIP

The Boards of Directors from Sustainable Connections and Cloud Mountain Farm Center are exploring a strategic alliance between the two nonprofit organizations.

Sustainable Connections and Cloud Mountain Farm Center have known each other and worked well together since inception. Whatcom County's local and regional food system has become the envy of many communities because it is filled with innovative and passionate people, has increased economic activity, and has provided access to delicious and nutritious food for thousands more community members over the past 15 years. Sustainable Connections and Cloud Mountain Farm Center have been instrumental in these changes and it only seems natural that both organizations would explore a strategic partnership together.

The mission and vision of Sustainable Connections and Cloud Mountain Farm Center are in alignment. Both organizations strive to produce economic, environmental, and social results that benefit our community. The mission of Sustainable Connections' Food & Farming Program is nearly identical to Cloud Mountain Farm Center's mission.

Sustainable Connections and Cloud Mountain Farm Center collaborate regularly, especially within the Food & Farming program at Sustainable Connections. The services each organization provides, however are complementary and not duplicative. Joint grant proposals over the past two years have helped both teams recognize respective strengths.

Both non profits have a solid financial foundation and have been particularly successful raising 'earned income' to help cover programming costs. Together, they would have a diverse base of funding that provides stability and opportunities for growth. Both organizations also share some key funder relationships and are trusted in the community.

There is mutual respect and admiration between the members of each organization. Professional staff are top notch and will likely benefit even more from working more closely together. Each team produces a great deal of value and will excel by having additional personnel and resources available. Both organizations are excited about the growing synergies that may emerge and the benefits that will be discovered by exploring a strategic alliance.

Both boards intentionally use the term "strategic alliance" so they can explore all options available for working together. The boards and staff are talking with key stakeholders and experts to help determine which course of action (if any) could benefit both organizations and the community. Other terms such as "merger" have specific legal definitions and implications in WA state, and the boards of directors did not want to limit any possibilities before making a decision.

Have questions? Interested in learning more? Want to help? Contact us!

Derek Long

Executive Director, Sustainable Connections
Derek@sustainableconnections.org

Tom Thornton

Executive Director, Cloud Mountain Farm Center
Tom@cloudmountainfarmcenter.org