

RESTOR(Y)ING SOIL



BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA
+
KAITLIN BRYSON

FACILITATING SUCCESSION POST-WILDFIRE

Facilitating succession means that we are facilitating relationships - allowing communities to be built, maintained, and strengthened through nourishing their numerous and abundant interactions; honoring their cycles of living and dying. Each generation makes food for the next. By weaving this facilitation with respect for the pacing of ecological time and revering the miracle of every detail, we might sing stories to the ground reminding them: you have been a forest.



SUCCESSION

01

06.2023

In ecosystems, the process of succession refers to how a biological community evolves through sequential progression over time, how different organisms and species move in and out of a place due to changing conditions and resources, and as such, pave the way for future generations. We can think of high-heat and high-intensity post-wildfire landscapes as places for primary succession to occur. Meaning that succession is starting from ground zero. Due to the extreme temperatures of the Calf Canyon and Hermit's Peak wildfires, the soil web was nearly destroyed rendering certain soils — the primary location of the food chain — lifeless.

As we work to abolish centuries of colonial and genocidal policies attempting to disconnect Indigenous Peoples from their lands and cultures, there is hope that remains in the continuance of Indigenous and land-based ways of knowing. When this knowledge is Indigenous led and implemented as part of the bigger Land Back movement, it can help to soften the climate crisis and strengthen the relations and reconnection needed to heal a communal consciousness and our true place as humanity within Natural Law and within our ecologies. This does not mean the burden of solutions and labor should fall on Indigenous Peoples, but that restorative justice, LandBack, and liberation is a necessary piece of a healthy environment and sustainable future.

RESTOR(Y)ING
THROUGH

02

RESTORATIVE
JUSTICE

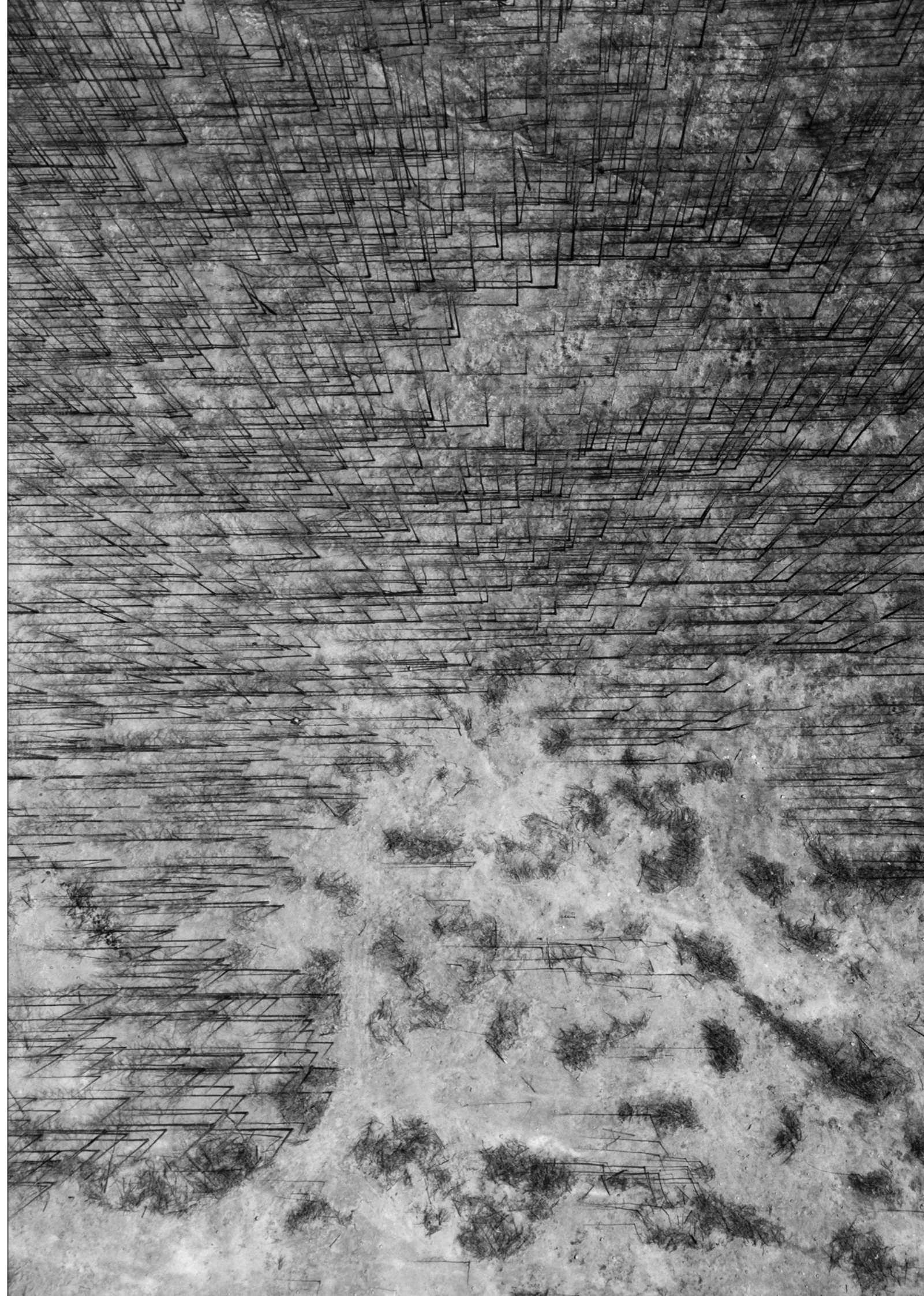
When we center Indigenous Pregnant Families in the work of supporting the transformation already underway on the planet, when we center them as the standards for protections, then everyone is protected.

In Northern NM, we have been enduring decades of wildfires as a result of Indigenous land theft, gross mismanagement from colonial regulatory agencies, and long term drought brought on by the climate crisis. This has greatly impacted the severity and frequency of devastating wildfires in our state. There are strategies that we can take to help nurture the restoration and strengthen our forests in need of healing.

2023

02

RESTOR(Y)ING SOIL





SUCCESSION STRATEGIES

05

1. Build soil health through seeding of Native mycorrhizal fungi and microbes, and abundant composting of organic matter
2. Seed cover crops, Native perennials, Native wild grasses and wildflowers
3. Mulch and keep soil covered with vegetation year round as much as possible
4. Disturb the soil as little as possible. Let it heal

SUCCESSION STRATEGIES

2023

5. Encourage plant diversity through patchwork plantings of perennials and groundcover
6. Plant fruit and flower-bearing perennials that will invite wildlife and pollinators back in
7. Build resources to grow or acquire plant starts to engage in robust replanting of trees and other middle and upper story trees and perennial vegetation on an annual basis (twice a year during Spring and Fall)
8. Encourage microclimates near plantings with rocks and other fallen materials on the south side of plantings. Plant seeds and seedlings on north facing slopes with rain catchment basins as much as possible
9. Utilize runoff points to build berms and check dams to slow and catch water for plantings and seeding

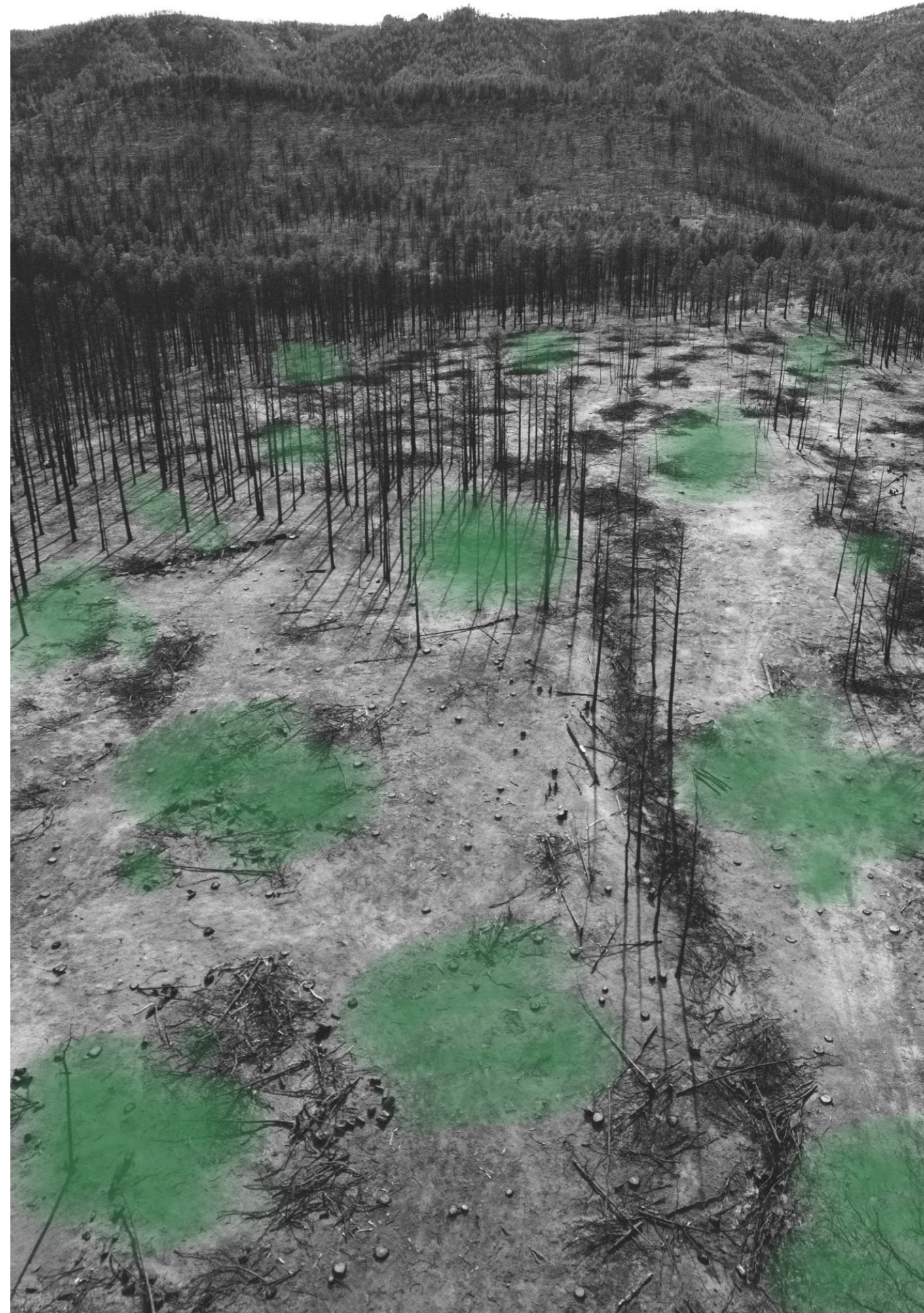
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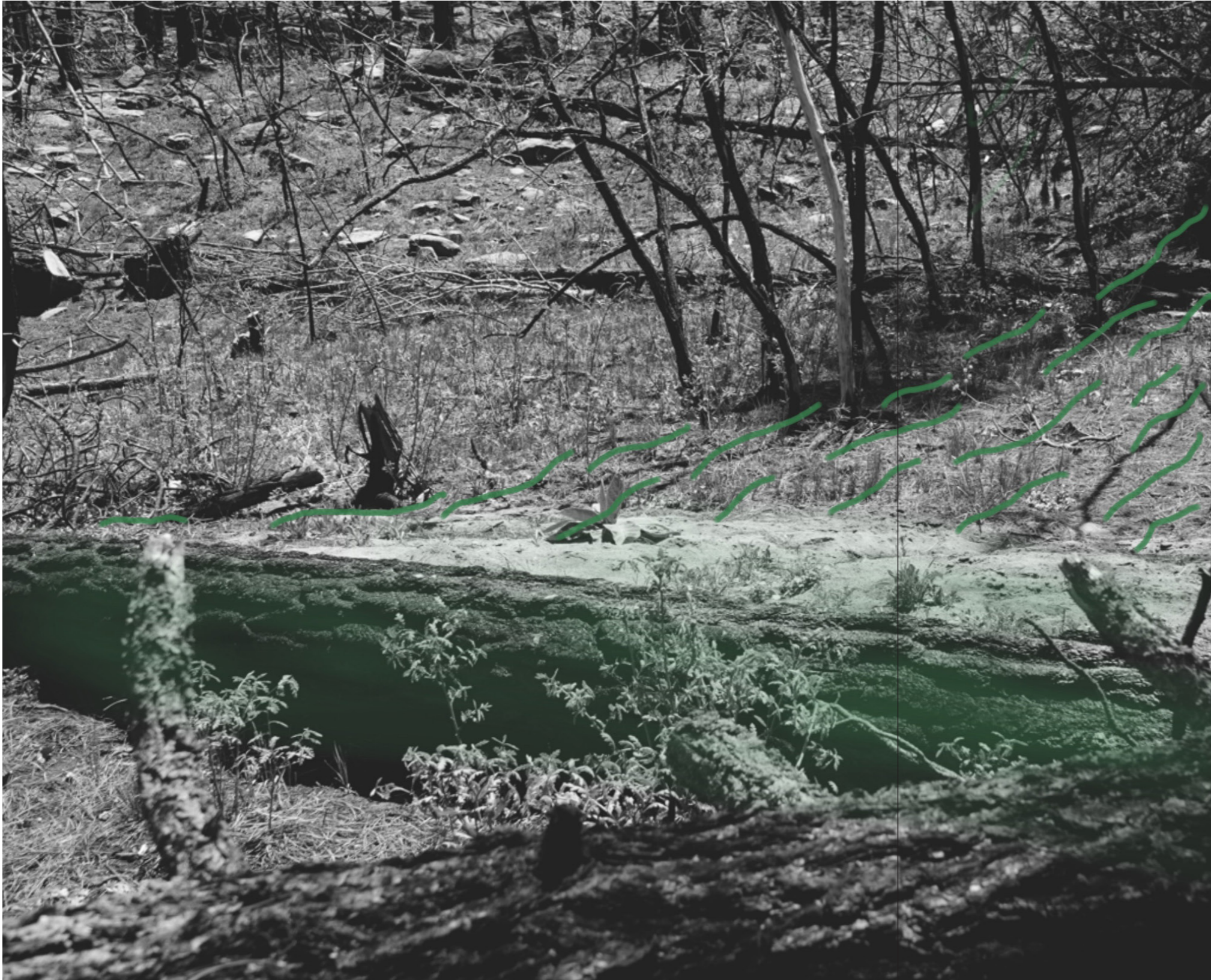
RESTOR(Y)ING SOIL

2023

07

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10. Facilitate as much erosion control as possible. A quick solution is to fell burned trees and move them perpendicular to the slope, using other (rooted) burned trees as stakes to hold them in place (see reverse photo)

11. Build mulched pathways on contour on scarred areas

12. Use rainwater harvesting such as Zuni bowls and contour planting to nurture the forest floor as a sponge and minimize erosion

13. When walking through scarred areas, throw small seed balls in abundance containing mycorrhizal seeds, Native grasses and wildflowers, organic soil and encased in hardened clay to await activation during rainy seasons

14. Engage in a culture of consent and personal spiritual practice when carrying out these activities

TRANSFORM 10

Sitting with the denial of access to sacred sites, the fires, and rampant leasing of homelands
Sitting with events today, with white supremacy and the denial of Affirmative Action

Deep Breaths

The thunder and lightning washing over our skies and horizons
Door open, smelling rain, sage and rosemary
My toes under my dog's back, a soft, calming weight on the tops of my feet
Plain sight fascism it can get deadly fast

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Joyful tears and genuine moments I had this day
Have you ever seen sunsets from quiet bosque evenings while watering your field?
Cheered on after dinner chess matches and marveled at brilliant children
And then let yourself witness something evil and methodical
Destructive words proclaimed as law, poof, denial of ancestral sacrifices
Of equal access
Still, we will never stop helping each other or our relatives
Building our own educational and economic survival
Like always, we will always be
Rooted to our own Indigenous ecological existence
Sharing resources in abundance like potteries full of seed
And this warning is a warning to your legalities
Extinction, does not recognize self appointed dominance
And your laws will never be of these lands, this place
Your systems of power over lives will not continue
Are not a part of forever, not a part of now

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And I think about



2023

How fire is transformational
Can speed change, destroy indiscriminately
Like a storm or slower and controlled
Sprouting new growth, self resurrection
Forests of symbiotic revolutionary collapse forcing
nurturing collaboration

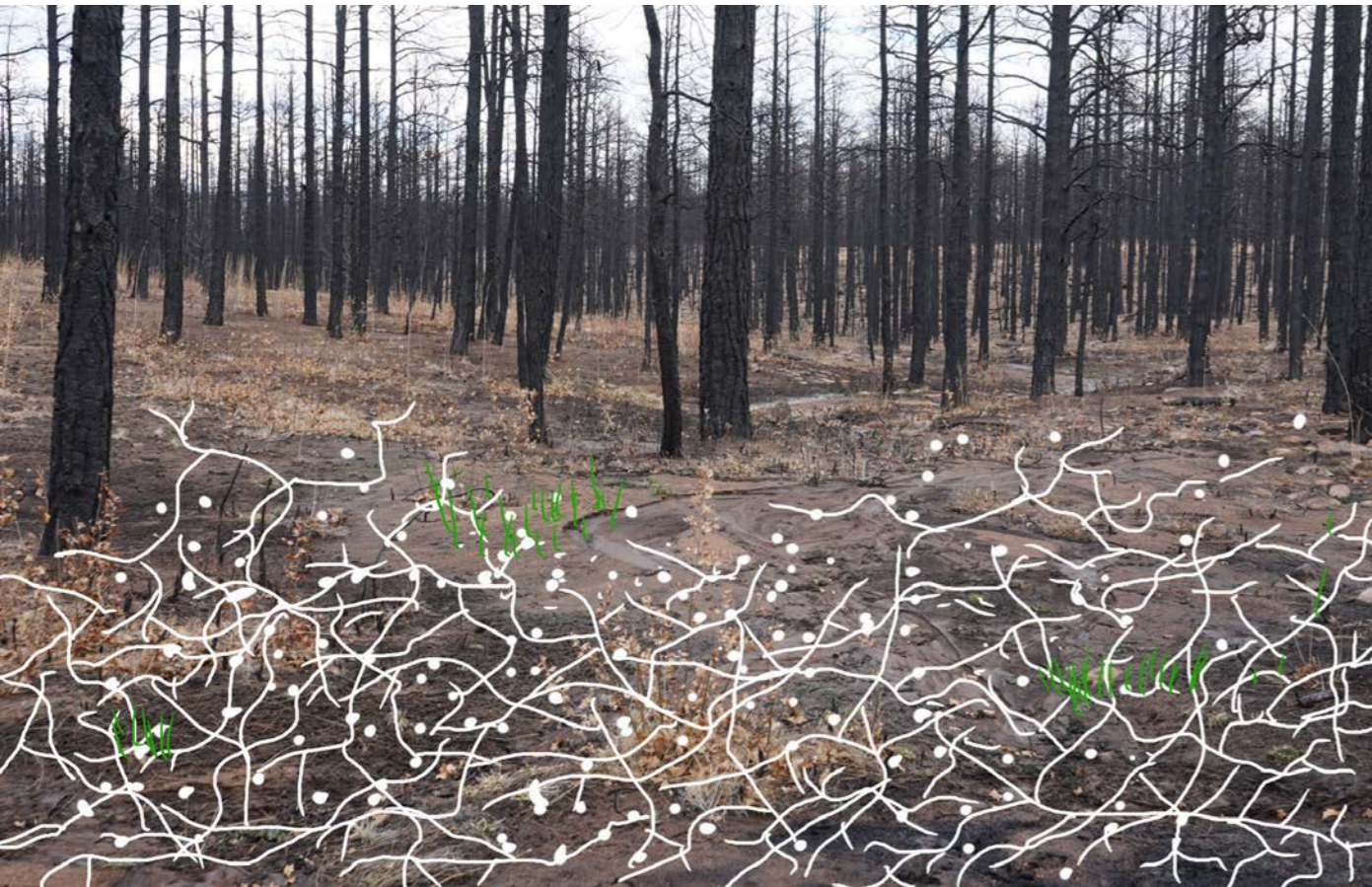
12



2023

A hesitation, and a knowing this time it's out of control
All its energy expended at once in rapid painful combustion
There are places where heat turns mountains to glass
There are places where wildflowers and dormant diversity
take root

13



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2023

The footsteps of deer and Peoples returning to pray, to
collect rain and grass seeds
Birdsong and helpers, many hands blessed, so much strength
So much to feel
It does not erase our struggles and resistance

14



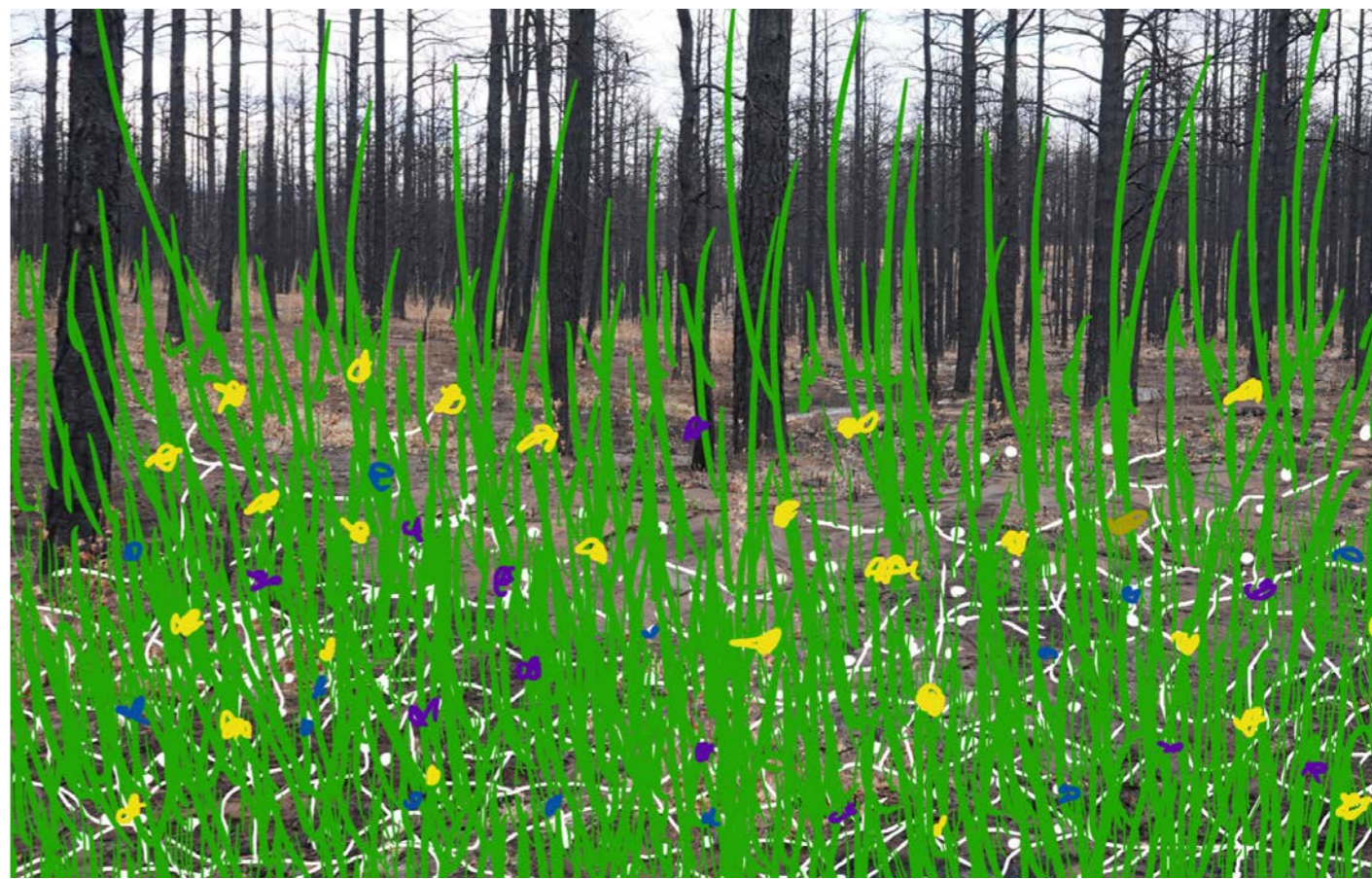
2023

Hands on flame, On hot stone
Sustenance for ceremony and waking up tomorrow
Prayers for life in sunrise beauty another day closer
Imagining blue corn fields and blackened forests
Getting an extra drink while soaking up this storm

15



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Precautionary Principles center preventive actions and measures that can be taken to reduce harm, intensity, and severity of destruction within the environment. This especially pertains to policies and standards set for environmental and health regulations. Following precautionary principles can facilitate strengthened and more resilient ecosystems with a high capacity to adapt and recover after a disaster.

2023

PRECAUTIONARY

16

PRINCIPLES

1. Restore management to Indigenous Peoples with Tribal to Tribal training programs
2. Harvest trees with strategy and intention to thin out dense forests ensuring to always leaving older/old growth trees
3. Nurture healthy watersheds, nurture biodiversity with vegetation and wildlife
4. Do No Harm for human and more-than-human communities
5. Change policies to ensure industry and development do no

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2023

harm to the multi-layers of ecologies (from soil to atmosphere) so that no “permitted” harm is allowed

6. Build societies and systems the way the forest uses energy. Do not build dense communities in forested areas, ensure nothing is wasted, only harvest and use what you need, close loops

7. Restore protection to waterways. Manage wildfires by protecting watersheds

17

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THE ABILITY TO SMELL WATER
IN JUST A FEW RAINDROPS ON DRY
SOIL,

THE WAY THE LIGHT SHINES
THROUGH DRY GRAMA GRASSES IN THE
THE SMELL OF JUNIPER ON AN EARLY
WINTER MORNING.

THE WAY PEOPLE RESEMBLE PLANTS
IN THEIR RESILIENCE.
DOUBLE RAINBOWS DURING A GOOD
MONSOON.

PINON SAP STICKY ON MY HANDS AFTER HO
ONTO YOUR BRANCHES FOR SUPPORT

I DIDN'T KNOW

SO MUCH WENT INTO
THE COLOR BROWN
BEFORE KNOWING
THIS LAND

THERE IS
BROWN-GREEN
AND SAND TAPE
AND SILVER-COPPER AND
ROSE-BROWN
AND THAT THE LONGER
I LOOK
THE MORE RAINBOW
I FEEL

QUESTIONS TO ASK



If re-growth comes from re-storying what stories do

you

want

to

sing?



IMAGE CREDITS

DYLAN MCLAUGHLIN	COVER	2023 DRONE FOOTAGE BURN SCAR
HEATHERASH AMARA		2023 PLANTING STORY QUILT
DYLAN MCLAUGHLIN	03	2023 DRONE FOOTAGE BURN SCAR
KAITLIN BRYSON	04	2023 HOLE LEFT FROM INCINERATED ROOTS
KAITLIN BRYSON	06	2023 PINE NEEDLES MULCH
DYLAN MCLAUGHLIN	07	2023 DRONE FOOTAGE BURN SCAR
KAITLIN BRYSON	07	2023 DRAWING ON PHOTO
KAITLIN BRYSON	08	2023 PHOTO OF EROSION CONTROL + DRAWING
KAITLIN BRYSON	12 - 15	2023 SUCCESSION DEMONSTRATION
KAITLIN BRYSON	18	2023 STORY QUILT
HEATHERASH AMARA	19	2023 PLANTING STORY QUILT
HEATHERASH AMARA	21	2023 PLANTING STORY QUILT
KAITLIN BRYSON	21	2023 BEATA WITH GAMBLE OAK

TEXT BY BEATA TSOSIE-PEÑA WITH KAITLIN BRYSON