



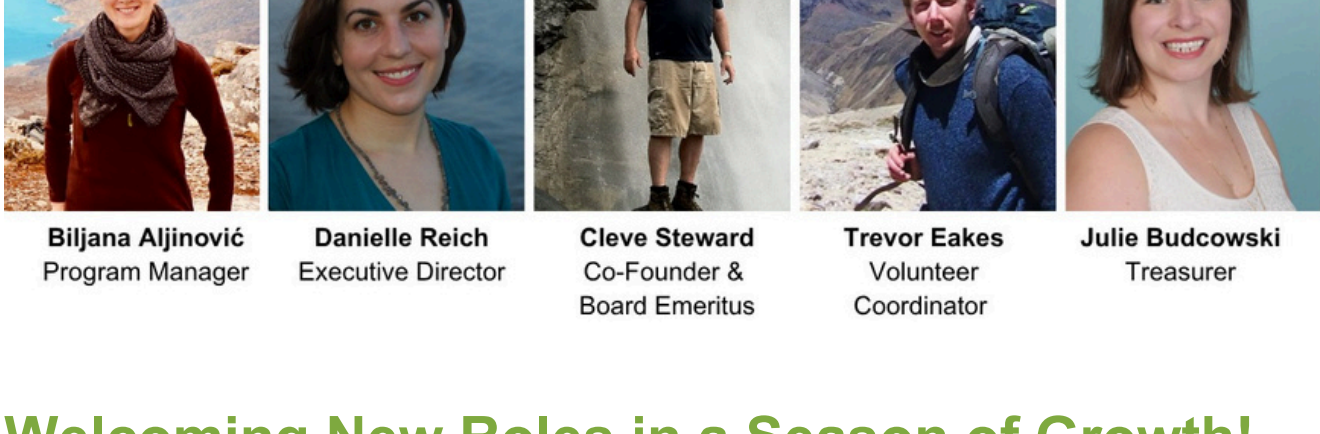
Thanks for Being Here!

In every corner of the EcoWB community, volunteers are stepping up to make a difference—sharing their skills, solving complex problems, and standing alongside communities working to protect the places they call home.

In this, our Summer 2025 Newsletter, we're celebrating what happens when people show up—not for recognition, but because they care. When we come together like this, real change becomes possible.

Thank you for being part of it.

Ecologists Without Borders



Biljana Aljinović
Program Manager

Danielle Reich
Executive Director

Cleve Steward
Co-Founder & Board Emeritus

Trevor Eakes
Volunteer Coordinator

Julie Budkowski
Treasurer

Welcoming New Roles in a Season of Growth!

We're thrilled to welcome **Biljana Aljinović** as EcoWB's new Program Manager! With a background in biological sciences and over 15 years of experience supporting conservation projects across Europe, Africa, and Latin America, Biljana brings a thoughtful, strategic lens to our work. Her focus on long-term impact and community-centered collaboration makes her a perfect fit for EcoWB's evolving direction.

We're also marking a few transitions within our leadership team. After 14 years of dedicated service, **Cleve Steward**, one of EcoWB's original three founders, is stepping back from his role as Executive Director and passing the reins to **Danielle Reich**. Danielle has held the roles of President and Treasurer at EcoWB and has played an active leadership role within the organization for more than seven years. Cleve will remain actively involved in project management and continue to serve as Board Member Emeritus.

Meanwhile, **Trevor Eakes** has officially taken on the role of Volunteer Coordinator alongside his existing board position, and **Julie Budkowski** has stepped into the role of Treasurer. We're incredibly grateful for the passion, continuity, and fresh perspective each of these leaders brings to EcoWB's next chapter.

If You Have a DAF, This Is The Year to Use It!

If you have a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF), the #HalfMyDAF campaign is a powerful way to put your charitable dollars to work. By committing to give out half of your DAF by September 2026, you'll unlock matching funds for nonprofits like EcoWB. Your grant could help us respond faster, support more communities, and create lasting change. To join the movement and recommend a grant to EcoWB today, visit halfmydaf.com. Let's move those dollars off the sidelines—and into action.



Turn Workplace Energy into Real-World Impact!

Looking for a simple way to support EcoWB? If you're employed, your workplace might be the key! From employee giving programs to company fundraisers, there are plenty of easy ways organizations can get involved. Could your employer host a fundraiser, match donations, or choose EcoWB as a "charity of the month"? Let us know—we're happy to help with ideas, graphics, and anything else you need to get started. [Get in touch](#) and let's make it happen.

EcoWB in Action: Volunteer Highlight



EcoWB Volunteers Using GIS to Protect Wildlife and Habitats in Cameroon

EcoWB volunteer, **Jennifer Walker**, is a research scientist at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, where she focuses on hydrology and landscape function in rangelands, including minesite reclamation. She holds a Master's in Natural Resources and a PhD in Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences, and previously worked as a rangeland ecologist and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. She and her husband also farm in western South Dakota, where they've raised their three children.

Drawing on that wide-ranging experience, Jennifer brings a deep understanding of how landscapes function—and how GIS tools can help ecologists make sense of them. Landscapes, habitats, and living things exist in a mosaic of places, and GIS helps us understand where and how the elements of ecosystems interact. It's how we map habitats, plant and animal populations and their migrations, and the challenges species face as the world changes.

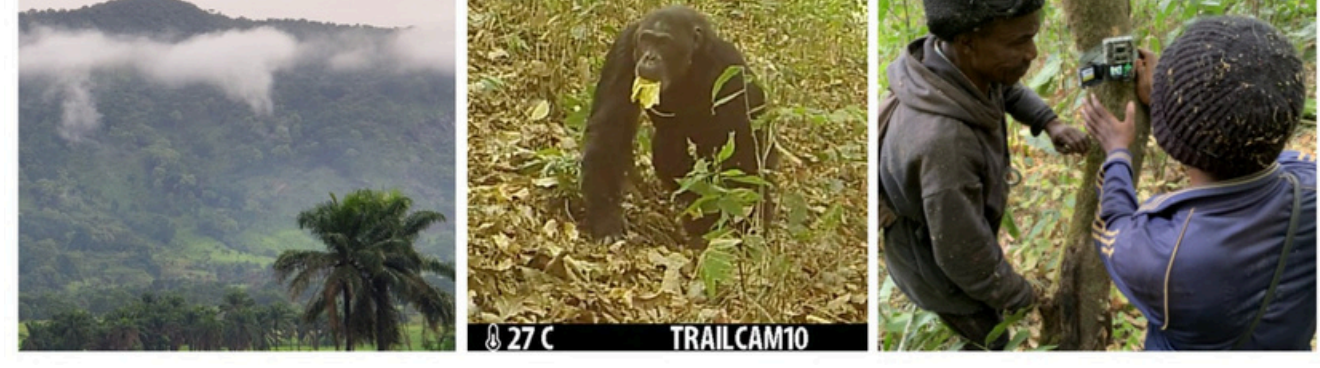
But GIS is more than maps. With it, volunteers like Jennifer can identify the most effective locations for ecological restoration or habitat protection. We can use them to assess conditions, track changes across ecosystems, and support communities with the information they need to make smart, locally grounded conservation decisions. Adding the spatial element to data analysis and research trends helps reveal patterns, relationships, and trends that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Jennifer is one of a team of EcoWB volunteers supporting a project in northern Cameroon to help conserve a critically endangered population of chimpanzees, in partnership with local NGO **Community-Based Biosynergy Management (CBBM)**. She and her fellow volunteers contribute in several ways—including providing basic map data for this very remote area. Using web-based GIS tools, the team supports people on the ground to collect data on rivers, roads, buildings, farms, and infrastructure using cell phones—alongside information on wildlife habitats and potential community forestry sites. Wildlife encounters can also be recorded.

This project also draws on more advanced GIS work. Remotely sensed data is being used to create detailed maps of forest structure—canopy heights, density, species composition, and plant health—to better understand habitat dynamics. When combined with camera-trap observations, this data allows for detailed modeling of where improved habitat quality would provide the best benefit for wildlife. This will allow the community to make decisions on what types of projects to invest in to best help chimpanzees and other wildlife thrive alongside their human neighbors.

This kind of collaboration—pairing local knowledge and on-the-ground conservation, with remote scientific support—is at the heart of how EcoWB works: helping communities protect their ecosystems with the right tools, expertise, and allies in place.

We're grateful to Jennifer—and to all our volunteers—who bring their skills, insight, and time to support communities around the world. You can learn more about this project on our [website](#)—or, if you're interested in signing up to volunteer or exploring current opportunities, head over to our [volunteer pages](#).



Look Good, Do Good!

Every hat, t-shirt, or hoodie sold in EcoWB's Bonfire store helps fund our work—and we'd love to see you in yours! Snap a photo wearing your EcoWB merch and tag us on social media or email it for us to feature online! It's a great way to show support and spark conversations. [Visit our store here.](#)

Here's our Development Director, Becky Muston, wearing her EcoWB tee with pride while helping to build an oyster reef in Charleston, SC, during May's **National Association of Environmental Professionals (NAEP) Conference**.

Run for EcoWB in Seattle!

Calling all runners! EcoWB is an official charity partner for the **Seattle Marathon on Sunday, November 30**, and we're looking for runners to raise funds while crossing the finish line for a EcoWB. Join our team and fuel the impact of our global volunteer work. If running isn't your thing but you're a Seattle local, we'll also need volunteers on race day! Mark your calendars and [get in touch](#) if you're ready to take on this exciting challenge in 2025!



Volunteer Opportunities

Explore our current volunteer opportunities and see how your expertise can help protect ecosystems and uplift communities worldwide.

CURRENT OPENINGS

The Goal Behind Everything We Do at EcoWB!



If you've browsed the [project pages](#) on our website, you've probably seen how we align our work with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. These 17 global goals cover everything from clean water to climate action—shared priorities for building a better world.

But one goal stands apart: SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Unlike the others, SDG 17 isn't focused on a single issue. It's about how we work together to achieve the rest. It emphasizes the importance of strong, inclusive partnerships—sharing knowledge, building trust, and coordinating efforts across borders, sectors, and communities.

This principle is deeply woven into how EcoWB works. Our projects begin with local organizations that have identified an environmental challenge and are looking for support. We connect them with skilled volunteers, co-develop solutions, and provide technical guidance. It's a model rooted in collaboration and it only works because of trust built through partnership.

In many ways, SDG 17 reflects what EcoWB has believed from the beginning: lasting change comes from working together. We're proud to play a small part in showing what that can look like. So, by volunteering with EcoWB, you're contributing to SDG 17. You are part of a global partnership model that helps communities solve challenges they wouldn't be able to tackle alone. Let's keep that going—together, we can make a difference.

Thank you for being part of EcoWB!

DONATE TODAY

