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Hello, and welcome to the green mind podcast. I'm your host, Leandra Lacey. For those of you that did not already know me, I am a social conservationist. That means I work at the intersection of environmental and social sciences. I've been able to love and enjoy this space since 2007. And now I want to bring that space to you. I will be interviewing people around the world and understand the connection between human wellbeing and environmental outcomes. My hope is that you will find a way to engage in this space, we all have a role to play in the health of our communities and the planet. Let's see who's up next for today's interview.

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Okay, well, I am super excited Today we have with us Elizabeth Shue stairs. So Elizabeth is a dear friend of mine, someone who I can fight in for a lot of things. And I really appreciate her taking the time for us to talk. And today we're gonna get super geeky, so buckle in listeners as you can. So Elizabeth, I'm so excited that you're with me today.

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Hey, Leander, I'm so excited to be here, too.

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That's awesome. First, I just need to know because we haven't caught up all summer all year. How are the kids doing? How's Eddie? How's Gabby? I'm just excited.

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Well, I have to say we have been very fortunate because I work from home with the kids doing remote learning. It hasn't affected us that much. So things are going pretty smoothly here.

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That's awesome. And we have a new little one. Elliot, right?

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That's correct.

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Awesome. Who just recently turned to I believe?

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Yes, that's right.

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That's awesome. And now so is Edie and Steve's birthday at around the same time? Because like, that's all two birthday posts, like back to back.

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Yes, Stephen Elliot, are the ones who have December birthdays. Yep.

02:03

That's awesome. That's so cool. So Elizabeth is an environmental economist, I am a social scientist. And you know, there's this like, unspoken war that's going on, and not between us. But like, I think between people who hire us about like, oh, what do you do? And what do you do? And how are you similar? and How are you different. And so when you and I first met each other, we were working for an organization that had both of our roles and environmental social scientists and environmental economists. And they put us in the same office. And I really felt like they're putting two beta fishes together to see who would take out the other one to see like, Okay, which one is more important? It really is gonna work out the social scientists or the economists. But

really, I think that's not what happened at all. If anything, I became such a better professional social scientist, because of you and your perspectives. And what you brought to the table. I thought it was very symbiotic overall. So I don't know, what is your thought on this whole social science versus environment, environmental, social scientists versus environmental economist,

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I think, in general, people think that if they have an ecological restoration, or some sort of natural science project, they just need some sort of human dimension or social element. So most people don't know if they need an economist or a social scientist. And so they kind of blend us together. And like you say, they think they only need one without realizing that we feel very different roles, and we have a different purpose. And so I definitely agree with you that we ended up being very symbiotic. We don't have a lot of tools in our field, for instance, to quantify trust or culture. And to this day, I still quote some of the things you have said about trust being a key element. And so that's an example of something that environmental economics doesn't do very well at, but your field does a little better at.

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Mm hmm. That's right. Yeah. And I totally think about, you know, I go out of my way, when I get clients who hire me on to do social science, I say, you know, I'm not an economist, I almost have to say that every single time because I don't want them to all of a sudden say, Hey, can you do a what? Is it like a benefit cost analysis? Or can you do a willingness to pay study on like, I don't, I don't, I don't do that. I can I can, I can maybe start the process that you can give it over to an economist or really take it forward. But you know, what's interesting, though, Elizabeth, is that there's actually a lot of overlap, so I can kind of see where people will get confused. So I remember having a conversation in the office, and you were saying that Oh, yeah, a lot about what you talk about is about behavior and incentives. And like, Oh, that's what I do, too. But it's from a different lens and a different perspective. And I really appreciate that.

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Yeah, I think it's true. I think that at the end of the day, I think you and I could both have a project that has the same name. So a lot of times we do focus on the same areas, and it ends up being behind the scenes the differences that not everyone notices. So I think part of it is the training, most environmental economists probably got a degree in an agricultural economics or an Applied Economics Department. And so I'm going to go all jargony on you here, we probably got a training based in neoclassical economics. Yeah. So I mean, we do frame the world in terms of supply and demand and costs and benefits. And we put a lot of resources into a lot of my hours. And my days go towards either quantifying demand or quantifying benefits or quantifying quality

of life. And so it's behind the scenes that our tools and our methods are going to look a lot different. And in the end, we might actually reach the same conclusion, but we take a very different path to get there.

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Mm hmm. And you know, what I love talking to people about when I like, Oh, well, you know, my friends and economists like, Oh, well, you know, can she do my taxes? I'm like, that's not that's not what an economist is. But it is as cost of like, economy, like they see the word economy, and like, okay, so you're just about money? And what do you say to people who were like, Okay, what can you do for like monetary reasons? Like, how can you help me out from like, putting dollar signs on nature, like, that's not what you're all about?

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No, there was a period in the field of environmental economics, maybe back around 2005, where we were putting dollar values on everything, thinking that in order for nature to get a seat at the table, and decision making processes that it had to have \$1 value, but the field has grown in the past 15 years, and we now have moved into an area where we now have a bigger range of quality of life indicators. And we realized that dollar values don't tell the whole story that it's much more than

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that. Hmm, that's so fantastic to hear. And just kind of explore I mean, because science is so fascinating because of how multifaceted it is. And there's so much diversity within every field itself. So for those of you who I've kind of mentioned before, I am a social scientist, but I focus primarily on the qualitative social science and not quantitative social science. And so I have love interviews and focus groups and community meetings and using that data and analyzing that data in order to kind of give a story of that community, their values, their beliefs, what are some of the tools that you have in your bucket, Elizabeth, that you tend to use either most frequently, or that get you excited when you do the type of work that you do?

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Well, we also use focus groups and surveys. But again, there might be different methodologies behind it. So you mentioned in the intro, this whole willingness to pay. And so that is still a tool we pay that assesses demand, your willingness to pay says something about the value you prey on, say, a natural amenity like a wetland or a park. So that's one thing. But I've gotten a lot more into creating indicators, so quality of life indicators that tell something about your community, and

what your community values and how you're making progress around those things. And so that would be a slightly different set of tools that might still be based on surveys, but then it might bring in other data from other available sources online.

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That's awesome. You know, I think it's really about again, as we talked about earlier, this training that we both got that were different, but the lenses and the perspectives applied to the same challenge in such an innovative way. And of course, you know, I always remember, and I can never forget about the fact that we put on this huge workshop together, right? Yeah, the farms, forests, and rivers sustaining our way of life, I still have the notebook in front of me. And if I ever have to do a big community watershed meeting like that, again, I will probably mimic a lot of what we did. But what you were trying to get out of it maybe was slightly different from what I was trying to get out of it. But we were working with very diverse individuals, and really looking at the landscape in different ways. And from your remembering of the conference outside of how hectic it was and how crazy it was, you know, what were some of your biggest takeaways, as an economist from gathering these people together? Like what are some potential outcomes from gathering individuals like that together?

09:03

Well, you're not gonna believe this, but I just replicated that conference here in the county I live in because I loved it so much. And what I loved about it is I still remember we had economic development managers and farmers and conservation groups and municipalities all in the same room. And I remember people saying, Oh, that's what that person does. I didn't realize that, oh, that's what their goal is like, oh, the conservation groups don't really want to take over the whole watershed. They really are only targeting a few key parcels. Oh, I say there's a process to it. And so we decided to do the same thing here in this county. It's Wayne County, Ohio. And our county went through a two year comprehensive planning process. And they came up with a plan for balanced land use that really looked at how can we bring in open space, agriculture, housing, urban areas and commercial industrial development in a balanced way that preserves our rural quality of life. So it was canceled because of the pandemic. And we switched it to online. And we ended up having a much higher interest than I expected. We got like 50 to 75 people coming to every one of the four sessions. And we had the same thing. Oh, that's what you do is an invite as an economic development manager. Oh, you mean, there are benefits to economic development if we have open space and parks because it improves the quality of life and it retains your workforce, and then it helps your businesses grow? And it helps with business retention. And so I am shocked to find how much the basic questions are, what do you do? What are your goals? And what are your roles or responsibilities, and without having that first conversation, it's hard to move past it and have a successful collaboration.

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And that's the beautiful part of what we do. That's why I created this podcast to kind of bring that beauty that you just described to the rest of the world because it's so interesting. Like when maybe someone hears the word social scientists or environmental economist, they're like, it's data driven. It's all about facts. And yes, part of it is for sure, right. But the other part of it, the beautiful part of it is this bringing together of people of diverse areas who don't generally talk to each other, and being able to understand them in a different way through the lens of both from our side from a social science side, but also from their angle, having never met each other before and bringing together environmental activism and social activism or you know, whatever word you want to use, those were separate worlds. And we get to bring them together, which I love so much.

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Yeah. And oh, gosh, I could share with you quote after quote, a feedback we got out of doing this balanced linear seminar series here in our county, one of our presenters, works for one of the municipalities. And he said he didn't word it this way. But I felt like this was what he was saying is that he felt so misunderstood time and time again, that he was so excited. This is the first time ever he could have his voice heard about why their municipality makes some of the choices they make and what the benefits are. And people did receive his presentation very positively. Another question we got that was interesting, is one person. This question kind of made me laugh a little, but one person asked the economic development manager, but are you just going to keep growing forever? How much growth is enough growth? And I did say I think that that's a bigger philosophical discussion. And it might be easier if you had to take it offline, and ask this person face to face. But what it did, I heard several of our presenters had people follow up with them after and had these conversations, and they didn't have an avenue for that before. And then the third type of feedback I'm getting, which is also fascinating is I've had a lot of people come out of the woodwork and email me and say, I've been working on balanced land use issues and trying to get more parks into our urban areas, or trying to get more economic development with farms and blah, blah, whatever the issue is, and I didn't know anyone else was doing this. You mean there are other people like me? How do I get connected with you guys? So

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it was just this

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fascinating thing?

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Yeah, I love that so much. And I know I will say because of you every project I go into where I have to engage with the community at home, and I'm trying to get a rounded perspective, the Business Bureau, I always go to them, like I can't do a project and not understand like the perspectives of those who are trying to bring business and trying to develop their town and communities because they're an integral part of the whole perspective of nature. And people. I mean, they play a huge role in that,

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for sure. And what we did, one of the things that's interesting about our seminar series is we had three to four speakers for each of the four sessions. And we had every session balanced, every session had a mix of economic development and business or open space and from the preservation. And so I found that nobody got really angry, like, the farmers weren't getting mad that the open space people were taking their farmland, and there wasn't a lot of controversy because it was fair, and everyone's voice got heard. And we were never saying everyone has to agree. We were just saying, let's acknowledge that there are these multiple perspectives, and what can we do to come up with what can we do to co create creative solutions to get more balanced land use?

14:18

Mm hmm. I love it. I love it. You know. And so this is an interesting part. And I want to get your perspective because I think you fit in this bucket. So to be a social scientist or an economist, you don't have to have social skills, you can just like send us mail out survey, get the data back, crunch some numbers, and then you're done. But what you're talking about and what I love to engage in is something that requires an art as well. And so is that something that you learned through your schooling, learn through doing learn, because that's your personality. How did you kind of get to be in that bucket where you're also a social you have social skills, right? Not just the science.

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I think part of it is just I'm naturally extroverted. And so I enjoy the connection. And when I do interviews, every once in a while I say, Oh my gosh, you're brilliant. That's the good. I feel like, people are gonna think I'm flattering them. I'm telling you, when I say it, I really mean it in the moment, I am so enthralled by what they're saying. And I really care. But you know, what I think for me, it goes back to is I was a Peace Corps volunteer. And they receive a very, very deep anthropological training and cultural sensitivity. And for me, I think that if I hadn't had that depth of training, then I wouldn't have had tools that I have for approaching new cultures, because even

aside a piece from hundreds, but even if you're not in a developing country, there are different social and cultural groups within the US. I mean, I'm stating the obvious here. But without having these tools to think of engaging different groups, I think, actually, Peace Corps was a bigger influence than my degree in environmental economics.

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right in your ability to engage with people, I that totally makes sense for me. And I think about that from you know, how I grew up my experience growing up. So my mother's Panamanian is a very Hispanic culture, and there's no room for privacy and Hispanic culture, you're just in it, at least in my in the one that I grew up in. And so you learn to talk to people from day one. And then I think also just having these other kind of identities that I have is like you're faced with having to have awkward, weird conversations from early age. And I feel like that just kind of came into my adulthood. And so you probably had some of that, but also a very real tangible experience in Honduras allowed you to kind of expand on that, which is awesome.

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Yeah, I mean, I do think I do very well with awkwardness, I think I have an ability to push through that. And you have taught me a lot of tools, like when we went through the old engaging or cost differences, programs and learned about talking about diversity and differences. I learned a lot from you as well of how to have these conversations. I guess it's not a one time thing. It's a skill that you work on your entire life. Right?

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That's right. That's right. Absolutely. So just a question about that really quickly. So you're in Are you you're living in Ohio now? Right?

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That's correct. Okay. So

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people might think of Ohio and be like, oh, there's no diversity there. What do you what do you say about that? I mean, obviously, there's always there's diversity everywhere. People, there's no such thing as no diversity. So in a place, even though it may not be the kind of diversity you think about, but like, what are the kinds of some of the diversity that you get to interact with in Ohio, since I've never really engaged in been in Ohio,

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our county is pretty white. So it's not very racially diverse. We live in a rural county. And so we might even be 95%. White. Mm hmm. That said, we do have a lot of economic diversity, we have twice the poverty rate as the county, that's just one county to the north of us. Wow. I think we're 10% in the county to the north of us. That's 5%. And so that's some of the diversity is economic diversity. And we do certainly have a teeny bit of racial diversity, which makes it even harder for those individuals to have the conversation. It's a tricky place to be. But yeah, we do have two colleges here. And that may be a cliché thing to say, but I do think that colleges bring certain diversity and oh, yeah, it differences. I'm thinking with them as well.

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Yeah, absolutely. And so what type of groups do you get to interact with? I mean, I think you mentioned a couple, but you know, you have farmers, you get ranchers, you have fishers, like do you interact with those groups, in particular, those kind of recreational users,

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I work a lot with farmers and farmers are definitely a diverse group I work with right now I'm working with the smallest of the small farmers. And they are fundamentally a different group than some of the larger commodity farmers. And so I actually just got a grant, I just got a research grant from Ohio State University. Yay. It's very exciting. We're starting a new center for entrepreneurialism, for small scale food businesses. And so we're actually researching the diversity of these food producers and the different needs, so that we can develop new trainings based on those diverse needs for these small scale food producers to be able to access new markets.

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That's amazing. I mean, that's so needed. And that's so amazing that you get to bring that to your community. And that's the other thing too. So I live in Colorado, and I have a couple of projects, but my mental model when I started my business, and for those of you who are listeners, for those of you who don't already know I have a business called Lacey consulting services. And I primarily work with environmental organizations and sustainability minded businesses. And I help them through things like qualitative social science, strategic planning, and integrating justice, equity, diversity and inclusion into both of those things. My mental model when I started was, I don't want to be tied down to a place so I didn't hardly have any contracts in Colorado at all. Max, my first few contracts were either multi state or national or international, which I'm very thankful for. And then now I get to work a little bit more in Colorado. And it feels different because it feels like I'm

giving back to my own neighborhood. Do you feel that way? When you work in, you know, in Ohio?

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Well, yeah, actually, because my previous job where you and I both worked for the Nature Conservancy, I had to work statewide. I never had a project in my own County. And so, to me, this feels, I mean, I hate to exaggerate. But it feels euphoric to me to be able to have all of these local projects. And finally, for the first time, I mean, I'm in my 40s. And I've moved so much that I literally feel like this is the first time ever, that I've bought a home and I have roots in this community, and I am finally able to give back to my community. And I like helping other communities. But it's a different kind of feeling to give back to my own community.

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Yeah. Sometimes I get scared, though, because I'm like, Oh, my God, I messed this up. I have to live here. And these people are happy to live here with me. But then I'm like, I'm not come on Leander. You've done this a million times. Do you know that you're very gentle and you care about other people? And you're empathic? So yes, I guess you know, similarly, like, this is your home like, these are your people it makes you want to do right by them even more like of course, you have like a unstated standard, of course, you're going to take care of them, because that's your as a scientist, and as an individual. That's what you do. Does it feel weird though, when you go to the grocery store, and the person that you interviewed or person you're talking to is also there or not too far away?

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That part is less weird.

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Mm hmm.

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What feels weird is the politics. I feel like I'm stepping. I feel like I tiptoe around hidden landmines all the time. And so an example would be homelessness is surprisingly controversial, like, how could that be controversial? affordable housing is a very controversial political topic right now. And I was I just did a very small, a mini research project on homelessness, and I submitted the article to be published in our local newspaper. And so I know that there could be somebody who

gets mad at me and says, Oh, she's one of those people who's pushing affordable housing and homelessness. And so I do choose very carefully when I'm going to take a position or speak up on controversial things, and I do it sparingly, but I visited the homeless shelter, and I was just so moved by these people. And what's weird about homelessness in our county is there's a tangible number, there's like 125 of them. It's not that many. So to think that it's so close to being solvable in a county like this. And yet here it is a northern state that has cold winters. And it's still happening, I felt like that's something I wanted to take a position on. And if somebody gets mad at me and thinks that I'm being political, and politicizing it, I'm willing to take that risk, because it's that important.

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That's so beautiful, and powerful. And thank you for doing that. It's part of being an individual. We are human beings. We're not cold scientists who don't care about anything more than data. Like we're actual people. So of course, we're going to care about certain topics, when we're engaged with them. How are you navigating? So I remember when we work together, one of the big projects was the removal of Columbia Lake dam in northwest New Jersey. And I remember when I went into that community, and I just love to tell the story, because it's like this, like black Hispanic gay man walking into Northwest New Jersey, where you wouldn't think I would be okay, walking into just because sometimes there's a stigma about rural communities that automatically it's boxed into labeled into this or X, Y, or Z. I loved that community. But the politics were just outrageous, like the people who were probably the most powerful. The one of the most powerful people in that town, influential wise, was the ex mayor of the town. And I remember when I was up there, I think I might have told you the story. When I was up there initially, no one would get back to me when I would email them. And you know, I could have a little con, you know, a little like, Oh, is it me? Is it because of race, like what is going on? But eventually, I finally met up with the ex mayor, and we had a conversation at the local library. And after that, he opened all the doors. He was like, by the way, Leander, no one's getting back to you because they're waiting on me to tell them that it's okay to meet with you. And I was like, Wow, that's so crazy. Do you have any experiences like that when you kind of engage in these communities? Ah,

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that's a really powerful story. I remember you told me about that at the time, and I'd forgotten till now and it's great to hear that story again. Oh, interesting. I don't think it's that dramatic here. But definitely getting an introduction here from somebody else has gone a long way.

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It's just powerful to realize the power of real chips and how that works. And curious about this

topic. So I remember in school, someone mentioning the idea that, you know, you really got to be careful about who you choose to do particular projects. And so sometimes you have to let other people lead, because of certain reasons, for example, so example being that, you know, the story being of a woman who went to a fishing town to do the interviews and focus groups, and no one will talk to her because basically, because she was a woman and not in the States, but nonetheless, it doesn't mean it couldn't happen in the States. Have you ever been conscious of that, that you know, as a woman, or whatever the case may be that someone may or may not talk to you?

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Oh, yeah, no, I think you and I've talked about that before, I definitely think it's all about who's the right messenger for the project. And so I frequently will have somebody else lead a meeting, or convene a group or be the one to send the email, it's always about who's the right person to be the messenger for that. And when we let our ego get in the way, and we want to be the one to deliver the message all the time, and it actually can slow down our projects. So I couldn't agree with you more on that one.

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Yeah, absolutely. Obviously, you've, you know, struck out on your own, you start your new business, and what is the name of your new business? And kind of like, what do you do specifically, in your new business,

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I work called Sustainable Economies consulting, and we do economic development projects that have the three pillars of sustainability. So they have some sort of environmental, social or economic component to them. And I still work as an environmental economist. So really funny story. Since this is sort of one of the big themes of this conversation you and I are having, ah, I decided I didn't want to be an environmental economist anymore. Hmm. I had done it for five and a half years. And to me, in this political climate, environmentalism suddenly went from being resource management and this balance thing that got bipartisan support to being this polarized thing. And I was like, you know, maybe I'm done being an environmental economist. And so I just started calling myself an economist to feel that out for several months. And it didn't work, because I would be like, oh, but I'm not that kind of a communist.

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What kind of economist are you? And I'm like, Well, I'm an environmental

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in this organic process, had to reclaim that name and be like, Oh, yeah, I do want to do this. I forgot why I liked being an environmental economist. That is what I do.

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We all go through a phase of midlife crisis about what kind of scientists we are, we get it, I understand.

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It was a big learning year for me so that my whole first year, I have to say, I'm a little nerdy about this, I definitely use the Lean Startup approach, where you're doing projects while you're doing strategic planning. And every single project you do as a new business in your first year as a tax, I purposely chose this diverse mix of projects with diverse clients, or I don't call them clients, I call them collaborators. And I like that word. For sure. And so it was able to help me be like, Oh, this works, this doesn't work. And this is what I want to do. So I helped a lot.

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That's awesome. And, you know, going through that journey of learning, I mean, obviously, what makes you passionate about being an environmental economist now, like, What keeps you invested in this career versus doing something different?

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Well, I think that it's sometimes it's hard to define that skill set that really differentiates us. But there's that one thing that we realized that we're doing that other people aren't doing, and I do have trouble defining it. But I think we saw with the bounce land use seminar series, it's not everybody who's able to bring all those players to the table, and really talk with substance about job creation, and business retention and economic development, and wildlife corridors and biodiversity and water quality. So having somebody who understands both of those languages can be really helpful. And so with that project, I'm seeing it with the small scale food producers, I'm seeing that ability to bring together all those different, you know, the ecology and the economic development piece. I'm starting to work with parks, and I'm going to help a local group come up with a strategic plan for parks. And I think that ability to bring in economic metrics to a parks plan will help it be more palatable to the counties. So yeah, it's hard to define. But that is the thing that makes me passionate is building bridges.

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I love it. And you're so right, this idea that you and I can talk to two different worlds almost and bring them together in a way that's super effective. And that is still data driven and relationship driven at the same time. Obviously, you're not just doing environmental work. Um, you are but you're also working with developers with government officials. Who do you find Is it different by project that you really enjoy engaging with the most? Or maybe that's not the right question. Maybe the question is like, who do you find like, is excited about the most? You're the type of work that you do?

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I could answer that two ways. I think that it isn't necessarily a job title that I'm most attracted to by, I'm very attracted to innovators and systems, thinkers. And so I mean, when I put together my business plan, I literally said, I'm going to target working with out of the box thinkers who really want to do something different that has multiple goals. And you really can hear that you would think, how can you find those people, but you can hear it in the way they talk. And so I really get excited about thinking of working with visionaries who want to do big things and change the world. And I still have that ideological streak with me. But the other thing that I do is I don't like working at the municipal scale. I like working at the county scale, or the region scale. And I think that's a unique level to work at. I feel like maybe I'm wrong, but I feel like a lot of people I talked to prefer to work at the project or the municipal scale. So being able to bring together multiple municipalities is an interesting lens to use.

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Nice. And so I guess the difference is kind of like the scale of action that can be accomplished at working at that scale versus a project. So like, what's the trade off, I suppose, versus I'm working on a local municipal versus regional county or versus even like a national, what do you see is like maybe some trade offs of working on each of those?

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Well, I'll give you an example. One of the partners I'm working with on the small scale food producer project, started getting frustrated with me because I said, I want to transform local food systems. And he's like, he looked at me and he goes a lift, but I thought about it. And I realized I don't want to do that he said, I want to work with he said, I want to have an in depth impact on seven producers. And to me that's more meaningful. What I can do at the scale I'm working is I can help these seven producers transform their business. So I said to him, You know what, we don't have to have the same goal. I can think about how to link your project to these big system

changes. And you can do that on the ground work. And we can balance each other. And it's okay that we have different goals.

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I love it. First of all, I love how flexible you are, and how you're able to really like listen to what that person has to say, and then be able to say, okay, that works for you. And that's great. We can make that happen. And also it doesn't have to be a black or white like one or the other binary option. Yes or No, it can be that and which is pretty awesome and powerful.

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Yeah, I love the both. And I say that a lot, too.

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So what are you most excited about moving forward? I mean, obviously. So this year was insane, just with COVID. And everything else that happened. Obviously, you're still doing things virtually for the most part, I imagine I assume Ohio isn't doing in person software, I could be wrong. How's Ohio doing in that sense,

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we're mostly virtual, we do have some meetings for 10 people or less if we can be spaced out six feet. So that's nice that we can do that. The thing I'm excited about is this transforming local food system project because it brings in, to me, it's like a puzzle. We're doing research with Ohio State University. And so we have these hard core researchers who are going to bring a really rigorous lens to it. But then we're interacting directly with these established food processors and food producers. And we're making sure that it's very, very applied research. And at the same time, we've convened the steering committee of 12 people, and we're starting a nonprofit, and we actually got an attorney to do bono work. He's doing it for free. It's amazing. And he's setting us up as a 501, c three, and we've named ourselves food sphere, the Entrepreneurial Center at local roots. And so to me to have a really, really, really big impactful project like this that brings together all those pieces and could benefit food security and job creation and farmland preservation. I am just like, giddy about I

34:04

could cry cuz I'm so happy for you. I could tell by how excited you got like I'm actually teared up a little bit. Because I could just tell how happy you are. And I'm just so happy for you that you get to

be in this space, doing the things you love working with people in nature in a way that really you know, highlights the beautiful things that you bring to the world. And then you obviously are working to your strengths. And that's such a amazing thing that more people should be doing, I hope.

34:30

Yeah, yeah, for sure. Thank you.

34:32

Yeah, absolutely. So where can people find more information about your organization's Are there any other websites that you want to direct people towards? Just so any listener who wants to find out more about you and find out more about the work you're doing in Ohio can find out more?

34:46

Sure. Unfortunately, I have a very long URL, but that's fine. It's Sustainable Economies consulting.com I'll say it again, Sustainable Economies consulting.com If you click on my project page on there, I do have information on food sphere and our feasibility study, and the work we're doing with local routes so that we can all be linked through my website.

35:10

That's awesome. And for any of my Ohio listeners, please make sure to hit up Elizabeth, if you're thinking about doing anything that you heard throughout this entire podcast that really strikes us like, wow, Elizabeth would be a great asset here, please feel free to do so. Do you work outside of Ohio? Are you kind of staying to your roots and sticking to Ohio at this point? No, I

35:29

do work outside of Ohio. I still have a project in New Jersey. And so depending on the project, I can do a wider area. Nice.

35:36

Okay, so all my listeners everywhere. Feel free to help Elizabeth if you have any products that make you think she might be a good fit for you, Elizabeth, I miss you dearly. And I'm so glad we had an opportunity to catch up through this process. It gave us a reason, but also just gave me an opportunity to catch up with someone who I care about so much. Is there anything else you want

to add before we jump off?

35:56

No, just thank you for doing this and for getting these stories out to the public. I really appreciate this. Yeah,

36:02

absolutely. Anytime I'm looking forward to COVID being over or vaccinated and maybe come out to Ohio and seeing what you're doing in person. You're welcome. Anytime. All right. Well, thank you so much. And we will end it here.

36:15

I take care.

36:17

Thank you for joining me during that amazing interview. I hope you learned something that you can bring back to your family, your friends, your co workers, and to your community members. I invite you to learn more about me and our guest at the green mind podcast.com I can't wait to have you join me during the next interview. In the meantime, go enjoy nature in a way that is uniquely you. See ya