

Courtney White

I consider myself to be a professional daydreamer.

I've been dreaming about other worlds since I was thirteen years old, when a long summer road trip through Mexico lit a fire that has never gone out. Some of those worlds have been historical, some practical, some wishful, and some imaginary, but all have been united by an abiding curiosity, a sense of place, and a strong desire to heal and help. This daydreaming has taken different forms over the years, including archaeology, photography, writing and activism, but in each I have endeavored to be an honest and compelling storyteller.

In 1997, my daydreaming took a big turn when I cofounded the Quivira Coalition, a nonprofit conservation organization dedicated to building a radical center among ranchers, conservationists, public land managers, scientists and others around practices that improve land health. I served as Executive Director of Quivira for nearly fifteen years. In 2012, I became the Creative Director, focusing on writing and conservation work that strengthened economic and ecological resilience in working landscapes, with a special emphasis on carbon ranching. In 2016, I left Quivira in order to pursue new writing projects and new horizons.

In 2005, I was deeply honored when Wendell Berry included my essay *The Working Wilderness* in his collection titled *The Way of Ignorance*. In 2008, Island Press published a collection of my writings titled *Revolution on the Range: the Rise of a New Ranch in the American West*. In the same year, I coedited with Dr. Rick Knight, *Conservation for a New Generation*, also published by Island Press.

In 2014, Chelsea Green Press published my book *Grass, Soil, Hope: a Journey through Carbon Country*, with a Foreword by **Michael Pollan**. In 2015, they published my book *Two Percent Solutions for the Planet: 50 Low-cost, Low-tech, Nature-based Practices for Combating Hunger, Drought and Climate Change*.

In 2015, Counterpoint Press published a collection of my essays titled *Age of Consequences: a Chronicle of Concern and Hope*, with an Introduction by **Wendell Berry**.

I self-published a collection of black-and-white photographs of the American West in an online book titled *The Indelible West*, which includes a Foreword by **Wallace Stegner**. A new and ongoing collection of photographs titled *Here & Now in the Age of Consequences* can be found at www.ageofconsequences.photo

More can be found on my web site: www.awestthatworks.com

I do my daydreaming in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where I live with my family and a backyard full of chickens.

Praise from:

Michael Pollan:

“Hope in a book about the environmental challenges we face in the 21st century is an audacious thing to promise, so I’m pleased to report that Courtney White delivers on it.”

Wallace Stegner:

“What we have in Courtney White's book is a recording of one passing phase of that frontier. And what a pleasure it is to see the real Wests captured in their flow! What a reassurance it is to see the Wests recorded in their living reality, instead of getting another view of someone being

cut off at the pass in the Alabama Hills of the Kanab Desert, shooting wildly with both hands from guns that never need re-loading.”

Wendell Berry:

“I have asked Courtney White to lend his essay ‘*The Working Wilderness*’ to this collection for three reasons: First, I think it is a good essay. Second, it tells of a serious and continuing effort on the part of some ranchers and conservationists to develop local knowledge sufficient to support a locally adapted land economy. This is an effort that is needed simply because it is necessary.... Third, it is an essay about cooperation between people and nature, between people and their places, and between ranchers and conservationists. This, again, is necessary...”

“Courtney White’s experience with the Quivira Coalition has made him master of two indispensable truths: People of different and apparently opposing interests can work together in good will for their mutual good; and, granted their good will and good work, a similar reciprocity can be made, in use, between humans and their land.”

Other praise:

“In a time when environmental reporting has become justifiably gloomy, this book is a refreshing breath of pragmatic optimism. White’s vision of stewardship, openness to new ideas, giving as well as taking, and flexibility will inspire anyone who loves humanity or the great outdoors.” – *Publishers Weekly*

“White strikes a refreshing tone that will resonate with readers turned off by the superior or condescending attitudes of some environmentalist writers... Throughout, he balances abstract questions and ideas with tangible life experiences... [R]eaders will be engaged by his frank and thoughtful discussion of our modern environment.” – *Kirkus*

“I couldn’t put *Revolution on the Range* down – so many good ideas from people who have discovered workable means to effect positive change in our local environments and ways of thinking about our place in the world. This is one of the most encouraging and inspirational books I’ve read in ages. Thank you, Courtney White!” – *Deborah Madison, author of Local Flavors*.

“Courtney White has lived and worked at the radical center of collaborative conservation in the West for more than two decades, literally reshaping dialogue and land stewardship in the region through his innovations. But with this book Courtney demonstrates that his own essays on these concerns can rightfully take its place alongside Scott Russell Sanders, Peter Forbes, Richard Nelson and Wendell Berry for its eloquence, depth and lasting impact on the conservation movement.” – *Gary Nabhan, author of Food, Genes and Culture: Eating Right for Your Origins*

“Courtney White employs a masterful blend of storytelling and science to communicate a most hopeful message: that building healthy soils – in some surprising and creative ways—can help solve our food, water, and climate challenges all at the same time. The carbon-capturing farmers, ranchers, and conservationists whose work White so elegantly describes form the vanguard of a new movement of regenerative production that deserves society’s attention and support.

Inspiring, thought-provoking, energizing, and—at bottom—full of hope.” — **Sandra Postel**,
Freshwater Fellow, National Geographic Society

“This book is Courtney White’s most important work. It is the best practical guide to how we can begin to address the significant, unavoidable challenges awaiting us in our not-too-distant future. *Two Percent Solutions for the Planet* inspires us to address these challenges creatively, especially with respect to our food and agriculture future, and to do it in cooperation with nature in ways that also heal the planet. The solutions Courtney describes are not just ideas but are demonstrated strategies already being implemented by creative farmers, ranchers, ecologists, and designers. This book is a must-read for anyone interested in practical ways to restore the planet’s health while experiencing a flourishing life.”

—**Frederick Kirschenmann**, author of *Cultivating an Ecological Conscience*