

BIGFOOT NATURE FELLOWSHIP

Statement of Beliefs and Creed

A Religious and Spiritual Foundation Document

Preamble

Bigfoot Nature Fellowship is a religious and spiritual community organized under Internal Revenue Code Section 508(c)(1)(A) as a church organization. This Statement of Beliefs and Creed articulates the core spiritual convictions, theological propositions, and religious practices that form the foundation of the Fellowship's faith and practice.

We, the members and leaders of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship, affirm the following beliefs as central to our religious identity and community life.

I. THE SACRED NATURE OF ALL LIFE

We believe that all life—human, animal, plant, fungal, mineral, water, and earth itself—is sacred, interconnected, and worthy of reverence. We recognize:

- **Animism:** That consciousness, spirit, and agency exist throughout the natural world, not confined to human beings;
- **Interdependence:** That all beings exist in relationship with one another, and that no life thrives in isolation;
- **Sacred Reciprocity:** That humans are in a sacred covenant with the earth—we receive from her, and we are called to give back with gratitude, humility, and stewardship;
- **Inherent Worth:** That the intrinsic value of all beings is not contingent on human utility or economic measurement.

This belief is grounded in nature-based spirituality, Taoist philosophy, and indigenous wisdom traditions that have long recognized the earth as a living, conscious entity deserving of profound respect.

II. NATURE AS TEACHER AND HEALER

We believe that nature is humanity's primary teacher and healer. We practice learning directly from natural systems, patterns, and cycles, rather than solely from human institutions or abstract ideology. Specifically:

- **Natural Law:** The patterns, cycles, and laws observable in nature (succession, cooperation, energy flow, regeneration) provide wisdom for how humans can live in harmony with ourselves and with one another;
- **Direct Experience:** We value direct, embodied experience of natural systems—planting seeds, observing insects, feeling seasons, moving through forests—as

- fundamental spiritual practice;
- **Ecological Humility:** We acknowledge that human knowledge is limited, and that nature frequently knows better than we do. We approach land stewardship with humility and willingness to adapt;
 - **Healing Through Connection:** We recognize that spiritual awakening and physical/emotional healing occur through renewed connection with the living world.
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III. PERMACULTURE AND REGENERATIVE STEWARDSHIP AS SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

We believe that permaculture—the practice of creating human systems that work with, rather than against, natural patterns—is a sacred spiritual practice. We hold that:

- **Regeneration is Sacred:** The act of restoring degraded ecosystems, building soil, creating food forests, and fostering biodiversity is not merely practical; it is a profound spiritual discipline and expression of devotion to life itself;
 - **Food Sovereignty is Freedom:** The ability to grow, prepare, and share food without coercion or dependency on unjust systems is foundational to human dignity, freedom, and spiritual autonomy;
 - **Reciprocal Relationship:** To garden, farm, or tend land is to enter into reciprocal relationship with beings. We give our labor; the earth provides abundance. This exchange is sacred;
 - **Demonstration Over Imposition:** Rather than telling others how to live, we demonstrate through our own land, our practices, and our communities that another way is possible, effective, and beautiful. This is our primary teaching method.
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IV. VOLUNTARYISM AND NON-COERCION AS SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE

We believe that coercion—the use of force, manipulation, or threat to override the will of another—is fundamentally contrary to spiritual truth and human dignity. We affirm:

- **Sovereignty and Consent:** That every human being possesses inherent sovereignty, freedom of conscience, and the right to choose whom to associate with and how to live. No genuine spiritual practice can be coerced;
 - **Voluntary Association:** That the Fellowship is built entirely on voluntary participation. No one is manipulated, shamed, or punished into membership or belief;
 - **Non-Hierarchical Spirit:** That while the Fellowship has organizational structure, all authority is derived from consent, service, and alignment with mission—never from domination, control, or claims of spiritual superiority;
 - **Ethical Resistance to Coercion:** That we may ethically and spiritually resist systems, governments, and institutions that coerce and control. We practice and advocate for freedom without requiring it of others, and we accept diverse responses to questions of governance and social organization.
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V. SPIRITUAL ECOLOGY AND INTERCONNECTEDNESS

We believe that spirituality and ecology are inseparable, and that authentic spiritual development necessarily includes awakening to our embeddedness in living systems. Specifically:

- **Spiritual Awakening Through Ecology:** That as humans awaken to our profound dependence on and connection with natural systems, we simultaneously awaken spiritually. Ecological awareness is spiritual awareness;
 - **Sacred Web:** That all beings are connected through flows of energy, nutrients, information, and relationships. To harm any part of the web is to harm ourselves;
 - **Humans as Part of Nature:** That humans are not separate from or superior to nature, but are expressions of natural creativity and intelligence. Our task is not to dominate or transcend nature, but to align ourselves with it;
 - **Climate and Ecological Justice:** That the destruction of ecosystems and the degradation of the living world are spiritual crises and moral emergencies. Our religious practice includes commitment to ecological regeneration and justice.
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VI. SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND TRANSFORMATION

We believe that spiritual awakening—the deepening awareness that one is part of a living, conscious universe and the transformation of consciousness that follows—is the heart of religious life. We recognize:

- **Many Paths:** That spiritual awakening occurs through many paths and practices. The Fellowship does not claim to be the only valid path, and we honor diverse traditions and practices that lead to genuine awakening;
 - **Living Practice:** That spiritual awakening is not a one-time achievement, but an ongoing practice of deepening awareness, questioning assumptions, and aligning one's life with truth;
 - **Sacred Ceremony and Gathering:** That gathering together in sacred space, whether through silence, ceremony, music, storytelling, or conversation, facilitates spiritual connection and collective awakening;
 - **Natural Cycles:** That following natural cycles of growth and rest, seasons, lunar phases, and ecological succession is itself spiritual practice. We attune our gatherings and practices to natural rhythms;
 - **Transformation Through Belonging:** That being held in community that shares deep values and commitment creates the safety needed for authentic transformation.
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VII. THE BIGFOOT ARCHETYPE AND FREEDOM

We recognize **Bigfoot** as a spiritual and philosophical archetype representing the human being in authentic relationship with nature and freedom. Bigfoot symbolizes:

- **Freedom:** Living freely, not requiring permission, not dependent on systems of control;
- **Sovereignty:** Needing neither credentials nor authority to act, teach, or live according to one's values;

- **Self-Reliance:** Capacity to meet one's own needs through knowledge, skill, and relationship with the natural world;
- **Reciprocity:** Living in right relationship with all beings, taking what is needed, giving back with gratitude;
- **Hiddenness and Mystery:** The recognition that not all that is real can be controlled, measured, or captured by dominant systems. Some mystery and wildness are essential to authentic life.

The Fellowship uses this archetype not as a literal assertion, but as a symbolic invitation: to awaken the Bigfoot within—the part of humanity that is wild, free, wise, and harmonized with nature.

VIII. TAOIST PHILOSOPHY AND THE WAY

We are deeply influenced by Taoist philosophy and its insights into how the universe operates. Core Taoist principles that guide the Fellowship include:

- **The Tao:** That there is a fundamental unity and flow underlying all existence—what the Tao Te Ching calls the "Way." Spiritual practice is learning to align oneself with this flow rather than resisting it;
- **Wu Wei (Non-Forcing):** That authentic action arises from stillness, observation, and alignment with natural processes, not from forcing, struggling, or imposing the ego's will;
- **Balance of Opposites:** That the universe is characterized by dynamic balance of complementary forces (yin/yang). Excess in any direction creates suffering. Health and harmony arise from balance and integration;
- **Simplicity:** That the deepest truths are often the simplest. The Fellowship values clarity, simplicity, and authenticity over complexity and abstraction;
- **Return to the Natural:** That humanity's suffering often stems from departure from our natural condition. Spiritual practice involves returning to simplicity, health, and harmony with the natural world.

IX. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND TRANSMISSION

We believe that religious education—the transmission of wisdom, practice, and values to new generations and seekers—is essential to the Fellowship's mission. We practice:

- **Storytelling:** Sharing stories of transformation, of nature's teachings, of spiritual wisdom, as primary means of transmission;
 - **Direct Teaching:** Offering workshops, retreats, courses, and mentorship in permaculture, spiritual ecology, Taoist philosophy, and voluntary cooperation;
 - **Media as Ministry:** Producing podcasts, videos, written content, and other media exploring these themes, making this wisdom available widely;
 - **Initiation and Apprenticeship:** Recognizing that some students may deepen their commitment and skill, and creating pathways for Nature Stewards/Ministers to emerge;
 - **Teaching by Example:** Demonstrating through our own lives, land projects, and communities how these principles can be lived.
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X. RELIGIOUS ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

We believe that authentic spirituality necessarily includes resistance to systems of coercion and oppression, and work toward just and regenerative alternatives. Specifically:

- **Spiritual Activism:** That challenging unjust systems—those that coerce, control, manipulate, or degrade—is a form of spiritual practice and expression of love;
- **Alternative Systems:** That creating alternatives (food forests, communities, educational programs, media) is itself activism, and often more transformative than opposition alone;
- **Non-Violent Resistance:** That we practice resistance through creation, demonstration, and moral witness, not through violence or domination;
- **Cultural Regeneration:** That transforming how humanity relates to nature and to each other requires cultural regeneration—new stories, practices, ceremonies, and ways of being in community.

XI. MINISTRY AND NATURE STEWARDS

We believe that ministry—the calling to serve, teach, and guide others toward spiritual awakening and alignment with natural law—is a sacred calling in the Fellowship. We recognize:

- **Distributed Ministry:** That ministry is not confined to formally ordained clergy, but emerges among those called and trained to guide others;
- **Nature Stewards as Ministers:** That those recognized as Nature Stewards/Ministers of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship have been trained and commissioned to facilitate spiritual practice, teach the Fellowship's wisdom, and serve as guides within our community;
- **Accountability to Community:** That all ministers operate with transparency, integrity, and accountability to the community and to the Fellowship's core principles;
- **Refusal of Cult Dynamics:** That we explicitly reject any spiritual hierarchy in which some are regarded as more "awake," "evolved," or spiritually superior. All beings are sovereign equals on the spiritual path.

XII. COMMUNITY AND RADICAL TRANSPARENCY

We believe that authentic spiritual community is built on radical transparency, mutual accountability, and voluntary participation. We practice:

- **Open Governance:** That decisions affecting the Fellowship are made openly, with opportunity for community participation and input;
- **Financial Transparency:** That all funds are accounted for, and community members can access information about how Fellowship resources are used;
- **Honest Dialogue:** That we create space for genuine dialogue, including difficult conversations about conflict, harm, and needed change;
- **Accountability Structures:** That the Fellowship has clear processes for addressing violations of ethical conduct and for protecting vulnerable community members;
- **Freedom of Conscience:** That community members may disagree with leadership, ask difficult questions, and depart without shame, judgment, or retaliation.

XIII. RELIGIOUS AUTONOMY AND FREEDOM FROM INTERFERENCE

We affirm the right of the Fellowship to self-determination in all matters of doctrine, spiritual practice, internal discipline, and community life. We declare:

- **Ecclesiastical Autonomy:** That questions of spiritual doctrine, religious practice, and the structure of spiritual community are matters of religious conscience, to be determined by the Fellowship itself and not by civil government or secular institutions;
- **Non-Establishment:** That we neither seek nor accept government funding or control, which would compromise our spiritual autonomy;
- **Interfaith Respect:** That we respect the autonomy and wisdom of other faith traditions, and we do not claim exclusive access to truth or spiritual authority;
- **Protection of Conscience:** That we defend the right of our members and all people to freedom of conscience, belief, and religious practice without coercion or discrimination.

XIV. LONG-TERM VISION: DECENTRALIZED SPIRITUALITY

We envision a future in which:

- **Distributed Networks:** The Fellowship evolves toward a decentralized network of autonomous, locally-rooted communities and projects that share core principles while maintaining creativity, autonomy, and responsiveness to local conditions;
- **Multiple Centers of Wisdom:** Rather than centering spirituality and guidance in a single institution or person, wisdom and leadership are multiplied across many teachers, stewards, and communities;
- **Scaling Through Multiplication:** The Fellowship's impact grows not through centralized control, but through the multiplication of aligned actors—-independent projects, teachers, and communities practicing voluntaryism, permaculture, and spiritual ecology;
- **Generational Continuity:** That future generations will inherit not just a particular organization, but a living tradition of spiritual practice, ecological wisdom, and freedom that they will adapt, deepen, and transform.

XV. RELIGIOUS RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS

We understand that the religious status of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship includes certain rights and protections, which we affirm while committing to use responsibly. These include:

- **Ministerial Exemption:** That Nature Stewards/Ministers of the Fellowship may operate in roles essential to the Fellowship's religious mission without meeting secular certification requirements;
- **Freedom from Certain Secular Regulations:** That certain secular regulations (particularly those that would violate religious conscience or autonomy) do not apply to the Fellowship's religious functions;

- **Protection of Religious Privacy:** That certain internal matters of the Fellowship—doctrine, spiritual practice, internal discipline—are protected from civil interference;
- **Tax Exemption:** That as a qualified religious organization, the Fellowship is exempt from certain tax obligations, and donors may claim charitable deductions, enabling broader support for our mission.

We commit to use these protections responsibly, in service of our authentic religious mission and not as a pretense for evading legitimate regulatory obligations (e.g., safety laws, labor laws protecting workers from exploitation, fraud prevention).

XVI. CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR ALL MEMBERS

All members, participants, staff, and Nature Stewards/Ministers of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship commit to uphold the following ethical standards:

- **Integrity:** Acting honestly, transparently, and without deception;
- **Non-Coercion:** Never using power, position, or persuasion to manipulate, control, or override the will of others;
- **Accountability:** Taking responsibility for one's actions and accepting feedback;
- **Respect for Persons:** Treating all beings with dignity, honoring bodily autonomy and consent;
- **Stewardship:** Using resources responsibly and in service of the mission;
- **Spiritual Humility:** Acknowledging limitations in knowledge and wisdom, and remaining open to growth and correction;
- **Protection of Vulnerable:** Actively protecting children, vulnerable adults, and those with less power from harm and exploitation;
- **Transparency:** Operating openly and making decisions in a way that can withstand scrutiny.

XVII. COMMITMENT TO TRUTH AND WILLINGNESS TO EVOLVE

We believe that spiritual growth requires honesty, humility, and willingness to be wrong. Therefore:

- **Intellectual Honesty:** We commit to seeking truth, wherever it leads, and to revising beliefs in light of new understanding;
 - **Openness to Critique:** We welcome external critique and accountability. We want to be wrong, discover it, and change;
 - **Adaptive Practice:** While we hold core values steady, we remain willing to adapt practices, programs, and structures as circumstances change and wisdom deepens;
 - **Intergenerational Accountability:** We acknowledge that future generations will rightfully critique our blind spots and failures. We invite such critique and commit to listening with humility.
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XVIII. AFFIRMATION AND CLOSING

We, the members and leaders of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship, solemnly affirm these beliefs as central to our religious identity and practice. We commit ourselves to living in alignment with these principles, to building a community rooted in voluntary cooperation and ecological regeneration, and to demonstrating that another way of being human is possible.

We invoke the wisdom of the earth, the vision of the Bigfoot archetype, the flow of the Tao, and the awakening that comes through sacred connection with all life. We do this work with gratitude, humility, and deep commitment to the flourishing of all beings.

May the Fellowship serve life. May all beings awaken. May the earth be healed and regenerated.

Attestation

The officers and Board of Directors of Bigfoot Nature Fellowship Inc. hereby attest that this Statement of Beliefs and Creed accurately reflects the spiritual foundation, core values, and religious practices of the Fellowship as of the date of adoption.

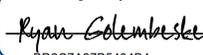
Board Approval Date: 1/29/2026

Cory Endrulat, Co-President

Signature:  Date: 1/27/2026

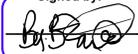
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Ryan Golembeske, Co-President

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Brigitte Endrulat, Director

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