



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Allison Agsten

Inaugural Director of USC Annenberg's Center for Climate Journalism and Communication



Moderator

Allison Agsten is the inaugural Director of USC Annenberg's Center for Climate Journalism and Communication. In her role, she develops strategic priorities and conceptualizes initiatives to bolster public understanding of climate change. Upcoming projects include the energy transition podcast series, *Electric Futures*, of which she serves as executive producer, and a report on the state of climate communications in the U.S., of which she is the primary author. She was recently named one of COP28 UAE's 50 inaugural global Actionists in recognition of her contributions to the field of climate communication.

In addition to her appointment at the Annenberg School, Agsten serves as the USC Wrigley Institute for Environment and Sustainability's first curator. In that position, she facilitates expression at the intersection of art and climate, including a series of Getty Pacific Standard Time convenings conceived by artist Carolina Caycedo to bring together Latin American community leaders to exchange organizing principles and practices related to the energy transition. Previously, Agsten has worked in journalism, communications, and public engagement capacities including as a producer at CNN, Director of Communications at LACMA, and Curator of Public Engagement at the Hammer Museum.

Agsten holds a B.A. from UCLA and an MPA from the Harvard Kennedy School.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Whitney Latorre

President and Chief Executive Officer, Catalina Island Conservancy



Photograph by Celeste Sloman

Panelist

Whitney Johnson Latorre serves as the sixth president and chief executive officer at the Catalina Island Conservancy, the oldest and largest private land trust in the state of California. The conservancy is committed to restoring a biodiverse landscape across Catalina Island that is accessible to all.

Throughout her career, Whitney has championed visual storytelling and been transformational in contemporizing legacy brands. Prior to joining the conservancy in 2023, she worked for nearly two decades as an award-winning media executive, at The Walt Disney Company and Conde Nast, most recently as Vice President of Visuals at National Geographic Media. She also served as the Director of Photography for esteemed magazines *National Geographic* and *The New Yorker*. Prior to her career in media, Whitney worked at the Open Society Foundations, where she managed an international grant competition and exhibition for documentary photographers. And for more than a decade, she served as an adjunct professor at Columbia University, New York University, and the International Center of Photography.

An accomplished public speaker, Whitney has presented on conservation, visual storytelling, and media trends to audiences as diverse as Dutch and Emirati royals, media elites, college presidents, art patrons, and officials from the U.S. Department of State. An internationally recognized leader in visual communication, Whitney has served on numerous juries around the world including as Chair of the photojournalism awards for the International Women's Media Fund and World Press Photo. Her work has earned numerous awards, most notably: under her leadership *The New Yorker* received a Peabody in collaboration with Human Rights Watch and *National Geographic* was a two-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize, in Feature Photography and in Breaking News Photography.

Whitney received her B.A. from Barnard College and continued with graduate work in American Studies at Columbia University.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Tim Dillingham

Environmental Program Manager
Lands & Wildlife, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)



Panelist

Tim Dillingham grew up in Los Angeles in the Santa Monica Mountains and visited Catalina many times in the 1970s. He has a B.S. degree in Wildlife Management from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and 32 years of wildlife management, lands management, habitat restoration, and environmental regulation experience with the CDFW. Prior to joining the CDFW, He worked as an Environmental Educator and a Park Ranger/California Peace Officer in the Santa Monica Mountains. He is currently the Environmental Program Manager for the South Coast Region (R5) Lands and Wildlife Program.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY™

Dr. Lauren Dennhardt

Senior Director of Conservation, Catalina Island Conservancy



Panelist

Dr. Lauren Dennhardt received her B.S. in both Environmental Studies and Biology from the University of Minnesota, Morris, where she was also president of the Minnesota Public Interest Research Group working on environmental and social justice issues, a residential advisor for the environmental studies floor, and the community volunteer manager. She went on to earn her Ph.D. in botany with a focus on restoration ecology from North Dakota State University while president of the Biological Sciences Graduate Association and receiving both the department teaching and research award. After her Ph.D. she taught botany, plant systematics, restoration ecology, zoology, herpetology, GIS, and range management in a Fisheries and Wildlife Program at Valley City State University while starting an annual trip for students out of state to learn about ecosystems beyond the prairie. She has worked for both the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Sequoia National Park in the past. Dr. Dennhardt has a passion for restoration ecology, bringing back species from the brink of extinction, and ensuring wildlands are in better shape for future generations.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Kate Faulkner

Former Chief of Natural Resources Management, Channel Islands National Park



Panelist

Kate Roney Faulkner worked for the National Park Service for 36 years. Kate worked at the Channel Islands National Park from 1990 to 2016. Prior to coming to the Channel Islands, Kate was lead biologist for the national parklands of northwest Alaska.

At the Channel Islands, Kate oversaw the removal of a number of non-native animals; including rats from Anacapa Island, feral pigs from Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa Islands, feral sheep from Santa Cruz Island, and deer, elk, and cattle from Santa Rosa Island. As a result of these projects, the park's woodlands, soils, waterways, and rare species are recovering. All of the park's conservation programs have been in partnership with universities, governmental agencies, and scientific organizations.

Kate has a B.S. in natural resources management from the University of Michigan and an M.S. from the University of Minnesota.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Dr. Nick Holmes

Associate Director, Oceans Program at The Nature Conservancy



Panelist

Dr. Nick Holmes is an Associate Director for Oceans Program at The Nature Conservancy in California, working in thematic areas of island conservation, invasive species, seabird restoration and threatened species recovery, with projects at California, Pacific and Global scales. Between 2011-2019, Nick was the Director of Science for the NGO Island Conservation, from 2006-2010 the Coordinator for the Kauai Endangered Seabird Recovery Project at the Pacific Cooperative Studies Unit for the University of Hawaii, and earned a Ph.D. from the University of Tasmania, Australia in 2006. He is an Associate Researcher at the University of California at Santa Cruz Institute of Marine Sciences, an Associate Editor for the journal *Biological Invasions*, and member of the Scientific Advisory Council for Island Conservation. He is an author of more than 80 peer-reviewed publications.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Dr. Luciana Luna

Director of Ecology, Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas, A.C.



Panelist

Luciana is a biologist (UABC, Mexico) with a Ph.D. in Biological Sciences (University of Auckland, NZ). She has been directly involved in the restoration of Guadalupe Island, Mexico, as part of Grupo de Ecología y Conservación de Islas (a Mexican NGO), since 2003, working intensively with native flora and the eradication of feral goats. She is in charge of the reforestation project as well as the feral cat eradication project. For her Ph.D. thesis, she investigated the trophic interactions between introduced house mice, feral cats, and vegetation. She oversees a project in collaboration with Mexican Federal Agencies and international donors to restore vegetation communities on Guadalupe Island.



CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY

Dr. Winston Vickers

Wildlife Research Veterinarian, UC Davis Wildlife Health Center



Panelist

Dr. Winston Vickers is a wildlife research veterinarian with the University of California, Davis Wildlife Health Center, a division of the One Health Institute at the School of Veterinary Medicine. He has a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree as well as a master's degree in the epidemiology of wildlife disease and ecology. He has directed or participated in research on mountain lions, Channel Island foxes, Santa Cruz Island scrub jays, Farallon Islands seabirds, waterfowl, cactus wrens, bobcats, wolves, and the impacts of non-native species on the health and ecology of native animals on islands. He has also worked on treating animals affected by oil spills and prevention of oil exposure with the Oiled Wildlife Care Network at UC Davis. He is the author or coauthor of 45 peer-reviewed scientific publications and numerous scientific reports. He was also a practicing veterinarian for over two decades treating all manner of pets and livestock.

Dr. Vickers worked and lived on Catalina Island for several years and directed the Island fox recovery project there, as well as working with the Institute for Wildlife Studies on bald eagle re-establishment. His research documented elevated levels of ear tumors in the Catalina foxes and showed that medical treatments applied during trapping for population monitoring could reduce tumor incidence and improve the overall health of the fox population there. Dr. Vickers has personally observed the positive effects on multiple island ecosystems and native animal populations when humane removals of non-native animals have occurred. His profession, training, and life's work demonstrate his concern with the full array of animals and plants that make up healthy ecosystems and the importance of returning systems that have been degraded by human actions to their most natural state possible.