



MONARCH FORUM

August 25–26, 2025

New Orleans, LA

Katrina20 Week of Action



WELCOME

The Monarch Forum is a gathering of testimony, lessons, and vision. Together, we honor the 20th commemoration of Hurricane Katrina while lifting climate migration as a defining story of our time. This forum is a space to root in memory, share strategies for survival, and imagine futures where all people can move and live with dignity.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & PERMISSIONS

We honor the Indigenous peoples whose lands we gather on, including the Houma, Choctaw, Chitimacha, and Atakapa-Ishak nations. We give thanks for their stewardship and resistance. We also acknowledge our collective responsibility: to protect, restore, and repair the Earth while granting each other permission to grieve, to resist, and to reimagine the path forward.

AGENDA

Over two days, the Monarch Forum will center climate migration as a lived reality and a call to action. Through cultural grounding, keynotes, panels, and movement, we will remember Hurricane Katrina as a climate migration story, examine global migration catalysts and the realities of leadership in crisis, explore the intersections of water, energy, land, democracy, labor, and economy, lift frontline solutions rooted in Black liberation, Indigenous sovereignty, and collective repair, and engage cultural bearers and artists to help us process, heal, and reimagine.

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025

8:00 AM	Registration
9:40 AM	Cultural Presentation Local Grounding Honoring the Gulf South and Appalachia Chief August Creppel, former Principal Chief of the United Houma Nation (Gulf South) Layla Creppel, Tribal Member of the Lumbee Nation (Appalachia)
10:15 AM	Day 1 – Welcome, Opening and Framing of the Monarch Forum Colette Pichon Battle, Esq., Strategy and Initiatives Partner at Taproot Earth Anthony Giancatarino, Strategy Partner at Taproot Earth Sophia Andrews, Coordinator, Taproot Noire at Taproot Earth
10:30 AM	Video Taproot Earth: Global Climate Reparations
10:35 AM	Partner Presentation Land Shorlette Ammons, Co-Executive Director and Program Director at Farm Aid
10:45 AM	Grounding in Movement Movement Makers and Dance at Boston Conservatory at Berklee
11:00 AM	Keynote The State of Water Inside a Climate Crisis Radhika Fox, Principal, North Star Energy
11:30 AM	Cultural Presentation African Roots in New Orleans Drumming to Call On: Water, Energy, and Land Nfungotah African Drummers
11:50 AM	Panel 1: limate Change as a Global Migration Catalyst The impacts of global warming are drastically impacting the ecosystems in which people live, changing how people access water, grow food, or live in a community. From disasters to sea level rise, the climate crisis is impacting how people can adapt and remain in their homes; decide how and where to migrate for survival; and what is possible to return, reclaim, and save for generations to come. To understand this new context that we are all facing, we must establish a broader social analysis of the root cause of the climate crisis that tells the truth about science, the oil and gas industry, the use of law, and the role of capitalism, and ultimately understand migration as a climate solution.

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025

12:35 PM	<p>Movement Makers</p> <p>Movement Makers and Dance at Boston Conservatory at Berklee</p>
12:50 PM	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Lunch will showcase the beloved flavors of New Orleans, brought to you by a mix of local caterers and food trucks. The menu highlights the city’s rich food culture while offering options for different dietary needs. Attendees are welcome to order freely from any of the menus below—everything listed is included.</p> <p>Inside the Theater - Tee’s Catering</p> <p>Serving their signature “Walking” Shrimp Po-Boys with fries (nut-free) Circulating through the lobby and mezzanine of the Mahalia Jackson Theatre</p> <p>Outside the Theatre - Food Trucks</p> <p>Follow the “Let’s Eat” signs on Mezzanine Level 1 and outdoors to find the trucks, parked along the side of the theatre.</p> <p>Nola Chuck Wagon</p> <p>Fried Chicken (nut-free) Fried Fish (nut-free) Mac & Cheese (vg, nut-free, gluten-free) Red Beans & Rice (nut-free, gluten-free) Unlimited Beverages</p> <p>Diva Dawg</p> <p>Bourbon Glazed Pork Sliders (nut-free) Red Bean Chili Dawg (nut-free + dairy-free) Crabmeat Grilled Cheese-y (nut-free) Seafood Dirty Rice (nut-free + gluten-free) Creole Vegan Dirty Rice (v, nut free, dairy free, gluten free) Fries (v, vg, nut-free, dairy-free, gluten-free)</p> <p>Valerie’s Snoballs</p> <p>Unlimited Snoballs Ice</p>
1:30 PM	<p>Welcome Back, Regrounding, and Framing</p> <p>Anthony Giancatarino, Strategy Partner at Taproot Earth</p>
1:35 PM	<p>Partner Presentation – Energy</p> <p>Rachel Matthews, Senior Attorney, Oceans at Center for Biological Diversity</p>
1:50 PM	<p>Panel 2: Realities of Leadership Inside the Climate Crisis</p> <p>The climate crisis often forces many into positions of leadership that they may not have anticipated. But when the moment calls for action, people step up. From navigating inequity and structural harms to providing immediate goods to help people survive, leadership in crisis is hard but required for us to survive. This panel will explore lessons and growth from leaders who have had to put aside personal interests and desires to ensure that the community -as a whole - can survive and move forward.</p>
3:00 PM	<p>Keynote Conversation: Advancing Global Restoration & Repair</p> <p>Prof. Maxine Burkett, Professor of Environmental Social Sciences at Stanford University</p>

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025

3:35 PM	Taproot Earth: Climate Migration and Katrina 20
3:40 PM	Gratitude, Reminders, and Closing Colette Pichon Battle, Esq., Strategy and Initiatives Partner at Taproot Earth
3:45 PM	Grounding in Movement Movement Makers and Dance at Boston Conservatory at Berklee
4:00 PM	Adjourn

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025

9:00 AM	Doors Open
9:45 AM	Local Grounding: Migration & War Khai Nguyen, Vietnam 50, Climate Migration
10:15 AM	Day 2: Welcome, Opening, and Framing of the Monarch Forum Colette Pichon Battle, Esq., Strategy and Initiatives Partner at Taproot Earth Anthony Giancatarino, Strategy Partner at Taproot Earth Sophia Andrews, Coordinator, Taproot Noire at Taproot Earth
10:30 AM	Partner Presentation: Economy Denise Fairchild, Founder at Ubuntu Collective
10:40 AM	Grounding in Movement Movement Makers and Dance at Boston Conservatory at Berklee
10:50 AM	Keynote: Grounding in Our Climate Reality Dr. Rachel Cleetus, Senior Policy Director for Climate and Energy Program, Union of Concerned Scientist
11:20 AM	Cultural Presentation: ReRooting Louisiana and Brazil Baba Curtis Pierre at Casa Samba
11:50 AM	Partner Presentation: Democracy The Dandelion Project Panel 3: Advancing a Broader Climate Movement Every year, global temperatures reach new record highs. Climate disasters are catalyzing global migration patterns within and across borders- shifting our relationships to our natural ecosystems, political processes and support for human achievement. How do we build across perceived differences to create intentional communities that can withstand disasters - climate, economic, or social?
12:50 PM	Grounding in Movement Movement Makers and Dance at Boston Conservatory at Berklee

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2025

1:00 PM	<p>Lunch</p> <p>Lunch will showcase the beloved flavors of New Orleans, brought to you by a mix of local caterers and food trucks. The menu highlights the city’s rich food culture while offering options for different dietary needs. Attendees are welcome to order freely from any of the menus below—everything listed is included.</p>
1:40 PM	<p>Welcome Back, Regrounding, and Framing</p> <p>Sophia Andrews, Coordinator, Taproot Noire at Taproot Earth</p>
1:45 PM	<p>Partner Presentation: Land & Democracy</p> <p>Nadia Ben-Youssef, Advocacy Director, Center for Constitutional Rights</p> <p>Dominic Renfrey, Advocacy Program Manager, Center for Constitutional Rights</p> <p>Bill Quigley, Emeritus Professor of Law, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law</p>
2:05 PM	<p>Panel 4: Transcending Borders and Advancing Human Rights</p> <p>Migration is a right that should be defended and asserted, yet political borders often reinforce fear, scarcity, and limitations that violate the human right to migrate. To restore our relationships with each other, we must re-imagine our communities. We need laws and institutions to transcend borders and protect rights from the local to the global level. This panel will discuss how current institutions- like the Catholic Church - are in a position to transcend borders and uphold the rights and dignity of migrants while discussing what bold visionary laws and actions should be pushed for in a time of growing authoritarian rule globally.</p>
3:05 PM	<p>Cultural Presentation: African Roots in Central America</p> <p>Fermin Ceballos</p>
3:25 PM	<p>Partner Presentation: Land</p> <p>Rita Valenti, RN, Member, Project South and the People’s CDC and Pandemic Research for the People</p> <p>Rob Wallace, Executive Director, Agroecology and Rural Economics Research Corps</p>
3:35 PM	<p>Panel 5: What do we have to lose?</p> <p>Gulf South communities balance between a combination of short-term displacement due to extreme weather and long-term relocation due to sea level rise. And, inside of the climate impacts are environmental justice concerns that also force displacement from ancestral lands. Oil, gas and chemical storage and refinement in Louisiana and Mississippi make climate disasters more toxic and while contributing some of the highest rates of GHGs from the US into the global stocktake. Policies at the national and local levels contribute to global migration patterns, a growing racial wealth divide and debilitate poor communities in a shifting climate reality. This panel will explore frontline approaches to move with dignity and preserve culture in the face of abrupt and undesired migration.</p>
4:30 PM	<p>Gratitude, Reminders, and Closing</p> <p>Colette Pichon Battle, Esq., Strategy and Initiatives Partner at Taproot Earth</p> <p>Anthony Giancatarino, Strategy Partner at Taproot Earth</p> <p>Video: Frontline Jubilee</p>
4:45 PM	<p>Adjourn</p>

We would like to extend deep gratitude to our panelists, speakers, national allies, and cultural presenters for lending your voices, expertise, and art to this gathering.

FEATURED PANELISTS

Jo Banner, Co-Founder, The Descendants Project

Joy Banner, Co-Founder, The Descendants Project

Adrienne Bloch, Earth Justice

Jose Bravo, Executive Director, Just Transition Alliance

V, Formerly Known As Eve Ensler, The Vagina Monologues

Mary Annaise Heglar, Author and Climate Essayist, Millimeter Communications

Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré, LTG, USA Ret.

Guerline Josef, Co-Founder, Executive Director, Haitian Bridge Alliance

Hiroko Kusuda, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Andrea Cristina Mercado, Climate and Clean Energy Equity Fund

Meishka Mitchell, President, Emerald Cities Collaborative

Pat Mitchell, TEDWomen, ConnectedWomenLeaders, Project Dandelion

Luz Molina, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Dr. Tedd Moya Mose, Legal Scholar & Founder of Lex Navitas

Hakm Murad, Palestinian Youth Movement Member

Vann Newkirk, Senior Editor at The Atlantic

Roishetta Sibley Ozane, Founder of The Vessel Project of Louisiana

Bill Quigley, Loyola University New Orleans College of Law

Malik Rahim, Community Organizer, Global Solidarity Network
and Gwangi and Hollywood Community Center

Chief Brenda Dardar Robichaux, Former Principal Chief, United Houma Nation

Kalima Rose, Principal and Poet, Rose Creative Strategies

NOTICES AND INSTRUCTIONS

Please silence devices during sessions. No photography is allowed.

Follow staff guidance for seating and transitions. Spanish and Vietnamese interpretation available with headsets at registration.

Accessibility support and reserved seating are available on request.

For media please contact Mary Heglar
mary@millimetercommunications.com.

Please follow the posted health guidance.

FILMING, RECORDING & CODE OF CONDUCT

No personal photography or videography is allowed inside the theater. The forum is recorded for archival and educational use.

We kindly ask that you fill out our [Photo Release Form](#).

MIGRATION REPORT

Climate migration is not a future threat or a story from somewhere else.

It is here. Katrina pushed more than 1.5 million people to evacuate to all 50 states, and by 2015 about 40 percent had not been able to return home. This report names that truth and centers the right to remain, the right to move, and the right to return. It offers data, lived experience, and community grounded solutions that honor the leadership of frontline people across the Gulf South and beyond.

[Download Report Here](#)



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CLIMATE ON TAP: A PODCAST TO COMMEMORATE HURRICANE KATRINA

Taproot Earth's podcast shares stories of displacement, return, and collective care from the Gulf South to global frontlines.

[Listen Now](#)

SUPPORTERS

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INVEST IN TAPROOT EARTH

[Support frontline leadership](#) and solutions that help communities live, rest, and thrive in the places they love.