

TNC INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MURPHEY, FOUNDER AND CEO OF UPTON HILL

How did you discover The Nature Conservancy (TNC)?

I've always liked environmental groups that try to preserve vulnerable and ecologically valuable land. I feel like unconstrained development is creating long-term problems, and the most effective response is to buy key land parcels and preserve them. In essence, groups like TNC are working within our capitalist system and focusing the money where it's needed the most.

Where do you think your passion of the environment stems from?

My dad is a biologist and he took us to a lot of places in nature, when we were kids. He also taught us a lot about how animals and nature interact. As a result, I've always loved camping, hiking and the outdoors in general. My favorite family trips have always been road trips out West that incorporated some amount of hiking.

What was your craziest or most memorable outdoor adventure?

The craziest memory was rafting on the Arkansas River in Colorado, and our guide fell out of the raft in big and dangerous rapids.

On a relatively recent trip, Randy (friend and Upton Leader) and I went to British Columbia with a few others and climbed 7,000 vertical feet with heavy packs in 80-degree heat. Then it proceeded to snow on us the next morning! It was a bit of a whipsaw, but the views were pretty awesome, and I always like the feeling of achievement from getting to the top of a trail. This photo is from that trip!



If TNC could look back in two and then again in five years, what would you hope they say about Upton Hill?

Within two years, I'd like to help TNC purchase a parcel of land. If we do well enough in five years we could actually contribute enough funding to preserve a parcel entirely on our own.

My goal with TNC would be to contribute to our natural environment in Minnesota. We've talked to them about helping to purchase a piece of land in central Minnesota that has been degraded by a former cattle ranch. They think they can restore the forest and the trout stream that winds through the land. I think they and others would say great things about anyone who can make financial contributions to the goal of enhancing our natural surroundings.

All of us here at Upton Hill thank you for the opportunities and building a work environment filled with energy and genuine compassion.

What are some ways we and others can give back to show appreciation supporting your passion?

We are talking to the TNC about developing an outing to plant trees and/or restore riverbanks on some of their existing land. Doing that together might be a really good way for everyone to contribute and have fun outdoors!