

Linda Engle: Sustainable Idaho on KISU is brought to you by the Portneuf Resource Council.

Charlie Medema: Welcome back to Sustainable Idaho. I'm your host, Charlie Medema. This week I had the privilege of speaking with our new host, Tara Gray. Tara spoke with me a little bit about herself, why she was interested in a position as a host, and why she wanted to get involved. Later on, we will have our final interview with my co-host as she departs from Sustainable Idaho.

CM: What interested you in joining Sustainable Idaho?

Terra Gray: I like that this show brings attention and awareness to important sustainability topics, specifically here in Idaho. I love spending time in nature and studying it as well. I believe that sharing current issues on a platform with many listeners, like the Sustainable Idaho podcast, opens up more opportunities for change and protection for the environment, which is something I'm very passionate about.

CM: Would you tell us a little bit about yourself and your involvement with Idaho State University?

TG: So currently, I am a senior here at Idaho State University. I'm getting a bachelor's of science in biology with a concentration in ecology and environmental conservation. I'm also the vice president of the Ecology and Conservation Club here at ISU.

CM: How do you think living in Idaho has impacted your view of sustainability, but also of environmental conservation and natural resources?

TG: I was born and raised here in Idaho. I grew up going camping and hiking with my family, which instilled a love for the natural environment for myself. As Idaho's population continues to increase, so does our need to protect and manage its biodiversity, as well as its natural resources.

TG: There will always be a demand for earth's natural resources, which won't always be in abundance, so finding sustainable solutions across a variety of sectors is of utmost importance. One of the fastest ways for change is through communities and local areas, helping one another through stewardship practices.

CM: What professional and educational experiences do you bring that will assist you as a host of sustainable Idaho?

TG: I'm passionate about community outreach and education, specifically with young learners. I enjoy teaching elementary school age, so for the past couple summers I worked at different learning centers and museums and zoos and aquariums, specifically with summer camps.

TG: It's really cool because the children are able to have a hands-on learning experience that I think it's very beneficial for a child's development, and it kind of sparked an interest in them at a young age. Even if they don't go on to study biology, they're going on with a knowledge of how they can provide stewardship for the environment and also make a difference in their own communities.

CM: What topics most spark your interest in sustainability?

TG: I enjoy learning about native wildlife here in Idaho, both plant and animal science. I most specifically like learning about birds and also native wildflowers most recently. I also am really fascinated with water conservation and management.

CM: What would mark a successful year for you here as a host of sustainable Idaho?

TG: I think being able to interview people and cover topics that haven't previously been either discussed or covered on the show. I think having different viewpoints as well and not just one side of the story can be very beneficial for viewers to more thoroughly understand a topic. I think also covering issues that directly impact the Portneuf area because providing more coverage, it allows people to, if they previously didn't know about something that was happening, they're able to make a difference and an impact within their own communities.

CM: Thank you so much Terra, we are so incredibly excited to have you join us here as a host. After serving over a year at Sustainable Idaho, it is time we say farewell to my co-host Madison Long in her final interview here with us at KISU.

CM: What have been the most memorable or rewarding parts of your time hosting Sustainable Idaho?

Madison Long: I think my whole time here at Sustainable Idaho, I had a really good time interviewing lots of different people and talking about lots of different topics. I got to see a lot of issues surrounding water rights and environmental concerns. I spent a lot of time on solar energy. I feel like I learned a lot about myself, which sounds really cliché, but I learned that I have opinions on things that I don't normally have opinions on because I learned the good and bad sides, the journalistic side, to pretty much every topic.

ML: In order to present a neutral viewpoint, I learned about things that I had never had an interest in learning before, like nuclear waste and railroads and even health care. I wasn't super interested in health care, but I got to learn a lot about the clinicians for climate and health. Even episodes that I didn't do, I learned more about economics and sustainability because I had never tied those together before.

CM: I'm kind of new to this, but coming on, it kind of seems like you're exposed to a lot more, especially within our community. I'm just so happy that you've had this rewarding experience.

What do you think has been the biggest lesson you have learned from being a Sustainable Idaho host?

ML: I think I learned a lot about patience. I don't think I'm a very patient person, even though I tell everyone patience is a virtue. Make sure you do it. But I learned how to let my work be edited more thoroughly. Yeah, I didn't have as detailed of editors in past jobs as I had in this job, and so I had to learn how to take what they were saying and help make my episodes better.

ML: I also think I learned, along with patience, I learned how to do interviews better. I learned how to make sure that I stayed quiet because I feel like a lot of times when you talk to someone, you want to jump in and have a discussion with them. But in order to get really good audio, you have to stay quiet, and so I had to really work on listening skills. I learned how to be patient and make sure that what I was going to say was very well thought out before I said it.

CM: That's definitely something that I've seen coming on, and I admire how much you have a very developed sense of running a good interview and having it be succinct and to the point. You and I both know that we're big talkers, and so it's a skill that I hope to improve. And finally, what is next in your journey, and what do you hope to impart as a lasting message for KISU listeners?

ML: I'm a multi-platform journalism major, so part of the reason I took this job was so that I could explore radio and see if this was something I would want to do as a professional job. And I really, I love radio, so I'm hoping in the next couple years to maybe get another job at KISU or try a different radio station, maybe closer to my hometown or in Twin Falls.

ML: I'm hoping along with that to explore TV production because I haven't done that a lot. And while I'm kind of looking for those jobs, I'm going to keep working at The Bengal for the paper for ISU, so it's a shameless plug.

ML: And then just for KISU listeners, give it a try. I had never really listened to Sustainable Idaho. I had listened to a couple episodes here and there before I started, and I actually really grew to like it. So I think give something new a try, and you might find yourself interested in something that you thought was just going to be boring and was too political for you or too clickbait for you. And it's actually very detailed and there's lots of different facets of it that are interesting routes to explore.

CM: Thank you so much, Madison, for all your hard work and dedication here as a host. We're so incredibly appreciative of you, and sorry to see you go, but can't wait to see what you do next in your career and your journey forward. If you'd like to learn more about The Bengal, their publication, and what they do for the university, you can go to isubengal.com and kisu.org/sustainableidaho.

LE: Funding for our Sustainable Idaho student hosts is provided in part by this radio station, the ISU Office for Research, and the Center for Ecological Research and Education through the ISU

Career Path Internship Program. Direction, funding, and additional support is provided by the Portneuf Resource Council.