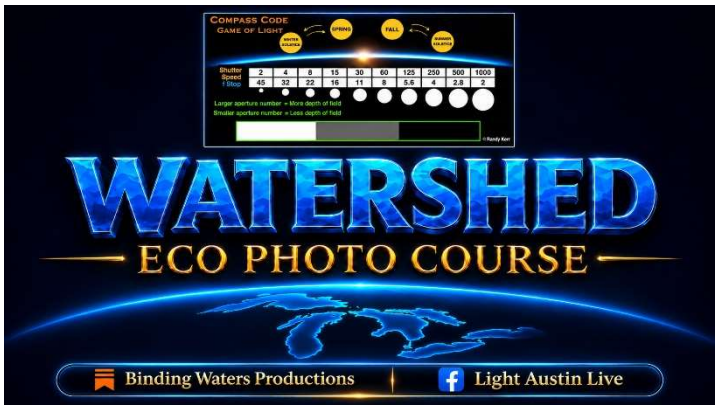
WATERSHED ECO PHOTO COURSE

# A Journey of Light, Discovery, and Our Shared Responsibility for Water

*The Vision and Development of Randy Kerr W.*

**By Randy Kerr W.** · Binding Waters LLC Production · Traverse City, Michigan

## A Journey That Began with a Wildflower




**For** photographer, artist, and educator Randy Kerr W., the journey toward ecological storytelling began with an assignment that would forever change the direction of his work.

While covering the grand opening of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas, Kerr encountered a story far greater than the event he had been hired to photograph.

He learned about the dramatic decline of native plants across the Great Plains of North America and the importance of preserving the natural ecosystems that sustain wildlife, water, and human communities.

It was a moment of awakening.

Until then, Kerr's photographic career had taken him through the worlds of political portraiture, commercial photography, major events, education, and global travel. His camera had been a tool for documenting people, places, and the human experience. He then began to recognize its potential as something more: **a bridge between the beauty of the natural world and our responsibility to protect it.**

More than three decades later, that early encounter continues to influence his work. Each assignment, journey, and teaching experience has helped shape the next generation of his photographic education programs.

What began with the story of a wildflower has grown into a vision for the waters of the world.

## The Vision: Watershed Eco Photo

> ***The Watershed Eco Photo Course was created with a simple belief: When we learn to observe the natural world more closely, we begin to understand our place within it.***

Developed by Randy Kerr W. through Binding Waters LLC Productions, the course brings together decades of photographic education, environmental observation, artistic exploration, and conservation storytelling.

Written and developed along the watersheds of North America's Great Lakes, the program invites people of every generation, culture, and photographic skill level to discover nature through the creative power of photography.

Using a smartphone or camera, participants explore the fundamentals of light, composition, observation, and visual storytelling while discovering how watersheds connect our forests, rivers, lakes, oceans, wildlife, and communities.

The course is not simply about making better photographs. It is about becoming a more observant person, a more thoughtful storyteller, and a more informed steward of the environment.

## Connecting Generations Through the Sacred Value of Water

Across cultures and generations, water has carried profound meaning. It is a source of life, a foundation of community, and a sacred connection between humanity and the natural world.

The Watershed Eco Photo Course seeks to honor that shared wisdom while creating new opportunities for people to learn from one another.

Imagine grandparents and grandchildren exploring a creek together, families discovering the direction of light along a shoreline, or friends documenting the changing conditions of a familiar river.

Each photograph becomes an opportunity for conversation. Each observation becomes a chance to learn.

Through simple field activities, short readings, and the **Compass Code Game of Light**, participants develop practical photographic skills while exploring the living ecosystems around them.

Along the way, they are introduced to the challenges facing our watersheds, including plastic pollution, microplastics, and the connections between freshwater and ocean health.

The program emphasizes discovery, creativity, and enjoyment rather than fear. Its purpose is to inspire curiosity and encourage meaningful personal action.

> ***When generations share their stories of water, they also share their wisdom, their memories, and their hopes for the future.***

## From the Great Lakes to the Waters of the World

Although developed in Northern Michigan, the Watershed Eco Photo Course carries a global message.

The waters of the Great Lakes connect through rivers and the St. Lawrence River system to the Atlantic Ocean. Across the world, watersheds similarly connect communities, ecosystems, and marine environments.

Kerr's conservation storytelling also reaches the Caribbean island of Dominica, where his work with the Nature Enhancement Team at Rosalie Bay explores the remarkable lives of migrating leatherback sea turtles.

These experiences have reinforced a central conviction: **The health of our watersheds is inseparable from the health of our oceans, wildlife, communities, and ourselves.**

The Watershed Eco Photo Course invites participants to recognize those connections wherever they live. A neighborhood creek, a quiet wetland, a Great Lakes shoreline, or a Caribbean nesting beach can become a living classroom.

## A Living Course: Learning, Sharing, and Growing Together

Unlike a traditional photography course confined to a classroom, Watershed Eco Photo is being developed as an evolving public educational experience.

Its lessons combine short, accessible readings with creative photographic directives that encourage participants to step outdoors, observe, photograph, reflect, and share their discoveries.

The course is designed for individual explorers, families, multigenerational groups, classrooms, nature centers, and communities.

Free public programming introduces the fundamentals of ecological photography, while continuing publications, field guides, presentations, and expanded educational experiences support the long-term development of the project.

The vision is to build a welcoming community of people who discover that their photographs and personal stories can contribute to a greater understanding of watershed health.

## Follow the Journey — Streaming from Traverse City, Michigan

The development of Watershed Eco Photo is an ongoing journey, one that you are invited to experience as it unfolds.

Through **Binding Waters Productions** on **Substack** and the **Light Austin Live Facebook group**, you can follow Randy Kerr W.'s field notes, photographic discoveries, educational presentations, and evolving conservation stories.

These platforms provide opportunities to participate in free public programming, explore new photographic skills, and support the continuing productions of Binding Waters LLC.

From the banks of Northern Michigan's watersheds, Kerr shares a lifetime of photographic knowledge while inviting a new generation to discover the stories waiting to be told through their own lenses.

## An Invitation to the Next Generation

The greatest achievement of Watershed Eco Photo will not be measured simply by the photographs its participants create. It will be found in the conversations between generations, the new appreciation for familiar landscapes, and the understanding that each of us has a role in protecting the waters we share.

A photograph can begin with a moment of beauty. A story can begin with a single observation. And a lifelong commitment to conservation can begin with something as simple as a walk beside a creek.

**Come discover the Game of Light. Become a storyteller for water. Share the wisdom of generations and discover how the waters that connect our world can bring us closer to one another.**

*Watershed Eco Photo Course — Observe. Understand. Create.*

**A Binding Waters LLC Production**
Created by Randy Kerr W.
Streaming from Traverse City, Michigan
Follow the journey on Substack: Binding Waters Productions
Join the free public programming: Light Austin Live on Facebook