Kim Fortun: LEARNING FROM CALIFORNIA

00:00:07:24 – 00:00:52:22
Kim Fortun
So, like many people in California, I'm not originally from California. I grew up on the Texas Gulf Coast also, and very highly industrialized region. And then I spent much of my career working at a university in New York. I moved here about five years ago, and had a lot to learn about California. I learned about California through my students research, my students who did research on communities disproportionately impacted by pollution across the state not only told me about that pollution and the harms it caused, but also showed me maps to tell me where those communities were.

00:00:52:22 – 00:01:24:24
Kim Fortun
So I learned the map of California through my research students research on environmental justice. But I think what most surprised me when I began to learn about environmental injustice and the state of California's response to it, is the contradiction in California being known around the world as a leading state in environmental governance, having stronger and better environmental governance than almost anywhere in the world.

00:01:24:27 – 00:01:57:02
Kim Fortun
And yet in community. After community, we saw really horrific environmental harms lots of pollution, lots of health effects and little, governing structures that could at least respond to it. So this paradox of being known as and indeed to some extent really being out ahead of other environmental governance regimes. California still had so many problems to deal with.

00:01:57:04 – 00:02:29:28
Kim Fortun
And so learning one of my goals has been to learn to work well within the California structure. Help the communities that I work with understand those structures, because the government agencies don't always make it easy for people to know what they could do to improve those communities. And so it's that paradox of kind of same for good environmental governance and the many hotspots of environmental, injustice that my students have shown me across the state.