



UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

CHANGE THE WORLD FROM HERE

Climate Change and Philanthropy: Implications for Fundraisers

by

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of philanthropy on the fundraising efforts of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change. It specifically looks at nonprofits headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area, CA. Three research objectives: 1) To evaluate whether there is a disparity between the needs of these organizations and foundation support. 2) To identify the consequences of a disparity and new strategies or models to address it. 3) Offer a set of recommendations for more effective fundraising.

Following a Mixed Methods approach, primary data included semi-structured interviews used for data collection to allow for a pre-determined set of questions with the opportunity to explore responses further. Participants were recruited through direct outreach, interviews of 30 minutes to one hour in length were conducted by phone and in person. One grassroots environmental nonprofit member meeting was attended. Five expert interviews were conducted with environmental nonprofit professionals from a mix of small, medium and large nonprofit organizations located within the San Francisco Bay Area. A variety of professionals were purposefully chosen, and job titles included legal counsel, director, development manager, fellow and media expert. Represented organizations included: 350SF, Climate One, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, Pacific Forest Trust, Project Drawdown, and Sierra Club. Secondary data included a review of applicable literature.

Key Topics: Climate Change, Global Warming, Philanthropy, Fundraising, Communications, Grassroots, Environment.

Results of the findings indicated a need for nonprofit organizations to embrace collaboration in the form of more partnerships among large and small nonprofits to increase social impact and gain more access to foundations and wealth managers, as well as, the need to leverage the youth movement and technology to innovate fundraising.

RQ1: Is there a disparity between the needs of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change and the amount of foundation support? Participants agreed funding priorities and trends of large foundations are not always aligned with the needs of existing nonprofits in particular those of the small grassroots environmental organizations.

RQ2: A) How does a disparity affect fundraising and organizational capacity for fulfilling mission and making impact? B) How does a lack of funding affect the grassroots organizations? Participants provided diverse responses that described a range of experiences including the need to restructure programs, develop entirely new strategic approaches and rely on volunteer support for critical functions, such as fundraising.

RQ3: What alternative fundraising strategies or models are needed to address a disparity? Participants provided diverse responses including philanthropic trends and the need for nonprofits to diversify their fundraising methodologies to include more than market-based incentives.

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I wish to thank the environmental nonprofit professionals who participated in this study and all environmental professionals, philanthropists and activists young and old who inspire and work diligently to ensure the future of our planet is one that is just, equitable and inhabitable with clean air and clean water for all. So much gratitude for the heavy lift and important work you are doing to protect our common future by working to address climate change.

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Section 1. Introduction

Climate Change is a global issue that has been fiercely debated, in particular in the United States, despite scientific consensus. Ongoing efforts to create necessary policies to address and reverse the threat of global warming have been underway for several decades. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel Climate Change (IPCC) was established as a working body in 1988 to provide an objective, scientific view of climate change taking into consideration its natural, political and economic impacts and risks, as well as, to indicate possible responses.

Climate change as it is defined by on the IPCC website, “Climate change refers to a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings such as modulations of the solar cycles, volcanic eruptions and persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use. The Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in its Article 1, defines climate change as: ‘a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.’ The UNFCCC thus makes a distinction between climate change attributable to human activities altering the atmospheric composition and climate variability attributable to natural causes.”

The issue is currently receiving enormous public attention, largely in part, due to an increase in severe weather events including devastating wildfires in Northern and Southern California and throughout the Western States, in Canada and Sweden, a bomb cyclone causing record floods in the Midwest impacting water quality in ten states, polar vortex event with temperatures -40 below that gripped Canada and the Eastern United States, and two massive hurricanes within five days apart from one another to hit Mozambique, Africa.

According to the UNFCCC website, The Paris Agreement, an outcome of COP21, is a commitment by world leaders to significantly reduce their respective countries’ greenhouse gas emissions by putting forth NDC nationally determined contributions, in an effort to combat the impacts of climate change.

The United States is one of the biggest emitters of greenhouse gases and therefore a significant part of the problem and potentially a significant part of the solution. The US

originally signed on to the Paris Agreement during the Obama administration, however, the current US Administration under Trump announced plans in January 2019 that the United States will exit the Paris Agreement. The Administration under Trump is also working to dismantle environmental protections that have been in place for decades, as well as, the more recently passed Clean Power Plan established under the previous Obama administration. These significant rollbacks to environmental protections are taking place at a critical time. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, 2018 Summary for Policymakers Special Report Global Warming of 1.5C indicates the need for immediate course correction to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2055 or 2040 to avoid the consequences of 1.5 and 2 degrees of warming.

The release of the latest IPCC Summary report has prompted bold activism and a new wave of youth led activism within the climate movement. Greta Thunberg a Swedish schoolgirl climate activist began skipping school on Fridays to sit outside the Swedish Parliament which has grown into the school strike movement, Fridays for Future. Greta has addressed world leaders regarding the need to act on the climate crisis, such as her special address to leaders at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting on January 24, 2019 in Davos, Switzerland. Greta's act of school truancy has led to similar school strikes in other countries throughout Europe and in the United States. Teen climate activist, Alexandria Villasenor, leads the US school strikes. The action has grown and on March 15, 2019 in over 100 countries 1.4 million people took part in the school strike to demand action and policies to address the climate crisis.

Despite the US Administration's actions businesses, local and state governments, faith-based organizations and nonprofits have joined to stay committed to the greenhouse gas reductions goals of the Paris Agreement through various alliances such as 100 Mayors, County Climate Coalition, America's Pledge and We're Still In. Furthermore, while it is understood climate change is a complex and global issue, California is a climate leader within the United States and serves as a role model for policy adoption and innovation, demonstrated by the lead taken by San Francisco Board of Supervisors' on April 2, 2019 to declare by Resolution a Climate Emergency.

Purpose

This study examines the influence of philanthropy on the fundraising efforts of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change. It specifically looks at nonprofits headquartered in California within the San Francisco Bay Area. This research has three objectives. First, it evaluates whether there is a disparity between the needs of these organizations and foundation support. Second, it identifies the consequences of a

disparity and new strategies or models to address it. Finally, this paper offers a set of recommendations for more effective fundraising.

Climate change is a major pressing issue impacting people's lives, livelihoods and the planet. It is important to understand the funding need and philanthropic landscape, so nonprofits leaders are best prepared to fundraise to secure the necessary funds in order to achieve mission impact by successfully addressing this complex issue.

Section 2: Literature Review

The Climate Movement

The beginnings of the climate movement and activism began in the 1990s with participation by major environmental organizations in the UNFCCC framework discussions on climate. In the aughts, several climate specific organizations were launched such as Energy Action Coalition and 350.org. Billy Parish, then at Yale University, founded Energy Action Coalition (now Power Shift Network), which effectively launched the youth led component of the climate movement and activated students around the nation on university campuses to call for action on climate change. 350.org an international environmental organization headquartered in New York with chapters worldwide was founded in 2007 by author activist Bill McKibben, who is credited as the author of the first book on climate change for a general audience published in 1989 called *The End of Nature*. 350.org seeks to spread climate advocacy and education (Climate Movement Wiki).

People's Climate Movement, a coalition of organizations working to address climate change composed of community organizations, environmental justice groups, individuals and labor groups from across the United States was born in 2014 out of the historic People's Climate March and is composed of groups that approach the work of addressing climate change through two key strategies mass mobilization and movement alignment. The Movement's decision-making body called Mobilization Support Team (MST) composed of individuals and organizations cuts across sectors to demand action on climate change. MST includes: 350.org, Alliance for Climate Education, Blue Green Alliance (BGA), Center for Popular Democracy, Climate Justice Alliance, Communications Workers of America, Community Change, Indigenous Environmental Network, GreenFaith, League of Conservation Voters/Chispa, People's Action, People's Climate Movement NY, SEIU, SEIU 32BJ, Sierra Club, Sunrise Movement, US Climate Action Network.

Paul Hawken's book *Blessed Unrest* and online database WiserEarth.org established by Hawken in 2007 served for a time as a resource to document the social, environmental organizations. The online database was shuttered in 2017 (Wikipedia). Hawken (2007) recorded 1,318 as the total number of organizations under the heading Global Climate Change. Total number of Climate Change organizations was recorded as 1,055, total Emissions Trading organizations was 53 and total Greenhouse Gases organizations was 210.

Role of Nonprofit Campaigns in Addressing Climate Change

Hall & Taplin (2010) study of the campaigns of six US climate change organizations reported:

Not-for-profit environmental advocacy organizations (referred to hereafter as "nonprofits") have sought to reduce the threat of climate change for over 20 years through campaigns designed to influence US climate policy (Shellenberger and Nordhaus 2004). Nonprofits act where change cannot be achieved by citizens alone or by an unorganized movement (Princen and Finger 1994, p.11) Nonprofits "operate directly on the government of the day" and attempt to influence a variety of agencies, including the elected government, the bureaucracy, the courts and through public opinion (Rush 1990). Often nonprofits are poorly resourced in comparison with lobby groups from the business sector. This compels them to "find ways of participating in, and contributing to, public debates which do not require material or cultural capital", such as "symbolic forms of protest" (McNair 1998, pp. 9, 148).

Given the difficulty of influencing climate policy at the federal level, the research reported here was based on the hypothesis that nonprofits have preferred a state level intervention approach. It is proposed that the nonprofit campaigns have gained leverage from existing state competition for economic advancement and political leadership on issues of public concern. Using California as a case study, this research explored the role of nonprofit in attempting to influence US federal climate policy within this context of state competition.

Campaigners perceived that nonprofits and the broader environment movement have facilitated greater public understanding of climate change and transformed this understanding into pressure on governments to respond. One campaigner stated that climate change as an issue is "not consumable so someone [must] take it and make it consumable... that's certainly the role that the environment groups have played" (J. P. Ross, *Vote Solar*, 10/11/06). Another considered that the environment movement's involvement on climate change had ensured that

the public had moved from awareness towards taking action, rather than moving directly to despair (C. Miller, Greenpeace, 9/29/06)."

The nonprofit campaigners interviewed considered their campaign goals had been more achievable due to their decision to focus at the local, state and regional levels, rather than federal level. The outcome of this effort has been the nonprofit organizations working at "the more grassroots level to push solutions forward" (C. Miller, Greenpeace, 9/29/06). Many of the nonprofit campaigns focused on policy and legislative decisions that resulted in the outcomes legislated in AB32, AB1493, and the "million solar roofs" policy decision. One campaigner stated, "here in California... the nonprofit community has been very important as one of the major players in influencing policies" (A. Luers, UCS, 10/12/06). Another considered AB1493 as the most successful climate campaign outcome of her organization's work (D. Fugere, the Bluewater Network, 10/11/06.)" (Hall & Taplin, 2010)

California Environmental Nonprofits

According to CalNonprofits (2014), there are 4,297 environmental organizations in California. This total reflects all Form 990 filers including: 1,211 Form 990, 1,096 990-EZ and 1,990 990-N. Larger nonprofits that have gross receipts of more than \$50,000 may file Form 990 or 990-EZ. Small nonprofits with gross receipts of \$50,000 or less must file Form 990-N (e-postcard) to maintain their exempt status. While these numbers do not isolate climate change specific organizations, it can be argued that since climate change is a complex issue all environmental organizations are working on some aspect of the solution. Examples of large environmental organizations based in California include Sierra Club, Earthjustice and Friends of the Earth. An example of a small environmental nonprofit is 350SF, the San Francisco chapter of 350.org. CalNonprofits (2014) reported grants awarded for environment and animals to California based organizations from California based foundations totaled \$245,981,000 or 13% of overall total \$1,942,653,000. While grants awarded by non-California foundations to California recipient organizations for environment and animals totaled \$67,138,000 or 7% of overall total \$1,029,114,000.

Climate Philanthropy

Data from the Foundation Center Foundation Maps online database indicated the nonprofit organizations based in California that were recipients of grants to support climate change work 2006 to present included (in order of greatest total number of grants awarded): Energy Foundation, Sierra Club Foundation, Climateworks Foundation, Resource Media, Tides Foundation, Stanford University, Climate Policy Initiative,

University of California San Diego, Sierra Club and Green Tech Action Fund. Of these large organizations, Energy Foundation and Climateworks Foundations are regranting organizations (Nisbet 2018). Sierra Club is the only recipient organization listed in conjunction with the People's Climate Movement.

Data from Foundation Center Foundation Maps also revealed that from 2006 to present a few big philanthropies funded the climate change work of these nonprofit organizations based in California. These large foundations included (in order from largest value of grants awarded): The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (\$752,163,682), The David and Lucile Packard Foundation (\$502,306,026), Sea Change Foundation (\$111,959,401), Oak Foundation (\$102,374,488), McKnight Foundation (\$41,175,000), National Science Foundation (\$33,963,641), John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (\$28,625,000), Heising-Simons Foundation (\$23,018,300), The Energy Foundation (\$21,461,089) and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (\$21,200,000).

Critique of Philanthropy

There has been much critique of environmental foundations, their funding strategies and progress on climate change.

In an address to Environmental Grantmakers Association, Shellenberger and Nordhaus (2004) stated:

Over the last 15 years environmental foundations and organizations have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in combating global warming. We have strikingly little to show for it. From the battles over higher fuel efficiency for cars and trucks to the attempts to reduce carbon emissions through international treaties, environmental groups repeatedly have tried and failed to win national legislation that would reduce the threat of global warming. As a result, people in the environmental movement today find themselves politically less powerful than we were one and a half decades ago. Yet in lengthy conversations, the vast majority of leaders from the largest environmental organizations and foundations in the country insisted to us that we are on the right track.

Nearly all of the more than two dozen environmentalists we interviewed and underscored that climate change demands that we remake the global economy in ways that will transform the lives of six billion people. All recognize that it's an undertaking of monumental size and complexity. And all acknowledged that we must reduce emissions by up to 70 percent as soon as possible.

But in their public campaigns, not one of America's environmental leaders is articulating a vision of the future commensurate with the magnitude of the crisis. Instead they are promoting technical policy fixes like pollution controls and higher vehicle mileage standards – proposals that provide neither the popular inspiration nor the political alliances the community needs to deal with the problem.

(Shellenberger and Nordhaus, 2004)

Funding Strategy - Design to Win

In 2007, a funders alliance composed of six large foundations The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, The Energy Foundation, The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, The Joyce Foundation and Oak Foundation posed the question, "How can philanthropists turn the tide against global warming?". Hundreds of leading scientific experts were consulted to identify the strategy. The findings were published in the report "Design to Win: Philanthropy's Role in the Fight Against Global Warming." which set the funding strategy with a focus on policy/advocacy and technology solutions.

California Environmental Associates (2007) reported in *Design to Win*:

Underlying all our interventions is the urgent need for regulation of greenhouse gas emissions. The sun is setting on an era in which no one bears any responsibility for emitting carbon from tailpipes and smokestacks. Strong financial signals are necessary to spark real collective action. Either through an emissions cap or other means, we must put a price on carbon to force businesses, consumers and governments to pay for their pollution. In turn, investment will shift to cleaner options.

Foundations and others have a long-standing commitment to this policy goal; those efforts finally appear to be paying off. Politicians have never been as serious about tackling climate change and the Group of Eight nations recently established a goal of halving global greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. In the U.S. and E.U., it's not a question of "if" there will be a carbon price and associated market; it's "when" and "how." And the "how" is absolutely critical because poorly designed carbon policies could constitute the worst lock in of all.

(California Environmental Associates, 2007, p.16)

Philanthropy Post Cap and Trade

However in 2010, Cap and Trade legislation in the United States failed to pass. The legislation would have effectively established a carbon market as a mechanism to incentivize the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. In a post Cap and Trade failure landscape, the critique of the environmental foundations continues.

Pritzker (2019) asserted, “Where I respectfully disagree with Nisbet is that I think he overstates the power of big philanthropy to set the climate agenda. In many cases climate foundations are actually following the priorities set by their grantees. And despite Nisbet’s claim that philanthropists are “likely to surpass national governments in their ability to define the agenda on climate change,” money isn’t everything, and the power of public leaders to set an agenda remains unparalleled—even in an era of gridlock and dysfunction. The Green New Deal, which was not funded by big philanthropy, is just the latest reminder of this. However, what the Green New Deal and much of the work funded by traditional climate philanthropy have in common is that they are well-intentioned but problematic agendas for building effective political constituencies on climate change. We need climate solutions that can help decarbonize the economy and break through partisan gridlock.”

Matthew Nisbet, Professor Communications and Public Policy, Northeastern University (2018) reviewed 2,502 US Specific Grants awarded for climate change to 20 organizations from 19 of the largest foundations.

Nisbet’s (2019) study found the following:

My analysis of \$556 million in US focused grants awarded between 2011 and 2015 by 19 influential foundations shows that they continued to invest in efforts to shape federal climate and energy policy but redirected much of their funding to support actions at the regional, state, or municipal level, prioritizing the West Coast, Midwest, and Northeast regions. The largest environmental grantmakers remained committed to their decades old policy and technology road map on climate change, investing in familiar approaches, strategies and goals. In this case, one out of every four dollars invested (\$140.3 million) was dedicated to promoting renewable energy and efficiency-related actions across states and various industry sectors, with an additional 27% (\$151 million) going to communication and mobilization efforts, much of this focusing on influencing public sentiment in politically strategic Midwest states.

Funders also responded to past critics who had argued for investment in climate change resilience, and for greater financial resources devoted to opposing the fossil fuel industry. More than \$55 million was dedicated to

building sustainable and resilient cities and local economies, with \$17.2 million focused on the needs of low-income and minority communities. Philanthropists were also aggressive in targeting the fossil fuel industry, spending \$69.4 million to limit coal power, ban or restrict fracking, and hold the industry accountable for pollution and legal violations. Foundation investments and strategies have led to several important successes. Many of the market and social forces propelling renewable energy today are a result of the decades long road map pursued by major climate funders. The 99% decline since the early 1990s in the cost of solar panels, concludes a recent study published in *Energy Policy*, would not have happened without the types of market-stimulating policies long favored by philanthropies. But early spending by governments on research and development was also essential, as were the enormous economies of scale achieved by Chinese overproduction and dumping of cheap panels on US markets. (Nisbet, 2019)

Echoing Nisbet's research, Tate Williams, Science and Environment writer for *Inside Philanthropy* remarked in a 2019 *Climate One* podcast, "I find that even today philanthropy doesn't fund the grassroots enough; they don't fund movement building enough," says Williams. "And then in particular, I find that they don't fund communities of color and low-income communities that have the most to lose when it comes to climate change." Larry Kramer, President of the Hewlett Foundation responded, "We were on track for 5-6 degrees of warming. 2.7-3.2 degrees has been achieved. 1-1.5 to go, it's way harder than the first. It's unquestionably the need for movement building and the grassroots. There's not sufficient philanthropic resources to play all of the bases at the same time."

Nisbet (2019) noted, Larry Kramer, the president of Hewlett, is on record as saying he takes seriously criticism that past investing on climate change has been too narrow. "We are in a position of spreading our bets," he told *Inside Philanthropy*. Hewlett is also working to diversify the types of funders committing money to the problem. Despite the billions spent by philanthropy on climate change, this funding still only accounts for 1% of all foundation giving, noted Kramer.

For all these reasons, I posed Research Question RQ1: Is there a disparity between the needs of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change and the amount of foundation support?

Center for Effective Philanthropy (2018) found agreement between foundation leaders

and nonprofit CEOs that fundraising, governance and leadership are the areas where grantee organizations most commonly need strengthening. But are there differences among large environmental organizations and small grassroots organizations in their ability to raise funds to achieve mission impact? There has been a long running discourse on this topic. Lehmer (1999) documented, "Robert Ferguson, Director of Foundation Relations for the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in New York, said foundation involvement can often be an invaluable asset. "We're engaged in a very healthy dialogue with foundation program officers," said Ferguson. "If you've had a long relationship, they're more willing to make a long-term commitment to your work." But Ferguson acknowledges that NRDC, a large mainstream environmental organization, runs campaigns that fit within the program scope of about 80 percent of the foundations that fund environmental work. Such funding, says Britell, tends to be for, "name-it-and-save-it" projects that rarely, if ever, take on the corporations that are causing the problems in the first place. If you want to do grassroots organizing around problems like corporate crime or corporations' central role in environmental destruction, it's almost impossible to get foundation funding, he says. Since many of these foundations derive their funds from oil companies and other extractive industries, grantee guidelines often stress a preference for "win-win" program proposals that won't threaten such activities."

To evaluate conflicting claims on the impact of foundation funding on nonprofit grantees, Delfin and Tang (2000) conducted a survey of U.S. environmental nonprofit organizations receiving grants in 2000 from private California foundations. The results of their study were more in line with pluralist and resource dependency arguments that view foundation donors as supportive of nonprofit capacity building versus the elitist critics that foundations co-opt their grant recipients. Delfin and Tang also found that whether the funding impact is cooptation or capacity building had more to do with grant types received and their organizational traits than the nonprofit's degree of dependency on philanthropic funds. Their study identified capacity building to be associated with multiyear programmatic grants and 1-year program grants to be associated with cooptation. A simplistic interpretation of elitist theory may underestimate the diversity of motivations among funders and the tremendous administrative costs associated with a rigid supervision of grantees.

For all these reasons, I posed Research Question RQ2: a) How does the disparity affect fundraising and organizational capacity for carrying out the impact of these nonprofit orgs? b) How does a lack of funding affect the grassroots orgs?

Costs of Drawdown

But how much would it cost to reverse global warming? Paul Hawken assembled a team of leading scientists and policymakers from around the world to research and identify the top 100 existing solutions. Hawken's (2017) team then financially modelled the costs "of an ambitious but plausible adoption of the respective solutions when compared to a thirty-year period in which growth is fixed at current levels relative to market size. Hawken (2017) states, "While the scenario is optimistic it is also realistic. We use conservative estimates when it comes to financial cost and emissions impact, relying on widely cited, peer-reviewed science. We vet sources and incorporate meta-analysis to evaluate a range of potential impacts before settling on one, always with a bias to the conservative. With respect to financial modeling, we purposely chose slower rates of falling costs compared to historical trends." The first cost (total cost to implement) of all the modeled solutions is \$129 trillion over 30 years equivalent to \$440 per person per year. The Net cost, \$27 trillion over 30 years, represents how much more money would be required to implement climate solutions compared to the cost of repeating business as usual. The Net operating savings is \$74 trillion over thirty years. Based on current levels of philanthropic giving, much more money is needed to carry out this drawdown plan.

Nonprofits can derive revenue from a variety of sources including government grants and contracts, grants from private, family and community foundations, corporations, fees from programs and services and individual donors. There are all of these strategies but what are new strategies to think about in order to be best prepared in the event foundation and government money disappears or is not awarded?

Rage Philanthropy

The philanthropic response in the United States in the wake of the Trump election saw an unprecedented rise in individual giving. Preston (2017) reported, "So far, donors have stepped up in a big way. The Sierra Club acquired 26,000 new monthly donors in November and December, a 16-fold increase over the same period in 2015. One-time gifts in December totaled \$4 million, double the previous year." Preston (2017) also noted, "...and NRDC acquired 55,919 new online donors compared with 4,050 during those two months in 2015. Under Susan Casey-Lefkowitz, chief program officer, a battle plan has taken shape designed to maximize the group's ability to defend existing environmental rules in Washington while making gains locally and overseas. The group is also trying to inspire its donors, who gave four times as many gifts in the two months after the election as they had over the same period the previous year" (Preston 2017) With this bump, NRDC is now moving to add digital-advocacy and development staff, bolster its litigation team, and expand fundraising for its advocacy arm.

NRDC's senior director of digital advocacy and fundraising Ben Smith said (Preston 2017), "NRDC is investing in recruiting donors by email and social media. After the election, it saw first-time supporters give in large numbers through Face-book -- a few thousand a month compared with just a few dozen before." Smith also reported (Preston 2017), "All told, between the election and early January, the group sent 47 emails to members, a roughly 15 percent jump over the same period last year. "I don't see oversaturation as a threat. If anything, [members] are looking to us for more effective messaging and really clear guidance."

Leslie Lenkowsky an Indiana University expert on philanthropy and public affairs remarked, "The fundraising boost is akin to the cash infusion that relief groups typically receive after a natural disaster. Nonprofits have to start planning ahead for leaner times, he says. But for now, Mr. Trump remains the most potent fundraising tool for left-leaning and progressive organizations." (Preston, 2017)

HOW ADVOCACY GROUPS ARE READYING FOR THE TRUMP ERA

- Adding staff members, especially lawyers who can challenge regulatory rollbacks and agency actions in court
- Capitalizing on public anger toward President Trump by sponsoring protests, mobilizing supporters, and investing in volunteers
- Shifting to a defensive strategy at the federal level to preserve and protect existing laws
- Boosting their presence at the state and local levels by hiring new staff and forming coalitions
- Assessing election results and looking for new ways to connect with GOP members
- Protecting their operations from surveillance and harassment
- Forging collaborations with grass-roots groups and organizations that work on different causes

Source: Chronicle of Philanthropy (Preston, 2017)

Preston (2017) also reported, "Nonprofits also want to tap into the mounting public outrage over Mr. Trump that inspired street protests after the election, the Women's March in Washington, and protests in cities nationwide in response to his travel ban. Dozens of groups, including Amnesty International, Planned Parenthood, the Sierra Club, and the National Domestic Workers Alliance, signed on as partners in the march." Small grassroots environmental nonprofits can tap into these trends that the larger environmental nonprofits are benefiting from and the growing momentum of the new wave of the youth led climate movement in order to grow their own donor base.

Impact Investing

Foundations are looking at ways to grow their investments and impact investing strategies, such as Mission Related Investment (MRI) and Program Related Investment (PRI) are currently trending among philanthropists. While MRI and PRI are not new strategies, an Aspen Institute (2001) report entitled, *Green of Another Color: Building Effective Partnerships Between Foundation and the Environmental Justice Movement* described, “By adopting mission-related investing strategies, foundations screen out investments which would otherwise support companies that engage in environmentally destructive and socially irresponsible business practices. PRIs are loans, loan guarantees and equity investments that support a foundation’s mission. Foundations can record PRIs as grants or use them to supplement a grantmaking program.

According to President of Hewlett Foundation Larry Kramer (2017), “There could still be a role for traditional grantmaking foundations in the impact investing world, though it may not be investing our grant dollars or endowment. If new philanthropists and high-net-worth individuals are going to use their resources this way, we can at least take steps to make it more likely that they do so well. This could take several forms. We could help develop investment opportunities in ways that maximize their social impact. We can use our expertise in energy, for example, to help cities develop transportation or housing plans that are appealing to investors while also maximizing the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Or we might make grants to help potential investors find the most impactful investments—supporting organizations like the Prime Coalition or Aligned Intermediary, which provide philanthropic investors with tools, information, and support to make smart, effective investments. We could, in other words, help build the infrastructure needed to grow and sustain a flourishing impact investment sector. The Hewlett Foundation already makes grants for these purposes, which seem sensible and beneficial, but do not require that we divert a lot of resources from a nonprofit sector whose good work deserves—and depends on—our support. With limited resources to address monumental challenges, we need to be thoughtful about how and where and when we act, with an eye on the sector as a whole.” Small grassroots environmental nonprofits could seize opportunities to align and partner with organizations and companies that receive PRI and MRI investment support.

Roger Kim, head of the Climate Fund at Democracy Alliance stated, “There’s a structural imbalance in terms of the flow of resources to the largest organizations and their dominance in the field. What we need is more of the smaller and mid-level organizations to grow and to expand, and frankly, those are the groups ... that have real, authentic connections to the communities in which we are trying to build power. Supporting local groups in impacted communities is important. While such groups often work with very small budgets, they are also among the greatest champions for action. Community groups are also closer to the ground and can be

more responsive to unique concerns in each locale, led by people who are closest to the problems. (Tate, 2017)

Wei-Skillern and Marciano (2008) stated, “Although the social problems that nonprofits are tackling are growing in both magnitude and complexity, funding is failing to keep pace. Networks do not require more resources, but rather a better use of existing resources. And so networked nonprofits are uniquely poised to face the perennial challenge of the nonprofit sector: achieving lofty missions with decidedly humble means.”

For all these reasons, I posed Research Question RQ 3: What alternative fundraising strategies or models are needed to address the disparity?

Section 3: Methods and Approaches

Mixed Methods

Following a Mixed Methods approach, primary data included semi-structured interviews used for data collection to allow for a pre-determined set of questions (see Appendix) with the opportunity to explore responses further. Participants were recruited through direct outreach, interviews of 30 minutes to one hour in length were conducted by phone and in person. Three of the five experts interviewed were from my own personal/professional network, two experts interviewed, and members of the grassroots organization were from outside my own personal/professional network.

Primary Data

Five expert interviews were conducted with environmental nonprofit professionals from a mix of small, medium and large nonprofit organizations located within the San Francisco Bay Area before a saturation point was reached for the three research questions. Experts from a variety of professions working within environmental nonprofits were purposefully chosen and job titles included legal counsel, director, development manager, fellow and media expert.

Additionally, one member meeting of a grassroots environmental nonprofit organization was attended. The member meeting focused on a discussion of the organization’s next steps related to specific actions including San Francisco Board of Supervisors Climate Emergency Resolution and the Department of Environment’s role in developing a plan, as well as, follow-up needed in support of tax breaks for electric vehicles and group rides. Nonprofit organizational structure and consideration of 501c4 structure was discussed. Following the meeting adjournment, an informal conversation with members

of the coordinating committee continued for fifteen minutes. Informal conversation centered around the staff capacity and fundraising needs of the organization.

Participants in the study represented the following environmental nonprofit organizations: 350SF, Climate One, Environmental Action Committee of West Marin, Pacific Forest Trust, Project Drawdown, and Sierra Club.

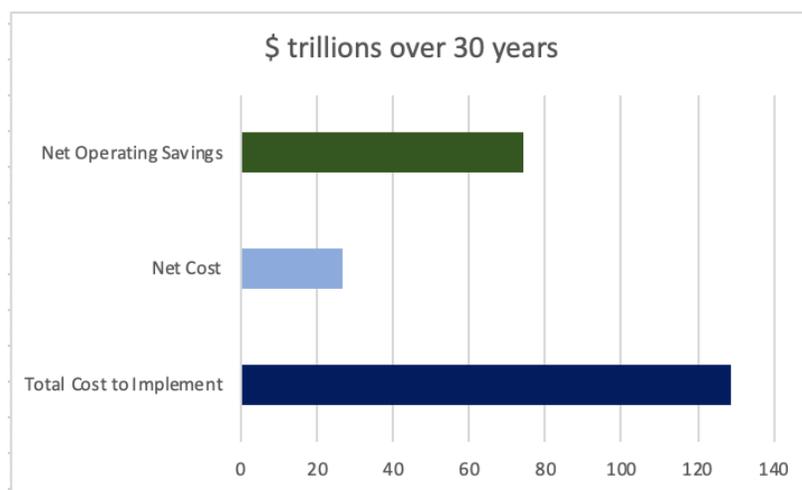
Secondary Data

Secondary data included a review of applicable literature. Key Topics: Climate Change, Global Warming, Philanthropy, Fundraising, Communications, Grassroots, Environment. Foundation Center Foundation Maps database was accessed for relevant data on foundation support of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change.

Section 4. Data Analysis

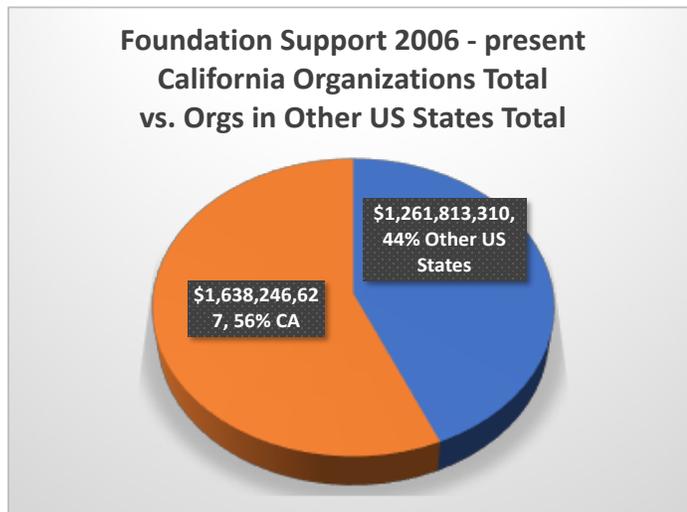
Secondary data was also collected to demonstrate projected financial costs of reversing global warming (Figure 1), amount of foundation support contributed to California and United States based organizations for climate change specific work from 2006 to present (Figure 2), illustration of foundation support of California based organizations 2006 – present compared to net cost of implementation over thirty years of the top 100 solutions modelled by Drawdown (Figure 3).

Figure 1: Projected Financial Costs to Reverse Global Warming



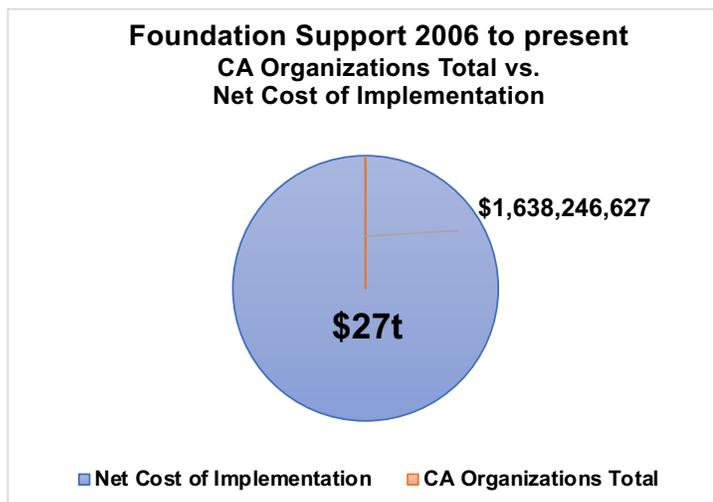
Source: Author's creation. Data from "Drawdown The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming" by P. Hawken, 2017, p. 220.

**Figure 2: Foundation Support 2006 – present
California Organizations Total vs. Organizations in Other US States Total**



Source: Author's creation. Data from Foundation Center Foundation Maps online database.

**Figure 3: Foundation Support 2006 – present
California Organizations Total vs. Net Cost of Implementation**



Source: Author's creation. Data from Foundation Center Foundation Maps online database and "Drawdown The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming" by P. Hawken, 2017, p. 220.

Results

Results of the findings indicated a need for nonprofit organizations to embrace collaboration in the form of more partnerships among large and small nonprofits to increase social impact and gain more access to foundations, as well as, the need to leverage the youth movement and technology to innovate fundraising. Participants were in agreement on the challenges of raising foundation support that funding priorities and trends of large foundations are not always aligned with the needs of existing nonprofits, in particular those of the small grassroots environmental organizations

Research Question Findings

RQ1: Is there a disparity between the needs of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change and the amount of foundation support?

Interview participant responses indicated that the funding priorities and trends of large foundations are not always aligned with the needs of existing nonprofits in particular those of the small grassroots environmental organizations.

A Director of a small grassroots nonprofit organization shared, “Larger foundations have made grants for human behavior change, transportation i.e. less cars. There is a disconnect between the type of projects funded and the need.”

Legal Counsel for a large environmental organization acknowledged, “The majority of funding is going toward policy and advocacy.”

A fellow at an environmental organization commented, “Trends in large philanthropy giving, environment is waxing and waning. In philanthropy, environment is not trending. Social impact first is taking priority.”

RQ2: A) How does a disparity affect fundraising and organizational capacity for fulfilling mission and making impact?

Study participants provided diverse responses that described a range of experiences including the need to restructure programs, develop entirely new strategic approaches and rely on volunteer support for critical functions such as fundraising.

A Development Manager at a medium sized environmental nonprofit noted, “Authenticity matters. As funders change their funding priorities, orgs are re-trenching. [A funder] just announced they are entering strategic revisioning and will not fund for

the next 2 years. Well, if you have been doing something (a certain strategy for a long time) it's hard for an org to build a new approach overnight."

B) How does a lack of funding affect the grassroots organizations?

Director of a small grassroots nonprofit organization shared, "[We] had three programs and will now move more toward emphasizing two programs political advocacy and climate adaptation for seeking funds, in particular from foundations."..."There is a disconnect - land use planning is not funded by foundations."..."There is no watchdog funding. [Our organization] does this and its funded by our members. There is no foundation money for it."

Member of a small grassroots organization responded, "We are volunteer run and have experienced recent turnover among our volunteers. We are in real need of someone to help with fundraising, but we are looking ideally for someone to volunteer to do that work."

RQ3: What alternative fundraising strategies or models are needed to address a disparity?

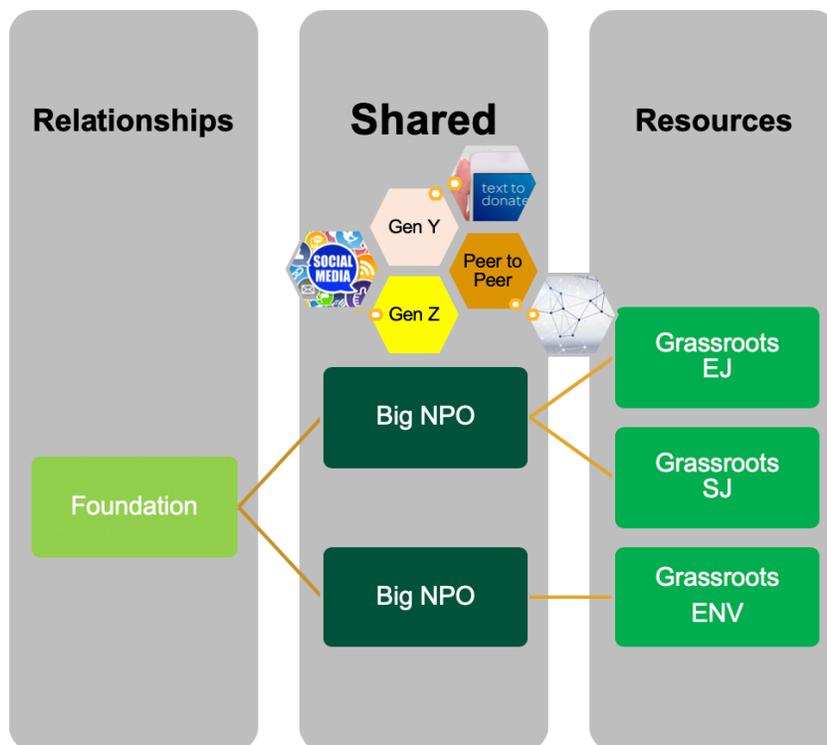
Research participants expressed opinions on alternative fundraising strategies or models needed with diverse responses, such that included philanthropic trends and the need for nonprofits to diversify their fundraising methodologies to include more than market-based incentives.

A development manager at a medium sized environmental organization responded, "Diversifying fundraising methodologies. Market based incentives innovated/ pioneered along with a policy advocacy side. They support each other. We point to a set of tools, conservation tools and carbon market as tangible practical tools and broader policy makers and landowners to enact policies. Funders depending on guidelines may not fund policy or may not fund easement. [Our organization] has a mix of methods and finding the different funders that align. We also have a focus on individual giving, through major gifts and events."

A fellow at an environmental organization shared, "A big trend in philanthropy is moving resources into total portfolio activation, aligning investments with mission, investing corpus to make more money beneficial to the cause. PRI, MRI, sub-commercial return could be catalytic. Philanthropy is exploring how to use PRI and MRI to make more investment money. More action is needed. Some family philanthropies are ahead of the curve."

Based on the research findings a model for collaborative collective impact and innovation is recommended to strengthen and lift up organizations of all sizes in their work to address climate change.

Figure 4: Collaborative Collective Impact and Innovation



Source: Author's creation.

Section 5: Implications and Recommendations

Implications

Implications of this study's findings in relation to the sector include:

1. Large foundations have been critiqued for their decades long funding strategy that emphasizes policy/advocacy and technology solutions, in particular, that the strategy has left out a critical component of the climate movement, the grassroots organizations, that would have helped mobilize the political will necessary to gain traction and make progress to establish policies needed at the federal level.
2. >1% of annual foundation giving is attributed to climate change mitigation, this is clearly not enough money to solve the climate crisis. Much more money is needed from public and private sources. Businesses, local and state governments have come forward to make commitments.
3. Climate change is a complex issue and will take all aspects of the movement – grassroots social and environmental justice organizations alongside the large established environmental organizations working together to create equitable solutions.

Recommendations

1. Embrace Collaboration vs. Competition:

Work Together to Gain Access to Foundations and Wealth Managers

A. More Partnerships Among Small NPOs and Large NPOs

To Increase Social Impact. Be a "Node" not a "Hub".

B. Form a Connector Group

To Strengthen the Movement through Shared Relationships and Resources

Pritzker (2019) reported, "Accelerating the pace of this work in order to meet the climate challenge requires building a new field of institutions that can work alongside big green groups to provide a diversified approach to addressing climate change. In my view, that is climate philanthropy's most urgent task." While Center for Effective Philanthropy (2018) highlighted the importance of networks quoting Linda Baker, Director, Organizational Effectiveness at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, "In today's accelerating and deeply interconnected world, strong networks are essential element for social and environmental change. To succeed, both formal and informal

networks must communicate, leverage opportunities, and powerfully collaborate across issues and sectors – allowing individual leaders and organizations to work together to meet the demands of a changing world.”

2. Leverage Youth Movement:

Focus on Engaging Gen Y and Gen Z Peer to Peer

Simone Joyaux (2009) recommends as one of the Basic Principles of Fund Development, “Build an individual giving program. Each year, individuals give the largest portion of philanthropic gifts in North America. And individuals are more loyal donors than foundations or corporations.” Given the rise in individual giving in response to the current US administration and new wave of the youth led climate movement there is opportunity to leverage these actions into peer to peer fundraising to acquire new donors Gen Y and parents of Gen Z and build a pipeline of eventual Gen Z donors to your organization’s cause.

3. Double down on Technology to Innovate Fundraising

As previously mentioned, large environmental organizations are reporting increases in online engagement through the acquisition of new members and donors and are investing more in digital advocacy and fundraising tools. This trend could prove to be innovative and one that small grassroots environmental organizations could adopt in particular in conjunction with engaging with and leveraging the local, national and global narrative and current rise in youth-led activism within the climate movement.

Section 6: Conclusions

Background / Purpose Statement

This study examines the influence of philanthropy on the fundraising efforts of nonprofit organizations working to address climate change. It specifically looks at nonprofits headquartered in California within the San Francisco Bay Area. The three objectives of the research are as follows: 1) To evaluate whether there is a disparity between the needs of these organizations and foundation support. 2) To identify the consequences of a disparity and new strategies or models to address it. 3) Offer a set of recommendations for more effective fundraising.

Climate change is a major pressing issue impacting people’s lives, livelihoods and the planet. It is important to understand the funding need and philanthropic landscape, so nonprofits leaders are best prepared to fundraise to secure the necessary funds in order to achieve mission impact by successfully addressing this complex issue.

Results

Results of the findings indicated a need for nonprofit organizations to embrace collaboration in the form of more partnerships among large and small nonprofits to increase social impact and gain more access to foundations and wealth managers, as well as, the need to leverage the youth movement and technology to innovate fundraising.

Implications

This study's findings identified several implications. Large foundations have been critiqued for their decades long funding strategy that emphasizes policy/advocacy and technology solutions, in particular, that the strategy has left out a critical component of the climate movement, the grassroots organizations, that would have helped mobilize the political will necessary to gain traction and make progress to establish policies needed at the federal level. >1% of annual foundation giving is awarded for climate change mitigation, this is clearly not enough money to solve the climate crisis. Much more money is needed from both public and private sources. Businesses, local and state governments have come forward to make commitments. Climate change is a complex issue and will take all aspects of the movement – grassroots social and environmental justice organizations alongside the large established environmental organizations working together to create equitable solutions.

Limitations

There are other ways that this research could have been carried out by employing other methods of data collection such as surveys or focus groups rather than interviews. Other perspectives other than those captured within this study may exist. Given time constraints of the project, my own personal network was heavily relied upon for half of the interviewees. This is just something to note as it may or may not have had some influence on participants' responses.

Future Research

Examples of future additional studies to expand the research include:

1. Survey large established environmental organizations and small grassroots organizations to establish a larger data set regarding fundraising from foundation support and ability to achieve mission and organizational capacity.
2. Explore deeper how foundation support can help nonprofits to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals for Climate Action SDG 13 plus SDG 8-12 and 14-15
3. Analysis of specific funding strategies for best Return on Investment (ROI)

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

What are the challenges faced by the environmental nonprofit/social sector in California to fundraise for climate change and climate resilience efforts?

What business or funders (philanthropy) are jumping in to support efforts in California where federal is not?

How are grassroots environmental nonprofits tapping into the overall global commitment for sustainability for climate change?

What is the total # of Grassroots Funders vs. # of Larger Foundations and what areas are they funding within? Has there been a growth in how many environmental groups vs. growth in foundation support?

How does the agenda set by foundational support for climate change impact nonprofit environmental fundraising efforts and their success in carrying out their mission?

How is fundraising impacted by the influence of climate change rhetoric?

How have organizations coped have they increased educational messaging, have they benefited from climate denial, have they benefited from their own contributors?

Have new fundraising strategies or models developed?

What fundraising strategies and models have been most effective for funding climate solutions?

What (if any) new fundraising strategies and models have been or could be developed for funding climate solutions?

Author's Bio

Karen Campbell is a strategic development professional with over 15 years of dedicated experience in the social sector. Karen is currently the Education Initiatives consultant at Environmental Action Committee West Marin, a nonprofit addressing the urgent needs of local climate change adaptation. She is also a member of the Malloy Group for Organizational Science Consulting where she leverages her career experience within interdisciplinary team settings to deliver strategic business solutions from a Design Thinking approach to both for-profit and nonprofit organizations. In previous Development & Fundraising roles at The San Francisco Foundation, Slide Ranch, and National Dance Institute New Mexico, Karen honed her skills in donor relations, fund development and portfolio management while being a passionate advocate for social justice and youth development.

At The San Francisco Foundation, Karen managed a \$60M annual donor advised fund grantmaking program and was responsible for donor communications and stewardship of major donor relationships within the 840-member donor community. Additionally, she served as liaison to the Environment program and Arts and Culture program grantmaking teams.

As the sole in-house development professional at Slide Ranch, Karen partnered with the Board Chair, the Development Committee and a fundraising consultant to grow individual and institutional fundraising by \$1.5 million dollars and raise an additional \$1 million in contributions in the final stage of the capital campaign. She cultivated and facilitated new charitable gifts, initiated and stewarded relationships with major donors, corporate funders and foundations, resulting in ~\$270K in revenues received.

At National Dance Institute New Mexico, Karen managed major donor Giving Circles cultivation and stewardship events and annual donor stewardship campaigns. She also spearheaded three targeted donor outreach campaigns to thousands of donors by creating donor segments and profiles, crafting outreach efforts and marketing materials to achieve the organization's fundraising goals of \$2.5M.

Karen holds a Bachelor of Science in Environmental and Biological Sciences from Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio. She is currently pursuing a Master of Nonprofit Administration at The University of San Francisco, to be completed May 2019.