COMMUNICATING CLIMATE IMPACTS
Local Solutions Conference
May 2014
www.climateaccess.org
SOCIAL CAPITAL STRATEGIES
METHODOLOGY

LITERATURE AND POLLING REVIEW:

122 articles including survey data from 2005 to 2014 and academic research from the fields of behavioral science, communications, development studies, environmental studies, political science, and psychology.

SCAN OF THE FIELD:

Reviewed 39 examples of campaigns, tools, and on-the-ground projects related to climate preparation communication and outreach.
63% of Americans believe global warming is happening (with an increase in those who don’t think it’s happening).
58% of Americans say they worry a great deal or fair amount about global warming.

Gallup 2013
54% of Americans saying the effects of global warming have already begun.
Global warming has ranked at or near the bottom of the U.S. public’s policy priorities since 2009.

29% say global warming is a top priority (ranked 19 out of 20 issues) in Jan 2014.
Most Americans believe global warming will primarily harm future generations and plant/animal species.
GROWING NUMBER OF AMERICANS BELIEVE GLOBAL WARMING WON’T BE STOPPED

40% say we could reduce global warming, but it’s unclear whether we will do what’s necessary.

5% say humans can reduce global warming and that we’ll do so successfully.
THOSE WHO BELIEVE GLOBAL WARMING IS HAPPENING:

Have hope that…….

67% People want to save resources for future generations

64% People are becoming informed

58% Once people feel the impacts they’ll act

But they doubt action we be taken because…….

72% Corporations care only about their own profits

68% Most people don’t know what they can do

52% People have higher priorities to worry about
CLIMATE IMPACTS
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH EXTREME WEATHER

59% weather has been getting worse

70% experienced extreme weather

33% experienced global warming
HEAT WAVES

51% experienced extreme heat in the past year

67% say global warming contributed to record highs
DROUGHT & WILDFIRES

42% experienced drought conditions

49% say climate change exacerbated droughts

65% say climate change is fueling wildfires
EXTREME STORMS

41% experienced an extreme rainstorm

15% experienced a hurricane

46% say climate change made Superstorm Sandy more severe
73% say global warming will cause sea-level rise

76% say sea-level rise will be serious problem
VIEWS ON PREPARATION

85% favor preparedness

60% think preparing will create jobs

94% think it will be difficult
HOW RISK PLAYS A ROLE

1. Discounting the Future
2. Dealing with Complexity
3. Displacing Risk
HOW RISK PLAYS A ROLE

4. Individual vs. Societal Risk

5. Illusion of Control

6. Optimism Bias
HOW RISK PLAYS A ROLE

7. Valuing Certainty

8. Psychological Denial

9. Filtering Based on Values
Recommendations

START WITH AUDIENCE VALUES
Recommendations

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Recommendations

CHANGE STAGES AND MECHANISMS

Disinterest  Deliberation  Design  Doing  Defend

Cognitive and Experiential Change Mechanisms
Disturbances
Awareness-building
Choice expansion
Emotional Inspiration
Supportive relationships

Organizational/ self-reevaluation

Behavior Change Mechanisms

Commitment
Helping relationships
Reinforcement
Substitution
Structural Redesign
Recommendations

LEVERAGE WEATHER EVENTS

• Connect the dots to climate carefully

• Emphasize trends more certain

• Concern for humanity

• Less severe trends also important
Recommendations

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

DISINTEREST
Recommendations

FOCUS ON PREPARATION

DELIBERATION
Recommendations

Why me?
Connect to identity.

Why now?
Waiting to act will make the task more difficult and costly.

What are the stakes?
Economic, community, and individual well-being.

What are the solutions?
Balance impacts with solutions that are on scale with them. Frame mitigation as an effective way to prepare for and reduce risk.

What is the problem?
Impacts are causing harm now and are only getting worse.
Recommendations

EXPLORE TRENDS, RATHER THAN ARGUE ABOUT SCIENCE
Recommendations

EMPHASIZE CURRENT AND REGIONAL IMPACTS
Recommendations

USE IMPACT SCENARIOS TO ILLUSTRATE TRENDS

San Francisco Bay

Oakland

Alameda

San Leandro
Recommendations

USE EFFECTIVE VISUALS

DELIBERATION

[Images of landscape with smoke and clear water with a child, indicating effective use of visuals for environmental communication.]
Recommendations

USE EFFECTIVE VISUALS

Wildfires are **increasing** and wildfire season is getting **longer** in the Western U.S.

Average number of large wildfires per year bigger than 1,000 acres:
- 1980-1989: ~140
- 1990-1999: ~160
- 2000-2012: ~250
Recommendations

USE EFFECTIVE VISUALS

THE SOLUTIONS PROJECT: FLORIDA

Transition to 100% wind, water, and solar (WWS) for all purposes
(electricity, transportation, heating/cooling, industry)

2050

PROJECTED ENERGY MIX

- Residential rooftop PV: 10%
- Solar PV plants: 52.9%
- CSP plants: 5%
- Onshore wind: 5%
- Offshore wind: 15%
- Commercial/govt rooftop PV: 10%
- Wave devices: 1%
- Geothermal: 0%
- Hydroelectric: 0.1%
- Tidal turbines: 1%
Recommendations

**USE A DIALOGUE AND PEER-BASED OUTREACH METHODS**
Recommendations
Recommendations
Recommendations

MOTIVATE THE MOTIVATED & AGGREGATE THEIR ACTIONS
NCAnet: Building a network of networks to support the National Climate Assessment

We invite you join the National Climate Assessment (NCA) in NCAnet, a network of organizations working with the NCA to engage producers and users of assessment information across the United States. Partners extend the NCA process and products to a broad audience through the development of assessment-related capacities and products, such as collection and synthesis of data or other technical and scientific information relevant to current and future NCA reports, dissemination of NCA report findings to various users of assessment information, engagement of assessment information producers and users, supporting NCA events, and producing communications materials related to the NCA and NCA report findings.

http://ncanet.usgcrp.gov
Recommendations

PROMOTE AND REWARD LEADERSHIP IN PREPARATION

U.S. MAYORS’ CLIMATE PROTECTION AGREEMENT
Recommendations
APPLYING ENGAGEMENT
BEST PRACTICES
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