CONSERVATION AND CHRISTIANITY:
Outcomes and Values Driving Faith-based Conservation

by

Allison Scherberger

Dr. Stuart Pimm and Dr. Norman Wirzba, Advisors
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Abstract

Faith-based environmentalism is a sensitive, evolving, and therefore often misunderstood movement. Literature suggests that faith-based nonprofits are capable of shifting values pertinent to the environmental movement, yet various instances keep many conservationists wary of the Church’s role in conservation. This study aims to clarify what faith-based groups are doing, in terms of conservation, and why.

Using surveys, interviews, annual reports, and press releases, this study investigates the values and outcomes of five faith-based and four secular environmental nonprofits. I compared these organizations’ values and outcomes with one another to explore the similarities and differences between faith-based and secular nonprofits. I hypothesized that faith-based and secular identities are distinctly different from one another. I also hypothesized that faith-based groups operate off a different set of values than secular groups and that these values yield different types of conservation outcomes.

On the contrary, I found that the groups are very similar, in terms of identity, values, and outcomes. At least one secular and one faith-based organization hold almost every value explored. Furthermore, although no quantitative outcome comparisons were feasible, secular and faith-based groups report qualitatively similar outcomes. Finally, within this set of case studies, these similar values and outcomes enable several faith-based/secular partnerships. These findings suggest that faith-based nonprofits are not as different from secular nonprofits as one might initially think and that faith-based environmental groups are an important partner to secular conservation.
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I. Introduction

The Church’s role in the environmental movement, to many conservationists, is unclear. There are instances of Christians supporting as well as denouncing conservation. Yet, with the creation of faith-based\(^1\) nonprofits and the growing trend of faith-based environmental groups, conservationists must decide how to interact with faith-based organizations.

Throughout time, the Church has played a large role in setting values and shifting norms, for better or for worse. When conservationists step back and recall how values are critical to conservation progress, the importance of where the Church stands on environmental issues becomes undeniable.

This study seeks to clarify the Church’s role in the environmental movement. Through comparing faith-based and secular nonprofits, I explore what faith-based organizations are doing, in terms of conservation, and why.

First, I hypothesize that faith-based and secular groups are distinctly different from one another. Second, I hypothesize that faith-based groups operate off a different set of values than secular groups. I hypothesized that these different values yield different types of conservation outcomes. Finally, I hypothesize that these groups are compatible with one another. I used surveys, interviews, press releases and annual reports to test these hypotheses.

I reject the first three hypotheses because I found faith-based environmental groups’ identities, values, and outcomes are similar to secular groups’. Therefore, faith-based environmental nonprofits are an important, harmonious resource to the conservation community, particularly as we address environmental issues that require shifts in values.

II. Literature Review: Why faith-based nonprofits are of conservationists’ concern

1. Why values matter

The environmental crisis is nothing short of a complicated problem; it therefore comes as no surprise that the solution(s) is (are) inherently complex as well. Our aims to conserve and preserve our planet and its resources call for diverse solutions in technology, policy, science, and culture. Instances like green energy can often utilize a financial argument (Pimental, 2002). For example, removing oil subsidies would save the U.S. government millions of dollars each year (Myers, 2008). Yet other environmental issues, such as protecting endangered species or ending mountaintop removal (MTR), are often financially disadvantageous, at least in the short term. Topics like these require us to consider, to value, something beyond financial gain.

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\(^1\) In this study, “faith-based” refers to Christian-based.
The inability for economics to address all environmental problems is precisely why values become extremely important (Wilson, 2002 and Bedoe, 2009). In this report, the definition of values will be “standards or criteria which guide action [. . . ] representing ‘oughts and shoulds’” (Axelrod, 1994). A value is therefore going to be that which directs an action.

Studies show that values often determine an individual’s lifestyle choices (Axelrod, 1994; Stern, 2000). Going a step further, the I=PAT formula\(^2\) indicates that these choices, in the form of affluence (A), then determine an individual’s environmental impact (Kates, 2000). It is therefore clear that an individual’s environmental impact is at least partially a reflection of values.\(^3\) Although this connection might seem obvious, some leading climate scientists suggest that there is no space or need for religion or values in conservation (Chameides, 2010).

Yet confirming instinct and therefore rejecting such claims, Axelrod found those with a universal motivation consistently made more environmentally positive decisions than others with an economic or social motivation.\(^4\) Similarly, studies show, “personal norms are the main basis for individuals’ general predisposition to pro-environmental action” (Stern, 2000). Given the fact that environmental actions often rely upon and reflect values, understanding these values is of key importance as we hope to further conservation efforts.

2. Nonprofits: Conservation via values-shifts

If we accept that values are an important aspect of tackling environmental problems, parties promoting universalism-oriented attitudes are a vital component of environmental solutions. One sector that historically works to shift value (specifically regarding less consumption, environmental justice, and increased reverence and care for the earth) is nonprofits (Alexander, 1999)\(^5\).

3. Faith-based nonprofits

\(^2\) Impacts = Population x Consumption/Person (Affluence) x Impacts/Consumption (Technology); this equation is accepted in that these three variables are all seen to determine environmental impact of a given population; however, no coefficients are assumed/accepted. The key point here is simply that all three of these areas contribute to human impact on the earth.

\(^3\) Demographics and opportunities obviously affect an individual’s carbon footprint as well.

\(^4\) Axelrod defined “universal” motivation as that which “involves the pursuit of self-respect garnered from making a contribution to the betterment of the world, particularly as it pertains to pursuing and attaining outcomes that correspond with universalistic-type goal (e.g. equity, environmental preservation)” (p. 88). Valuing maximum economic gain drives economic motivation. Social motivation is driven by valuing “belongingness and conformity”

\(^5\) There are several types of nonprofits (e.g. 501s, according to the IRS), but the two explored in this study are 501(c)3’s and 501(c)4’s. The notable differences between these two types of nonprofits are that 501(c)4’s are allowed to lobby and that donations to these groups are not tax deductible,\(^2\) while this is not true for 501(c)3’s (IRS, 2010).
Understanding how value-shifting nonprofits achieve their goals becomes complicated (or enriched) in the realm of faith-based nonprofits. Due to the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, faith-based nonprofits, eligible for federal grants and tax exemption, came into existence (Ebaugh et al., 2003). Given the nature of faith and religion, these groups largely function according to their respective set of religious values. How do these values conflict or compliment the types of values necessary for environmental solutions? As there are several environmentally oriented faith-based nonprofits, one might assume that these values are complimentary (McDuff, 2010).

4. The Church and Conservation: Opponents or Partners?

Opponents

The Church, or at least large portions of it, can hold anti-environmentalist perspectives (VanHoutan and Pimm, 2006). Studies have often concluded that Christianity and conservation are not compatible:

Religious individuals were less likely than nonreligious individuals to support additional federal spending to protect the environment. Church attendance and being born again predicted willingness to relax environmental controls for the sake of economic growth. (Kanagy and Nelson, 1995)

Furthermore, testimonies such as Representative John Shimkus’ exhibit how environmental skeptics do sometimes speak from a religious standpoint (Shimkus, 2009).

Partners

However, Christian environmentalism is increasingly saturating the libraries and media (to list a few examples: Bahnson, 2007; Griffin, 2010; Kennicott, 2011; McKibbon, 2008; Rice, 2010; Wilson, 2010). Although some Christians still disdain environmental activism, Christian environmental theology and action indicates that a significant number of Christians are, or want to be, partners with conservationists.

This shift towards pro-environmental theology is motivating significant actions. In the last five years alone, denominations traditionally opposed to conservation are beginning to lead the way in religious-conservation efforts. For example, evangelicals are spearheading Gulf oil spill relief and MTR resistance alike (McDuff, 2010). In other parts of the country, environmentally conscious nuns are gardening, making ecologically minded icons, and protesting toxic waste (Taylor, 2007). Ecological theology is becoming a widespread field of study among both church leaders and academics (Bouma-Prediger, 2010 and Wirzba, 2003). Almost every Christian denomination is pursuing models to implement conservation via (and in) the Church
The Church therefore is on its way to being, if not already, an important partner to conservationists.

5. Christianity in the Civil Rights Movement

Given that values are critical to conservation’s success, it is helpful to recall the role that the Church has played in other value-contingent movements, particularly the civil rights movement (CRM). Theologians often argue that the CRM was “The greatest example of Christian faith in action in the social history of the U.S.” (Marsh, 2005). Furthermore, many scholars would argue that it was Reverend Martin Luther King’s vision of the “beloved community” that birthed and sustained the CRM. In questioning the Church’s power to [re]define values regarding the environment, it is helpful to remember the leader of the CRM himself. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. was clear when he said, “I am many things to many people, but in the quiet of my heart, I am fundamentally a clergyman, a Baptist preacher” (King, 1996). If the Church was able to redefine our nation’s values once, what is to say that it cannot do so again in the context of environmental values?

6. Relevance to this study

If environmental solutions are contingent, at least in part, on values, and nonprofits have historically worked in value-shifting arenas, then nonprofits play an important role in the work of conservation. Furthermore, as Christianity increases its role in the environmental movement, faith-based nonprofits become particularly key players. If we look at the concrete actions already coming out of Christian environmentalism, as well as the CRM past, it is clear that this role is more than theoretical. Thus, understanding Christian environmental nonprofits is integral to understanding environmental solutions. The purpose of this study is therefore two-fold. First, I compare the outcomes of faith-based and secular environmental nonprofits, to explore whether faith-based groups are indeed producing significant conservation outcomes. Secondly, I explore these organizations’ values, in order to understand what drives these outcomes.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Data Collection Methods

Tradition of inquiry

This project is a comparative case study, using both qualitative and quantitative methods. I first collected quantitative data through surveys. Then, I used qualitative interviews to expand upon that data.

Case Study Identification

First, I identified ten case studies. Through a preliminary literature review, I created a primary list of faith-based nonprofits, each working in a different environmental field. I sent a
recruitment email to the person in the highest leadership position listed on each organization’s website (see Appendix A). Of the groups that agreed to participate, some actually do not identify themselves as faith-based. I still investigated these groups but as secular groups. I contacted additional nonprofits until there was a faith-based and secular case study working on each of the initial environmental fields, with the exception of food redistribution and green energy ⁶ (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Issue</th>
<th>Faith-based nonprofit</th>
<th>Secular nonprofit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Climate Education</td>
<td>Blessed Earth (BE)</td>
<td>Alliance for Climate Education (ACES)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Garden(s)</td>
<td>St. Philips Community Garden (SP)</td>
<td>South Eastern Efforts Developing Sustainable Spaces, Inc. (SEEDS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Interfaith Power and Light (IPL)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food redistribution</td>
<td>Inter-Faith Foodshuttle (IFS)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Top Removal</td>
<td>Christians for the Mountains (CFTM)</td>
<td>Kentuckians for the Commonwealth (KFTC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toxic Waste</td>
<td>GreenFaith (GF)</td>
<td>Ironbound Community Corporation (ICC)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Informant Identification**

The initial point of contact for each organization was then asked to refer me to whomever he/she felt would be the most appropriate informant. I then briefed the informant on the project and asked him/her to read and sign a letter of consent (Appendix B). Throughout this report, I use pseudonyms for each informant.

**Survey**

I then distributed a value extrapolation survey to each informant (Appendix C). The survey had two purposes. First, it allowed the informant an opportunity to self-identify his/her organization as either faith-based or secular. Second, it gave the informant an opportunity to indicate which types of values drive their organization.

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⁶I was unable to use secular nonprofits working on food redistribution and energy issues. I contacted several nonprofits working in both areas, but none was willing or able to participate in the study. Due to time limitations, I did not contact any other groups.
Interview

I then conducted semi-structured, open-ended interviews with each informant (Appendix D). Part of the interview sought to expand upon his/her survey answers. The other portion of the interview focused on the organization’s outcomes. Although I used a guide, questions were added/modified as fit (e.g. if informant alluded to something seemingly pertinent, a follow-up question was asked).

Follow-up Research

Often times, informants alluded to issues that required further research. In each of those instances, I collected the recommended information. For example, one informant mentioned an important court case, so I investigated press releases for that case.

2. Data Analysis Methods

Coding

I then imported all of my data (surveys, interviews, mission statements, and press releases) into NVIVO (Version 9). I first examined the data for common themes. These themes dictated the nodes into which I coded the data, e.g. categorized (Table 2).

| Table 2: Node framework used to classify data. |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------|
| **Identity**    | Whether the organization is faith-based, inter-faith, secular, or hybrid. |
| **Values**      | Any value discussed in mission statements, interviews, or surveys. |
| **Outcomes**    | Any outcome discussed in mission statements, surveys, or interviews. |
| **Partnerships**| Any partnership discussed in interviews, annual reports, or press releases. |

Faith Based/ Secular Identification

I used six different indices to classify each organization as either [Christian] faith-based, secular, interfaith-based, or a hybrid of faith-based and secular. First, I noted direct self-identification, as indicated in the survey. The survey also revealed whether or not each organization references any sacred text(s) or religious prophet(s), which I used as another means of classification. Then, as Ebaugh et al. (2003) recommends, I classified each organization according to its name, mission, and funding sources. Because several case studies’ volunteers are people of faith, I considered volunteers’ religious orientation as an additional classification criterion. For simplicity sake, I adopted the organizations’ direct self-identifications as their identities in all sections of this report, except in the identification results section.

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7 I coded the same data into multiple nodes; nodes were not mutually exclusive.
Outcomes Analysis

I used annual reports, each organization’s website, press releases, and interviews to extrapolate the major environmental outcomes of each organization. After preliminary data screening, I categorically clustered their outcomes. Analysis determined which outcomes both secular and faith-based groups produce and which outcomes were particular to only one type of group.

Values Analysis

I coded all values discussed in interviews, surveys, and mission statements. I then created value clusters. Analysis determined which values both secular and faith-based groups hold and which values were particular to only one type of group.

Partnerships

I coded and analyzed data regarding partnerships between faith-based and secular agencies.

3. Implications and Limitations

Because this study is a collection of case studies, the findings do not serve as a definitive comparison between faith-based and secular environmental nonprofits. Instead, they will serve as examples of the similarities and differences between faith-based and secular environmental nonprofits.

In addition, given the open-ended nature of the interviews, some informants discussed certain values and outcomes while others did not. The reader must therefore interpret the data as presence-only data (Lincoln and Guba, 2010). For example, a faith-based organization holding a particular value is an example of a possibility, not a constant reality. The finding does not imply that all faith-based organizations hold the said value.

Finally, all survey and interview data reflects the informant’s impression of the organization, which is not necessarily the organization’s complete view.

IV. Results and Observations

1. Identification results

I used six methods to classify each organization as either Christian, inter-faith, secular, or hybrid (Figure 1).
Beginning with mission statements, the line between faith-based and secular groups fades. For example, SP’s has both secular and Christian goals, while GF’s has inter-faith goals. SP and GF are thus examples of organizations that collaborate with secular (and inter-faith) groups to address their common goals (Figure 2).

Identification via survey results also produced an interesting identity classification. First, two self-identified secular groups, ACE and SEEDs were determined to be hybrids (Figure 2). This is because ACE references the Dali Lama on their website, while SEEDS uses Old Testament teachings, as well as meditation practices, in their programming. These examples suggest that even secular groups can incorporate major world religions into their functioning.

Identifying groups based on their funding sources revealed that all self-identified faith-based groups, except SP, have some secular or inter-faith funding sources (Figure 2). Understanding why secular groups are funding faith-based groups requires additional research,

8 I provide the list of all organizations studied and their respective acronyms on page 9.

9 I discuss the ambiguity of the term secular in the conclusion section of this paper. For now, secular refers to any institution that does not explicitly reference a major world religion.
but one reason might be that funders recognize that these organizations’ work affects more than just their respective communities of faith (e.g. the environment).

The last method of identification, personnel, was not an anticipated identification method, and therefore only groups that revealed related information could be included—that is why I listed ICC and KFTC as ‘U’ (Figure 2).

Still, in several interviews the faith of volunteers, including that of the informants, came up. For example, according to Hartger, 60% of IFS’s volunteers are people of faith. GF and SEEDS also serve as examples of organizations whose board and employees are people of diverse beliefs.

In terms of overall consistency, if we assume ICC and KFTC are secular in terms of volunteers and personal (as they are currently marked ‘U’), they are the only two case studies that have consistent identities, regardless of the identification method used (Figure 2). It is also important to note that one might interpret any of the self-identified faith-based organizations as either inter-faith or hybrids (Figure 2).

The diverse results confirm that an outsider would not classify any case study as strictly faith-based or secular.
The above table demonstrates the identity (faith-based, interfaith, secular, hybrid, or unsure) of each organization, as determined by six different methods.

10 I listed KFTC as ‘U’ regarding its personnel and volunteers’ faith because this topic did not arise in any data. However, after the data collection process, I discovered that many of their volunteers are indeed religious.
2. Environmental Outcomes

I extracted environmental outcomes from interviews, annual reports, and press releases. I then grouped these outcomes into common themes (Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Organizations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attracting Volunteers</td>
<td>CFTM, IFS, IPL, SEEDS, SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changed [environmental] Attitudes, Norms and Values</td>
<td>ACE, CFTM, IFS, SEEDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowered Environmentally Disadvantaged</td>
<td>ICC, KFTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Education</td>
<td>ACE, BE, IFS, IPL, KFTC, SEEDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Energy: Increased infrastructure and/or policy progress</td>
<td>IPL, KFTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Air Quality Monitoring</td>
<td>ICC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased Green Space</td>
<td>GF, ICC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organic, Local Food</td>
<td>ICC, IFS, SEEDS, SP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress on Mining and Drilling Policies</td>
<td>CFTM, KFTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progress on Toxic Waste Policies</td>
<td>GF, ICC, KFTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strengthened communities</td>
<td>ACE, CFTM, ICC, KFTC, SEEDS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table summarizes the environmental outcomes of each organization. Note that air quality monitoring and empowering environmentally disadvantaged policies are the only outcomes that I did not code both a faith-based and secular groups yielding.

Attracting Volunteers

None of these groups, with the exception of KFTC, explicitly aim to engage citizens as volunteers in their environmental efforts; however, several informants alluded to the impact that their organizations have on their volunteers, which often times included informants themselves. For example, Fedek remarked on the impact that her (volunteer) work in the garden has on her when she says, “In terms of outcomes, it’s an intangible, but meaningful experience” (2011 02 02 Interview). Peabody, as well, describes her work at SEEDS as something similar to mission-work, where she expresses her love for the earth and its inhabitants in a direct way. Although the indirect effect that inspiring environmental volunteers might have on future conservation is unsure, it seems important to note that many of these organizations fuel their volunteers to continue conservation work.
Changed attitudes, norms, and values

ACE, SEEDS, CFTM, and IFS all reported that they change attitudes, norms and values as related to the environment. ACE specifically tries to make climate activism a social norm among high school students.

Another secular group, SEEDS, also changes attitudes regarding environmental responsibility. Although their only means of documenting these changes is anecdotal, one should not overlook statements from their youth participants. Two examples of SEEDS’ impact on attitudes are in their 2009-2010 annual report (Figure 3):

Figure 3: SEEDS’ impact on Attitudes

Damion shared what he values most about DIG is the opportunity to pass on what he has learned to others—including volunteers, peers, family and farmers’ market customers. He said it took a couple of years to fully understand why organic gardening practices are important and how to best explain this method of responsible gardening to others.

LaTasha is so glad to have learned the meaning of sustainability. She loves telling visitors how important it is for us to take care of the soil, because “it will be here long after we’re gone.” When LaTasha first joined the DIG program, she was hot-tempered and a bit of a trouble-maker. She credits DIG for helping her prevent several potentially ugly conflicts by teaching her “love and patience.” The critical thinking she has learned benefits both the environment and the community.

The above figure contains two examples of SEEDS changing attitudes. This excerpt is from their 2009-2010 annual report.

CFTM works hard to change attitudes as well; Blakely describes this work by explaining:

We’re talking about developing attitudes. Heart attitudes, theological perspectives because lifestyle, attitude, and change [is what we] really we need if we are going to have any integrity in the political process [regarding MTR].

(2011 02 04 Interview)

IFS, too, changes attitudes. Hartger explains that IFS believes that “We need to change how people think about food here” (2011 01 26 Interview).

The above findings show that both secular and faith-based groups shift values, attitudes, and norms.

Empowered Environmentally Disadvantaged

Empowering those most impacted by an environmental problem is a powerful way to remediate the problem (Batterbury et al., 1997). Allen explains that KFTC does just that because their efforts allow, “More people who are affected by the [MTR] issue feel empowered to influence the outcome of those issues” (2011 02 18 Interview). Similarly, Grant describes one of ICC’s major outcomes as addressing difficult questions such as:
How do we engage residents to better their own lives, help their family structure, [achieve] personal realization of empowerment, and [replicate that] on a larger scale? How do they improve their whole communities [which are currently subject to intense toxic waste pollution] and become better citizens? (2011 02 14 Interview)

Note only two secular groups reported this outcome.

**Environmental Education**

Focused primarily on climate education, it is no surprise that ACE’s most significant outcome is environmental education. To date, ACE has reached approximately 692,000 students at 12,000 schools. Although no studies have concluded the exact impact ACE has had on our nation’s high school students, one study did find that ACE is responsible for 58% of Chicago’s high school students understanding climate science. ACE provides these same services to 11 other states (CA, DE, GA, NJ, NH, MA, MD, NY, RI, TX, VT), as well as Washington DC.

BE, also focused on environmental education, had 89 Church speaking engagements in 2009, which spanned 11 states (AL, CA, CO, IL, MA, MD, NY, OH, TN, TX, and VT) as well as Washington DC. Although they do not track how many individuals attend their presentations, several of their speaking engagements have been to congregations of greater than 5,000 people. They also spoke at 67 different campuses, in 23 states (AL, AR, CA, CT, FL, IA, IL, IN, KY, MA, MD, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, OK, PA, TN, TX, VT, WA, WV), as well as Washington DC and British Colombia. Twenty of these presentations were at secular schools, including Harvard Medical; therefore, BE’s educational outcome spans outside of the Christian community. No data exists regarding the impact of their presentations, but BE does have 3,000 active followers.

IPL works to educate congregations as well. IPL typically focuses on energy and its role in climate change. However, they also cater their presentations to fit congregations’ interests—such as organic food, environmental policy, local environmental issues, etc.

Then, there are the groups that work on environmental education from the food perspective. IFS graduated 56 individuals from their culinary job-training program this past year, which teaches participants how to utilize fresh, local food. With this focus, IFS offered 21 nutrition classes to a total of 333 participants this past year.

SEEDS also works in the realm of education, but internally and with long-term participants. With projects like their “Healthy Food-Athon,” they teach youth about healthy eating and its impacts on their bodies and the planet. They also have a project focused on providing naturalist knowledge to elementary school students. SEEDS also works to educate the

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11 Martin defines *active followers* as all followers on Twitter and/or all newsletter recipients.
greater Durham community with efforts such as their Garden of Eatin’, an educational and edible garden, adjacent to the farmer’s market.

KFTC educates citizens outside of the classroom through MTR tours and the long-term awareness that they create. Allen explains that KFTC has:

Created a statewide and national consciousness about MTR and its consequences, which in turn has directed some researchers to focus more on the impacts of MTR and coal in general, such as recent studies on the health impacts of living near coal operations. (2011 02 18 Interview)

Regarding numbers, Allen points to how their membership tripled to 5,000 in the past 5 years and 1000± people attend their annual “I Love Mountains Day” rally. Also, they have also begun to lead MTR tours for prominent authors, photographers, and religious leaders.

Allen explains that KFTC’s MTR education was the critical first step in addressing MTR policy. Essentially, Allen attributes KFTC’s current progress on MTR policy to the education groundwork they have laid in years past. Allen states:

If we didn’t have our MTR project in Louisville 5-6 years ago, we would have spent most of our time explaining what MTR is, and now for the most part, we don’t have to do that. People know. Therefore, we can move beyond how horrible MTR is and talk more about solutions and broader energy and coal issues. So, that’s really hard to qualify or quantify, but it represents and illustrates that the work has been effective. (2011 02 18 Interview)

These findings suggest that both secular and faith-based groups are working on environmental education.

**Improved Air quality monitoring**

ICC was the only organization that reported work on air quality monitoring. Not only do they initiate small-scale monitoring projects, but they also work to organize grassroots committees to address air quality policy. ICC provided no numeric indices regarding these projects.

**Improved toxic waste policy**

Several groups have produced significant outcomes regarding toxic waste. For example, KFTC has fought, and won, several legal battles against incinerators (Figure 4).
Another victory against toxic waste, in 2009, ICC and GF worked together to win a case against an incinerator in 2009. Based on Clean Air Act violations, the incinerator’s owner, Covanta energy now must install Nitrogen oxide (smog) emission control equipment and fund a mercury collection program.

Faith-based and secular groups alike have also improved toxic waste policy. Regarding KFTC’s work on policy in general, one should note that they are the only 501(c)4 organization investigated.\(^\text{12}\)

### Increased Green Energy Infrastructure and Policy

One of IPL’s major outcomes is encouraging Christian congregations to practice “green” energy habits. IPL gives Church congregations energy-focused presentations and offers them free audits. If a Church does an audit, they then can choose which, if any, recommended energy conservation measures to take. One option is for a congregation to formalize its energy conservation commitment by signing a Cool Congregation pledge. The pledge itself allows for a variety of energy conservation measures, from hosting educational events to making actual infrastructural improvements. Numbers regarding light bulbs changed or kilowatts saved are not available, but IPL has conducted 70 energy audits and 151 congregations have signed the Cool Congregation pledge. IPL is the only group that reported green energy outcomes, but it was the only green energy organization investigated.

KFTC has also been hard at work lobbying for green energy policies, as they recognize anti-MTR policies’ dependence on alternative energy. A concrete example of success is that in 2004, KFTC helped pass a policy to promote solar energy technology. Allen also explains that thanks to KFTC, “conversations about energy transformation and creating clean energy jobs are

\(^{12}\) 501(c)4’s, such as KFTC, have more legal ability to lobby.
much more part of the public conversation in Kentucky than they were a few years ago” (2011 02 18 Interview).

**Increased Green Space**

ICC has worked for 20 years on their green space initiative to double New Jersey’s park acreage. Park acreage, according to Grant, is a long-term outcome, requiring intense lobbying and funding. However, ICC’s efforts finally began to show this past year, as they saw the first 12 acres of parks put in place. ICC was the only group to report outcomes related to green space.

**Organic, Local Food**

Regarding local food and gardens, many outcomes related to community are again relevant. ICC, IFS, SEEDS, and SP all have community garden projects, most of which are organic. SEEDS also formed the committee responsible for legalizing urban chickens in Durham, a critical component to our local food options in Durham today. No metrics regarding and garden’s pounds of produce were available.

Aside from its two community gardens, IFS also redistributes millions of pounds of food each year, which not only feeds millions of people, but they also save significant waste from landfills. In fact, IFS rescued 6 million pounds of food just this past year. Local, organic food is another outcome produced by faith-based and secular groups.

**Progress on Mining and Drilling Policy**

KFTC’s impact on natural resource policy dates back almost 3 decades (Figure 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Members work to remove the property tax exemption for unmined minerals and to stop strip mining without landowners' permission under broad form deeds (BFD).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>KFTC legislation to end abuses of broad form deeds becomes law. Coal companies are forced to monitor groundwater quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>KFTC bill to protect landowners from oil and gas drilling becomes law, as does water replacement rights bill and an energy conservation measure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Efforts begin to save Black Mountain. Public pressure forces the state to stop issuing illegal reclamation exemptions to coal companies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Upper elevations of Black Mountain (state's tallest peak) saved from mining and logging, thanks to great involvement from youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Clean Water Act provision gutted in response to KFTC mountaintop removal lawsuit but U.S. district court still rules that coal companies must stop burying streams.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figure is extracts of KFTC’s “History and Accomplishments” webpage, [http://www.kftc.org/about-kftc/history](http://www.kftc.org/about-kftc/history), which documents their impact on natural resource policy.

One example of KFTC’s recent impact on mining policy is their involvement in a current
case against three coal companies. KFTC collaborated with Appalachian Voices to report these companies for 2,765 Clean Water Act (CWA) violations. Thus far, the companies have offered a $660,000 settlement, but KFTC is still pushing the case, as they believe these violations call for more action and restoration funds. As a long-term indicator of success, Allen explains that “there’s a lot more sponsors of the CWA legislation in the Congress now than when we started out a few years ago; it’s just a result of raising awareness.” Interpretation of this and other policy achievements by KFTC, a 501(c)4 should, as aforementioned, be interpreted with care because of its ability to lobby more than 501(c)3s.

Strengthened Communities

Community and leadership building is critical to many conservation efforts (Daly and Cobb, 1994). Therefore, the fact that several groups strengthen and empower communities is an important environmental outcome. SEEDS’ initiation of the Durham Farmers market and their implementation of a 28-plot organic community garden are two examples of building community while furthering conservation.

As another example, ACE, works to build environmentally minded communities in high schools. With a focus on leadership, ACE encourages students to join (environmental) “action groups” that then serve as environmental leaders at their schools.

Meanwhile, CFTM works hard to [re]build the currently torn community of Appalachia. Blakely explains that communities often ostracize locals who fight MTR, so his organization works to provide a community and “pastoral support” to some of these people.

Another example of strengthening local communities is much of ICC’s work. Grant explains that ICC groups environment and community work together because achieving the latter depends on the former. In particular, ICC strengthens communities with their community gardening, construction projects, and grassroots organizing.

KFTC’s Allen also acknowledges the connection between empowered communities and environmental policy when he states:

The major outcome is that we have a well-informed, passionate, committed, group of members and leaders that feel motivated and supported. [They] are learning new skills and becoming extraordinary leaders in their communities. (2011 02 18 Interview)

Again, both secular and faith-based case studies strengthen communities.
3. Values comparison of faith-based and secular groups

When comparing each organization’s values, it is clear that both secular and faith-based groups incorporate several values. The only two values that faith-based organizations do not report are shifting attitudes and promoting social justice. These values were not formally investigated, making it unclear whether or not any values are specific to either secular or faith-based groups (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Values incorporated into each organization, grouped by identity.**

The above graph represents the different values that drive each organization’s actions. Length of the bars is irrelevant; each bar simply represents a coded presence of a given value.

**Community**

Each of the following organizations references community in their mission statement: ICC, SEEDS, SP, and KFTC. However, no informant mentioned community in their survey. Still, during interviews with these groups, informants mentioned community several times as a core value. For example, Fedek states:

> The heart of the garden is community. And that’s what the garden provides—the opportunity for building community. And the way it does that is that it gives us a place to be together with people who come from all kinds of backgrounds. [It provides] a way for us to see each other as alike, rather than different, to share
knowledge with each other. (2011 02 02 Interview)

Fedek was also makes note that “community” referred to all people in close proximity to the garden, who represent diverse races, religions, and economic statuses. Grant, too, explains that the key goal of ICC is “making more healthy vibrant communities” (2011 02 14 Interview). We can therefore infer that some, if not all, of SP’s and ICC’s outcomes reflect their value for community.

**Environmental Economics**

I did not collect any data regarding groups’ environmental economics values. Although I listed this value on the survey, and several groups checked it, when asked to explain, their answers each discussed the value of economic equity rather than environmental economic issues.

**Economic Equity**

CFTM was one of the groups that discussed economic equity. Blakely explains that one of their key goals is:

> Developing a new Appalachian system. A sustainable, healthy, community enhancing economy [...] And I believe God calls us to have a world where we don’t have to destroy. Where we don’t have a bubble economy. (2011 02 04 Interview)

KFTC also highly values economic equity, as seen in their current slogan, “It’s time for new power” (2011 02 18 Interview with Allen). Allen explains that the meaning of this statement:

> Came out of our work in coal and energy issues; that we need to turn to energy sources that are sustainable and survivable. But also now it means much more; we need new political power; we need new economic power.” To KFTC, new economic power is a system that provides jobs to local Kentuckians without the cost of destroying the environment (2011 02 18 Interview).

IFS and SP also value economic equity, as they target low-income families and communities in terms of outreach. Both organizations grow and distribute food to the economically disadvantaged, an action driven by valuing economic equity. ICC, too, targets low-income populations as they empower these groups to more effectively fight for environmental justice. All of these instances of valuing economic equity compliment positive environmental outcomes.

**Shying away from economics**

Then, several groups explained why they often do not consider economic values. For example, CFTM’s Blakely states:

> We are speaking from a moral platform, rather than an economic [because…] there are higher values than the economy. That’s what we continually say. We need to have an
economy, we want a just economy, sustainable economy, but above all, we’re not going to trade our moral values, we’re not going to trade the care of God’s creation for a better gross domestic policy.

IPL, too, tries to appeal to something beyond economic values. [We cannot] look at an issue like global warming and say we are not going to cut back on using coal because it will have an adverse economic effect on our people. We have to consider what the effect is on people outside of our own country [. . . ] it’s just a huge social justice issue that we’re not addressing. (2011 02 04 Interview)

I discuss IPL’s value for social justice later, but for now, the above statements serve as examples of faith-based groups determined to emphasize values beyond economics. Although cost-benefit analyses can often be in conservationists’ favor, there are countless conservation decisions that rely on something beyond financial gain to be valued. In those instances, groups that foster other values are of key interest. These two faith-based groups are examples of such organizations.

Environmental Aesthetics

The following groups indicated in their survey that they value environmental aesthetics: BE, CFTM, GF, IPL, SEEDS, and SP. ACE specified that they sometimes appeal to students’ value for environmental aesthetics, but that is not at the forefront of their values.

Other groups, like CFTM, acknowledge environmental aesthetics, but attribute aesthetic pleasure to “the spiritual values that correspond with wilderness, the theological understanding of wilderness because wilderness is beyond just aesthetics” (2011 02 04 Interview). Then, groups like SEEDS and SP value the environmental aesthetics of their products (meals, gardens), and in their desire to convert deserted, aesthetically unpleasing areas into gardens.

Environmental Education

Several groups’ mission statements explicitly discuss the value of environmental education. These groups include: ACE, BE, GF, IPL and SEEDS. Although target audiences largely reflect whether the group is faith-based, note that both secular and faith-based groups value environmental education.

During Levo’s interview, he expands on ACE’s value for environmental education. He states:

[Understanding] science is our big thing. We’re really trying to say, ‘look, this is what scientists agree upon.’ We acknowledge that there is a perception of disagreement out there, and [in turn] we try to say that the science is pretty clear. (2011 02 23 Interview)

He also wrote in “Science” as a value on the survey.
Environmental Politics

As explained, 501(c)3s’ ability to lobby is extremely limited. However, as policy influences many environmental issues, how groups do or do not incorporate political values into their work is of prime interest. The following groups incorporate political values into their organization, according to their surveys: ACE, CFTM, GF, ICC, IFPL and KFTC. IFPL and KFTC also explicitly reference policy and/or politics in their mission statements.

Both KFTC and ICC explain how they embody political values. Politics, Allen explained, is part of KFTC’s quest for “new power.” He states:

What’s blocking that [clean energy], especially in KY, is politics. It’s the political power still entrenched in coal, [that which is] still submissive to the coal industry. Therefore, when we say new power, we mean new political power [as well]. (2011 02 18 Interview)

ICC’s Grant explains, that in her opinion:

Everything that we do is political. Whether it’s serving a meal to the poor, offering civics courses to people who don’t speak English, assisting citizens advocating for environmental justice who want to cite polluters—these things are all political acts [. . .] in that they have political implications. (2011 02 14 Interview)

IFS holds political values concerning issues such as food stamps and The Farm Bill.

Shying away from politics

Other groups prefer not to express political values, for a variety of reasons, into their organizations. BE, for example, seeks to be more inclusive than politics allow. Martin explains,

The government is part of the answer [but] the Church has to be part of the answer too; we all have to be working together. Nevertheless, because environmental issues have been politicized, we feel called by God to be an organization that stays away from politics, so that we can welcome Churches that fall all along the political spectrum. By taking it out of politics, we can speak to the broadest range of Churches; we feel called to speak to the person in the pew. (2011 02 02 Interview)

Levo says that ACE embodies political values as well, but also explains, “Politics can be thorny for us. Climate change is often seen as pretty politicized and we just try to ratchet it down [. . .]” (2011 02 23 Interview). SEEDS serves as another group that avoids discussing politics out of a goal to include the maximum number of people.

CFTM specifies that although they do embody political values, their “major thrust is to change attitudes and hearts, and [. . .] then out of that activism, political activism can be a
component” (2011 02 23 Interview). Other groups, like IFPL, simply limit their emphasis on political values to maintain their 501(c)3 status.

**Morals and Ethics**

All groups’ surveys, faith-based and secular alike indicate that their organization operates off moral, or ethical\(^{13}\) values. Blakely specifically defines moral values, for CFTM, as “integrity of lifestyle” (2011 02 04 Interview). Blakely expresses the important role morals and ethics play in CFTM’s work when he states:

> Moral issues related to the environment—that’s probably our primary thrust [. . .]. To use a metaphor, we’ve got to stop the bleeding [MTR] before we can build the body back up to what we think it should be. (2011 02 04 Interview)

Ending MTR, in Blakely’s opinion, requires asking ethical questions like, “What is really important in life?” (2011 02 04 Interview) He explains, “We’ve got to learn to control ourselves, collate values and ethics” in order to end MTR (2011 02 04 Interview). Smith explains that IPL too focuses immoral issues related to environment. He says, “A very big part of our message these days, concerning global warming, is that it’s immoral” (2011 02 02 Interview). Similarly, GF’s mission statement says, “We believe that protecting the earth is a religious value, and that environmental stewardship is a moral responsibility” (2011 02 11 Interview).

IFS, too, sees their focus problem as an ethical issue. Hartger states, “This ethical problem is universal. Why throw away perfectly good food when people are hungry?” (2011 01 26 Interview). The answer to this problem, Hartger explains, lies in morals as well. In her words, “I do think that most people are motivated out of that moral sense of what is right and what is wrong” (2011 01 26 Interview). IFS’ key goal is to “change how people think about food” (2011 01 26 Interview).

Other groups like KFTC and ACE acknowledge the moral value behind their environmental work, but do not formally define these morals. For KFTC, moral values are a large reason many of their volunteers get involved. Allen states:

> Even though people get involved in KFTC for lots of different reasons, our experience is that they’re not selfish reasons. There’s some greater good that people are concerned about. Having to do with family, having to do with community, having to do with principles about what the world should look like. How people should treat one another. As an organization, we don’t necessarily try to define what those morals, or use moral values as a screen for people to get involved” (2011 02 18 Interview).

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\(^{13}\) Ethics and morals, in this study, are used interchangeably. Both terms are defined as that which “influences actual behavior by appealing to standards or norms” (Fischer, 2004).
Still, morals seem to attract people to KFTC’s work. ACE’s Levo similarly explains that morality is one of ACE’s values, but not always the value that they try to appeal to in their presentations. Levo explains:

Morality is certainly one of our values [. . .] but we also know that it doesn’t work as well as other angles. To get people to change their behavior, shame or something isn’t going to work very well [. . .]. The thing we try to do is appeal to everybody. We’re probably a little more pragmatic, I’d say, although there’s a morality component to what we do [. . .], we try to frame it more in terms of pointing out the benefits. (2011 02 23 Interview)

Overall, each group functions in reference to its own moral values, but publicly expresses these morals to varying degrees. As explained in the introduction, groups able to operate off values beyond economics, such as morals, are of prime interest to conservation.

**Natural Resources and Ecological Systems**

Regarding mission statements, several groups allude to their value for conserving natural resources and systems. For example, ACE and IPL’s mission statements refer to climate integrity, while BE and GF’s mission statements discuss their value for general planetary health. SEEDS and SP refer specifically to the value of sustainable agriculture in their mission statements. Peabody expands upon SEEDS’ value for sustaining soil and water systems when she describes their gardening attitude as “taking care of it as if you expect it to last” (2011 02 28 Interview). Allen, too, discusses how KFTC values natural systems when he explains, “The health and well-being of people and communities are connected to the health and well-being of the land” (2011 02 04 Interview). CFTM and KFTC both act on their value for the Appalachian Mountains while they try to end MTR. All groups, faith-based and secular, in either their survey or interview, discuss their values regarding the integrity of natural resource and ecological systems.

**Social justice**

An informally investigated value, social justice, came up in several interviews, as well as in two groups’ mission statements (ICC and KFTC). Allen expands upon the role of social justice in KFTC’s identity when he says:

A lot of people think of us as an environmental organization, we get labeled that a lot. Its not so much that every time a tree or a plant or an animal dies that we jump on the bandwagon. But it’s more that we see the way we treat the earth and the land and the water is in fact how we treat one another. [We believe in] in the saying, ‘what we do to the land, we do to the people.’ That’s why we call ourselves a social justice organization rather than an environmental organization. (2011 02 18 Interview with Allen)

The injustice of MTR, particularly regarding human health, largely motivates their faith-based counterpart, CFTM. Regarding IFS, Hartger explained that IFS’ actions aim to create a
community in which “everyone is treated with respect, no matter where they enter our universe [because] that it is not only the good thing, but the right thing to do” (2011 01 16 Interview).

ICC, as well, holds their social justice so high that they also identify as a social-justice organization. In fact, Grant writes in “social justice” as an additional value on ICC’s survey. Grant explains, “Especially in my work, since its environmental justice work, the justice piece is definitely at the fore-front of what we are looking for, what projects we’re going to be working on [will be]” (2011 02 14 Interview). She explains that ICC comes from “a long tradition of serving disadvantaged, lower economic status, minority population[s]” (2011 02 14 Interview). ICC believes that “everyone has a right to a clean, healthy environment” (2011 02 14 Interview). Therefore, driven by social justice, ICC pursues cleaner environments.

Smith expresses IPL’s social justice value as it relates to climate change when he says:

People in other countries have nothing to say about what we’re doing [regarding carbon emissions]. They can have no influence on us. So for us to look at an issue like global warming and say we are not going to cut back on using coal because it will have an adverse economic effect on our people, we are failing to consider what the effect is on people outside of our own country [. . .] it’s just a huge social justice issue that we’re not addressing. (2011 02 14 Interview with Smith)

He explains IPL’s motivation to increase clean energy is linked to the well-being of all citizens, both those of other nations and of the future. SP’s, as well, functions largely in order to address social justice issues. Fedek explains:

Those of us who are working on the garden project, it is because we feel called by our faith to reach out to our neighbors around us, to people in need. (2011 02 02 Interview with Fedek).

These instances are examples of how valuing social justice compliments conservation, both in secular and faith-based instances.

**Spirit and Religion**

Other groups explain that their religious beliefs are their central value. For example, BE’s Martin explains that their focus is:

A spiritual issue [. . .]; we have stepped away from out commands from God. We are not taking seriously our responsibility to care for the planet and instead operate off human greed, our distance from God, our inability to put our love for God, our neighbors’ needs. People have forgotten the scriptural call to care for God’s creation. (2011 02 02 Interview with Martin)
Blakely similarly discusses how valuing of the earth, seen as God’s creation, is central to CFTM when he explains, “That [the] beauty of God’s creation and its wonder is what strikes us deeply and [is] what gives us a love for the creation and correspondingly love for God and humanity.” He continues to explain that CFTM’s actions reflect not only their value for creation, but also for the integrity of the Church. He says:

When there are bad things going on, that’s a responsibility and an opportunity of the religious groups to step up. And if we don’t do that, we’ve lost our integrity. So I’m also fighting for the integrity of the Church [. . .]. I’m not an environmentalist that goes to Church; I’m a Christian. And because I’m a Christian, my responsibility is to advocate for God’s creation. (2011 02 04 Interview with Blakely)

SP’s work too is “informed by faith,” according to Fedek (2011 02 02 Interview). She explains that they “feel called by our faith” to operate the garden (2011 02 02 Interview). Both IPL and GF reflect their religious values particularly in that they try to reach communities of faith. SEEDS’, a secular group, also operates off of spiritual values, although Peabody explains that they never alienate people according to their spiritual values.

All of the faith-based case studies as well as SEEDS serve as examples of how valuing religious and/or spiritual growth can compliment environmental action.

**Not Expressing Religious Values**

Then there were groups who do not embody any religious values. Levo explains that ACE do not operate off of religious value because:

We go into schools, and people are really defensive around their kids, [and because] we’re already kind of in a hot-button issue [climate change], we steer clear of anything [else controversial]. We try to keep it broad and appeal to everything. We don’t want anyone to feel excluded. (2011 02 23 Interview with Levo)

This secular approach to environmental issues serves as an example of how some groups feel that religious values would alienate audience members and therefore avoid expressing them.

**4. Partnerships**

Several faith-based case studies have collaborated with secular groups, and vice-versa. For example, KFTC worked with Churches to sponsor a “Prayer for the Mountain” event in 2002. Churches also often host portions of KFTC’s MTR tours. For another example, CFTM’s Blakely frequently gives spiritual reflections at secular MTR events. He explains that nonreligious individuals also often join forces with CFTM. Blakely says religious affiliation does not determine partnerships; “It is how they operate. They can be secular, they can be religious, but it has to do with their integrity” (2011 02 04 Interview).
Meanwhile, IFS has facilitated partnerships between 285 food donors and 217 food recipient agencies; these groups are a mix of faith-based and secular, all working together to address hunger and food redistribution. Their before-meals prayer—“We might call you by different names and worship you in different ways, but we come together in unity today”—encapsulates their philosophy regarding interfaith partnerships (2011 01 26 Interview). Other partnerships centered on local food, SP works with the neighboring homeless shelter and low-income housing project on various food education and distribution projects.

In the political realm, ICC and GE worked together to file a legal case against an incinerator, as earlier discussed. When asked to describe this faith-based-secular partnership, Grant explains:

[One] reason why poor communities can be marginalized and disenfranchised is because everything gets dumped here in terms of pollution, burdens, and trash. [Other communities are] more able to deflect those burdens. And they’re not doing it intentionally or maliciously. But when we lift that veil and show communities of faith in particular what’s really going on—how their trash, how the regional transportation network that they benefit from, how all those things impact specific people [. . .] I think it really raises the level of what we can do together to effectuate change.

Because now you build allies, not just with your own community but outside, who know what’s really going on and feel empowered to change those situations. It’s easier sometimes to do with communities of faith, like the ones that GreenFaith reaches out to, because they have a real base in social justice. They come from communities of faith that tell them that social justice and caring for the neediest and communities that are disadvantaged are important part of their belief system. So, it opens up that window to have that conversation, to build those allies. (2011 02 14 Interview with Grant)

This description exemplifies the harmony between social justice, environmentalism, and religion.

Another faith-based group, BE, has given several secular presentations, as discussed in reference to outcomes. Martin explains that partnerships and collaboration between secular and faith-based groups are extremely logical and important to the conservation movement. She states:

We believe that there is strength in diversity—in nature, in the body of Christ, and in the environmental movement. Some people bemoan that there are hundreds of denominations in the United States, and yet we believe this is exactly where God wants the Church to be. Just as we can see one disease wipe out a forest of elm or ash trees, we believe the environmental movement is strengthened by many on-ramps, pursuing a range of inter-related values. There is a place for faith, science, government, and aesthetics at the table; we will need all parts working together to fulfill the Genesis 2:15 call to tend and protect the earth. (2011 02 02 Interview with Martin)
Regardless of faith, comparing environmental collaborators to parts of a body makes a strong analogy; effective functioning relies upon diverse organizations working in collaboration.

V. Conclusions

This study compares the outcomes and values of faith-based environmental nonprofits with those of secular environmental profits. Specifically, I investigate a group of nine case studies, five faith-based and four secular. Data in the form of surveys, interviews, annual reports, and press releases was collected to explore the hypotheses that faith-based groups operate off a different set of values than secular groups and that these values produce different outcomes. All results suggest that these groups actually have quite similar outcomes and values. I therefore consider faith-based nonprofits a valuable resource for conservationists.

1. Identification ambiguity

Each method of identification yields slightly different groupings of the case studies. Whether or not a case study is faith-based depends on what one examines—a group with a secular mission often practices faith-based rituals or vice versa. This initial finding suggests that the differences between faith-based and secular are not always prominent and should therefore release any initial apprehension of collaborating with a faith-based group. The ambiguity of labeling organizations as faith-based or secular aligns nicely with the debate over the definition, and even the existence, of the term secular (Crockett, 2001).

2. Similar Outcomes

Faith-based and secular groups produce categorically similar outcomes. For example, both faith-based and secular groups alike are working to remediate toxic waste, produce organic food, and end mountaintop removal. Neither type of group is found to produce more significant progress on a given issue because all groups, regardless of identity, face similar challenges regarding the difficulty of documenting outcomes, a third commonality.

3. Similar Values

The values driving these groups are also similar. Although faith-based groups all incorporate spiritual and religious values into their organization, they also operate off many of the same values that secular groups hold, such as the importance of community, economic equity, and environmental education. Furthermore, one secular group directly incorporates spiritual values into their organizations. All organizations, faith-based and secular, reported valuing natural resource and ecological system integrity, as well as morals and ethics. Both types of nonprofits use many value-based arguments to achieve their outcomes, which again is critical to achieving many conservation objectives.

4. Partnerships
Several faith-based case studies collaborate with secular groups and vice versa. Partnerships to address food distribution, toxic waste remediation and MTR policy all reflect faith-based and secular groups’ ability and interest in collaborating. Exploration of these partnerships reveals that although these groups are different enough to constitute separate organizations, common goals allow for partnerships and consequential conservation progress.

5. Methods recommendations

If someone were to emulate this study, I recommend restructuring the survey and interview to more formally investigate several topics. For example, the additional values that some informants discussed (namely education and social justice) should be included on the survey. In addition, one should provide the definition of each value in the survey directions, as to avoid a miscommunication such as that over “economic values.” Another unanticipated and therefore informally investigated aspect of the project was concerning partnerships. In the future, the interview guide would include “Has your group ever worked with a faith-based (or secular, if the group is faith-based) organization? If so, how?”

A study further investigating partnerships between secular and faith-based environmental groups is recommended, as to better understand how to navigate interfaith and/or hybrid partnerships. One should also pay attention to both failed and successful partnerships.

VI. Acknowledgements

First, I would like to thank my advisors, Stuart Pimm and Norman Wirzba.

Stuart, upon my arrival at Duke, you welcomed me into the “family.” You provided me with support, advice, and inspiration throughout the pursuit of my degree. Thank you for consistently believing me and encouraging my creativity.

Norman, you opened an entirely new world to me: Christian Environmentalism (if those two nouns are even separate entities). Thank you for listening and opening doors.

Special thanks also go to Charlotte Clark, for technical NVivo support, as well as being my mentor into the world of qualitative analysis.

Lastly, to my many sources of inspiration: my informant, my community, and all those fighting the good fight. I thank you for your wisdom, stories, and support.
VII. Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

2 February 2011

Dear Potential Participant,

My name is Allison Scherberger and I am a graduate student at Duke University. I am working on my Masters in Environmental Management at the Nicholas School of the Environment. For my Master’s Project, I am conducting a research project to document some of the work that various faith-based and secular organizations alike are doing in terms of conservation.

I am particularly interested in using Organization name as one of my case studies, as how I learned about the organization

My project has two main questions: what values motivate the organization? And how are the outcomes of the organization documented? I have obtained your organization’s annual report [if publicly available] and also read your mission statement. I do, however, have a few questions that I would like to ask regarding your organization. If there is someone who I would be able to contact for an interview, I would be much obliged. Total time commitment would be 30 minutes: 10 minutes to fill out a 1 page survey and then a 20 minute interview.

Thank you for being in touch,

Allison Scherberger
The Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University
Masters of Environmental Management, expected May 2011

Appendix B: Letter of Consent

Letter of Consent
03 February 2011

Dear Potential Participant,

This letter is to inform you of the nature of my project and your rights, should you choose to be a participant in my study. This study is a research project with a two-fold purpose. First of all, for each case study, I hope to answer two questions: What are the outcomes of faith-based environmental organizations? And, What values motivate those organizations? Then, I hope to compare these answers to secular case studies working on similar issues, to extrapolate the similarities and differences regarding both values and outcomes.

To conduct this project, I plan to use each case study’s annual report (if available), mission statement, as well as have a representative from the organization fill out a survey and participate in an interview. This process requires about 30 minutes total of the informant’s time. This project will be completed in April of this year, so I hope to complete all interviews by mid-February.

It is believed that participating this study will contribute the greater body of knowledge regarding conservation. Specifically the end product will hopefully facilitate better understanding of faith-based conservation work and its results and values.

My report will be publicly available via Duke Archives indefinitely. I will also present my findings in April to my peers. If you wish that information be either omitted or remain confidential, please alert me and I will ensure that it is not included in the report or presentation. Participation in this study is
completely voluntary, and at any time you may choose to terminate participation. There will be no compensation for participating this study.

If at any time you have questions about my research project, you may contact either me or one of my faculty advisors: Allison Scherberger (Ars44@duke.edu), Stuart Pimm (stuartpimm@me.com), or Norman Wirzba (nwirzba@div.duke.edu).

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a subject in my study, you can contact either of the above advisors or the Director of Professional Studies Environmental Sciences & Policy, Lynn Maguire at lmaguire@duke.edu.

Thank you for considering participating in this study,
Allison Scherberger
The Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University
Masters of Environmental Management, expected May 2011

I, ______________________________, certify that I have read and signed the above form of consent. I understand that unless I specify otherwise, any information I provide will be included in a publicly accessible document. I understand that this document will be indefinitely available via the Duke Archives.
Signature
Date

Lynn Maguire
Director of Professional Studies
Environmental Sciences & Policy

Appendix C: Value Extrapolation Survey

Value Extrapolation Chart

Organization Name: ____________________________
Informant Name: ______________________________
Date: ________________

Part 1
Explanation: The below chart is designed to help me clarify your organization’s identify as “faith,” “religiously,” or “secularly” based.

Directions: Please mark each box with either “Y” for yes or “N” for no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prompts</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your organization reference any sacred text?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your organization reference any prophets or other religious leaders?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your organization practice any form of prayer?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your organization identify itself as “religiously-based” in any fashion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your organization identify itself as “faith-based” in any fashion?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part 2
Explanation: The below chart is to better understand what types of values impact your organization, both internally and externally. Actions are listed in the columns; values are listed in the rows.

Directions: For any box that represents an action that the corresponding value does impact, please place an ‘X’ in the box. If there is a box that represents an action that the corresponding value sometimes impacts, please place an “S” in the box. The ‘Other’ column is for any value (relating to the environment) not listed that impacts your organization. If you check anything in that row, please list what that value is. The ‘Other’ row is for any value-impacted action not listed. Again, if you check anything in that column, please list what that action is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Hiring decisions</th>
<th>Recruiting volunteers</th>
<th>Identifying projects</th>
<th>Other internal decision making</th>
<th>Public presentations</th>
<th>Media</th>
<th>Fundraising</th>
<th>Other external actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral issues relating to the environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Aesthetic Values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious issues relating to the Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic issues relating to the Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political issues relating to the Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other type of value relating to the Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix D: Interview Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Script</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chart and Status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Is your organization a nonprofit? If so, what type [501c3?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Does your identity as faith-religious- or secularly-based play a role in your nonprofit/for profit status?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. [Use chart to identify any outliers/others/sometimes] Ex: I see that political values don’t impact any internal or external aspects of your organization. Would you explain why that is? Or, you listed sometimes for several aspects of when your organization references religious values. What determines whether or not religious values impact these aspects?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Documenting outcomes and funding**

| 1. What are the main funding sources of your organization? |
| 2. What are the major outcomes of your organization? |
| 3. How do you document the outcomes of your organization? [If only certain ones pertain to the study, specify which outcomes you are interested in.] |
| 4. What sort of information is included in this documentation? |
| 5. Is this information available to the public? |
| 6. Is this information aggregated in any fashion? |
| 7. What are the benefits of documenting **quantitative** outcomes? |
| 8. What are the challenges of documenting **quantitative** outcomes? |
| 9. What are the benefits of documenting **qualitative** outcomes? |
| 10. What are the challenges of documenting **qualitative** outcomes? |

What is the key issue that your organization is trying to address?
V. References


Bahanson, F. 2007. When a garden becomes a protest. The Orion, July/August.


Daly, H. E. and J. B. Cobb. 1994. For the common good. Beacon Press, Boston, MA.


McKibbon, B. 2008. Where Have All the Joiners Gone? The Orion. March/April.


Rice, N. 2010. Let there be solar. The Daily Climate. 30 November.


