Growing Climate Solutions – Path to Positive, Southwest Florida's Leadership Circle Convening Meeting

Summary Report March 31, 2020

On March 10, 2020, 60+ leaders representing the health, faith, civic and government, media, education, business and philanthropic sectors met at the Naples Daily News, in Naples, Florida for Growing Climate Solutions' initial Leadership Circle. The goal of the meeting was to form a "brain trust" of regional institutional and organizational leadership that can engage the community on positive climate action. The two-hour working session included individual and group ideation sessions on potential projects and a high-level thematic extraction of the findings across the breakout groups. Over 240 ideas were generated across all 9 sector breakouts table teams.

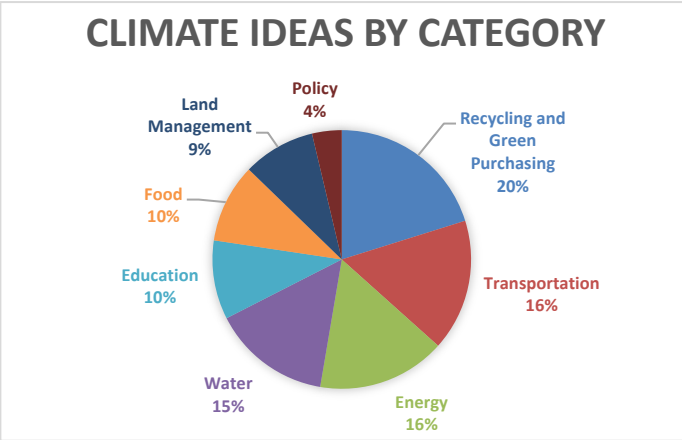
Our work together identified actionable ideas that organizations in the room and other community stakeholder could bring forth. The initiatives included ways to address the problems and plan for an educational outreach, brick and mortar projects and policies and incentives which would help connect the larger community to solutions for our changing climate in Southwest Florida.

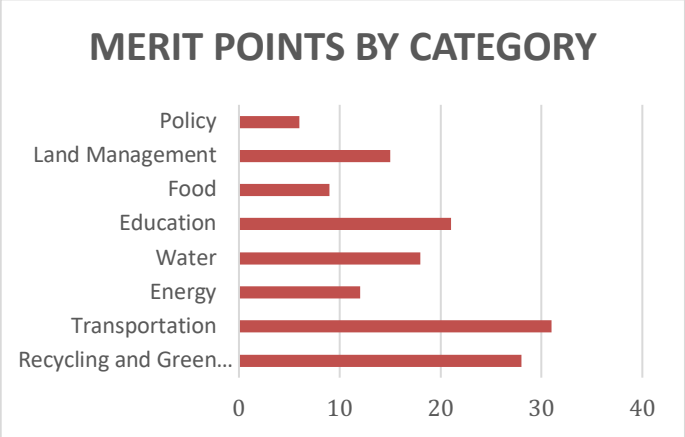
Executive Summary

Presented below are the synthesized outcomes of the morning's Gallery of Ideas and Sector Group Table-Top exercise. The Gallery of Ideas and Clustering Activity aimed to source a wide-range of impactful projects, policy and program ideas that address climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience. Participants first noted individual ideas on post-its and clustered ideas thematically. The total number of identical or similar ideas in a theme demonstrates the importance, as many participants generated the same or related idea. Each participant then assigned one to three dots to ideas they believe it would have the biggest impact, therefore, the most important for us to invest time and perhaps money to implement. The dot prioritization is thus a measure of merit based on what the brain trust believed would actually solve the problems.

The tabulation of the raw data indicates that meeting participants strongly associate climate actions with improvements in recycling, purchase of sustainable products and/or the reduction in the use of single-use plastics. Many ideas were also proposed referencing transportation modes and fuel type, and energy conservation and renewable energy. Transportation ideas referenced reducing work

commutation with alternative employee scheduling, as well as improving roads for non-motorized travel. These three topic areas accounted for more than half (128) of the ideas generated, although participants weighed the transportation ideas more heavily than others. Recycling ideas were also prioritized compared to green purchases. Remarkably, while many participants generated ideas around solar energy and energy conservation, these, along with ideas around food and policy changes received low prioritization. Individual ideas with high priority included transitioning all septic to sewer, transitioning grass lawns to native plantings and more trees, and improving science education for children.





Later in the morning, participants gathered in small groups by community sector to consider more extensively one idea they might work on collectively. Each group was asked to consider the action steps, resources and timetable for implementation. The one-paragraph summaries included in this report illustrate a broad spectrum of ideas, some clear cut and easy to implement, others visionary and more complex to realize. Two groups addressed issues tied to water conservation and water quality with proposals that focus on increasing native plantings, use of organic fertilizers and reducing irrigation demands. Three teams proposed addressing climate education. Non-profit leaders envisioned a coordinated climate literacy campaign at visitor destination sites. Media executives proposed creating a dedicated "climate beat" for their reporters, and educators wanted to improve climate science education by connecting every K-12 school with a university science researcher.

Analysis of the idea and voting data suggests that leaders understand the multiple ways that behaviors, purchase choices, and policies, impact climate drivers and they are able to list diverse type of actions that can be taken to mitigate climate trends. The relatively even distribution of ideas by category indicates that a community-wide approach can be framed effectively and would be well received. The large number of ideas related to recycling, green purchases and transportation suggest that those are areas where leaders associate climate and environmental strongly, and believe action is needed and effective. The merit point data also suggests that leaders view education and water projects as important and impactful, even if they cannot envision many clear implementation ideas.

Gallery of Ideas Tabulation

Recycling and Green Purchases: (49 post-its, 28 dots)

- Ideas around recycling made up the highest number of ideas generated, 29 post-its, and with the greatest number of dot votes (23) with ideas around banning plastic bags, using plant-based packaging and recycling paper, and going electronic for all printed materials.
- Green purchases in the form of no Styrofoam, stopping the use of bottled water, mindful purchasing and use of biodegradable or reusable cups, plates, silverware represented in 19 post-its and 5 dots voted.

Transportation: (40 post-its, 31 dots)

- Over 34 post-its ideas around transportation were generated, mostly around the use of more electric vehicles, installing more charging stations, carpooling, increasing public transportation and the use of golf carts, walking and biking paths. The 21 dots votes obtained demonstrates the importance the brain trust gave these ideas.
- Related were ideas around conserving fuel at work and home, efficient errands received 3 post-its with 6 dot votes. Employee flextime, working remotely/from home received an additional 3 post-its and 4 dots.

Energy: (39 post-its and 12 dots).

- Solar ideas around running city and county buildings, water pumps, offices and schools on solar, as well as for the adoption of solar lighting and transmission, and use of parking lots and building roofs received 18 post-its and 7 dots.
- Related were ideas generated around efficiencies with motion sensors and LED, to smart buildings which received 15 post-its and 3 dots. Installation of better insulation and a/c reduction, LEED guidelines especially around green schools received 6 post-its and 2 dots.

Water: (36 post-its and 18 dots)

- Native landscaping, reduction of lawns, expansion of planting trees as a sink represented 18 post-its and 9 dots votes. Related was HOA's support in mitigation and adopting native landscaping policies and rewarding eco-friendly water use received 4 post-its.
- Water Policy received 14 post-its and 9 dots mostly around conservation, cleaning waterways, educating public and politicians to thinking long term including taxing excess water use.

Education: (24 post-its and 21 dots)

- Speaking clearly about science, STEM focus in primary and all through K-12 schools, and providing educational resources, including access to experts for videos, interactive, model, exhibits, hands on generated 18 post-it ideas and received 19 dot votes.
- Related was media encouraging broadcast and print to dedicate space and time to environmental impacts, what activities produce greatest gains and educate visitors to our community how they could help this received 6 post-its and 2 dots.

Food: (24 post-its and 9 dots)

- Local and organic production and purchasing, eating less meat and more plant-based diet education, community gardens represented 14 post-it ideas and 6 dot votes.
- Related, composting to reduce waste and offering such services to hospitality and tourism companies represented 10 post-its and 3 dot votes.

Land Management: (22 post-its and 15 dots)

- Footprint reduction of lot coverage, more density housing/cluster development, and minimizing urban sprawl while increasing open/green space with walkable developments received 19 post-its and 6 dots.
- Related was the idea of transitioning from septic to sewer with 3 post-its but 9 dots.

Policy: (9 post-its and 6 dots)

- Ideas from no fracking in the Everglades to funding climate change research, to investing in green companies and conservation incentives these generated 9 post-its and 6 dots. Creating Green Incentives received 5 dots itself.

Community Sector Group Table Top Exercise Summaries

Increasing Native Landscaping and use of Organic Nutrient Fertilizer

Increasing native plantings and decreasing the use of St. Augustine grass are important ways to conserve water resources and provide habitat that supports biodiversity. Leaders in this group envisioned "incremental, but persistent change" in landscape choices until the region becomes a "leader in Florida Friendly Landscape". To achieve this goal, local government facilities should lead the way, moving toward mostly native landscape at their facility locations and recreation areas. Local governments can also review and revise the landscape standards and policies in their

jurisdictions, changing the native plant requirement, the ground cover requirements and species recommendations. The group also recommended creation of incentives for developers and landscape companies to adopt more native landscaping in their projects. Finally, an education component should be developed to promote use of native plants among landscape companies and property owners. The timeframe for implementation outlined was 1 year for local governments to establish the role-model examples; three to five years for private developments to be on-boarded; and "multi-years" to convert the region into a state-wide role model.

Water Efficiency

Leadership from the public sector and civic organizations recommended advancing water conservation, with a specific focus on reducing water consumption associated with landscape irrigation. The goal would be to maintain curbside appeal of landscaped areas using less water. The team's approach included providing better education to civic and government staff that maintain public spaces, educating the public on water-wise landscape design and effective irrigation methods, as well as passing enforceable legislation. In some cases, organizations with large landscaped areas may also have to assess the efficacy of their irrigation equipment and plan for, and invest in, new technology that prevents wasting water resources during irrigation. Inter-departmental and Intra-agency coordination would be important in rolling out an effective water conservation education program. Additionally, engaging other educational delivery types, including staff trainings, citizen scientist projects, youth and employees of the landscaping industries would prove effective in advancing this goal. The team concluded that this would take "possibly years" to achieve the desired goal, especially the regulation component.

Speak Clearly about Climate Science

Some of the region's top educators, including representatives from local school districts and top management of FGCU focused on improving K-12 climate education by connecting every school with a "working climate scientist." This person would serve as a resource to teachers and help develop tangible connections between curriculum and research. The initial steps for advancing this initiative include identifying scientists at universities interested in community engagement and obtaining buy-in from administration, at both the university and the school district level. University buy-in might include acknowledging community-engagement work in faculty assessments toward tenure, while at the school district level it would require dedicating Learning-Team Meetings (LTM days) to innovative program and curriculum enhancement. Once the concept is adopted, a match between scientists and schools would be made and then program development can proceed. The group also noted that the program and curriculum enhancement would have to conform to State Education Standards. The time frame for execution was seen as 6-12 months.

Climate Change Beats for All Media

A team of leading media executives and journalists proposed that climate change could be a "franchise" issue for media outlets and that a climate change "beat" should be established at each media company. Regular coverage of the topic by one or more journalists with expertise in the topic would deliver a more consistent message and higher quality information to the public. Creating a climate change beat could include developing data metrics benchmarks for the region in a "score card" format, which would allow for measurement of progress, and analysis of the consequences for failing to meet goals. The team also agreed that media companies should have corporate sustainability goals, and invest to achieve a lower carbon foot print by providing, for example, electric company cars, or assessing the inks and papers used for publications. The estimated implementation period for the initiative would be 1 year, and would include a small team of executives meeting person-to-person with others in the industry to grow industry-wide adherence and cooperation.

Coordinated Climate Literacy Campaign at Destination Sites

Non-profit leaders focused on leveraging highly visited destinations to integrate and promote climate literacy and education into their messaging. A coordinated effort, possibly with joint funding opportunity, could facilitate specific exhibits and messaging that could be integrated into each facility as part of a region-wide or community-wide climate literacy, awareness and action endeavor. For example, the Naples Botanical Gardens the Naples Zoo alone, cumulatively attract over 600,000 visits annually. Develop a coordinated climate change message and deliver it at other highly visible partner locations, such as the Conservancy of Southwest Florida, C'MON, Imaginarium, Ding Darling Refuge, Baker Park, and over 1 million residents and visitors could be reached within 1 year. The team determined that the message should focus on connecting the challenges of climate change to the things the public loves – be it plants, family, the environment, or animals. Resources required for this climate literacy campaign would be funding, possibly a joint grant and administrative coordination.

Clustered Living and Solar Energy

An ambitious vision proposed by a group of healthcare professionals aimed to pilot a clustered housing model built around a cooperatively-owned solar array. The residential development of medium density development would incorporate high energy efficiency and insulation, allowing it to function primarily by drawing off a commonly owned solar array and battery storage system. The solar array could be installed on building rooftops and parking areas, and energy savings achieved in integrated technology forward lighting, HVAC and associated mechanical systems. The pilot project was thought to require approximately $5 million of investment capital and take approximately 2 years to develop.

Raw Input: Post-its with dots (priority order given only to those with dots, others have no priority order)

- Transition septic to sewer (8 dots)
- Replace lawns with native landscaping to reduce water use (6 dots)
- Reduce/eliminate single use plastics (5 dots)
- Expand tree planting programs community-wide (5 dot)
- Conserve fuel work and home (5 dots)
- STEM focus in primary education (4 dots)
- Education in all levels of school K-12 (4 dots)
- Speak clearly about science (4 dots)
- Business implement a standard work from home schedule that provides ½ employees working from home for a period of time followed by a rotation – reduce commute and carbon emissions (3 dots)
- Plant-based packaging (3 dots)
- Mandate Florida Friendly landscaping (3 dots)
- Planting 3500 trees in Collier County (3 dots)
- Electric/natural gas-powered truck fleet (3 dots)
- Subsidize landowners for eco system services (3 dots)
- Integrate renewable energy such as solar to run city and county operations (3 dots)
- Density in building new projects (2 dots)
- Reduction in lot coverage construction (2 dots)
- Composting (workplace/home) (2 dots)
- Walk more, Bike more (2 dots)
- Solar mandate for ALL with incentives (2 dots)
- Encourage local print and broadcast media to help publicize ways to conserve and sustain resources (2 dots)
- How to eat local workshop/app/website/social media to teach how (2 dots)
- Introduce growing climate solutions to public schools part of their curriculum (2 dots)
- Publicize the Last Straw Movement (2 dots)
- Environmental education with a micro-farming component (2 dots)
- Switch to LED lights in whole house (2 dots)
- Encourage local print and broadcast media to help publicize ways to conserve and sustain resources (2 dots)
- Various consumption issue and related education, food, recycle and waste (2 dots)
- Provide educational hands on experiences for youth (1 dot)
- Promote safer bicycle lanes (concrete curbs) (1 dot)
- More electric charging stations per capita (1 dot)
- Community Garden options; grow own food (1 dot)
- Fleet of golf carts/electric shuttles to provide public transport (1 dot)
- Increase fossil fuel prices to a 'think first level' (1 dot)
- Carpool and transit subsidies (1 dot)
- Incentivize bike to work with time off benefits (1 dot)
- Green roof building standards (1 dot)
- Convince political leaders to think long term on water issues to plan for now (1 dot)
- Food shopping ban plastic bags (like in Europe) Use only reusable bags (1 dot)
- Increase farm to table operations with seasonal local menus (1 dot)
- Leftover food from events to Soup Kitchens (1 dot)
- Clean and replant filter marsh canals that flow into the Gordon River (1 dot)
- Adopt stormwater maintenance and capital project fee (1 dot)
- Advocate for car-pool subsidies (1 dot)
- Insultation Building design cutting back on a/c by 2 degrees (1 dot)
- Support laws to outlaw septic tanks (1 dot)
- SMART building of public facilities (with lower energy usage) (1 dot)
- Better cluster development (1 dot)
- Incorporation of solar energy (1 dot)
- Greater us of solar panels (1 dot)
- Employee flextime (1 dot)
- Invest in green/sustainable companies (1 dot)
- Presentations to supermarket on packaging (1 dot)
- Inventory product services that are more earth friendly (1 dot)
- Switch to "green" cleaning products (1 dot)
- Transition to decomposable coffee cups, plates and utensils (1 dot)
- Prioritize recycling pick up over regular trash (1 dot)
- More virtual meetings (1 dot)

All without dots

- Endorse retail organizations that use recyclable products/bags
- Reduce disposables
- Summer STEM Camp with focus on water quality
- STEM@work field trips to eco-friendly businesses

- Encourage programmatic partners to lead youth activities/badges
- Plant based diets and education
- Conservation incentives payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) growth density credits
- Clean Golden Gate canal as it flows to Naples Bay
- Limit use of transportation for work, coordinate meeting in one local area
- Stop using bottled water
- Shop local for produce to lower carbon footprint
- Eat more vegetarian and less meat
- Protect SWFL by reducing increased reliance on imported produce
- Hit the local farmers market
- Buy fewer non-biodegradable packages
- Meatless Fridays
- Health ways to improve care; doctor to doors
- Presentations to healthcare management
- Plant 3500 trees in Collier County
- Best practice management for PUD retention ponds
- Water conservation within irrigation
- Quit planting St. Augustine grass, adopt native plant landscape standards
- Redefine "native", right plants, right place
- Remove all non-native or invasive plants
- Native landscaping and irrigation mandate
- Tree planting education (best species to plant)
- Swales/permeability, build water gardens
- Composting services available to hospitality/tourism providers (hotel, restaurants)
- Compost landscapers waste
- Increase composting options for gardens
- Advancement of composting
- Compostable filter marsh in water detention areas
- Band fracking or drilling for oil in the Everglades
- Encourage gated communities to stop wasting water and support mitigation efforts
- Plant more carbon collecting trees (not palm trees)
- Transition landscaping to native vegetation and reduce lawns
- Start local organic programs and scale up
- Less frequent irrigation
- Increase public transportation
- Electric and Hybrid car ownership
- Vet and recommend hybrid/electric cars to employees
- Incentives for large and small employers who push green transport
- Car Sharing
- Car pooling
- Work carpool implementation
- More efficient errands, combine errands in one trip
- Smart small vehicles
- Elimination of large new trucks
- Electric car fleets/tire pressure check
- Golf cart pathways
- Lead the nation in becoming a Green County
- Tax excess water use
- HOA and Corporation water/landscape management resource connection
- Minimize urban sprawl
- Clustered development incentives
- Introduce long-term planning placemarks to policy leaders with funding estimates
- Adopt LEED's or green standards for building code
- Explore green roof options for corporations
- Ween elected officials from short term gain to growth mindset
- Codify SLR outcomes to multiply economic sector groups
- Ensure buildings are properly insulated
- Energy efficient lighting
- Motion sensor light switches in homes and offices
- Lights off when we leave home, work and meetings
- Community planning mandate in eastern section of counties
- Reward homeowners for ecofriendly water/power use thought county subsidy tax credits from lower impact fees
- Conserve electricity in buildings with timers and sensors
- Mandate green space in all construction
- Build "green" schools
- Convince your community we can live with less "luxury"
- No new construction without environmental thought
- Reduce # of locations/building in a company footprint without sacrificing business
- FPL solar home generation
- Solar powered
- Add solar panels in public parking lots
- Install solar on roof tops

- Increase solar panels, solar usage, incentivize gated communities to go solar
- Install solar/wind energy resources at offices and schools
- Solar panels on Government Buildings
- Encourage walkable (re)development communities
- Support organizations surrounding eco-friendly initiatives
- Land area: septic tank caps ratio
- Transition landscaping to native vegetation and reduce lawns
- How much lawn is really needed?
- Green Incentives, incentives for home green behavior, office, etc
- Conserve energy (gas)
- Clean energy tech (boating)
- Charging network throughout Florida for EVs; charging stations at all new buildings
- Adoption of solar in lighting and transmission
- Energy conservation campaign; create a reward system: schools that lower costs keep surplus
- Maintain open spaces/natural areas
- Solar required in new developments
- Solar power panels station and transmitter
- Reduce water usage
- Reduce the sea of asphalt and parking requirements
- Housing and density; no building in hydro / wetlands
- Commitment campaign on selected top actions using Fostering Sustainable Behavior: An Introduction to Community-Based Social Marketing Book by Doug McKenzie-Mohr and his research
- More 'water summit' like events
- Videos to educate public on each topic
- Build curriculum on "how it impacts me, how I impact it" programs and activities
- Tree planting education (best species to plant)
- Commitment campaign on selected top action using Doug Mackenzie
- Energy conservation in our schools
- Dedicated Environmental Reporter
- Fund climate related research
- Share the Science Programs/one sheet/exhibits
- Educator resource list (speakers, programs)
- Educate on how to reduce household waste
- Educate to turn off lights when not needed
- Educational awareness of staff on environmental issues
- Promote being a blue zone company
- Mindful purchasing processes
- Carpool App promotion
- Incentivize bike to work with time off or other benefits
- Go to business casual 100% of time to reduce cleaners
- Change work attire to allow for less a/c use
- Purchases recycled work supplies (paper, pen, pencils, etc)
- Use Zoom (or similar platform) for meetings when you can
- Rethink printing
- Print on both sides
- Reduce flyers, handouts, bulletins with slides and electronic poster boards
- Car charging at offices
- Incentivize solar and other sustainable energy
- Glass and pitchers of h20 instead of plastic water bottles
- No Styrofoam, replace with reusable
- Replace bottled water with filtered water fountains
- Use shredder paper as scrap paper
- Reduce commercial waste
- Electric fleet autos and changing infrastructure
- Turn off lights when not needed
- Event, solicits, invites etc all electronic, no printing
- Educational awareness of staff on environmental issues
- Don't wash your car at home, use a car wash
- Ensure reusable, washable plates and cutlery
- Mess kits for scouts and adults
- Gift green products
- Stash reusable bags in the car
- Reuse and repurpose as a consistent practice
- Reusable bottles; no Styrofoam
- Recycle everything possible
- Turn off water when brushing
- Turn off water when soaping up
- Run dishwasher when only full
- True recycling solutions (where does it go? Is it re-used?)
- Encourage hotels to participate by setting examples to their guests (communicating what and why broadly)
- Educate visitors on importance of sustaining our resources