



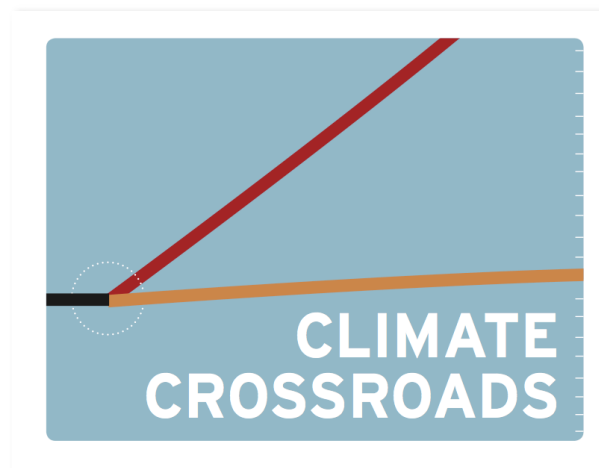
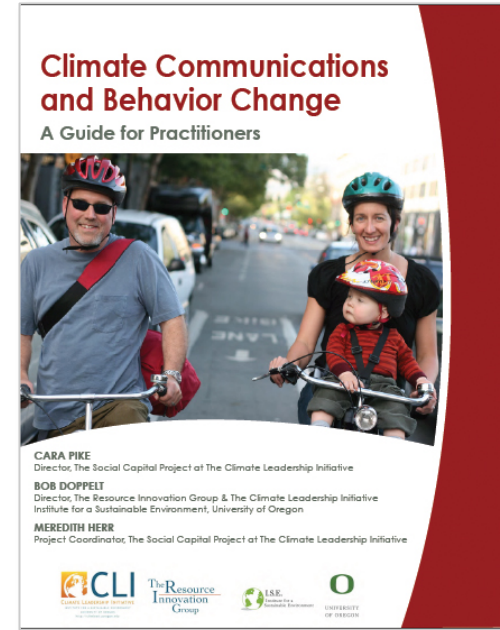
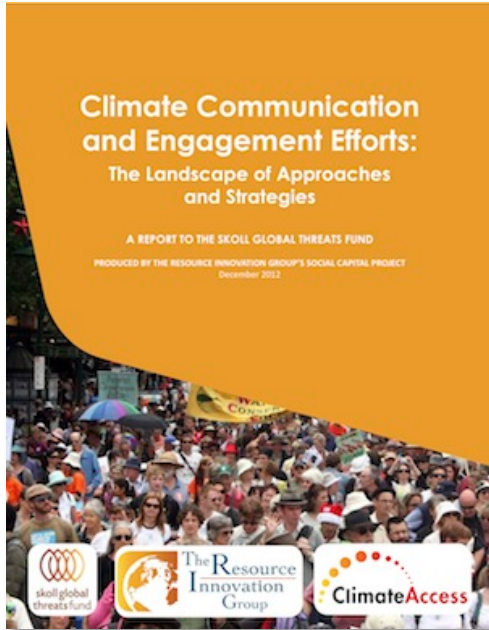
# HOW TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC IN CLIMATE ADAPTATION: A Research-Based Framing and Communications Guide

**MEREDITH HERR**

Senior Associate, The Resource Innovation Group's Social Capital Project

**BECC Nov 19, 2013**

# + THE SOCIAL CAPITAL PROJECT





The network for those engaging the public in the transformation to low-carbon, resilient communities.

- About Us
- Blog
- Resource Hub
- Campaign Gallery
- Tips and Tools
- Member Forums
- Contact
- Logout

facebook

twitter

SEARCH

**Mitigation measures alone will not minimize the nation's risks.**

RESOURCE

## Federal Agency Climate Change Adaptation Plans: Summary of Research and Information Needs

The report is a summary of the US federal government adaptation plans that were submitted for 2013 to the USGCRP Adaptation Science Interagency Working Group.

[Read more](#)



### BLOG



October 25, 2013

#### 21st Century Climate Extremes and the Next "Greatest Generation"

Nick Sundt

In regards to the solicitation for Climate Access members

### ROUNDTABLE RECORDING

#### A Year Later: Assessing the Lasting Impact of Hurricane Sandy and Other Extreme Weather Events on Climate Engagement

Did you miss the Oct 28th briefing or want to hear it again?

7 reasons why the public is not engaged on climate

AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT ▶

### FROM THE BLOGOSPHERE



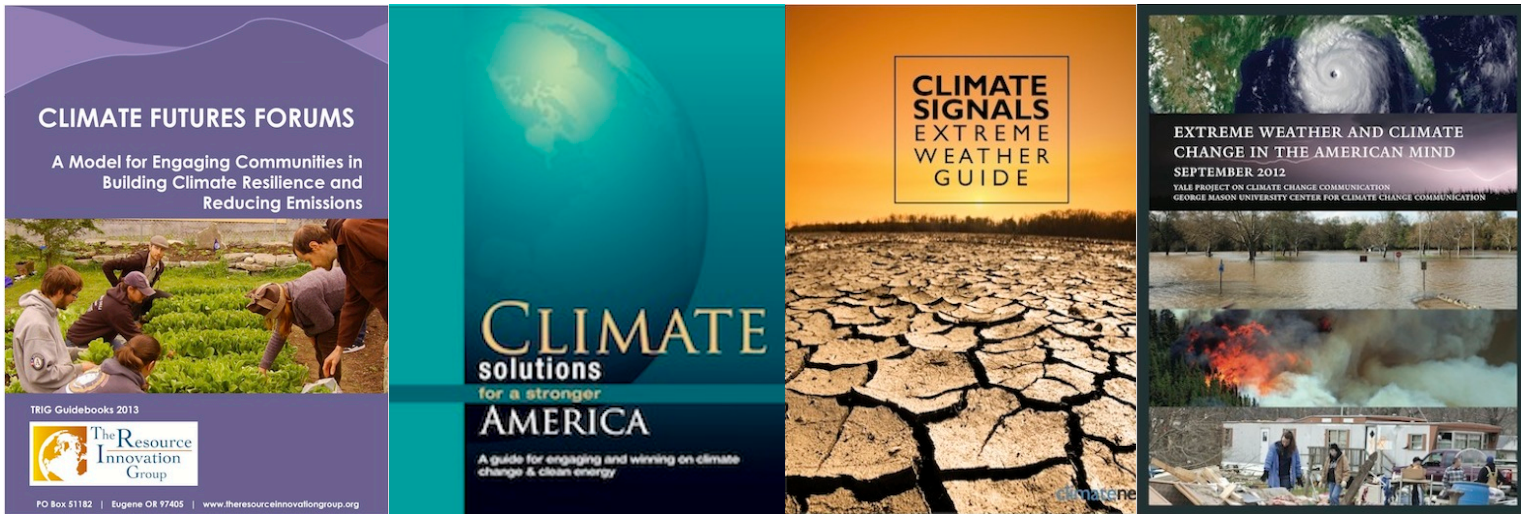
After the Storm

WSJ Interactive

# + COMMUNICATING CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND PREPARATION

## Literature Review and Polling Summary

- Reviewed more than 85 articles from scholarly journals and trade publications from 2007-present
- Analyzed findings from more than 70 polls from 2007-present





## Related Fields of Social Science

- Behavioral science
- Communications
- Development studies
- Behavioral Economics
- Environmental studies
- Political science
- Psychology

## TREND 1:

# Adaptation Comes Home

- Adaptation versus mitigation debate is largely over.
- The emphasis is no longer solely on adaptation in developing countries.
- The field of adaptation research is starting to grow.



## TREND 2:

# The Mitigation-Adaptation Intersection

- Mitigation and adaptation as joint climate response strategies.
- Greater integration is needed.
- Understanding of adaptation can lead to heightened interest in mitigation.



## TREND 3:

# Linking Extreme Weather to Climate

- Americans are making the connection between extreme weather events and climate.
- Direct impacts do not have to be experienced or extreme to motivate concern.





# TREND 4: Addressing Uncertainty



- Successful risk communication depends on recognizing uncertainty.
- “Insurance” frame resonates with public to prepare and protect communities.



## TREND 5:

# Vulnerability, Justice and Resilience

- “Equitable adaptation” as a response to justice issues.
- Resilience: ability for systems to cope with climate impacts.
- Protecting local resources, such as public health and water, is seen as vital.



# RECOMMENDATION 1: Use a Preparation Frame

- “Preparation” or preparing for climate impacts/ extreme weather events have traction.
- Preparation sounds proactive, hopeful and can bridge to “climate disruption” over time.
- People may not accept global warming, but will still take steps to prepare.



# + RECOMMENDATION 1: Use a Preparation Frame



**82%** of Americans say that people and organizations should **prepare for impacts** rather than deal with damage after it occurs. (*Gfk 2013*)

There is strong **bi-partisan support** for taking steps to protect against a wide range of global impacts. (*Climate Nexus 2012*)

The term “**preparedness**” is significantly more motivating than the language of “adaptation.” (*ecoAmerica 2012*)

**85%** of voters favor “preparedness” as the **preferred approach** to address climate impacts. (*ecoAmerica 2012*)

# RECOMMENDATION 2: Caution in conveying impacts



**post-apocalyptic**



**far future**



# RECOMMENDATION 2: Caution in conveying impacts



**local impacts**



**realistic hope**



# RECOMMENDATION 3:

## Build from extreme weather to action

- Link storms to larger trends and climate disruption
- Highlight record setting events, frequency and severity
- Tie to solutions and benefits



# RECOMMENDATION 4: Connect impacts with people

- Make it about people not polar bears
- Address equity and justice issues
- Climate change as a moral obligation





# RECOMMENDATION 5: Tap values

- Safe, prosperous communities
- Prevention pays
- Readiness
- Better future
- Health and well-being



# RECOMMENDATION 6: Convey solutions

- Build a sense of hope
- Highlight climate preparation successes
- Position climate adaptation leaders as champions
- Set concrete milestones





**Contact:**

**MEREDITH HERR**

**831.609.6368**

**meredith@thesocialcapitalproject.org**

**[www.climateaccess.org](http://www.climateaccess.org)**

**[@climateaccess](#)**