



For Immediate Release
May 23, 2024

Media Contact: Carina Daniels
carina@storyandreach.com
510-847-1617

New Findings: Community-Focused Climate Solutions Deliver Major Benefits for Residents & the Planet

During a period of accelerated investment, The Solutions Project provided \$42 million in funding to climate justice groups, contributing to results including 53 climate policy and campaign wins with the potential to significantly reduce carbon emissions, benefit 106 million people, and unlock over \$350 billion in public funding for climate solutions (2021-2024)

View the [fact sheet](#) & the [reports](#)

WASHINGTON, DC – Frontline climate groups – especially those led by women and people of color – **are securing climate policy wins and developing clean energy projects that have the potential to dramatically reduce carbon emissions and benefit millions of people**, according to new analyses from [The Solutions Project](#) (TSP) and external research partners.

Recorded successes of TSP grantees as part of coalitions include:

- \$20 million for a local drainage program designed to protect residents from industrial waste exposure during storm events and reduce the threat of mosquito borne-illness
- A statewide ban on natural gas in all new New York buildings
- The Biden-Harris administration's Justice40 Initiative, which was inspired by New York's 2019 Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act

“For the first time, we have hard data that shows how successful frontline climate leaders have been in advancing climate justice and a Just Transition to clean energy,” said Marcus Littles, Founder and Senior Partner at [Frontline Solutions](#). “In recent years, forward-thinking funders and philanthropists have infused historic levels of funding into a growing network of community-based climate justice organizations. Now, the results are in. When frontline leaders are adequately supported and funded, they deliver significant results – both for the planet and the communities they serve. These findings are especially timely, as the Biden-Harris administration makes unprecedented investments in climate and environmental justice through the [Justice40 Initiative](#).”

Since 2021, **The Solutions Project has deployed more than \$42 million in funding**, the majority (nearly \$30 million in the time frame analyzed) from a catalytic investment from the [Bezos Earth Fund](#). This and additional funding from [other private donors](#) has enabled the organization to fund **more than 300 frontline climate groups** – over 90% of which are led by women and/or people of color. In 2023 alone, The Solutions Project provided over **\$16 million to grassroots groups through its core grantmaking and the grassroots-led collaborative**



funds it administers, such as the [Fund for Frontline Power](#), [Communicating Our Power](#), and the [Justice40 Accelerator](#).

“For too long, there’s been a ‘top down’ approach to solving the climate crisis,” said Gloria Walton, President and CEO of The Solutions Project. “In contrast, when we resource from the bottom up, transformative change happens. The research shows that funding local frontline climate groups actually allows for increased impact, because they design solutions that simultaneously benefit local people and the planet. These organizations reduce carbon emissions, create good green jobs, provide affordable housing, and ensure clean air and safe drinking water.”

The Solutions Project’s new reports (listed below) find the organization’s approach to funding has helped frontline climate groups pass policies, fight polluting industries, and revitalize their communities in ways that will benefit residents and reduce carbon emissions.

“This research shows what’s possible when philanthropy properly resources grassroots groups to pursue their communities’ vision for climate solutions,” said Walton.

Dr. Andrew Steer, CEO of The Bezos Earth Fund, the largest funder of the accelerated 3-year investment effort, said, “The Bezos Earth Fund has a foundational belief that climate and justice issues are inextricably linked. Those least responsible for causing damage, suffer most from it. And these same communities are often the best equipped to find and implement solutions. We commend the work underway and are pleased to support it.”

NEW REPORTS:

- [Just Solutions Collective Policy Impact Analysis](#)
- [Frontline Solutions Survey of Grantees and Impact Assessment](#)
- [Physicians, Scientists, and Engineers for Healthy Energy CO₂ Emissions Impact Analysis](#)
- [The Solutions Project 2023 Impact Report](#)

NATIONAL FINDINGS:

(Just Solutions Collective Policy Impact Analysis; Frontline Solutions Survey of Grantees and Impact Assessment)

Frontline groups funded by The Solutions Project have:

- Secured at least 53 climate policy and campaign wins. Policy expert analysis found that just 20 of these climate policy wins have the potential to benefit nearly 106 million people nationally, including over 43 million people who will also benefit from local and state policies. Together, these policies unlock **\$367.2 billion in current and near-term future public climate investments** (2021-2024).
- Secured additional **\$53 million in total annual budget growth** from private donors as a result of TSP support (2021-2023).
- Secured **\$36 million in new funding** through their increased communications capacity provided by The Solutions Project (2021-2023).



This year, The Solutions Project is celebrating 10 years of working with community-rooted organizations on the front lines of the climate crisis.

“The Solutions Project understands the type of support that’s needed for the climate justice movement to be successful,” said Dawn Wells-Clyburn at PUSH Buffalo “Instead of providing ad-hoc funding for individual projects or campaigns, The Solutions Project takes a more holistic approach, providing general operating support, strategic initiative funding, and communications expertise to help us organize, build political influence, and develop our climate solutions. The Solution Project also understands the unique challenges that Femme BIPOC leaders face who run frontline organizations and often must navigate through the compounding crises of environmental and structural racism and community trauma. The Solutions Project is more than a funder. It is helpful that this doesn’t have to be explained; they get it and have moved in partnership with us over the last 10 years. This has led to many community and policy wins!”

A longtime grantee of The Solutions Project, PUSH Buffalo has developed a [20-block green development zone](#), turned an abandoned school into [affordable green housing for low-income seniors](#), and helped secure passage of the 2019 [Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act \(CLCPA\)](#) as a member of the NY Renews coalition. CLCPA, the strongest climate legislation in the country, **inspired the Biden-Harris administration’s Justice40 Initiative.**

NEW YORK FINDINGS:

(Just Solutions Collective Policy Impact Analysis; PSE for Healthy Energy CO₂ Emissions Impact Analysis)

The Solutions Project assessed the climate benefits of three TSP grantee campaign wins in New York:

- **Renewable Ravenswood:** A successful community-led campaign to secure commitments to replace a natural gas generating station with offshore wind power in Long Island City, Queens will put the power plant on track to cut nearly **1 million tons of carbon emissions per year**, the equivalent of taking nearly **200,000 cars** off the road. Now community groups are working in collaboration with corporations and the State Legislature to implement that commitment. (Led by [NYC Environmental Justice Alliance](#) and allies)
- **Green and Healthy Schools:** This 2022 campaign resulted in the largest school electrification initiative in the U.S. Through New York City’s *Leading the Charge* initiative, all new school construction will be all-electric, and 100 existing schools will be converted to all-electric heating by 2030. In addition to health outcomes, this has the potential to reduce **91,000 metric tons of CO₂ emissions** – the equivalent of removing **20,000 combustion-engine vehicles** from the road. ([Green Healthy Schools](#) campaign led by [ALIGN](#), and NYC Environmental Justice Alliance as part of the [Climate Works for All coalition](#))
- **No New Gas:** Additionally, the successful 2023 campaign to ban natural gas in all new New York State buildings is expected to reduce (when combined with a similar law recently passed in NYC) **160,000 metric tons of CO₂** – the equivalent of removing



35,000 combustion-engine vehicles from the road. (Led by [NY Renews](#), [NYC Environmental Justice Alliance](#) and [ALIGN](#))

“As a frontline leader, I’m grateful to The Solutions Project for conducting these analyses. The organization has its finger on the pulse of what the climate justice movement needs to be successful,” said Eddie Bautista, Executive Director of NYC-EJA. “These analyses dispel the philanthropic community’s misconception that climate justice isn’t achieving substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Now, I hope funders will follow The Solutions Project’s lead in funding similar analyses about the environmental benefits of our campaigns. It’s important for policymakers, funders, and the communities we serve to see the power of community-led climate solutions.”

“The Renewable Ravenswood campaign is a perfect example of why we started The Solutions Project. We understand that communities have the power to shape their own energy futures when philanthropy shows up in solidarity with their leadership,” said award-winning actor and TSP board member Mark Ruffalo. “We came up with the idea for The Solutions Project during the anti-fracking campaign in New York. While critically important, it wasn’t enough to say ‘no’ to oil and gas. We also focused on what we’re fighting for. We told elected officials that renewable energy is here and frontline communities have the solution. Our grassroots grantees leading the Renewable Ravenswood campaign are getting it done on the local level. They organized the community and are on track to turn a dirty energy project into one of the strongest examples of a Just Transition to renewable energy, saving lives and money as a result.”

Key Takeaways: Community-led climate solutions provide effective multi-solve approaches to climate justice, as well as other social justice issues. If provided with further resources, they can provide exponential benefits to society. The Solutions Project has a philanthropic model that works and should be replicated. This model provides holistic funding, communications, and capacity-building support, with grantees guiding decisions.

###

The Solutions Project is a national nonprofit organization that promotes climate justice by funding and amplifying frontline community climate organizations, especially those led by women of color.