



**Building a Permanent Home  
for Environmental Journalism  
in America**

**2018  
Annual  
Report**

[insideclimatenews.org](http://insideclimatenews.org)

## About InsideClimate News

InsideClimate News is a Pulitzer Prize-winning non-profit, non-partisan news organization that provides essential reporting and analysis on climate, energy and the environment for the public and decision-makers. We serve as watchdogs of government, industry and advocacy groups and hold them accountable for their policies and actions. Already one of the largest environment newsrooms in the country, ICN is committed to establishing a permanent national reporting network, training the next generation of journalists, and strengthening the practice of environmental journalism.

### ICN by the Numbers

as of December 31, 2018



**31,337**  
subscribers  
(+37% over 2017)



**100,000**  
Twitter followers (+18%)



**75,000+**  
Facebook likes (+1%)



**133,362**  
newsletter impressions  
per week (+18%\*)

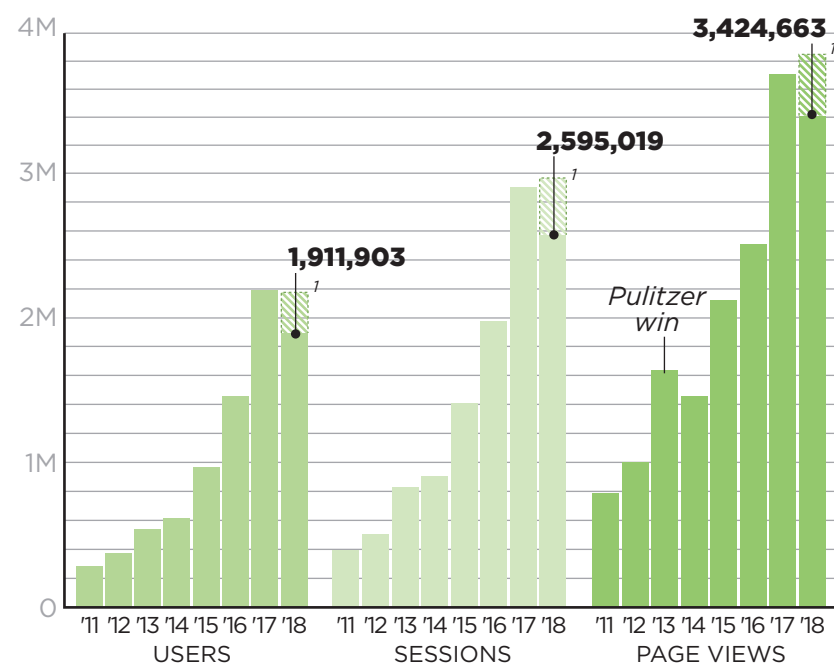
\*even though two daily newsletters were consolidated into one



**3,000+**  
individual donors  
(+50%)

### ICN Traffic Trends

2011-2018



**2017**

ICN saw a larger-than-usual growth in traffic as a result of the 2016 election outcome.

<sup>1</sup>ICN saw more than a 40% decline in referral traffic from Facebook, like many other news organizations. The hatched increment charts the loss.

## Breaking the Silence

Dear Reader,

The environmental journalist, a distinct species within the reporter genus, is a recent arrival to journalism. We date roughly to the epoch of Rachel Carson, whose scientific research pointed to the need for watchdogs to protect the natural world. Ever since, the press has been sniffing out human insults to the environment, because our lives depend on it.

Carson published her groundbreaking book, *Silent Spring*, more than two centuries after John Peter Zenger famously defended the freedom of the press against a colonial governor who wanted to silence him. Still, she was ruthlessly attacked for telling scientific truths about the dangers of pesticides by the industry that manufactured them.

Breaking the silence is both the daily and perennial work of journalism, and it takes many forms. Over the years we have spent a lot of our time at ICN exposing fraudulent misinformation about climate science, and the many bad actors who perpetuate it.

Last year we began a new effort to address a more pernicious silencing of the truth that has descended upon our body politic: the quiet that has come because environmental reporters are in short supply in the vast middle of the country. Our species has been suffering a dangerous decline in numbers.

We launched our National Environment Reporting Network to reverse the trend. We hired a reporter in the South and one in the Midwest, hosted workshops for colleagues at other outlets in those regions and entered into productive collaborations. We are expanding the network into other regions, too, strengthening the capacity of local news to report on issues critical to the next election.

We pursued our own stories to break the silence, too. We took our Finding Middle Ground series to five new locations in the country. We also produced work to speak to new audiences unaccustomed to frank climate conversation.

*Dangers Without Borders*, some of it co-published with NBC News, challenged the armed forces community to look at how climate change is undermining military readiness. *Harvesting Peril* spoke the truth to farmers not only about the threat posed to their way of life by extreme weather and climate change, but also who has been telling them otherwise, and why.

That series earned us two first place awards from the North American Agricultural Journalists association, and this comment from the judges: "This is an incredible piece of reporting that should be mandatory reading for every farmer—no, make that every American."

Our non-profit newsroom is the biggest of its kind in the nation. We make the claim proudly even if we have only 16 people. We never seem to have enough staffers, and certainly across the nation our species needs to come back from the brink to spark civic discussion where it's most needed. As we do, we can take solace in the example of both John Peter Zenger and Rachel Carson, for they have shown us it takes only one voice to break the silence.

**David Sassoon**  
Founder and Publisher, *InsideClimate News*



## Our Daily Beats

ICN's reporters are called upon to cover the complex subject of global warming from an enormous array of angles, as captured by the word cloud below. Last year our small staff published more than 400 stories. Our work is being indexed and is available on six separate databases, including Lexis-Nexis, Factiva-Dow Jones and Reuters. Our website is also being archived by the Library of Congress.



## Board of Directors

InsideClimate News is a non-profit incorporated in the state of New York and a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization operating with IRS approval as a public charity. It is governed by a Board of Directors and guided by the best practices of non-profit management.



Lawrence Rodman



Susan Kish



Ted Loewenthal



Jennifer 8. Lee



Michael Northrop



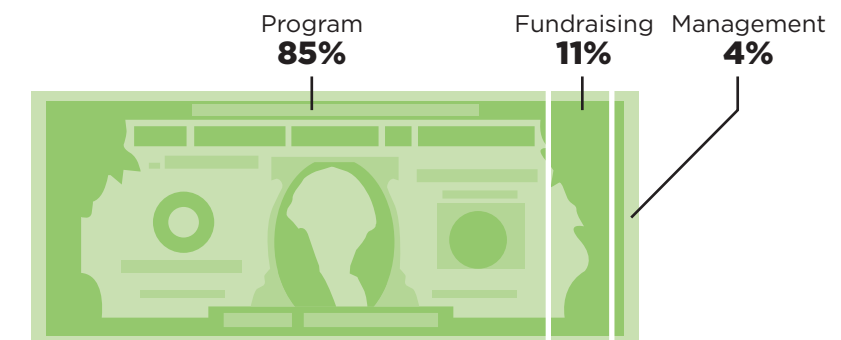
Norman Pearlstine



David Sassoon

### Allocation of Funds

How we spent \$2,125,529 in 2018:



### Revenue Sources

2018

#### Large Donors (Individual)

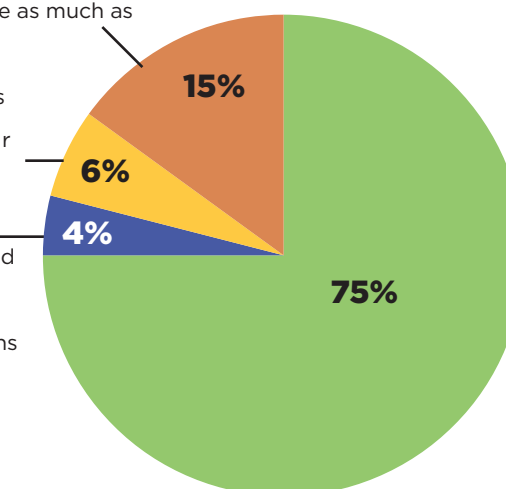
Individual generosity is a growing source of revenue for ICN. Donors in this category give at least \$1,000, or to date as much as \$150,000.

#### Online Donors

A growing number of readers are becoming supporters of ICN, voluntarily paying for our journalism, which is provided for free on the internet.

#### Earned Revenue

ICN is working to grow earned revenue from a variety of sources. This slice of the pie consolidates revenue earned from ebook sales, syndications and collaborations, re-publication licenses, special events and corporate sponsorships.



#### Foundations

The bulk of ICN's revenues comes from institutional funders who provide grants of anywhere between \$5,000 and \$1 million. Some funders prefer to provide funding for specific projects, but most of our funding is for general support.





## 2007-2018 12 Years of Journalism

How ICN became the largest dedicated climate newsroom in the country

### 2007

- ICN founded by David Sassoon & Stacy Feldman with funding of \$150,000 from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund
- The original website launches as a fiscally sponsored project of Public Interest Projects (now Neo Philanthropy)
- 57,000 journalists are working at daily newspapers around the country

### 2008

- ICN makes top 10 list of climate sites ranked by Technorati
- Financial crisis in journalism starts to shut down or shrink news outlets

### 2009

- 47,000 journalists are left working at daily newspapers around the country
- Reuters begins publishing ICN stories during Copenhagen climate talks

### 2010

- Reuters enters into formal agreement to publish ICN content
- 42,000 journalists are left working at daily newspapers around the country

### 2011

- Susan White becomes executive editor
- ICN grows its full-time staff to four people

### 2012

- Bloomberg News enters into agreement to publish ICN content
- Lisa Song, David Hasemyer and Elizabeth McGowan cover the Kalamazoo oil spill and pipeline safety in a project called The Dilbit Disaster
- ICN's annual budget crosses \$500,000

### 2013

- The New York Times dismantles its environment desk
- Only about a dozen environment reporters remain at top 5 U.S. newspapers
- Jack Cushman joins ICN
- ICN wins Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting for *The Dilbit Disaster: Inside the Biggest Oil Spill You've Never Heard Of*
- ICN publishes *Bloomberg's Hidden Legacy: Climate Change and the Future of New York City*

### 2014

- ICN detaches from its fiscal sponsor and becomes its own 501(c)(3)
- Larry Rodman becomes first chair of the board of directors, which includes Michael Northrop, Susan Kish and Simon Li
- ICN publishes:
  - *Keystone and Beyond: Tar Sands and the National Interest in the Era of Climate Change*
  - *Big Oil & Bad Air on the Texas Prairie* in collaboration with the Center for Public Integrity and The Weather Channel
  - *Meltdown: Terror at the Top of the World*

### 2015

- Susan White steps down, Stacy Feldman steps in as executive editor
- Neela Banerjee joins ICN as senior investigative reporter
- *Big Oil & Bad Air* wins National Press Foundation energy writing award and seven additional awards from other juries
- ICN relaunches its website
- ICN publishes *Exxon: The Road Not Taken*
- 33,000 journalists are left working at daily newspapers around the country

### 2016

- Grantham Foundation provides a five-year \$1.5 million grant to ICN
- *Exxon: The Road Not Taken* is a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service and wins ten other awards
- ICN wins EPPY award for best web site redesign/relaunch
- Norman Pearlstine, Jennifer 8. Lee and Ted Loewenthal join the board of directors
- ICN launches its membership program, the ICN Circle

### 2017

- ICN publishes *Choke Hold: The Fossil Fuel Industry's Fight against Climate Policy, Science and Clean Energy*
- ICN publishes *Finding Middle Ground: Conversations Across America About Climate Change*
- ICN launches *Clean Economy Weekly* newsletter
- Stacy Morford joins ICN as Senior Editor
- ICN expands its full-time staff to 15 people
- ICN's annual budget reaches \$1.8 million
- ICN celebrates its 10th anniversary at Time Inc. headquarters

### 2018

- ICN publishes:
  - *Harvesting Peril: Extreme Weather and Climate Change on the American Farm*
  - *Dangers Without Borders: Military Readiness in a Warming World*
- Jim Bruggers joins ICN, launches Southeast hub of Environment Reporting Network
- Dan Gearino joins ICN, launches Midwest hub of Environment Reporting Network
- ICN convenes reporting workshop in Nashville for a dozen journalists from local outlets
- ICN launches summer Institute for Environmental Journalism for inaugural class of 25 high school students

## Finding Middle Ground

Conversations across America about climate change

In 2017, ICN began to search for an elusive geography: the middle ground on climate change, with help from writer Meera Subramanian. She continued her search in 2018, which has now included nine communities, mapped below. Her lyrical and healing body of work captures the complicated connections that Americans have to the places that sustain them. It's timely work for a warming world touched more frequently by disruption and calamity.



Fly-Fishing on Montana's Big Hole River, Signs of Climate Change Are Everywhere



'It's Going to End with Me': The Fate of Gulf Fisheries in a Warming World



They Know Seas Are Rising, but They're Not Abandoning Their Beloved Cape Cod



Generation Climate: Can Young Evangelicals Change the Climate Debate?



# Environment Reporting Network

## How we are working to revive environmental journalism

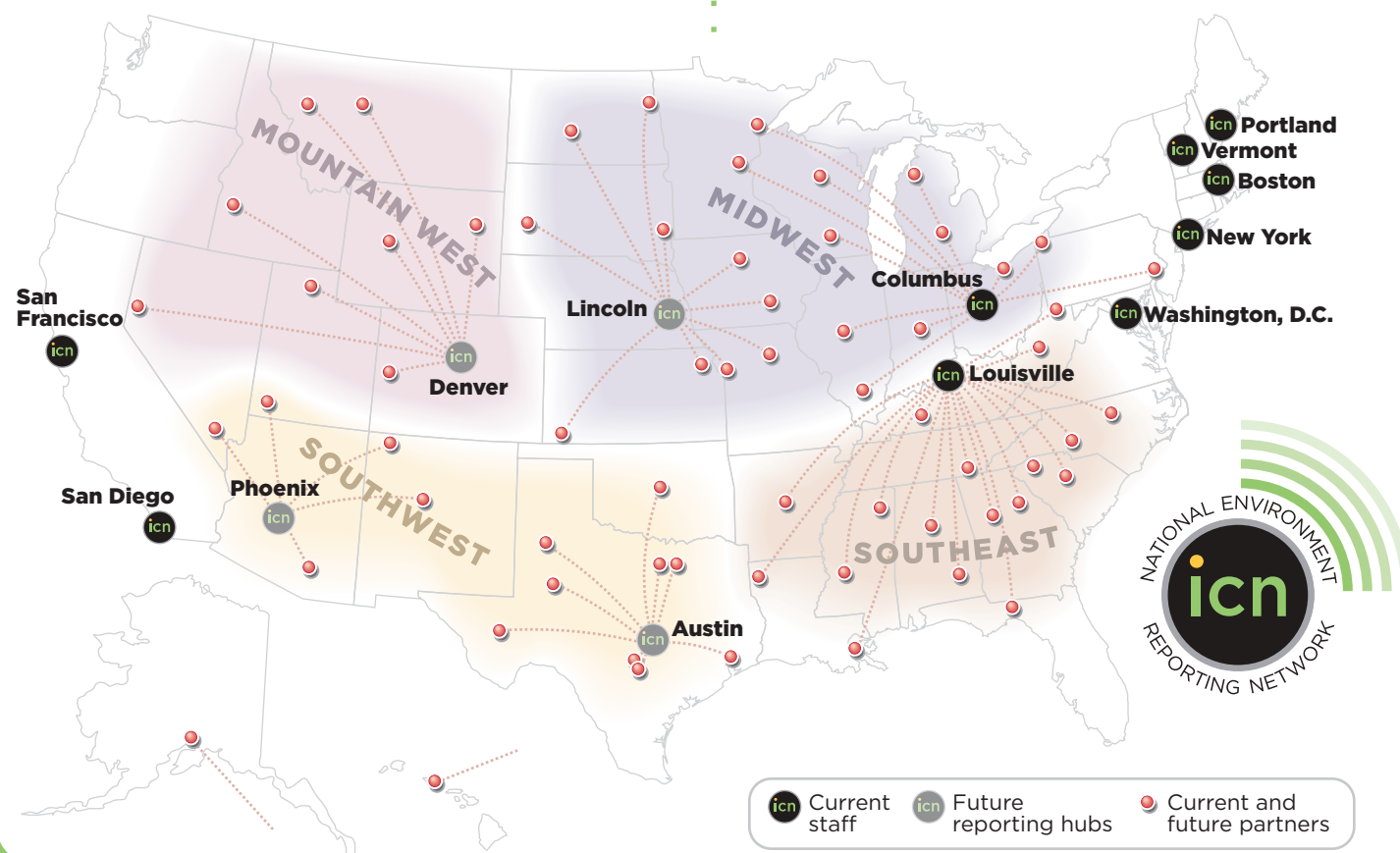
ICN has grown over the last 11 years into one of the nation's largest environmental newsrooms. We have simultaneously witnessed environmental journalism all but vanish from small, trusted outlets in the nation's interior. As a result, ICN is now working to strengthen local newsrooms through trainings and collaborations, acting as a catalyst for an environment reporting network to serve readers for many years to come.

### SOUTHEAST FOCUS

- ▶ Industries Try to Strip Power from Ohio River's Water Quality Commission
- ▶ Atlanta Charts a Path to 100 Percent Renewable Electricity
- ▶ With Hurricanes and Toxic Algae, Florida Candidates Can't Ignore the Environment
- ▶ Cost of Coal: Electric Bills Skyrocket in Appalachia as Region's Economy Collapses

### MIDWEST FOCUS

- ▶ Can Illinois Handle a 2000% Jump in Solar Capacity? We're About to Find Out.
- ▶ Net-Zero Energy Homes Pay Off Faster Than You Think—Even in Chilly Midwest
- ▶ Rural Jobs: A Big Reason Midwest Should Love Clean Energy
- ▶ Enbridge Deal Would Replace a Troubled Great Lakes Pipeline, But When?



# Institute for Environmental Journalism

## Training the next generation of environmental reporters

Last July, we launched a summer journalism program for teens. Award-winning instructors and journalists taught the fundamentals of journalism and best practices in sourcing, interviewing, research and writing. Students applied what they learned to stories they pursued about environmental justice, climate change and renewable energy.

In 2019, ICN's summer Institute for Environmental Journalism will be hosted at the New School in New York City and the College of the Atlantic in coastal Maine.



*"I now want to find out what people and companies and politicians are doing to solve global warming."*



*"The mentors helped me so much. To get one-on-one feedback really helped with my writing."*



***"Now, in writing my college applications, I am asked what my favorite word is. I would say 'fearless,' because this program showed me I am capable of anything."***

Aleina Dume  
York Early College Academy  
IEJ Cohort 2018



# Dangers Without Borders

How threats to national security are being multiplied by climate change



Dangers Without Borders: Military Readiness in a Warming World



The U.S. Military Needed New Icebreakers Years Ago. A Melting Arctic Is Raising the National Security Stakes.



U.S. Nuclear Fleet's Dry Docks Threatened by Storms and Rising Seas

## Video: Storms and Rising Seas: Norfolk Naval Shipyard at Risk



# Harvesting Peril

How the farm lobby's opposition to action on climate change is putting at risk the very farmers it represents

How the Farm Bureau's Climate Agenda Is Failing Its Farmers



The Farm Bureau: Big Oil's Unnoticed Ally Fighting Climate Science and Policy

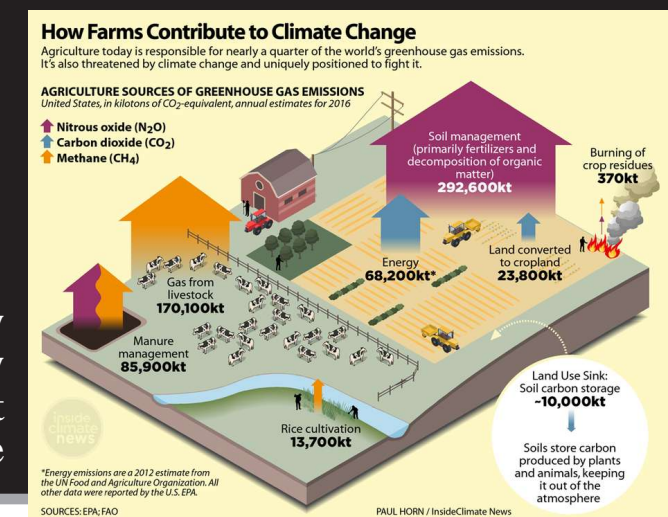


Industrial Agriculture, an Extraction Industry Like Fossil Fuels, a Growing Driver of Climate Change



U.S. Taxpayers on the Hook for Insuring Farmers Against Growing Climate Risks

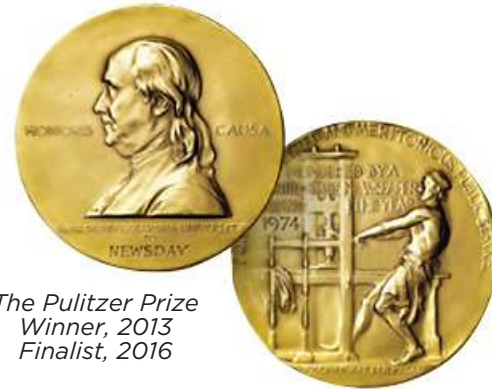
Infographic: Why Farmers Are Ideally Positioned to Fight Climate Change





## Awards

ICN reporters have won many of the most prestigious awards in journalism conferred by juries of our peers. Since 2012, our news outlet has won 36 national and regional awards and recognitions, including the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. They provide unimpeachable validation for the value and importance of non-profit news in our evolving media landscape.



The Pulitzer Prize  
Winner, 2013  
Finalist, 2016



Edgar Allen Poe Award

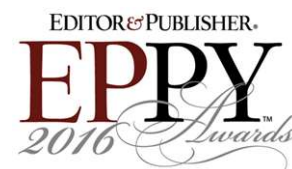


Shorenstein  
Center

Goldsmith Prize for  
Investigative Reporting  
Finalist, 2016



SOCIETY OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
JOURNALISTS



EDITOR & PUBLISHER  
EPPY  
2016 Awards



SAN DIEGO  
PRESS CLUB



SOCIETY OF AMERICAN BUSINESS EDITORS AND WRITERS



NATIONAL PRESS  
FOUNDATION



Association of  
Health Care Journalists



Robert F. Kennedy  
Journalism Award



Meaningful Awards for Significant Journalism



The Izzy Award



Knight Foundation  
Knight-Risser Prize



SOCIETY OF  
PROFESSIONAL  
JOURNALISTS

## ICN Staff



**David Sassoon**  
Founder, Publisher



**Sabrina Shankman**  
Reporter, Producer



**Stacy Feldman**  
Co-Founder, Executive Editor



**Phil McKenna**  
Reporter



**John H. Cushman, Jr.**  
Managing Editor



**Nicholas Kusnetz**  
Reporter



**Stacy Morford**  
Senior Editor



**Georgina Gustin**  
Reporter



**Neela Banerjee**  
Senior Correspondent



**James Bruggers**  
Reporter, Southeast Hub



**David Hasemyer**  
Reporter



**Dan Gearino**  
Reporter, Midwest Hub



**Marianne Lavelle**  
Politics Reporter



**Anna Belle Peevey**  
Video Producer



**Paul Horn**  
Graphics Editor

ICN is grateful for contributions from the following individuals

ICN Visionaries  
(contributing \$50,000+)

Norman Pearlstine & Jane Boon  
Simon & June Li  
Stephen & Jill McDonnell  
Larry & Linda Rodman

ICN Nobles  
(contributing \$25,000+)

Roy Young

ICN Champions  
(contributing \$5,000+)

Eric & Debra Schwartz  
Lise Strickler & Mark Gallogly

ICN Heroes  
(contributing \$1,000+)

Holley Atkinson & Steve Plumlee	Robert Dubrow	Elizabeth Marks
George Bell	Jack Elrick	Cozen O'Connor
Peter Bokor	Jon Hagler	Benjamin Posel
Lisa Castillo	Arthur Hall	Paul Sasso
James Cramer	Peter Joseph	David and Hilary Stookey
Dorothy Cutting	Judy Ko	
Alexandre de Selliers	Kenneth Levy-Church	

ICN Ambassadors  
(contributing \$500+)

Jonathan Alter	Farha-Joyce Haboucha	Wilhelm Merck	Val Schaffner
Mitchell Beer	Mary Hall	Joseph Miller	Sylvia Stein
Louisa Bonnie	Helen Heddens	Kathleen O'Neill	Sandra Steingraber
Matthew Dineen	Gary Hirshberg	Marion Odell	Nadia Steinzor
Walking Stick Family Fund	Dan Juhl	Toby Paterson	Leslie Tidwell
Marshall & Idelle Feldman	Ralph King	Hein Roehrig	Durwood Zaelke
Cynthia Franklin	Sarah Krakoff	Steven Sampson	
Daniel Gil	Patsy McCook	Laura Sanborn	



ICN Leaders  
(contributing \$250+)

William Abell	Jonathan Brun	David Gast	Joan Linney	Steven Running
Janet Alderton	Moises Chame	Constance Gill	Peter Linquiti	Andree Sassoon
Jeffrey Alexander	Randy Ching	Michael Goble	Pamela Lynn	David Sassoon
Jackie Alschuler	Elena Cohen	Beau Golwitzer	Audrey Maiese	David Schlissel
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Wendy Bachmann	Noel Crisostomo	Andrew Gunther	Michael Skoler and	Michele Schwartz
Irving Beiman Jr	Jay Dumont	Kimberly Haren	Maria Kirsch	Jonathan Silver
Jerry Bell	Mindy Engle-Friedman	Nancy Hazard	Lisa Moore	Steven Smith
Pat Benner	Wes Ernsberger	Susan Hoppe	Lloyd Morris	Pamela J Soukey
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Samuel Bleicher	Thomas Fehsenfeld	Elizabeth Kelley	Robert Perkowitz	Peter Stoel
Celia Bohannon	Larry Fessenden	Arthur Klebanoff	Karen Povlock	Amy Stump
Judith Borcz	Martha Fleischman	Oliver Knight	Jonathan Ratner	John Tobin
Amy Bouska	Tad Foster	Peggy Kurtz	Thomas Ross	Mark Voge
Bruce Brabec	Bruce Frishkoff	Brian Lamb	Deborah Rubin	Baerbel Winkler



ICN Allies  
(contributing \$100+)

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William Becker	Michael Campbell	Gary Cozette	Kathy Evans	Wade Greene
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Jeanne Bergman	Linda Centell	Peter Dart	Cornelia E. (Nelly) Farnum	George Gustin
Barbara Berman	Tracy Ceravolo	Al Davis	Tracy Farwell	Maria Gutierrez



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(contributing \$100+)

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Dorie Rae Gallagher  
Kathleen Gallucci  
Peter Galvin  
Peter Gang  
Gordon Garner  
Louise Garrett  
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Karin Geiselhart  
Erin Giles  
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Charles L Goldstein  
Donald Goldberg  
Deborah Goldsmith  
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Steve Hardin  
Charles D Hardy  
Thomas Hardy  
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Berl Hartman  
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Christopher Hatch  
Gregory Haugan  
Ron Hay  
Seth Heald  
Richard Heede  
Carl Heesemann  
Michael Heffler  
Robert Heinzman  
Rick Held  
Anne Hemenway

Stephanie Hemphill  
Borg Hendrickson  
Dawn Henry  
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John Herter  
Sharon Hill  
Nancy Hirshberg  
Geoffrey Hobin  
Diana Hoffman  
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Chris Holly  
Mark Hope  
Suzanne Hopkins  
Cynthia Howard  
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Sarah Hunnewell  
Allen Hunter  
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Robert Jack  
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Gail Jackson  
Karen Jacques  
Mohan Jain  
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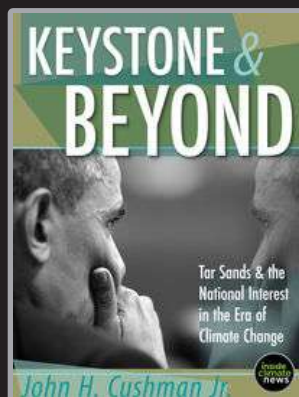
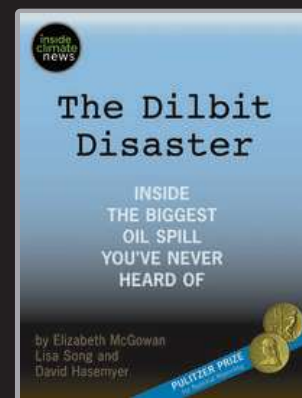
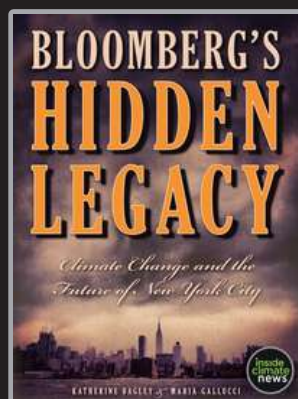
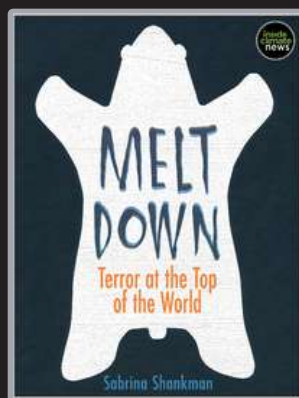
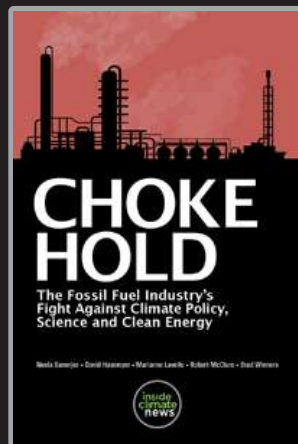
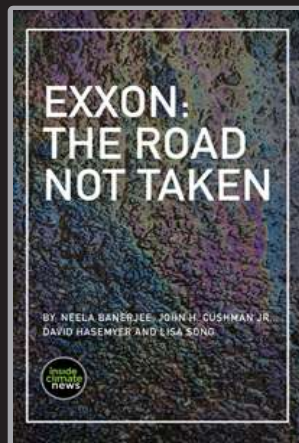
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