

THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'—
SHIFTING ENVIRONMENTALISM IN SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY

By

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A SENIOR CAPSTONE PROJECT IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Environmental Studies Program
Skidmore College

May 1, 2013

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Acknowledgements

We would first like to thank the community of Saratoga Springs for providing us with an environmental movement we were able to create an entire project out of, and for their valuable assistance with our project. We would like to extend a very important thanks to our advisors Bob Turner and Josh Ness for their support and advice throughout our entire project and Capstone experience. Additionally, we would like to thank the other members of the 2013 Environmental Studies Capstone class for their feedback and ideas, as well as accomplishing amazing projects of their own.

Introduction

National History of the Environmental Movement

Even before the first Earth Day in 1970, the topic of environmentalism has become a concern for many Americans. Today, environmentalism is hard to escape: talk of sustainability and being ‘green’ has become so popularized that it now appears in supermarket aisles, television shows and on our t-shirts. Today, it seems as though the environmental movement has always been present in the U.S., but the movement in fact has a long and varied history. The environmental movement began in the United States in the late 19th century with the desire to conserve and protect natural environments and habitats. This trend was supported by both John Muir, a preservationist pioneer who wrote about America’s natural environments, and President Theodore Roosevelt who voted for national parks and preservation projects (Kuzmiak 1991). Since the 1960’s the United States advocacy community has been successful in shaping the environmental movement and to push policies that ensure that land, air, and water are federally protected.

Despite these accomplishments and the longevity of national environmental organizations like the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council many political scientists believe the national environmental movement to be incapable of addressing the current environmental crisis. Many even have pronounced the movement to be dead, as the national movement has not displayed any major environmental achievements in the past fifteen years despite the presence of pressing issues like global warming and sustainable development (Nordhaus and Shellenberger 2005). However, it is no longer the responsibility of the major national advocacy groups to push the environmental agenda in the U.S., because the environmental movement is taking on a new identity. Political scientist, Christopher Bosso (2005), claims, “the environmental movement is no more, but it’s mature offspring are everywhere, embedded in every fabric of national discourse.” The environmental movement is transforming with the rise of niche and sector specific groups, all of which are slowly creating a new ‘shade of green’ in the environmental movement.

The Shift from the National to the Local

Since the 1970's the environmental movement has experienced a dramatic and multi-dimensional shift. Various changes in the movement's character are contributing to the overall shift. The movement is experiencing 1) a switch from "saving the whales" toward a concept of "sustainability" 2) a movement towards the local and 3) a greater emphasis on local initiatives over national legislation. We have found that Saratoga Springs, New York is exemplary of these national trends and is in fact experiencing the same shifts. On the national scale, environmental concerns have progressed through several waves, moving beyond simply air and water, and are now dealing with such concerns as healthy transportation, alternative energies and smart growth. Although many environmental regulations have been implemented nationally, gains from these legislations are largely short term and do not keep pace with an increasing population, rate of consumption, and the growing threats of climate change (Mazmanian and Kraft 2008). National organizations have become less prominent, as local groups in communities like Saratoga are coming to the forefront of activism, pushing for changes that address regional, rather than national needs.

In the 1990's the environmental movement experienced a "transfer of policy authority from Washington to the states and localities," a move that, "thrust regional, state and local environmental organizations into the middle of the political action" (Duffy 2003). Rapidly, many citizens are beginning to realize that national regulatory systems do not address the needs of local communities and in effect, do not address the more complex environmental problems communities face today. In response to this federal neglect and misunderstanding of local needs, trending studies argue that the most successful environmental and sustainable accomplishments have been achieved on a regional and local level. Considering the current social, political and environmental climate of the U.S. today a new "third wave of environmentalism" is emerging from the national movement (Mazmanian and Kraft 2008). The third wave movement is appearing in local communities across the U.S. and can be found here in Saratoga Springs.

Nationally, the third wave of environmentalism advocates for an approach to environmental issues that is sustainable for the natural environment and "relates to all other aspects of our economic and social worlds" (Mazmanian and Kraft 2008). The environmental movements of the 21st century now work to emphasize that sustainability should be an essential part of their mission and their solution. The movement must, "meet the needs of the present

without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 1987). The recent emergence of local and regional environmental and sustainable advocates in Saratoga is particularly important because these local environmental groups have the potential to be more successful than the national movement for environmental regulation. Local Saratoga groups can work to develop the link between community and sustainability, in effect bridging the intersections between the environmental, economic, and social needs. If these three sustainability pillars are recognized by the local environmental groups, they have the potential to have a profound effect on Saratoga’s environmental governance (Mazmanian and Kraft 2008).

The Environmentalists Who Drive the Movement

Bosso (2005) states that despite the professional “environmental establishment” in the United States-- a community of well-established national organizations with a corporate agenda and multimillion dollar budgets--the organizations were not created by political parties or corporations. Instead, environmental groups were created by the persistency of environmentalists who advocated that environmental issues be central to public interest and policy. The establishment of local environmental organizations by local citizens is occurring all the more frequently on the local scale. Concerned community members, like those present in Saratoga Springs, are the primary forces behind the new growth of the environmental movement.

The rise in local-level activism in response to a growing lack of faith in the functionality of federal government is illustrated by the decline in voter turnout since the last generation. To fill this void, many citizens have instead turned to membership organizations to enact change. Political scientist and scholar Robert Putnam (2005) argues in his article *Bowling Alone*, that “life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital.” Social capital refers to social assets of a community, in which there are many skilled individuals with important knowledge or connections that can contribute to the community as a whole. For example, having a lawyer on the board of an environmental organization is extremely beneficial when the group confronts issues relating to policy, becoming a non-profit or working with the local government. “As grassroots groups, true social movements identify their most important resources as the activists who join the groups,” explained Environmental Studies Professor and Earth First! activist Rik Scarce (Scarce 2008). When such individuals are available, social movements are bound to be more successful with the help of a wealth of human resources to drive the movement.

Saratoga Springs is a community seemingly rich in both financial capital and social capital, factors that could potentially contribute to the vibrancy of the environmental movement.

Frequently, active community members are driven by a desire to better their community, rather than specifically push an environmentalist agenda. As local perspectives are broadening, connections are arising between social and economic, as well as environmental realms, an overlapping that has opened up the “political opportunity structure”. The structure provides avenues for new citizen mobilizations and interest groups, as well as an overall growth of the movement (Bosso 2005). Dale Willman, a former Skidmore professor and founder of the Saratoga Wire, explained that it is not that environmentalists and advocates are initially attracted to Saratoga, rather people become involved in the community and environmental issues once they settle here (D. Willman pers. comm. 2013). While community members may not classify themselves as “environmentalists,” they still wish to serve their community and choose to join environmental causes to serve this purpose. The expansion for environmental impact towards a societal context emphasizes this entrance into the third wave of environmentalism.

The Environmental Movement in Saratoga Springs, NY

Saratoga Springs, NY is a region rich in environmental and natural resources. Located just south of the Adirondack Park, Saratoga is home to historic battlefields, the endangered Karner butterfly, and natural cold water springs. Historically, Saratoga’s famous horse racing track, Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the medicinal springs have made the city attractive to tourists. With the tourist influx during the summer, and the families and students brought in by Skidmore College during the off-season, Saratoga Springs has prospered into one of the most successful towns in Upstate New York (J. Yepsen pers. comm. 2013). Yet, Saratoga’s booming tourist economy has jeopardized its environment due to the growth and land development.

To begin, although Saratoga Springs is seemingly more progressive than surrounding towns with regard to environmental issues, we could not help but wonder how and why Saratoga Springs became a hub for environmentalism. Saratoga Springs is arguably a region that has a wealth of financial and social capital (D. Willman pers. comm. 2013). These resources include funding, available volunteers, a strong membership base and skilled group members. Saratoga itself is also set in ideal location, in which groups can access Albany, New York City, and Boston with relative ease. Secondly, we wondered if the movement was really as active as it

appeared. Saratoga is home to, “a variety of nonprofits dealing with social and environmental issues,” but we were uncertain of the extent of their activity and impact on the community (D. Willman pers. comm. 2013). We also wondered about the origins of the movement in Saratoga and how it began and continues to evolve. Through the identification of past trends we could better understand the progression of the movement as a whole and gain a deeper understanding of its focus today and its current initiatives.

One issue that is particularly pressing in Saratoga today is the outcome of the city’s upcoming renewal of the Comprehensive Plan. The city’s Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2001, so it is imperative that this document include regulations that uphold the importance of sustainability and help to push the city towards smart growth (A. Durland pers. comm. 2013). If these initiatives are not integrated into the document there will be no binding obligations for the city to adhere to sustainable and environmentally-conscious approaches to growth and development. Beyond an opportunity to enact sustainable legislation, the Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity for local environmental groups to collaborate and push City Council for a greener agenda. Since the environmental movement has “the ability to influence direct economic activity and human values and behaviors,” Saratoga environmental groups have an untapped potential to drive the direction of the town toward a more sustainable legislation (Mazmanian and Kraft 2008).

Sustainable Saratoga, a local environmental organization, held an open community forum in February, 2013 to discuss various sustainability initiatives the citizens would want to incorporate into the Plan. It appears that many of the suggested progressive ideas supported by the local environmental groups may not be implemented because of the contentious review committee appointed predominantly by the Saratoga Springs Mayor Scott Johnson. The people of Saratoga have shown their concerns with this process through high attendance and frequent public comments at City Council meetings, letters to the editor, as well as other outlets expressing their displeasure with the current proceedings (D. Willman pers. comm. 2013).

The activism from citizens shows that the community is concerned and passionate about the lack of environmental and citizen input in the Plan (J. Yepsen pers. comm. 2013). There is activism coming from individuals with a specific environmental agenda, groups of people collecting around an issue, and the paid professionals who provide organizational stability for

environmental groups in response to this issue, demonstrating a diverse environmental front in Saratoga.

Success and Progression of the Environmental Movement

In order to analyze the overall ‘success’ of Saratoga’s environmental movement, we wished to examine group membership, public support, and group activity. These factors allowed us to gauge how impactful each organization is on the Saratoga community. Although “success” can be very hard to quantify, we used Facebook likes, annual event counts and budgets to assess our groups. Qualitatively, we defined success as groups with many members, frequent events, and strong public support. Although the degree of success varied from group to group, each organization contributed in its own way to the movement as a whole. Using local data and research on Saratoga’s community activism and environmental advocacy, we sought to understand the capacity, structure, and support of the movement and what it has accomplished and where it is headed.

The aim of this research was to explore the degree to which the environmental movement is changing and the vibrancy of the movement within the community of Saratoga Springs. Is the Saratoga movement composed of a number of small organizations working in specific niches or large national organizations? We also wished to examine how the structures of environmental groups vary in Saratoga. Do they have paid staff? How many board members and volunteers work with the group? How large are the groups’ budgets?

Additionally, we asked if the Saratoga Springs environmental movement mirrored the national whether or not it exhibited distinct waves of environmentalism. We wanted to understand which topics regarding environmentalism and sustainability are addressed in Saratoga, to what degree, and by whom. For our study we wished to explore 1) the size, breadth and reach of environmental groups in Saratoga 2) the mission of the group and the possible niche(s) that the groups fulfills 3) the structure, leadership, and organizational capacity of these groups 4) the extent to which these organizations are successful in having a positive impact on the community and 5) on a whole, the vibrancy of the environmental movement in Saratoga Springs, NY.

Methods

Background and Preliminary Research

Our first step toward analyzing the vibrancy of the environmental movement in Saratoga Springs was to determine the number of local environmental groups that exist, why they exist, and what conditions were present for the groups to emerge. For the purposes of this study we created criteria for what defines a “local environmental organization.” The criteria included groups that are dedicated to preserving local flora and fauna, utilizing local resources, conserving Saratoga land, groups working toward sustainable solutions within Saratoga and national organizations that have regional field offices in Saratoga. We discovered these groups through speaking with our professors, exploring the groups on Facebook, following local news and events, and by speaking with key environmental stakeholders. We were able to establish a list of 34 groups, all with varying missions and goals.

We gained further perspective of the groups and individuals by conducting a comprehensive background study of the organizations. We gauged project progression and community involvement by researching archival data of the organizations, observing activity and membership on the groups’ websites, and examining Facebook pages. Useful documents that we utilized included annual reports, mission statements, news articles, and newsletters. These documents provided a glimpse into the origins, activity, capacity, and overall tone of the organization. Additionally, these documents gave us insight of their change over time and the current state of funding, staff, and initiatives. This allowed us to draw conclusions about how Saratoga’s environmental movement began and evolved to its current state.

Analyzing Capacity: Professional vs. Civic Volunteer

We then created an Excel spreadsheet, entitled “Environmental Organizations,” to organize this information and categorize the groups. The spreadsheet gathered the group’s primary mission or function, membership, budget, meeting times, office location, and year of formation. We observed the types of organizations that developed during certain time periods to gain a better understanding of what and who sparked the origins of environmental advocacy in Saratoga Springs, and what circumstances allowed for the movement to evolve. It also included structural questions: Whether the group was national or local, the size of the group’s board (if one was present), whether or not they had paid staff, and how many. To measure membership

and support we counted the number of members, as well as how many Facebook likes the group had on their page (if they had one). We viewed Facebook as a good measure because this site is widely used by groups as a way to distribute information, gain public support and awareness of initiatives and inform members about events and programs.

We also analyzed the sources of group funding (i.e. membership dues, federal funding, grants, etc.) by examining annual reports and websites. We then compiled this information into a spreadsheet. Looking at these basic foundations for each group allowed us to better understand the mission, structure, capacity, and reach of each organization. Based on budget and paid staff (having paid staff and budgets over ~\$100,000 considered as professional), we then placed our groups into two categories of activity: 1) professional 2) civic volunteer. Civic volunteer groups tend to have smaller budgets and depend solely on the support of dedicated volunteers, while professional groups have both volunteers and paid staff.

Assessing Group Niches

We modeled our next excel document entitled, “Environmental Groups Conceptual Map” after Christopher Bosso’s method of mapping the national environmental community through categorizing national NGO’s via their policy agendas pertaining to issues such as biodiversity and clean air (2005). According to Bosso, creating a conceptual map of how groups define their advocacy is helpful in assessing how groups overlap, compete, raise funds, or fulfill their policy niches. We altered Bosso’s categories and created ten specific niche definitions for Saratoga Springs. We categorized the organizations by the following labels: education, recreation, preservation, sustainability, biodiversity, policy, food and agriculture, infrastructure, water, and energy (see Appendix B for definitions). By placing each group into different categories, it allowed us to begin to see what roles the groups fulfill in the community and what overlaps between groups existed.

Next, we created a chart of the most to least common niches to demonstrate the prevalence of each topic in the Saratoga movement. Finally, we categorized each group into the following sections by how many niches a group fulfilled: 1) Keystone Groups (5-6 niches) 2) Sectoral Groups (3-4 niches) and 3) Niche Groups (1-2 niches). Between looking at the group's establishment dates and then classifying them, it allowed us to identify four distinct waves of

environmentalism that have occurred in Saratoga: 1) Preservation 2) Recreation 3) Conservation and Reaction to Development and 4) Sustainability.

Analysis of Activity

In order to analyze group activity, we studied the events hosted by the organizations. This information was also obtained through newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages. We counted the number of events that each group hosts annually. This information was then compiled into a bar graph and split into fifteen year increments to show the range of events.

In order to truly comprehend the dynamics of each group, we established a main contact person as our liaison for club updates and to the remaining members of the respective group. This contact person is essential for building trust and communicating between the group members and us, especially as we began the interview process.

Stakeholder Interviews

We conducted a series of open-ended, semi-structured interviews with the leaders and members of the various environmental groups in Saratoga Springs (e.g. Sustainable Saratoga, American Farmland Trust). We interviewed thirteen key informants of the organizations to gain a better understanding of their perspectives on their organization's work, their view of the environmental movement, how they view their involvement in the environmental movement, as well as how they envisioned their service to the Saratoga Springs community. These individuals provided us with the most comprehensive understanding of the organizations and their work. We then analyzed the information collected from these interviews by identifying emergent themes among the environmental organizations, as well as recurring problems or topics that are viewed as important for the entire Saratoga community (Yin 1994).

Results and Discussion

Formation of Environmental Organizations in Saratoga Springs

We identified a total of 34 groups in Saratoga that fulfilled our definition of a local environmental organization. This list only included groups that currently exist and does not include those that had previously existed and then died or ones that were the precursors to present groups. The list included organizations ranging from sustainability-focused Sustainable

Saratoga to conservation groups like Wilton Wildlife, to recreation groups such as the Saratoga Sailing Club. This list included groups that many would not initially see as falling into the ‘environmental’ category. For example, the Kayaderosseras Rod & Gun club is not in name a distinctly environmental group. Upon closer examination, however, this organization sponsors trips to the NYS Conservation Camp, stocks fish in local water bodies and releases pheasants. Based on our predetermined criteria, this group would be considered a local environmental organization. A full list of the organizations can be found in Appendix A.

To provide a comparative component to our study we examined the environmental trends on the national scale. We noted the various time periods in which certain initiatives, such as land preservation and recreation, were being pushed and examined whether or not these trends were mirrored by the movement in Saratoga Springs. According to Bosso, group formation can be divided into two main categories. The first is that groups form to promote a specific mission and are created by one individual or a set of individuals to maintain the organizations and mobilize support. Another way is through societal changes that open political opportunities for a new organization to respond to the needs of the environment. In all, groups form to “occupy vacant policy niches” (Bosso 2005). Both theories of group formation are applicable to Saratoga environmental groups.

Understanding that groups are established in response to political opportunities and the broader context of society, the timeline for Saratoga environmental groups indicates what environmental interests were salient during each time period. In Figure 1 we can see that the date of establishment of environmental groups in Saratoga began in 1890 and the amount of groups established has increased steadily over the century. We can see that Saratoga has a deeply rooted environmental history. However, simply looking at the timeline we do not see the hidden trends of why groups were established at certain times. To answer this question, we looked towards interviews and archival data as a means to perform a historical assessment and better understand how and why groups were formed. We performed this historical assessment because we cannot understand Saratoga’s environmental history “without [having] a clear picture of what came before” (Bosso 2005).

The Four Waves of Environmentalism in Saratoga

Looking back at a timeline of the foundation of Saratoga organizations we identified the most important environmental groups and noticed a pattern. Here we noted four distinct waves of environmentalism. To classify each group into these categories we examined the date that they were founded, the group's mission statement, and the events that they host. Once this analysis was complete we identified four distinct environmental waves in Saratoga based on the trending interests of each time period. The 1st Wave focused on preservation and lasted from 1900-1915, the 2nd Wave emphasized recreation and went from 1915-1965, the 3rd Wave was based in land conservation in response to development and was from 1965-1990, and the final 4th Wave that highlighted sustainability and political activism began in 1990 and continues through today, May 2013. However, this is not to say that these waves are finite in any way. These waves focus on what environmental organizations were created during certain time periods and include organizations that date back to the 1st Wave are still alive and well in Saratoga.

1st Wave: Preservation (1900-1915): Yaddo Gardens, Saratoga Battlefield National Park

On a national scale, Bosso considers groups established in the late nineteenth to early twentieth century time period to be the "Progressive Pioneers." These were the first conservation organizations established from the elite and progressive ideals of "scientific expertise, professional management, and the practical need to conserve natural resources for the use of later generations" (Bosso 2005). It was during this time that national groups like the Sierra Club and the National Audubon Society were established by "local elites" whose goals were different but not "absolutist." Both groups sought support from state and federal legislatures to assist in their establishment.

Like these national organizations, Yaddo Gardens and the Saratoga Battlefield National Park were among the first to become established in Saratoga Springs and were created out of a desire to preserve special spaces for educational and historical purposes. Yaddo is a 400 acre property located in Saratoga Springs, NY with elaborate gardens. It was founded by a wealthy financier Spencer Trask and his wife Katrina as an elite artists retreat (Yaddo 2013). The Saratoga Battlefield is a part of the National Park service, which was established by Woodrow Wilson in 1916 to preserve historical landmarks by establishing educational parks. This site was considered to have value by the "Progressive Pioneers" because it would serve later generations

not only as a valuable national resource, but as a revered historical landmark that would educate future generations about the Revolutionary War. Like the national organizations of this period, Yaddo and Saratoga Battlefield have longevity, are nationally renowned, and are major tourist attractions.

2nd Wave: Recreation (1915-1965): *Saratoga Rod and Gun Club, Saratoga Lake Association*

This time period between the world wars, Bosso considers “essential to the evolution of organized environmental advocacy,” because it was during this era that nature was able to be “enjoyed as another consumer good” and not simply for “aesthetic virtues.” Many groups began to realize the potential recreation has for exposure to environmental groups, and then switched their focus so these benefits emerged. Groups like the Wilderness Society, the National Wildlife Federation, and Ducks Unlimited were established to “foster an ethos of recreation and enjoyment of the outdoors among the widest spectrum of American” (Bosso 2005).

During the second wave of environmentalism in Saratoga, we can infer the citizens of Saratoga sought to utilize the abundant natural resources in the Saratoga area for recreational purposes. Saratoga has wide open spaces for trails, hunting, and mountain biking, as well as lakes for fishing and boating. Many of these natural qualities are what people come to Saratoga for. Recreational groups attract a variety of this population, even today, because people still appreciate the abundance of available outdoor activities and the community they foster. We include recreational groups in our study because they are the groups that have the most stakes in conserving natural resources.

A common thread throughout the recreational groups today is that they seek to educate their membership about their efforts to conserve. For example, Saratoga Rod and Gun Club boast on their website their dedication to conservation through annual fish stocking in local streams event and the group’s membership in the New York State Conservation Council. Recreational groups appeal to a wide portion of the Saratoga population, as many residents enjoy fishing, swimming, hunting and boating. However, although recreationists spend a lot of time out in the environment, this does not necessarily mean that this engagement in nature is tied to a sense of ecological consciousness or environmental ethic. The missions of these groups pertains more to the utilization of natural resources, instead of the use of these activities for environmental

education and awareness. However, wildlife management, hunting, and fishing serve to divert resource development by engaging Saratogians in recreation.

3rd Wave: *Conservation, Responses to Development (1965-1990): Saratoga Farmers Market, Open Space Project*

The next wave of environmentalism in Saratoga coincides with a new wave of advocacy on a national scale for public interest organizations. Beginning in the 1960's, Bosso considers this the start of the "Environmental Era," a time for a surge in citizen advocacy, increase in middle-class political participation, economic prosperity, and technical advances. This time period underwent a political transformation creating opportunities for new interest driven advocacy organizations. It was during this time period that federal legislation began to recognize "environmental impacts" and Earth Day. Established conservation organizations, like Sierra Club were introduced to new environmental issues like pollution, pesticides, and rising population and thus needed to expand their agendas to be more inclusive (Bosso 2005).

During this time period, many of the other established groups like the Saratoga Preservation Foundation and the Open Space Project emerged as responses to development due to rising population. Groups in this time period reflect both the need to conserve land permanently and begin to think about smart growth. Another major environmental group, the Saratoga Farmers Market, was established in 1978 to meet a public interest of connecting people to farmers. The market at the present time is a staple in the Saratoga Springs community. On a national scale, the movement experienced an emergence of new activists, laws, and advocacy.

4th Wave: *Sustainability, Political Activism (1990-2013): Saratoga P.L.A.N., Skidmore Environmental Action Club*

Within the 4th Wave time period, 1990-2013, thirteen groups were established, four of which were established since we began our study in September 2012. Aside from group formation, several policies regarding sustainability have been enacted as well, such as the governing body the Complete Streets Advisory Committee in response to the Complete Streets Policy, and the Anti- Idling Ordinance. According to Bosso, the "1990's is so dense with environmental issues and is internally diverse, that only the most specialized niche organizations are worth creating"

(Bosso 2005). This has pushed the environmental movement into the epoch of sustainability. Some of the most promising sustainability efforts today are found on a local level with individuals and non-profit groups striving to improve their communities (Mazmanian and Kraft 2008). The majority of the groups formed during this time period in Saratoga are focused on pushing the city toward actions, advocacy, and policy for sustainable solutions. Groups still fulfill the interests from the past waves, but hold a new sustainable direction. Rather than focusing on recreation, groups like Bikeatoga, promote healthy transportation through biking, signifying that groups are comfortable confronting climate change. Doug Hallaran of Bikeatoga describes the formation of the group because he was “motivated by reducing carbon and saving fuel” (pers. comm. 2013). He believes that since the general population of Saratoga does not share those same motivations, it is important to figure that out what citizens do care about, so that “Saratoga can become a more livable city. Most politicians can relate to that” (D. Hallaran pers. comm. 2013).

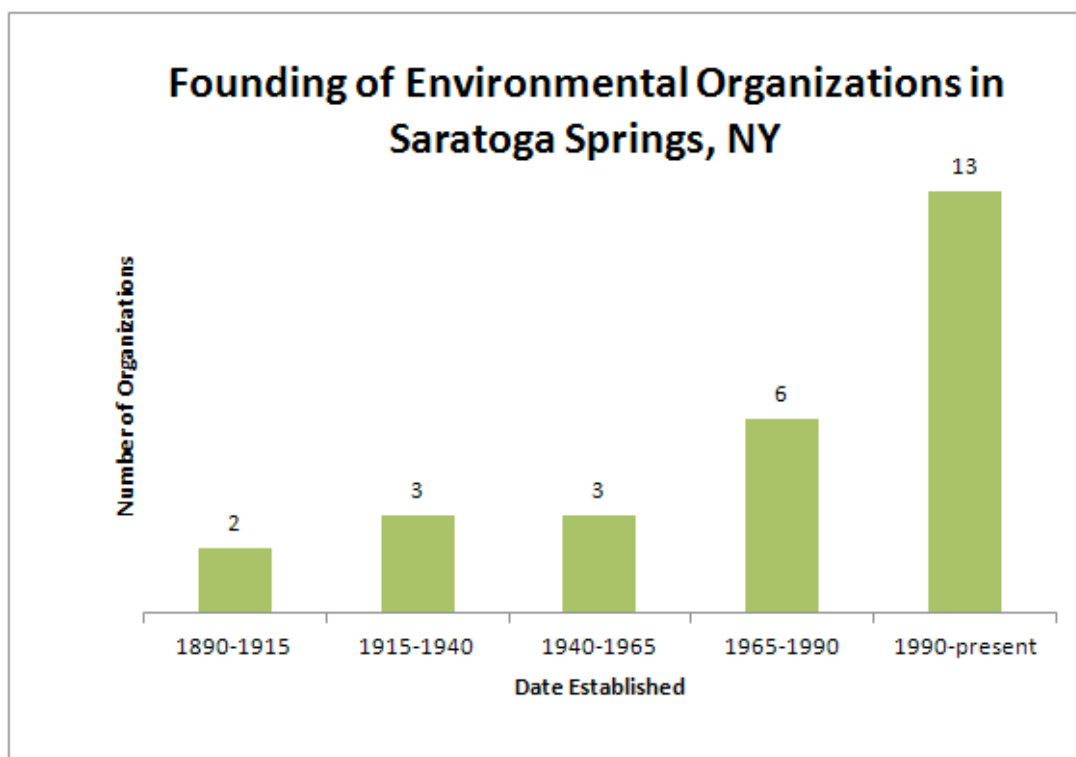
Additionally, we have found that people moving to Saratoga from other urban centers plays an important role in this shift to the 4th Wave. According to Charlie Samuels of Complete Streets, “The progressives, or democrats...are hitting the city from all sides” (C. Samuels pers. comm. 2013). These more ‘progressive’ transplants come from cities with strong sustainability initiatives. These individuals come to Saratoga and ask “Where are the bike lanes?” Their presence helps to drive many of these 4th Wave initiatives.

Saratoga sustainability initiatives like the Complete Streets Advisory Committee, the Anti-Idling Ordinance, BYOBag Saratoga, and Cool Cities represent the specialized niche organizations occurring on a national level, as well as a shift to becoming political. In order for groups and individuals to understand the need for environmentalism to focus on the current environmental crisis, groups must frame the goals in ways that are similar to the niches in the past.

These grassroots groups are coming to the forefront of the movement, creating their own agendas and “reinvigorating” national campaigns that may have lost motivation or interest (Rootes 2007). At this scale, participants can make connections to the environmental issues at stake through projects that tailor their missions to fit directly with the needs of the community and address the local consequences of these greater environmental issues. Grassroots environmental groups “are located where the grievances are actually occurring, typically in

people's backyards" and are informed by the needs of the unique community (Scarce 2008). It is not just an issue of 'water pollution'--it is pollution in residents' backyard, Saratoga Lake, which can affect all the species and people who depend on and enjoy this resource. While political disengagement is occurring at a national level, local organizations and community groups are growing in membership and importance, as well as political clout in response.

Figure 1: Date of Establishment of Environmental Organizations in Saratoga Springs



Environmental Groups Niches

We identified ten niches that embody the environmental priorities of the Saratoga Springs environmental groups. We defined each niche in Appendix B and Figure 2 shows the frequency of each niche classification. The top five niches the 34 Saratoga environmental groups fulfill are education, recreation, land conservation, sustainability, and ecosystem/biodiversity. The top three niches reflect how the drivers of the Saratoga environmental movement participate in local projects that are beneficial to their community through advocacy, awareness, and education, and are representative of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Wave movements. Although these initiatives are widespread in Saratoga, there are not necessarily projects that are political or radical. The majority of groups seek to conserve Saratoga's natural resources and influence environmental

behaviors by catering to the interests of Saratoga citizens via recreational groups. However, the fact that sustainability is the fourth most prevalent niche indicates that Saratoga's environmental priorities are beginning to shift away from conservation and recreation and into the 4th Wave of environmentalism. Water and energy, both connected with sustainability, are issues that are not as prevalent because they are niche specific or require politics that may be polarizing.

In the future, individuals, organizational entrepreneurs could see opportunities to inhabit unoccupied policy or ideological niches. These "niche seekers" strive to inhabit currently unoccupied policy or ideological niches and use tactics that are being underutilized by other organizations. Groups that occupy a specific niche are more likely to avoid competition from the start because they can better avoid competition (Bosso 2005). Therefore, in order for new groups to survive and be successful it is best for them to be more specialized and narrow in scope.

Often, niche organizations are created after the emergence of a new issue on the policy agenda. This emergence is often directly tied with the perceptions of organization entrepreneurs who observe that a policy niche is lacking or not fully occupied and seek to fill that position. As Saratoga has transitioned between the four waves new opportunities for group formation have arisen as a result of changing social and political trends. For example, when healthy transportation became a concern on the national level, and in turn local level, groups formed in response to this newly developed need. However, within this larger umbrella of 'transportation' groups formed niche subsets, such as bikes and trails, that allowed for the creation of multiple transportation groups. Additionally, groups form as "spin-offs" of a larger organization, such as BYOBag Saratoga (Bosso 2005).

The presence of 34 active environmental groups in Saratoga, a relatively large number, indicates that the overlap between groups is minimal. The 34 environmental groups occupy unique niches and are therefore able to survive. In our research we found that collaboration does exist between groups, but that each group maintains its specific role even in these collaborative interactions. For example, while Saratoga P.L.A.N. and Friends of the Kayaderosseras (FOK) do collaborate on conservation projects each group fulfills a specific role in the interaction: Saratoga P.L.A.N. provides the funds to purchase the land along Kayaderosseras Creek, while FOK agrees takes on the managerial role for the land. In this way, both groups participate in land conservation, but are each responsible for distinct parts of the conservation process.

Beyond the role of an organization, we noticed a difference in tactics among the groups, even if groups shared a niche. Groups use websites, annual or monthly newsletter publications, email mailing lists and Facebook to spread their group's message to the general public. To involve the citizens of Saratoga, groups hold education and outreach events, host volunteer opportunities and offer paid memberships. Additionally, the public can become involved in the groups via group committees or positions on the organization's board. Using the example of Saratoga transportation groups, each group has a different tactic to initiate strategies that push the organization toward success. The Complete Streets Policy is a recently passed resolution by the City of Saratoga Springs which created an obligatory commitment to any new road being built to consider safety for all modes of transportation (biking, walking, wheelchairs, etc.) (J. Hakes pers. comm. 2013). Bikeatoga use grassroots organizing and volunteers to distribute bikes to the community to promote functional cycling. The Saratoga Greenbelt Trail system is a coalition of planning groups to create a city-wide trail network. The Saratoga Mountain Bike Association is a membership based recreation group focuses on preserving trail access and fills another new transportation and recreation niche. Finally, the newly formed Critical Mass group at Skidmore has planned a more activist approach to promote healthy transportation, street safety, and sustainability. These five different transportation groups are successful examples of niche seekers that use different tactics and people to avoid competition, explore an untapped sector of the niche, and provide opportunities for members of the community to be engaged in this issue from differing perspectives.

To further analyze the niche data we organized the 34 groups into three scope categories based on how many niche groups they fulfilled.

Keystone (5-6 niches): Organizations whose size and reach can influence the larger advocacy community through a broad scope of interest. Bosso argues that without keystone organizations, many of the smaller groups would not exist. This concept is reflected in Saratoga, because many of the groups are directed by passionate individuals, but it is important to acknowledge that these three groups have influenced how many of the initiatives, particularly the political projects, are accomplished. These groups have a board of directors and subcommittees. Skidmore's

Environmental Action Club has a broad scope with projects focusing on education, agriculture/food, energy, sustainability, and transportation.

Environmental Action Club

Sustainable Saratoga

Saratoga P.L.A.N

Sectoral (3-4 niches): Groups that do not “dominate an entire sector of the advocacy community but are still large and active” (Bosso 2005). Like the keystone organizations, sectoral groups have a broad policy agenda, but their mission is oriented towards a particular sector. American Farmland Trust, for example, is oriented toward farmland conservation but is able to engage in education, public policy, and food advocacy (L. Ten Eyck pers. comm. 2013).

Adirondack Mountain Club- Northeast

American Farmland Trust- New York

Complete Streets Advisory Board

Friends of the Kayaderosseras

Friends of Spa State Park

Land Trust Alliance- Northeast

NOFA- New York

Saratoga Battlefield National Historical Park

Saratoga Lake Association

Sierra Club- Northeast

Waldorf School Forest Reserve Program

Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park

Yaddo Garden Association

Niche Players (1-2 niches): Niche groups tend to be smaller in scope and act as specialized “boutiques” with a variety of ideologies and tactics. Niche players are often restrained by their respective policy and tactical niches which often pose a threat to their consistency and security (Bosso 2005). Niche groups need to ensure that they are relevant to prevent redundancy and

competition with other groups. Niche groups are often associated with grassroots organizing driven by motivated individuals or small advocacy groups. Saratoga has a blend of grassroots niche groups and more structured groups with board members. Many of these groups are established in Saratoga or have the support of the keystone players. Bikeatoga, for example, is a group that was previously called the “Saratoga Healthy Transportation Network” and sought to focus on all types of transformation. Their broad scope was unsuccessful and the group decided to reform into one that focused only on biking. One of the newest environmental groups, BYOBag Saratoga, on the other hand, although directed by one passionate individual, has the structural support of the umbrella group, Sustainable Saratoga.

BYOBag Saratoga

Bikeatoga

Children and Nature in Saratoga

Cool Cities

Fish Creek Rod and Gun Club

Hudson Crossing Park

Kayaderosseras Fish & Game Club

Lake Ave Garden Project

The Ndakinna Education Center

Saratoga Farmers Market

Saratoga Greenbelt

Saratoga Mountain Bike Association

Saratoga Rod and Gun Club

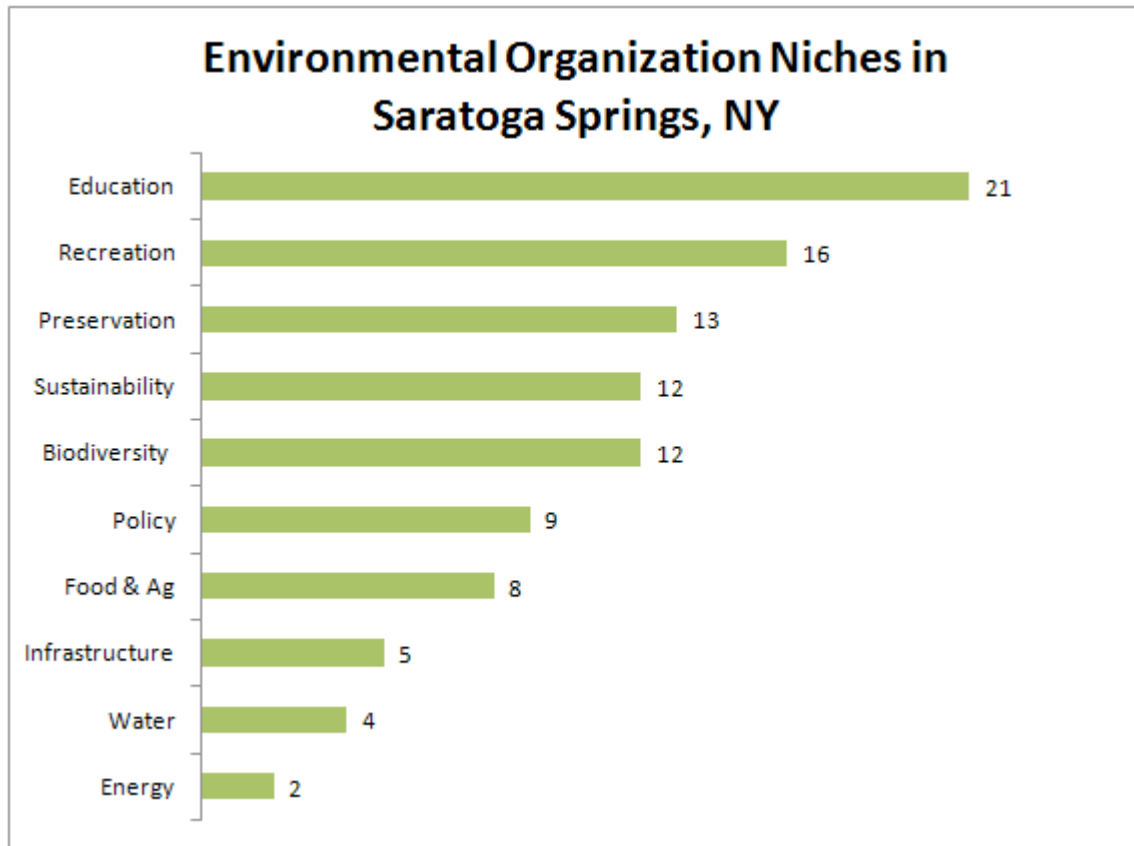
Saratoga Rowing Association

Saratoga Sailing Club

Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation

Slow Food- Saratoga Region

Figure 2: Environmental Group Niches in Saratoga Springs, NY



Organizational Models

According to Bosso (2005), “organizational activity requires a more professional staff in areas of expertise in order to maintain the organization. Many of these paid staff members are assigned to organizational maintenance, fundraising, and development. The central system of professional staff in environmental organizations is on the rise across the U.S., much to the shagrin of environmental activists. The Sierra Club is representative of this trend and has shifted towards a backbone of talented paid professionals for its organization. There is contrast within the Sierra Club however, as local chapters lean more towards the civic volunteer model. Tensions between the professional and the civic models of organizing have led to schisms within organizations, and often the “exodus of the activists” (Bosso 2005). Interestingly enough, the outcome of this clash was always the same: “the professionals won.” This triumph can be

attributed to the organizational skills and funds available to professional groups, concrete structures that often outweigh the idealism of civic groups.

It is unclear at the local level whether or not this concept is true. There is not even clear if this professional vs. civic model exists at the local level, and no studies have developed data supporting this theory. Based on our research, however, we believe that Saratoga's organizations exist on a spectrum of civic volunteer to professional groups. These two models of organizations can be distinguished through the use of general criteria, specifically whether or not the organization has paid staff and the size of their budget or endowment. Both models rely heavily on volunteer support.

Once the groups were categorized into these two models or organizations we could assess the impact and their level of activity. This activity was assessed through an analysis of the groups' events, membership, and public support and interest.

Operating Budgets and Revenues

We obtained budget information from 10 of the 34 environmental groups we studied. We acquired this information by looking at groups' annual reports, websites, and information obtained through our interviews. By assessing this budget information, we discovered that Saratoga's environmental groups function with a varying range of budgets and funding. This range of budgets affects their structure, the number of events they can host, and their level of communication or outreach. The two main distinctions among the groups were groups with professional structures and those that are volunteer-based.

The professional groups rely heavily on funding to maintain their organizational structure and to reach out to the public via newsletters and bigger events. The professional groups tend to have larger budgets that range from the Northeast Adirondack Mountain Club's (ADK's) \$2,337,000 budget to Wilton Wildlife's \$120,000 budget. ADK's larger budget can be contributed to their affiliation with a national organization with a large base of members and subsequent source of membership dues. A larger budget allows ADK to hold many more events, such as their weekly hikes, that help to raise awareness and encourage more membership involvement. In addition, professional groups get their funding from membership dues, donations, sale of publications and merchandise, programs and services, federal and state funding, and grants (see Figure 3).

The civic groups rely more on the enthusiasm and talents that their volunteers offer. Lack of funding is a common problem throughout the environmental movement as a whole, and volunteer groups experience this the most. Civic groups often have smaller budgets, ranging from Bikeatoga's budget of \$5,000 to the Saratoga Lake Association's larger budget of \$76,339. The Saratoga Lake Association is a unique case because, unlike the majority of civic groups, it gains revenues from its annual membership fees of \$15 (B. Goodale pers. comm. 2013): "Individual dues and contributions are critical to organizational survival and flexibility" (Bosso 2005). In effect, membership-funded groups could perhaps fall into a different category because they have larger budgets due to membership fees, do not have paid staff, but also do not rely heavily on volunteer support for their survival. This category can include Saratoga Lake Sailing Club, Saraspa Rod & Gun Club, and Saratoga Mountain Bike Association (SMBA). Overall, civic groups get their funding from donations, grants, and publication and merchandise sale (see Figure 3).

Professional: Groups with 2 or more paid staff members.

\$2,337,000=ADK Mountain Club Glens Falls Saratoga

\$1,500,000=Northeast Land Trust Alliance

\$952,928=Saratoga P.L.A.N.

\$637,466=American Farmland Trust

\$186,000=Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation

\$124,494=Yaddo Gardens

\$120,000=Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park

Volunteer: Groups that rely on civic activism to fund and participate in the groups mission.

\$76,339=Saratoga Lake Association

\$5,650=Environmental Action Club

\$5,000=Bikeatoga

Paid Staff, Board Members, and Volunteers

Saratoga Springs has a strong community support system, creating much of the foundation for these groups and initiatives. This support base consists of skilled staffers, loyal

board members, donating members, and an active volunteer core. 43% of the environmental groups in Saratoga do not have paid staff. 37% of the organizations have 10 staff or fewer.

Groups in Saratoga with Paid Staff:

Northeast Organic Farm Association NY (12)

Ndakinna Education Center (8)

Saratoga P.L.A.N. (4)

American Farmland Trust (4)

Land Trust Alliance (3)

Adirondack Mountain Club (3)

Saratoga Farmers Market (3)

Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation (3)

Sierra Club (3)

Sustainable Skidmore (3)

Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park (3)

In total, there are 49 full-time paid staff members in Saratoga (see Figure 4). Their positions include educators, managers, community outreach coordinators, financial advisors, fundraisers, scientists, directors, and consultants. The majority of paid staff members are designated toward specifically handling communications, budgeting, and the operational tasks of the organization.

Professional

Saratoga P.L.A.N is one of the only environmental organizations in Saratoga with paid staff, including an executive director, operations director, stewardship director, and an operations director. The staff has been hired based on their expertise in varying aspects of running a business and land conservation. The Executive Director, Maria Trabka, uses her extensive legal background to negotiate easements and land purchases; Andy Fyfe, the Stewardship Director, brings his prior experience with the NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation; Trisha Foster, their Operation Director offers her managerial and administrative skills with prior human resources and manager

jobs to coordinate the communication and outreach for P.L.A.N., and finally, Emily Oswald, the Community Relations Coordinator. Even with the paid, skilled staff and the dedicated volunteers of Saratoga P.L.A.N., Trabka describes the number of projects to be “overwhelming” and “constantly having to turn ones down” (M. Trabka pers. comm. 2013). Paid staff assures commitment to projects and a more professional appearance to the public that allows the organization to reach a broader audience through publications, events, and conferences. In addition, organizations like P.L.A.N have the capacity to outsource to hire consultants for their land management work. While P.L.A.N is a conservation organization, they have a separate board of directors, who are willing to volunteer, direct a variety of committees and oversee projects. Overall, because of paid staff and their attention to the inner organizational functions, P.L.A.N is able to establish themselves in the community as one of the major, high functioning environmental organizations in Saratoga, contributing to consistency of the movement.

Although paid staff is an intrinsic part of the professional group model or organization, we cannot ignore the importance of volunteers for both civic and professional groups. For example, though Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park is considered to be a professional group based on its three paid staff and \$120,000 annual budget, much of the work that the organization performs could not be completed without the assistance of volunteers (M. Olson pers. comm. 2013). Wilton Wildlife hosts numerous volunteer-based events, such as workdays planting lupine and other Karner blue butterfly-friendly seedlings, and sending mailings to the group's members. These important activities would not be completed without dedicated volunteer support.

However, it must be noted that having paid staff does allow these organizations to put on more complex events. In 2011, Saratoga P.L.A.N.'s annual “Tour de Farm Bike-a-Thon,” had over 225 riders that together helped raise over \$8,000 for the organization's conservation causes. With the organization and planning from paid staff and the support and numbers provided by volunteers, P.L.A.N. was able to put on this successful event (M. Trabka pers. comm. 2013). This collaboration between the paid staff and the volunteers embodies this important symbiotic relationship apparent in many groups, and what keeps them going.

Civic Volunteer

Other organizations like Sustainable Saratoga and Bikeatoga have significantly smaller budgets, do not have any paid staff, and have a more interest specific focus. The organizational structures of the smaller organizations differ in several ways because they don't have to directly search and hire employees. Without the support of an organizational staff, these groups depend on volunteers for their survival.

Sustainable Saratoga: Board members and committee chairs of the organizations are volunteers with varied and strong backgrounds in management, city planning, or environmental science. Within the past ten years, many groups, like Sustainable Saratoga, have established a board of directors to “professionalize” the structure of the group. They have matured “to the next level” going from having an “informal, loose group of individuals with a vision, to a more structured and professional outlook” (A. Durland pers. comm. 2013). With a more established structure, volunteers with positions have more stake and responsibility toward the organizations goals, similar to the function of paid staff. In addition to board members, Sustainable Saratoga has formulated six committees focused on different topics led by varying community members to reflect the group's top priorities. A new executive board and subcommittees has helped streamline the goals for Sustainable Saratoga and achieve major accomplishments within the past three years (J. Yepsen pers. comm. 2013). Sustainable Saratoga's new structure exemplifies a shift from an unstructured organization, with open forum meetings without focus, to one that delegates a group of talented volunteers who are responsible for certain projects depending on their specific interests. Regardless, the dedication of volunteers still does not compensate completely for the lack of paid staff. Although more structure is an asset to an organization, it is distinct from the structure and support provided by paid employees.

Bikeatoga: Bikeatoga is very much reliant on their skilled bike repair volunteers. Without them, they would not be able to hold their Bike Repair Workshops every Thursday and Saturday. Joanne Klepetar, one of Bikeatoga's head volunteers, described how their group is “loosy-goosy” and “run by a small, but very dedicated group of volunteers that all share a love for biking recreationally” (J. Klepetar pers. comm. 2013). Though Bikeatoga has two presidents, the rest of their group is purely volunteer run, with about seven consistent members. Klepetar admitted how “they can't advertise their workshops much more, because they don't have the volunteer capacity or space to handle more people, with only three or four consistent mechanics”

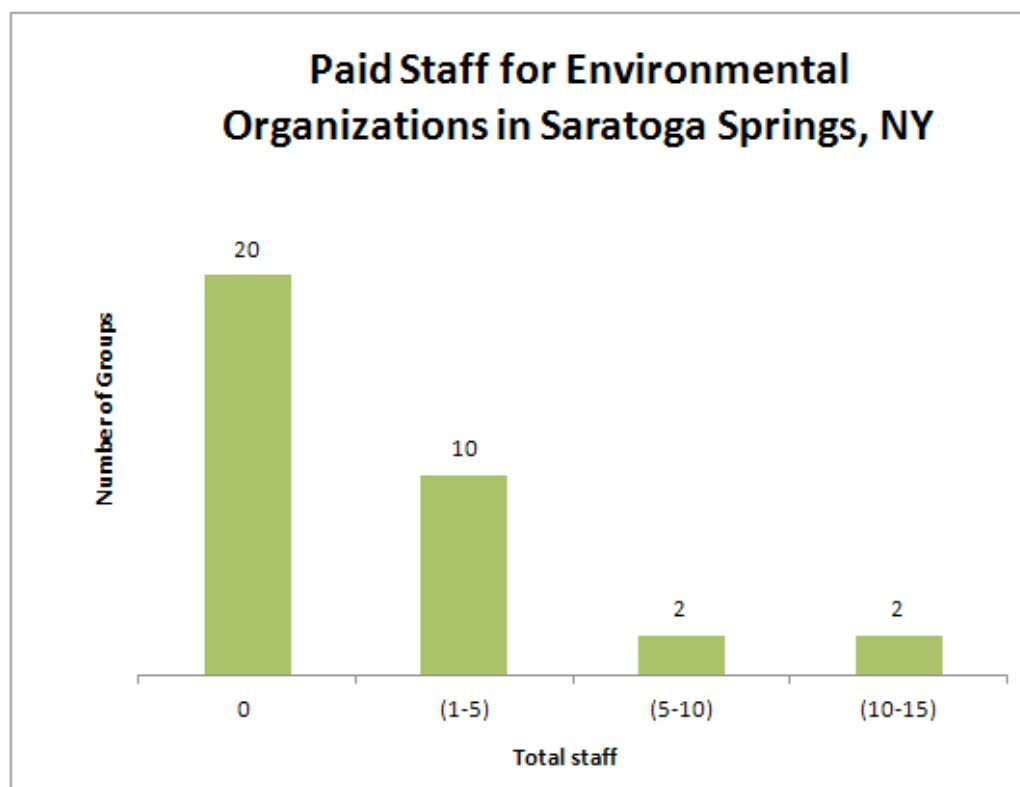
(pers. comm. 2013). Their annual average budget of \$5,000 comes mostly from donations and is spent on communications, bike parts, and events like their annual Bike to Work/School Days. The Church of Saint Peter donates their basement to Bikatoga for their workshops and bike storage year round, providing this much needed free space. Since their organizational transition in Spring 2012 from Saratoga Healthy Transportation Network, which focused on all modes of transportation, to Bikeatoga, which only promotes biking, their budget is able to go farther and dedicate more money to their workshops and bike repairs. They felt this change was necessary for the group to be most successful at the projects they do (J. Klepetar and D. Hallaran pers. comm. 2013).

These groups with smaller budgets like Sustainable Saratoga and Bikeatoga, tend to be purely volunteer based, however their range of scope may vary. Bikeatoga having this very narrow vision of solely promoting bicycles, while Sustainable Saratoga has a variety of volunteer committees ranging from energy efficiency to local economy. Despite having small budgets, these groups are able to accomplish tasks within their means because of the dedication and investment of their volunteer board and committee members. The volunteers are essential to the success of this movement in many ways, and have contributed to a large number of projects that have been completed. For example, Sustainable Saratoga's Urban Forestry Project drew from a large volunteer base: "Urban forestry project had about 90 volunteers last summer (2012)." As Alex Chaucer, a key player in the project explained "It's all about people" (A. Chaucer pers. comm. 2013). These volunteers are a huge asset to the movement and dramatically contribute to initiatives.

However, not all groups are able these attract large numbers for their causes. The BYOBag Saratoga project of Sustainable Saratoga has been advocating for a plastic bag ban in Saratoga for more than a year now. Their petition has just hit 500 signatures and their Facebook group has 38 "likes" both as of April 25, 2013. This completely volunteer-run group has used Facebook as their primary means of communication, with weekly posts about plastic bags' effects on the environment and economy to make people aware of this problem. The core group of about five meets weekly, but has faced much resistance from the community, particularly businesses and City Council members (A. Chaucer pers. comm. 2013). When it comes to these more 'radical' initiatives that actually ask people to change their personal behaviors, people are

more resistant to change. This will be an interesting project to see evolve over the next few years, and see if Saratoga is actually become more political.

Figure 4: Staff Employed by Environmental Organizations in Saratoga Springs



Organization Events

In the past year there were approximately 902 events held by Saratoga's environmental organizations (see Figure 5). 493 of these events were held by professional groups and 409 were held by civic volunteer groups. The types of event include one that are educational, group cleanups, fundraisers, recreational activities, and many others. We examined group calendars and events sections of websites, Facebook pages, and newsletters in order to count the number of events each group puts on every year. Although events vary every year, we estimated the numbers based on their main annual events and other programs held throughout the year. We also recognize that collaboration between organizations occurs for many events, but instead chose to count only the organization that was directly hosting the event.

The majority of the groups, thirteen in total, host between 0-10 events each year. Next, nine groups host between 11-20 events with only two groups having between 21-30. No groups have 31-40 events. Interestingly, however, there are seven groups that host between 40-50+ events annually. These groups ranged from the local branches of national organizations, such as the Northeast Adirondack Mountain Club (~200 events) to larger local organizations like Saratoga P.L.A.N. (~50 events) (see Figure 5).

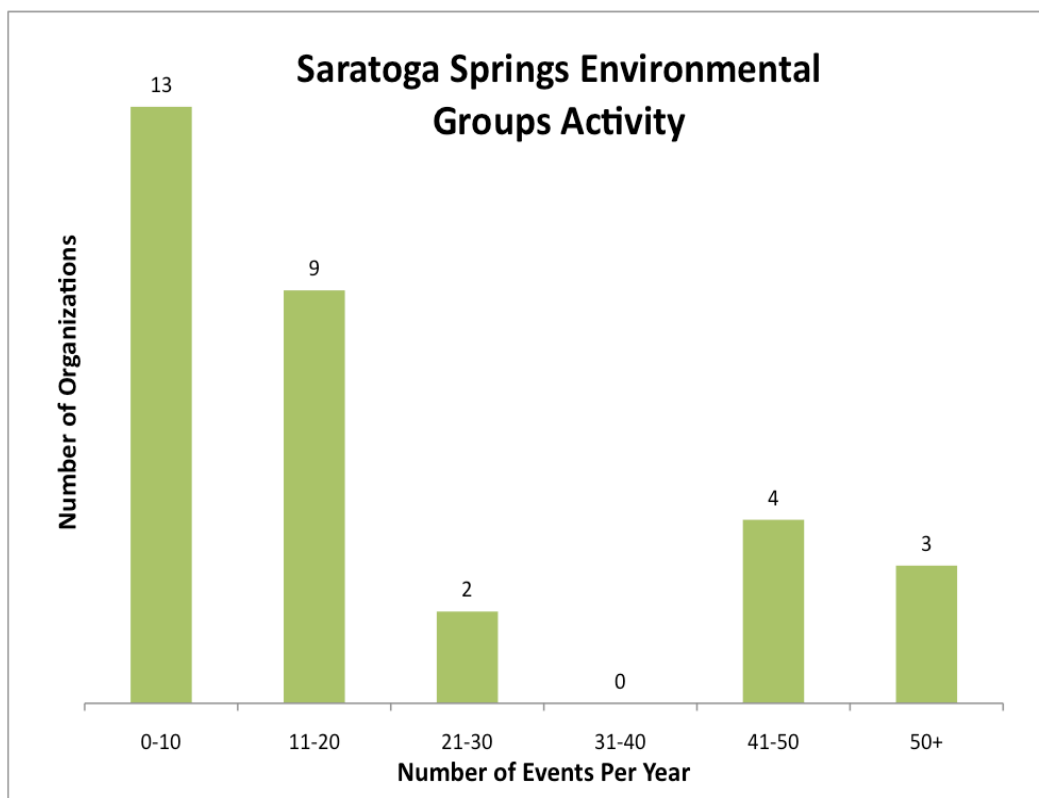
Regular events included programs such as Bikeatoga's weekly Bike Workshops and the Farmers Market bi-weekly markets. Regular events are also held by well-funded and established national organizations. For example, the Adirondack Mountain Club and the Sierra Club have the capacity to host weekly hikes for their members. All told, the Adirondack Mountain Club hosts up to 200 events each year. Other groups like Hudson Crossing Park or Fish Creek Rod and Gun Club have events less frequently and on a more seasonal basis. The majority of these events are clean-up or maintenance days and tend to happen between 2-3 times per year.

Overall, we found that many groups at least have one big, annual fundraiser event, like Saratoga P.L.A.N.'s "Feast of the Fields," with other education or service days scattered throughout the year to keep members involved and aware of what the group's activities. Although we counted each groups' specific events, this is not the only predictor for a groups' activity. Many groups inherently do not put on many events, like Yaddo Gardens, because people will explore their property regardless. This daily activity is not something we could assess using the above methods. Each group promotes their missions through these events while engaging the community and building awareness for a range of environmental issues.

Through our interviews we learned that many of these events are well-attended by the Saratoga public. For example, the Friends of the Kayaderosseras Meet the Creek day historically has "over 300 people come through during the day" and Saratoga P.L.A.N's events are "very well attended" (B. Neils and M. Trabka, pers. comm. 2013). Although this may not be the case for every organization, these numbers demonstrate that there is a large number of environmental event options available to the Saratoga community and that in many cases the community is very involved. These events serve to create awareness about a group's mission, gain volunteer support for projects, educate and raise funds. Oftentimes groups, such as Ndakinna Education Center, acquire revenue from programs. For programs such as Ndakinna's Wilderness Education and Camp & Adventure programs, the group earns \$25/hour for one-on-one training and \$40-60

for single-day camp adventures. Therefore, these events not only educate the public, but also work to maintain the organizations financially.

Figure 5: Number of Events Held per Year by Environmental Organization in Saratoga Springs, NY



Membership and Support

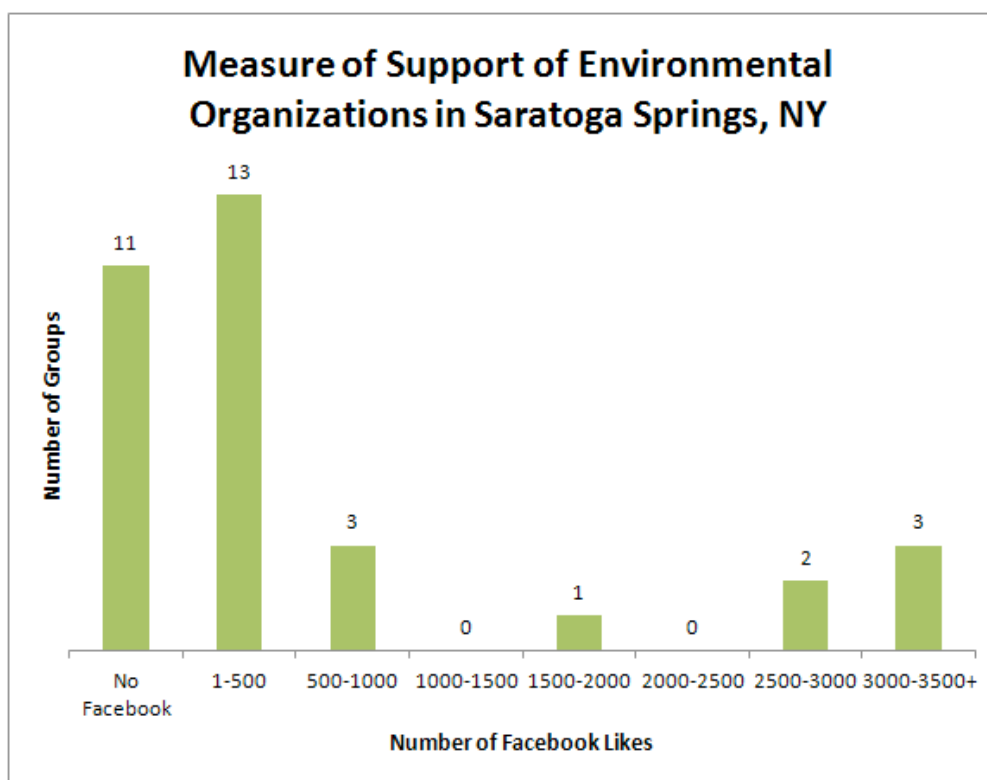
Through our research we found that it was often difficult to obtain precise membership numbers from organizations. At best we were able to uncover close approximations: ~200+ for Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park and ~5,000 farmers for NOFA NY. These values were hard to come by for the majority of the groups who did not take regular roll call or have records of membership. In an effort to find a way to quantify membership, we looked at Facebook likes as an indicator of support, the result of which are shown in the figure below (Figure 6). If an

individual ‘likes’ a Facebook page they are then linked into all of this information regarding the group and in effect are more apt to become directly involved in the group’s activity.

To begin, we found that 11 groups in total did not have Facebook pages: We found that all of the professional groups had Facebook, while many of the civic volunteer groups did not. Next, we found that 13 groups have between 1-500 Facebook likes. These groups tended to fall in the volunteer category, with 10 out of the 13 groups in the 1-500 like range being civic volunteer. In fact, all of the civic volunteer groups either had no Facebook page or had below 200 likes.

These numbers indicate that, although civic volunteer groups do have the support of a strong volunteer base, the professional groups have more online support. This could be due to the fact that professional groups with paid staff have individuals whose job it is to work on the Facebook page. For example, Tammey Holtby, the Operations Coordinator at the NY American Farmland Trust (AFT), goes on the organization’s Facebook daily. She gives updates on events, posts photos and videos. AFT even has a Twitter (L. Ten Eyck pers. comm. 2013). By having public outreach and social networking as a part of a paid staff’s job description gives the organization an edge in the cyber environmental scene. Although many civic volunteer groups do have Facebooks, it is often more difficult to find someone to establish and maintain the site. For example, Alex Chaucer of BYOBag Saratoga maintains the group’s Facebook page. Although other group members have access to the site and make occasional updates, it is primarily up to Chaucer to update the page in his free time. Through Facebook, groups can keep their members updated on new initiatives, relevant news and upcoming events. Therefore, Facebook is a valuable tool for the outreach and education of environmental organizations.

Figure 6: Measure of Support for Environmental Organizations by Facebook Likes



Specialization

Sustainable Saratoga is a good case study for understanding the cross section between professional structures and civic volunteering. Although Sustainable Saratoga is by definition a civic group based on the size of its budget and its lack of any paid staff, it borrows from the organizational backbone of professional groups. By becoming more specialized and establishing committees Sustainable Saratoga adapts components of the professional structure. We use Sustainable Saratoga because it is at a pivotal point in its restructuring toward a more professional outlook, but is organized solely by volunteers. The group formed with the goals of pushing sustainability in Saratoga, but has realized over the years that dividing and delegating the topics among subgroups is a more organized and efficient structure. Amy Durland of Sustainable Saratoga explained that the organization's "top priorities are reflected by the group's committees" (pers. comm. 2013). The five committees for Sustainable Saratoga are: 1) Energy Efficiency and Resources 2) Farming, Open Space and Natural Resources 3) Local Economy 4) Compost, Waste and Recycling 5) Housing and Urban Planning 6) Transportation and Mobility 7) Communications. Rather than having community wide meetings "that took a huge amount of

effort to organize,” the group transitioned to this more traditional structure with a board of directors and specific committees focusing on all aspects of sustainability (A. Durland, pers. comm., Feb. 27, 2013).

This transition resulted in a project-centered approach rather than a focus on a general mission. Based on her personal observations, Durland noted that volunteers were more apt to join and stick with committees because there was a set goal and usually a timeline for the group. Additionally, meetings were less frequent than the community wide meetings and usually were able to cover more material in a shorter period of time. Volunteers generally felt satisfied by their work with the committees and were more likely to continue working with the group, even after they completed their committee’s project. As Durland stated, this transition allowed Sustainable Saratoga “to move away from the grassroots organizing and move to the ‘next level’” of environmental organizing (pers. comm. 2013).

Specialization is also seen in the form of unique projects developed by passionate individuals with specific projects. These projects are created to occupy the niches the broader, umbrella groups don’t fulfill. Examining Sustainable Saratoga, we can see a number of programs: The Urban Forestry Project by Tom Denny, BYOBag Saratoga by Alex Chaucer, and the plans for the Spa Solar Park on the landfill designed by Larry Toole. These projects also bring up an interesting point: Who are these individuals?

The Role of Individuals

The programs listed above were created primarily as a result of the drive of passionate and skilled individuals. Tom Denny, of the Urban Forestry Project, may not have experience with forestry or environmental movements, but he had the leadership skills and motivation to take on the Project. As Denny explained, he had experience with leadership as a result of his roles as a leader in the Skidmore Music Department and a president of a small chamber choir. Additionally, Denny explained that as a retiree he had the time and energy to dedicate to the project. When the project began in 2011 Denny was, “putting way over forty hours a week towards the project. Even now there are long days” (pers. comm. 2013). This sort of energy and dedication is mirrored by another individual Alex Chaucer. Chaucer, a current Skidmore employee, is highly skilled in Geographic Information Systems (GIS), social media, and other

technical services. He assisted Denny on the tree audit and began his own initiative of banning bags in Saratoga, BYOBag Saratoga.

Other prominent individuals include Steve Toman of Palio+Ignite who works with Bikeatoga; Michelle Owens, a gardener and author of Grow the Good Life, who developed the Lake Ave Green Project; Jeff Olson, a transportation planner and consultant, who is working on the Saratoga Green Belt project; and Charlie Samuels, photographer and media expert, who has worked with Bikeatoga and Complete Streets. Steve Toman contributed to the group's marketing and communication efforts, working to improve Bikeatoga's presence in the community. Previously, Bikeatoga was named Saratoga Healthy Transportation Network (SHTN). The story goes, that one day when Toman was visiting the Bikeatoga workshop with his young son he overheard the group members using the SHTN acronym (pronounced shit-en). That was when Steve stepped in, changing the group's name (to something that sounded more appropriate), logo and website. This was the start of a relationship that still continues today. As a result of Toman's contributions to the group, Bikeatoga can compensate for the lack of a paid staff to work on communications. Instead Toman, a marketing and design expert, is there to make and maintain their website and work on other marketing campaigns (J. Klepetar pers. comm. 2013).

Jeff Olson's skills as a transportation planner and consultant are a huge asset to the planning of the Green Belt Project, as Olson's knowledge and expertise allow the planning to progress without the assistance of a professional paid planner. Michelle Owens used her gardening experience and social media savvy skills to start the Lake Avenue Elementary School Garden Project. She continues to assist with the project's Facebook website, updating it with recipes, events and pictures of the kids gardening and cooking. These individuals voluntary contributions have a dramatic impact on the movement here in Saratoga Springs. Their talents help to provide the organizational backbone that is lacking in many volunteer groups without paid staff.

Another keystone individual in the Saratoga movement, and perhaps one of the most prominent, is Barbara Glaser. Glaser is a Saratoga P.L.A.N. board emeritus, an advisor for Children and Nature in Saratoga, president of Linell Lands, owner of Spring Street Gallery (110 Spring St) and School No. 4 (112 Spring St), both hubs for environmental and non-profit activity, a founding member of the Open Space Project, as well as being involved in numerous other initiatives. As a former member of Saratoga Chamber of Commerce Linda Toohey described,

“Barbara is...the seamstress who for decades has been able to... bring together myriad diverse groups so that what were once really patches of preservation have been woven into a tapestry that is one of the significant glories of our community” (The Saratogian 2012). Glaser works to encourage collaboration within the movement and facilitates communication between groups through the 112 Spring St location.

Getting Political

Within the past five years the Saratoga environmental movement has begun to become more political in nature. Examples of political projects include the Anti-Idling Ordinance, Critical Mass, Complete Streets, and the Real Food Challenge. These events are considered to be more political because they deviate from the traditional environmental topics in Saratoga: preservation and recreation. Instead, they address topics that relate to sustainability and relate to topics that are important on a national scale: Climate change, alternative transportation, and local food. The emergence of these programs indicate 1) that the movement as a whole is transitioning into the Fourth Wave of environmentalism 2) that environmentalists in Saratoga are more attuned to national initiatives, 3) that there is a foundation for political action that already exists in Saratoga and 4) that there is some force driving this push for political initiatives.

Based on our research, we believe that Saratoga is a community that is well-prepared to take on political topics, based on its history of preservation and recreation. While Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park’s lupine planting and Karner blue butterfly programs may not seem to be political in nature, they are working to establish a connection to nature and the Saratoga landscape. These programs work “to increase the number of people who empathize with eco-centric values through cultivating their ecological consciousness” (Devall & Sessions 1985, Merchant 1990). Once this connection is established, the citizens of Saratoga can see the value in the environment and are more likely to take political action to protect and preserve this resource. Therefore, these First and Second wave programs and initiatives are what allow for the development of a political Fourth Wave movement.

Skidmore’s Contribution to the Movement

Regarding the ‘who’ in this situation, we identified Skidmore College’s Environmental Action Club and their subcommittee, the Cool Cities Committee, as huge drivers in this new

environmental movement. Many of the projects mentioned above were initiated by Skidmore students, who then collaborated with local environmental groups and stakeholders to implement them in Saratoga. Not only is this political action a means to create a bridge between the college and the community, Skidmore also serves as a source of volunteers and passionate individuals for the movement. One example of this is the Anti-Idling Ordinance, where students from the Cool Cities Committee collaborated with City Council Members like Department of Public Works Commissioner Skip Scirocco, Sustainable Saratoga, and the County Supervisor Joanne Yepsen. The students then went into Saratoga Springs High School to educate the students on the Ordinance and the negative effects of idling to the environment and health. These connections proved to not only be educational experiences for the Skidmore students, but also opportunities for the community to tap into Skidmore College as a resource and utilize the students' momentum and drive to their advantage.

Skidmore students often act as a force that pushes the movement towards the radical and political end of the spectrum. As a liberal campus that is attuned to both national and global issues, Skidmore can push the community to look outside of Saratoga and take note of what is happening on the national scale. The key collaborator with the college is Sustainable Saratoga, a group that has worked with the school on the Cool Cities campaign, the Anti-Idling ordinance, and developing bike share proposals for the city. Sustainable Saratoga has also served as a gateway for Skidmore students to get in contact with other influential players in Saratoga such as Joanne Yepsen, Tobin Alexander-Young, and certain City Council members. These partnerships allow the students to get involved with the community and the Saratoga environmental movement. It creates awareness for Skidmore's students of Saratoga's environmental concerns and helps Saratoga move towards a more political movement.

Conclusion

No one has ever studied the environmental movement of Saratoga Springs before this project, which makes it so unique. All of the data we collected on these groups is completely original, and therefore our analyses are as well. One main objective of this project was to study the size, breadth and reach of Saratoga's environmental groups. After studying 34 environmental organizations for about six months, we were able to address these questions. We also noted that the movement is growing and saw three groups form during the course of our

study. As students living in Saratoga for these past four years we learned that the environmental movement is much more complex than we ever imagined. We never realized how many local environmental groups existed and how many niches were filled just here in Saratoga. We were also surprised to observe that the movement is not only large in scope but very dynamic and covered a wide array of topics.

Second, we found that the environmental groups in Saratoga cover an array of environmental subjects to fulfill a variety of niche topics. The diversity of these niches allows environmental groups to survive and decreases the amount of competition between groups. We also discovered that the majority of groups are still focused on the 1st and 2nd Wave topics of preservation and conservation, as well as education and outreach. However, sustainability is gradually becoming a more important topic in the Saratoga environmental scene, an indication that the movement is transitioning into the 4th Wave of environmentalism. Progression towards the 4th Wave, a trend that emphasizes sustainability and is more political in nature, is pushed in part by more progressive individuals moving to Saratoga Springs, the influence of Skidmore College and its Environmental Action Club and the rise of more political initiatives since the signing of the 2009 U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

Concerning structure, we discerned two distinct forms of activity and organizational in the 34 environmental groups: 1) the professional organizations with paid staff and large budgets, and 2) the volunteer-run civic groups, with smaller budgets and no paid staff. One of the most interesting findings of our analysis was the presence of a surprisingly large and relatively well-funded professional environmental movement. Most shocking, perhaps, was the realization that there are about 50 people who go to work every day for the environment. The paid staff provide managerial support and organization to these groups, while the volunteers bring numbers, passion and ideas to the organizations. While volunteers play an intrinsic role for both professional and civic groups, paid staff create consistency in the group, improves financial management and fundraising, and establishes a permanent advocacy presence. In the future, collaboration between civic and professional groups will allow for a sharing of this organizational backbone and larger funds, a move that will assist civic groups with the managerial aspects of organizing. Through this collaboration we feel that the movement as a whole will be able to accomplish more initiatives faster, better, and with a higher level of success.

Regarding the success of the environmental movement in Saratoga, we found that the 34 groups host over 900 events each year and collectively have over 200,000 Facebook likes. We found that both civic and professional are equally as active with respect to events. Outdoor and environmental events then provide the foundation for an ecological consciousness by creating a connection between Saratoga citizens and their environment. When individuals establish this relationship they will say, “This is something I care about; this is something I want to protect.” As a result, these events not only bring the community together, but also work to establish the foundation for political action in Saratoga. Although the number of Facebook likes differs between professional and civic groups, we can conclude that the number of likes leads to more involvement in and public awareness of the local environment movement. The rising rate of growth of environmental organizations and initiatives, as well as the large number of events held, Facebook likes, volunteers, paid staff, and attendance at many events all indicate that the movement in Saratoga is vibrant and has the capacity continue to grow in new and interesting ways.

Although Saratoga has come a long way and progressed through four different waves of environmentalism we wonder what the future will hold for Saratoga’s environmental groups. Are the organizational and leadership structures environmental groups are now adapting the most successful or efficient? As with any form of activism, we fear that volunteers will ‘burn out’ and will no longer participate in the movement. This declining involvement could lead to a decrease in group funds and activity. As Alex Chaucer describes, “There’s still a lot of work to be done” (pers. comm. 2013). How will this work get accomplished in future years, by whom, and by which groups or initiatives? We have high hopes that the dedication of Saratoga citizens to their community will not let the environmental movement fade from existence. Additionally, the present member of the Saratoga environmental movement have learned to “re-spin environmental messages” to generate public support and City Council’s vote through specific causes, larger events, and overall greater town participation and collaboration (Bosso 2005). Adaptations like this change in framing will allow groups to modify their structure and practices to meet future demands.

The contributions of these local environmental groups to Saratoga are innumerable. No amount of Facebook likes or yearly events will show the impact environmental groups have had on not only Saratoga’s environment, but on the community as a whole. Across the country there

are similar local environmental movements occurring, that some would say are more successful than the national environmental movement. We can speculate that increased local environmental activity can be observed across the U.S. We also can conjecture that the professionalization and rise of political initiatives in the local environmental movement can be observed in many of these localities. The validity of this speculation can be tested by future researchers in other cities comparable to Saratoga Springs.

There is still a lot of potential for continued research of the Saratoga environmental movement. Our local Saratoga study can be built upon and improved with a complete list of each organization's budget, the number of volunteers at each event, and a more precise calculation of group membership. These values would be a great indicator for environmental activity and advocacy in the community. A deeper exploration of the collaborations between groups would also enrich our topic. As the environmental movement in Saratoga Springs continues to grow and change, more research can be conducted regarding these shifts.

It is hard to tell what Saratoga environmental groups will leave to see the next wave of environmentalism, or even to speculate what this new wave will be. We do, however, understand that the breadth of environmental groups, the vibrancy of their many volunteers, and the initiative provided by persistent individuals all lay the foundation for a sustained environmental movement in Saratoga. We believe that these factors provide the momentum for the movement to continue to grow and flourish into the future.

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Appendix A: Names of Organizations

American Farmland Trust NY
 Bikeatoga
 Bring Your Own Bag (BYOB) Saratoga
 Children and Nature in Saratoga
 Complete Streets Advisory Board
 Cool Cities (of EAC)
 Critical Mass
 Environmental Action Club
 Fish Creek Rod and Gun Club
 Friends of Spa State Park
 Friends of the Kayaderosseras
 Hudson Crossing Park
 Kayaderosseras Fish & Game Club
 Lake Ave Green Club
 Land Trust Alliance
 The Ndakinna Education Center
 NOFA New York
 Northeast Adirondack Mountain Club
 Saratoga Battlefield National Historical Park Service
 Saratoga Sailing Club
 Saratoga Lake Association
 Saratoga Farmers Market
 Saratoga Greenbelt
 Saratoga Mountain Bike Association
 Saratoga P.L.A.N.
 SaraSpa Rod and Gun Club
 Saratoga Rowing Association
 Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation
 Sierra Club Saratoga
 Slow Food Saratoga Region
 Sustainable Saratoga
 Waldorf School Saratoga Forest Reserve Program
 Wilton Wildlife Preserve & Park
 Yaddo Gardens

Appendix B: Niche Definitions

Education: The organization emphasizes education and outreach programs that teach about the group's mission or other issues relating to the environment and sustainability.

Recreation: The organization either facilitates (i.e. by providing trails or dock space) or advocates for recreation activities.

Sustainability: The organization provides an alternative way of learning and living through education and experience. The organization in some way connects the three social, economic, and environmental pillars of sustainability.

Ecosystem/ Biodiversity: The organization promotes maintaining the biodiversity and natural ecosystem to prevent destruction of the habitat.

Conservation: The organization is actively preserving a plot of land (i.e. a park) or has a mission that works to preserve land for conservation purposes.

Policy: The organization participates in local, regional, and national policy work that advocates for the organization's cause.

Food/ Agriculture: The organization advocates for fresh food and local farm preservation.

Transportation/ Infrastructure: The organization works to provide safe, alternative modes of transportation. It can also be working to move city infrastructure in the direction of sustainability.

Water: The organization works to preserve or enhance the quality of water. It can also work to protect local water bodies and encourage appropriate utilization of water as a resource.

Energy: The organization focuses on energy use issues or alternative energy technologies.

Appendix C: Environmental Events in Saratoga Springs

1900- Yaddo Garden Association formed
 1916- Saratoga Battlefield National Historical Park
 1946- SaraSpa Rod and Gun Club
 1957- Saratoga Lake Sailing Club formed
 1964- Saratoga Lake Association formed
 1977- Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation formed
 1978- Saratoga Farmers Market formed
 1981- Waldorf School Forest Kindergarten Program created
 1980- American Farmland Trust formed
 1986, July- Proposal for exit 14 development project "Saratoga East" (380 townhouses, 400,000 sq. ft. of office spaces=154 acres, 50 acres protected)
 1987- Open Space Project organization formed by Barbara Glaser to protect Saratoga's land
 1991- Environmental Action Club formed
 1993- Land Trust Alliance formed
 1996- Kayaderosseras Fish and Game Club formed
 1999- Hudson Crossing Park formed
 2000- Saratoga Mountain Bike Association (SMBA) formed
 2001- Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park
 2003, July- Saratoga P.L.A.N. established

2004, March- Friends of the Kayaderosseras formed
2005- Bikeatoga (formerly SHTN) formed
2008, September- Lake Ave Garden Project
2008, November- Sustainable Saratoga founded by Joanne Yepsen and Julie Stokes
2009, October- Cool Cities Committee formed at Skidmore
2009, October 24- Mayor Johnson signs U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement
2011, March- Saratoga joins Cleaner Greener Communities Program
2012, March 2- Complete Streets Policy passed
2012, June- Shared Access Advisory Board established
2012, March 23- City Council adopts Climate Smart Communities Pledge
2012, May- Saratoga's first "Green Street" created
2013, January- Saratoga Springs awarded Safe Routes to School Grant for Geyser Elementary School
2013, January- Urban Forestry Project complete
2013, February- Greenhouse Gas Inventory of Saratoga completed
2013, March- Anti-idling Ordinance passed
2013, May- EAC's Critical Mass ride