Climate of Hope: 2018

A Community Gathering on Environmental Changes in the Pájaro Valley
Introduction and Background
Regeneración - Pajaro Valley Climate Action is working with community partners to empower our community to respond locally to the global challenge of a changing climate.
After forming in 2016 we piloted a series of activities to engage our community:
Healthy Children for
A Healthy Planet Festival
In early 2017 our core team decided to conduct a community based research project in order to find out how our local community is being affected by pollution and environmental changes and to learn what solutions people believed would be most beneficial to our community.
We “took the pulse” of our community with a mini-survey at the 2017 Watsonville Earth Day/Children’s Day Festival and held two community roundtables to solicit input.
The Community Survey

We developed our survey after extensive research and consultation and hired Dr. Shishir Mathur, Associate Dean of Research, College of Social Sciences, San Jose State University to train our survey volunteers and conduct data analysis.
Demographics of Survey Respondents
Surveys Collected Online and In Person

138 • Usable Online Surveys

186 • Usable Paper Surveys

324 • Total Surveys
The majority of people identified as either Mexican or Hispanic, Latino, or Mexican American.
Breakdown of Respondents by Language

Language

More than half the respondents speak primarily Spanish at home.

16 speakers of Mexican dialects were interviewed (in Spanish or English).
Housing

Roughly half of all respondents rent their home, one in four own their home. Nearly one in five stay with family or friends.
Breakdown of Respondents by Online/In-Person

Survey Format
More than half completed their surveys in person, and slightly less than half online.
Transportation

Nearly three out of four drive a car for transportation.
Gender
Slightly more females than males answered. People that were transgender or non-binary were also represented.
First Survey
For more than three in four respondents, this was their first survey.

Breakdown by First Community Survey

Yes/Si, 73%
No, 27%
Young adults ages 18-34 made up more than half of the survey respondents.

Breakdown of Respondents by Age

- 18 to 34 years/18 a 34 años, 53%
- 35 to 54 years, 29%
- 55 to 74 years, 17%
- 75 years and above, 1%
We had good representation from adults in the community.

We want to know what young people think!*

*We could only legally survey adults. However, since climate change will affect the youngest people the most, we know this is a limitation and gap in our research.
Highlights from the Survey

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Key Findings

1. Environmental Changes are Observed and Experienced in the Pajaro Valley
2. Issues Affect Groups Differently – and Disproportionately
3. There is Strong Desire to Take Personal and Collective Action
Top Concerns

Litter and Pesticides are the most commonly cited pollution types reported to negatively affect the Pájaro Valley Community.
More About Litter

Litter comes from the overproduction of stuff - it is a visual clue to something that has gone very wrong in how we live our lives.

Litter shows a lack of connection and caring about the environment, including most profoundly a diminished sense of self-worth.
“I have many health problems, but I don’t have time to go to doctor appointments because I work a lot.”

“Some people are being affected by having pesticides on food or being sprayed w/ pesticides. People living outside are exposed to elements and when more erratic or extreme, worse for them.”

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“When notified about pesticide spraying I sometimes choose not to work because of fear of bringing pesticides home on clothing and bringing poison into the home...I check on the water level for work and sometimes the chemical level is too high for the plants.”

“My child and I get rashes from pesticide exposure.”

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“Due to my cancer, I need to spend more on natural [food] and organic foods. Perhaps I don’t eat a lot of meat, very little, but due to my cancer I have a lot of expenses. Smog is very bad for me. And the contaminated air affects my illness. Honestly, I don’t know how to explain it.”

“My child can’t play outside because polluted air aggravates his Von Willebrand Disease.”
Environmental Changes Experienced

Pájaro Valley is suffering from very high temperatures, heatwaves and frequent drought.

- More days with very high temperatures: 70%
- Heat waves during late...: 69%
- More frequent drought: 51%
- More severe drought: 36%
- More frequent flooding: 23%
- More severe flooding: 18%
- Sea level rise: 14%
- Salt water intrusion in wells: 12%
- Other changes: 11%

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Extreme Heat by Occupation

Three-quarter of agriculture workers, their families or neighbors in the Pájaro Valley suffer from extreme heat conditions at the workplace.

Impact of Extreme Heat Conditions at the Work Place by Occupation

- **Agriculture Workers**: 74%
- **Non-Agriculture Workers**: 40%
“Everyone who’s working in agriculture - farmworkers - is affected more by the heat.”

“Sometimes we can only work 3 or 4 hours; some people faint.”
More about Heat

“The supervisor stops work. If we leave early it means smaller pay check, less money.”

“The classroom temperature exceeds 95 degrees, at times over 100. No AC. Human bodies cannot concentrate and learn at these extreme temperatures.”

“It is hotter in the blackberry rows. It is causing fainting. Stressful days, after that it is cooler.”
People Impacted Most

Compared to homeowners, non-homeowners are more likely to feel they are affected more than others by pollution and or environmental changes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacts: Homeowners / Non-Homeowners</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I/we are being affected more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, everybody in the region is being affected equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I/we are not being affected more, but I believe some other people are</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Support for Changes and Initiatives
### Initiatives to Reduce Pollution and/or Greenhouse Gas Emissions

All initiatives were rated positively and with strong support (greater than 4 on a 5 point scale).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase access to local organic agriculture</td>
<td>4.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more sidewalks so people can safely walk</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more bike lanes so people can ride safely</td>
<td>4.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the use of clean energy over fossil fuels</td>
<td>4.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood fairs to engage/educate the public</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job re-training to help people to switch to green…</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer sponsored car pools, vans, or busses</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern rail system on existing, active rail line</td>
<td>3.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Support for Service on the Existing, Active Coastal Line

Bus riders are most likely to support provisions of modern rail service on the existing, active rail line between Watsonville, Aptos, Capitola and Santa Cruz, with connections at Pájaro to other rail networks by Primary Transportation Mode.
I believe that the local government should provide opportunities for residents to install solar on their home.

I believe that businesses and corporations should pay taxes proportionate to their negative environmental impact.

I feel that it is my responsibility to participate in solving environmental problems.

If there were resources available to make it affordable, I would make my business more green.

I believe that all employers of a certain size, should provide alternative transportation options/incentives.

I would eat more plant foods and less animal foods to help protect the environment.

I would participate in a tree planting event.

If I would afford it, I would participate in a training to work in a green career.

**Degree of Support for Various Initiatives to Promote Environmental Sustainability**

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Employer-Sponsored Transportation

There is strong support for employer sponsored carpools, vans and busses.
News sources

Television (55%) is the most frequently cited source for those who primarily speak Spanish at home.

For non-Spanish speakers online news (40%) is the most frequently cited source of daily news.
Next Steps
Future Direction & Needs

• **Pose additional questions for further research.** Our data could be analyzed in many different ways.

• **Share our data.** We believe our data will be helpful to many groups in our community as organizations seek grants or conduct more research.

• **Attract resources.** We need funding to complete a longer written report and will be seeking funding to begin projects or campaigns chosen from survey results.
To request a copy of this presentation or to learn more about this project please contact us through our website. Donations to support the cost of our research and reporting are much appreciated. Donate securely online at www.regenerationpajarovalley.org

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