

National Purpose, Local Action

Organizational Effectiveness of Sierra Club Groups and Chapters

R E P O R T

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Kenneth Andrews Marshall Ganz
University of North Carolina Harvard University

Matthew Baggetta Hahrie Han Chaeyoon Lim
Harvard University Wellesley College Harvard University

In Collaboration with the National Sierra Club

Lisa Renstrom
President

Greg Casini
Vice-President Administration

Julia Reitan
Director of OVAS

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I arise in the morning. . .
. . . torn between a desire to improve (or save) the world
. . .and a desire to enjoy (or savor) the world.
It makes it hard to plan the day.

E. B. White
U.S. author and humorist
(1899 – 1985)

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1. INTRODUCTION

The NPLA Project

We decided to undertake the National Purpose, Local Action project in recognition of the fact that accomplishment of the national purposes of the Sierra Club had to become grounded in effective local action. The environmental movement was – and is – at a crossroads. Most national environmental organizations lack an effective local activist base. And most local activist groups lack effective national strategy. Almost uniquely, however, the Sierra Club is composed not only of 750,000 members, but also of 62 Chapters and 380 local Groups through which those members can become engaged in effective local action.

But how effective are they? Do the elected leaders of local Groups and Chapters struggle along, doing the best they can, but not to be relied on when something “really” must get done? Or are they doing well – developing leaders, engaging members and asserting public influence? Do some perform better than others? If so, why? How do we know? As questions about the organization as a whole grow more specific, it has been clear that no one has known how to answer them, and certainly not in a way that offered the opportunity for learning.

This project, then, which originated in the work of an OEGC task force led by Lisa Renstrom and Greg Casini, was initiated at the May 2003 board meeting, not only to answer the above questions, but also to mobilize volunteer leaders at all levels of the organization in getting the answers, reflecting on them, and acting on them – what we call description, explanation, and action.

We launched the project in September 2003 by training 130 volunteer facilitators who, over the course of the next 5 months, administered self-assessment surveys to 1650 ExCom members and led 280 ExCom self-assessment sessions. We also interviewed 380 ExCom chairs, analyzed Sierra Club financial, staffing, and organizational data, and evaluated the ‘friendliness’ of each local community within which a Group or Chapter works.

We described what we found to the national leadership a year ago in a ‘preliminary report’ and provided individual profiles to each Group and Chapter ExCom for their review. The ‘final report’ explains our findings with a focus on implications for action.

This is only a beginning. The work of gaining a deep understanding of what needs to be changed, figuring out how to change it, and, most importantly, summoning up the will to change, only begins with this report. It is the leadership of the Sierra Club who will decide what to do, how much to do, and when to do it.

Questions

We evaluated the effectiveness of Groups and Chapters in three ways: leader development, member engagement, and public influence.

- **Leader Development** means enhancing ExCom members' organizational skills, motivation and ability to recruit new leaders on whom Groups and Chapters depend to build their capacity.
- **Member Engagement** describes the extent to which members participate directly in Group or Chapter work as core activists, leaders and general participants. More participation leads to greater influence of every kind.
- **Public Influence** is the primary goal of most Groups and Chapters: assuring access to the outdoors, educating their community about environmental concerns, advocating on behalf of public policy reform, and electing officials who share the Sierra Club's agenda.

We looked for an explanation of these differences in effectiveness by investigating four families of organizational features:

- **Community Context** – the demographic, economic, political, and cultural characteristics of the communities in which Groups and Chapters are located, including the density of Sierra Club membership.
- **Organizational Structure** – how Groups and Chapters organize themselves and interact with one another including the size of their membership and the number of their active committees.
- **Leadership** – the values and experience of the individual ExCom members, how they learn to lead, their strategy, and how well they govern themselves – deciding what to do and organizing themselves to do it.
- **Action** – mobilizing and deploying resources of money, time, and networks as support activities that include community building, organization building, and new member engagement; and as program activities that include conservation, electoral and outings work.

Findings

We report our findings about both Groups and the Chapters with which they are affiliated because they play very distinct roles in the organization, are structured differently, subject to different expectations and can draw on different resources to meet them. On the other hand, because each is governed by an elected ExCom and engage in similar activities, they face similar challenges.

- **Groups and Chapters do little to develop leaders, but could do far more.** Although ExCom members are committed, and draw satisfaction from their work, they do not learn much about the organizational skills that they need to be effective: self-management, task-management, and especially the skill of managing other people. Because it grows out of mastery of skills, they develop little sense of personal efficacy. In short, they feel more motivated to do the work than competent to do it. They also have little success recruiting new leaders. Only 10% of ExCom members recruit half of the new leaders being recruited while 70% of ExCom members recruit no new leaders at all. Only 20% of the ExComs recruit enough leaders to more than replace themselves while 44% of the Group ExComs and 25% of Chapter ExComs do not recruit enough new leaders to replace themselves.
- **Chapters and Groups engage no more than 2% of their members in local action, but could engage many more.** In the median Group of 1047 members, 111 or 11% vote in the national board elections, but only 24 members participate in local activities, 10 serve on committees, 4 lead outings, and 3 serve as core activists, people who commit 5 hours or more a week to the Sierra Club. In the median Chapter of 6498 members, 720 vote in national elections but only 54 members participate in Chapter activities, 22 serve on committees, 4 lead outings, and 10 serve as core activists.
- **Chapters and Groups have widely varying, but limited, degrees of Public Influence, but could have more.** Chapters enjoy more Public Influence than Groups, except in improving access to the outdoors. Groups and Chapters have the most Public Influence on their communities, but average only 3.5 on a 5-point scale. Their advocacy influence is more limited and their electoral influence is more limited still and tied to the politics of the local community.

We also learned why the Groups and Chapters that develop leaders, engage members, and exert public influence, succeed.

ExCom members' values of world-changing, social-recreation, and self-fulfillment drive their motivation to learn, the quality of ExCom governance, and their choice of programs.

- **Leader Development:** Successful ExComs identify with the environmental movement, not only with their local community; they also prioritize community building, and take national goals seriously. ExCom members learn to lead by interacting with other leaders, holding leadership positions, and participating in program activity. Those who learn the most, especially how to manage others, participate in a well-governed ExCom. Individuals who learn the most value self-fulfillment highly - although it is not a widely held value in the Sierra Club - they get help from fellow ExCom members, they accept coaching from locally based staff and attend formal training.
- **Member Engagement:** Core activists – and outings leaders - are the key to engaging participants in local activities. Chapters and Groups with more active committees or activity sections recruit more core activists. More members matter too, but membership growth alone beyond a certain point makes little difference in the number of members that become engaged (see Chart 49a on page 65). Two Groups of 1000 members each, for example, engage an estimated 64 participants or 32 each. But one group of 2000 members engages only 34 participants. On the other hand, ExComs that focus on member interests, prioritize organization building, and conduct regular new member engagement activity, especially new member meetings, recruit more core activists, particularly if they can also access locally assigned field staff. More core activists recruit more participants and generate more conservation and outings activity. And more activity creates the opportunity to engage more participants.
- **Public Influence:** Groups and Chapters that do a good job of developing their leaders, engaging their members, and generating conservation, electoral and outings activity earn more Public Influence, even in an unfriendly environment. They support their activities by networking with the broader community and by conducting organization building and community building activities. And they govern themselves well enough to

approach their projects with a strong sense of group efficacy. The “friendliness” of the community context, on the other hand, matters primarily for electoral influence – and far less than many think.

Although most ExComs share information with members, especially through newsletters, and raise funds, only fundraising influences variation in effectiveness. On the other hand, organization building (training, retreats), community building (social events, celebrations), and new member engagement all impact Group and Chapter effectiveness regardless of strategy, but are much less widely practiced.

Groups and Chapters that develop their leaders, engage their members, and assert public influence as effectively as they might are the exception, not the rule. It will take action to make them the rule.

Action

Our report points to five implications for action:

- **Commitment**
Commit the staff, financial and moral resources to developing effective Chapters and Groups. Affirm that the development of the Club's volunteer leadership and the Chapters and Groups they lead is a critical investment in the strength of the organization as a whole and in the environmental movement more broadly.
- **Governance**
Transform the governance practice of Group and Chapter ExComs by providing training in the skills of deliberation and implementation, establishing clear measures of performance and providing ongoing coaching by trained staff and leadership. A focus on governance will enhance the quality of leader development, member engagement, and public influence.
- **Leader Development Program**
Establish leader identification, recruitment, and development programs in each Group and Chapter to (1) provide urgently needed training in organizational skills, especially managing others; (2) engage new members through personal contact and regular

meetings; (3) enact explicit leader development practices including identifying potential leaders, bringing them into new positions, and enhancing their skills; and (4) provide coaching and mentoring. Focus on Leader Development will enhance Member Engagement and Public Influence as well.

- **Group and Chapter Support Activity**

Review the ongoing support activity expected of each Group or Chapter. Information sharing, the most widely practiced support activity, has no relationship to variation in effectiveness. Activities with the most influence, however, such as new member engagement, are less widely practiced.

- **Structural Reform**

Determine the structural changes that can best support effectiveness by examining the question of size, the extensiveness opportunities for participation in both committees and activities, considering arrangements that could make Chapter and Group interactions more productive, evaluating the contribution of activity sections, and considering funding mechanisms that could create greater incentives for community engagement.

None of what we suggest will be easy, but neither is it overwhelmingly complex – it is just plain hard. But the Sierra Club is not starting from scratch: its people have a vision of the world as they would like it to be, a depth of experience grappling with the world as it is, and the values, the willingness to work, and the imagination to make it happen. What this most requires is a clear-eyed commitment to the proposition that the only way the Sierra Club can fulfill its national purpose at this point in time is to invest its financial, staff, and moral resources in developing its leaders, enhancing its organizational capacity, and conducting programs to engage in effective local action – rekindling the movement that it played such a key role in launching.

Section 2 of this report provides a brief overview of the project. In Section 3 we explain how we measure organizational effectiveness in terms of Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence. In Section 4, we identify sources of possible effectiveness, introducing our model of organizational process. In Section 5, we explain why some Groups and Chapters are more effective than others. And in Section 6 we return to the implications for action based on what we have learned from this study. We provide a methodological appendix in Section 7.

2. NPLA OVERVIEW

Goals of the NPLA

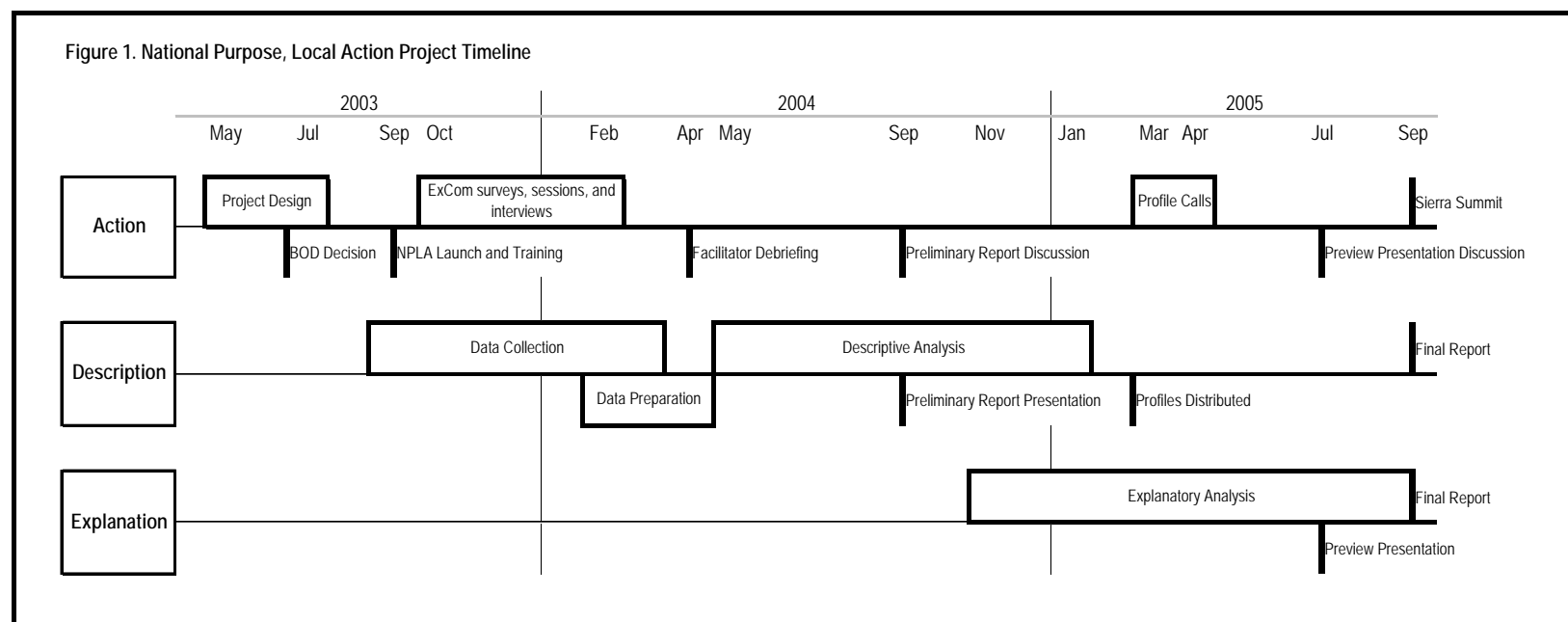
The goals of the National Purpose, Local Action project are threefold: action, description, and explanation. We engaged Sierra Club leaders in the 'action' required to learn from the experience of ExCom members across the country. We 'describe' what we learned about Group and Chapter performance on Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence. And we consider the effects of community context, organizational structure, leadership, and organizational action to 'explain' why some Groups and Chapters are more effective than others. We then return to consider steps to put this learning to work.

Action

As shown by the NPLA Timeline (**Figure 1**, next page), from July 2003 to March 2004 we worked with Sierra Club leaders to design the project: to recruit, train, and coordinate 130 volunteer facilitators; and to collect data. The facilitators collected 1624 written individual ExCom Leader Surveys (ELS) and led 280 ExCom Self-Assessment Sessions (ESAS) as we conducted 368 50-minute phone interviews with ExCom Chairs. After debriefing the facilitators, we prepared a preliminary report, discussed it with Club leaders in September 2004, and made profiles of individual ExComs available to them in April 2005. We created two databases: one from financial, staffing and other Sierra Club data, and another specifying political, economic, social, cultural and environmental characteristics of communities in which Groups and Chapters operate. We initiated discussion of the implications of our findings with national leaders in July and shared our findings with the entire Club at the first Sierra Summit in September 2005.

Description

From March to September 2004, we analyzed data descriptively. We entered, coded, and cleaned it and assessed possible bias due to non-participation by some ExCom members, Groups and Chapters. To identify patterns in the data, relationships among variables, and reliable measures of Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence, we used



statistical methods including factor analysis and cluster analysis. Having determined that we could measure variations in effectiveness, we presented descriptive findings to the national leadership as a 'preliminary report' in September 2004. In April 2005, we made profiles of each individual ExCom available to them so they could compare their own measures with those of the Club as a whole.

Explanation

From October 2004 to July 2005, we conducted an explanatory analysis of the data to learn why some Groups and Chapters are more effective than others. Regression analysis, our principal statistical tool, allowed us to determine whether systematic relationships between two variables exist and how strong they are. Multivariate regression also allows us to assess the influence of several variables simultaneously. This allows us to learn (1) how much each variable matters independent of everything else we are considering, often referred to as 'controlling' for other variables; and (2) how much of the difference in Group or Chapter performance that variable can account for. Because our data is aggregated, we can detect the patterns despite random individual errors. Our data is also a snapshot of the Sierra Club at one point in time. It is therefore difficult to determine cause and effect. Nevertheless, we can show which relationships exist and which do not, making plausible arguments about what affects what. Statistical analyses are only the tools we used; they are not the analysis itself. Throughout, we made judgments based on our organizational experience, relevant scholarship that informs this project, feedback from those steeped in knowledge of the Sierra Club and our own intuitions, expectations, and hunches from working closely with this data.

3. MEASURING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

What is Organizational Effectiveness?

We assess organizational effectiveness in three ways: (1) Leader Development, (2) Member Engagement, and (3) Public Influence. Leader Development means enhancing the motivation, skills, and practices of current leaders; Member Engagement means mobilizing members to participate in Group or Chapter activities; and Public Influence means advancing Sierra Club goals. We chose these measures because they evaluate organizational capacity, particularly among volunteer leaders and members, as well as the accomplishment of public goals. In the following section we describe ExCom effectiveness in two ways: as the median and as the amount of variation around the average. This variation – the fact that some Groups and Chapters do better than others – gives us the opportunity to learn some of the reasons why.

To illustrate these measures we use a ‘box and line’ chart. For example, **Chart 11** (on page 28) reports on Group size. If we imagine Groups stacked up from the smallest at the bottom to the largest at the top we can draw a horizontal line at the mid-point with half the Groups above it and half the Groups below it. This tells us the size of the ‘median’ Group, a measure that describes the typical Group better than the mean, which can give too much weight to exceptionally large or small Groups. The median line is located within a shaded box that includes 50% of all the Groups, 25% above the line and 25% below the line. The height and depth of this box show much variation there is around the median. Finally, the outer lines include 90 to 100% of all Groups, except for outliers.

Leader Development

Leader Development is critical because effectiveness at all levels of the organization requires elected leaders able to motivate people to work together, deal strategically with dynamic contexts, and adapt to the novel and challenging circumstances that accompany the work of advocacy.

We evaluated Leader Development in three ways: first, how much and what kind of leadership skills ExCom members learn from their experience in the Sierra Club; second, leadership

attitudes, or how motivated ExCom members feel by their work in the Club; and, finally, leadership behavior, which we evaluate in terms of their recruitment of volunteers and other leaders.

To measure these three components of Leader Development, we asked ExCom members what they had learned, how they felt about their experience in the Club, and how many people they had recruited. Based on their answers, we found that ExCom members learned three different types of skills: managing self, managing tasks, and managing other people. **Table 1a** below shows the practices that make up each of these components: managing self is about taking responsibility for one's work; managing tasks is about the skills needed to be a good advocate; and managing people is about working effectively with other volunteers.

Table 1a: Leadership Skills Scale Items

Managing Self
listening to other people
accepting responsibility
thinking creatively
accepting criticism
managing my time
Managing Others
providing others with support to do their work well
asking for help
asking people to volunteer
delegating responsibility
coaching and mentoring others
challenging others to be more effective
holding others accountable
Managing Tasks
organizing and running a meeting
working effectively with public officials
working effectively in coalition
speaking in public
planning and carrying out a campaign
working with the media
managing internal conflict

Leadership attitudes similarly sorted into three factors: commitment, satisfaction, and self-efficacy. As **Table 1b** shows on the following page, commitment measures the centrality of Sierra Club work in the lives of ExCom members. Satisfaction measures the fulfillment ExCom members feel from working with other ExCom members. Self-efficacy measures the extent to which an ExCom member feels confidence in their capacity to do Sierra Club work.

Table 1b: Leadership Attitudes Scale Items**Commitment**

What the Sierra Club stands for is very important to me.
 I am proud to tell others that I am part of the Sierra Club.
 I get a lot of satisfaction from seeing others participate.
 I feel myself to be part of the ExCom in which I work.
 My work in the Sierra Club influences many aspects of my life.
 I often try to think of ways of doing my work on the ExCom more effectively.
 I really feel as if the ExCom's problems are my problems.

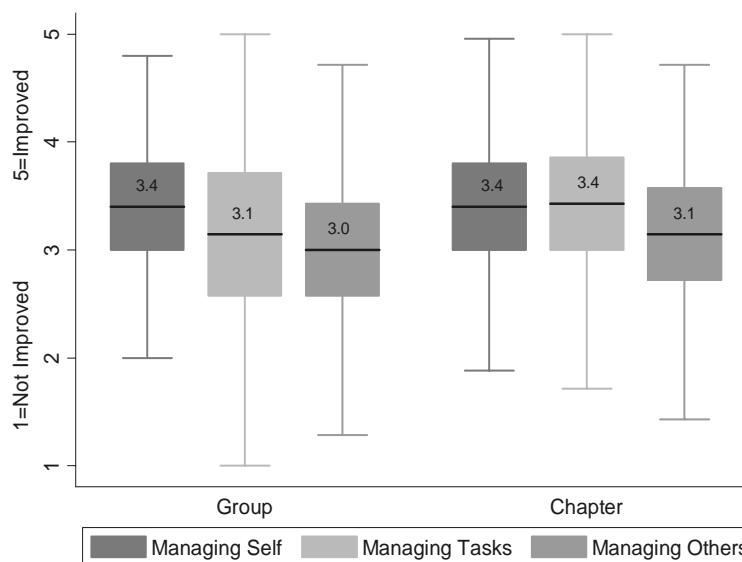
Satisfaction

My relations with other ExCom members are strained.
 My own creativity and initiative are suppressed by this ExCom.
 I enjoy talking and working with other ExCom members.
 The chance to get to know the other ExCom members is one of the best parts of working with the Group or Chapter.
 Working on this ExCom stretches my personal knowledge and skills.
 Working on this ExCom is an exercise in frustration.
 Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this ExCom.
 I learn a great deal from my work on this ExCom.
 I enjoy the kind of work we do on this ExCom.

Efficacy

I have confidence in my ability to do my work in the Sierra club.
 Most people in my group can do this work better than I can.
 All in all, I'm satisfied with the work I am doing in the Sierra Club.
 I have all the skills needed to do my work in the Sierra Club very well.

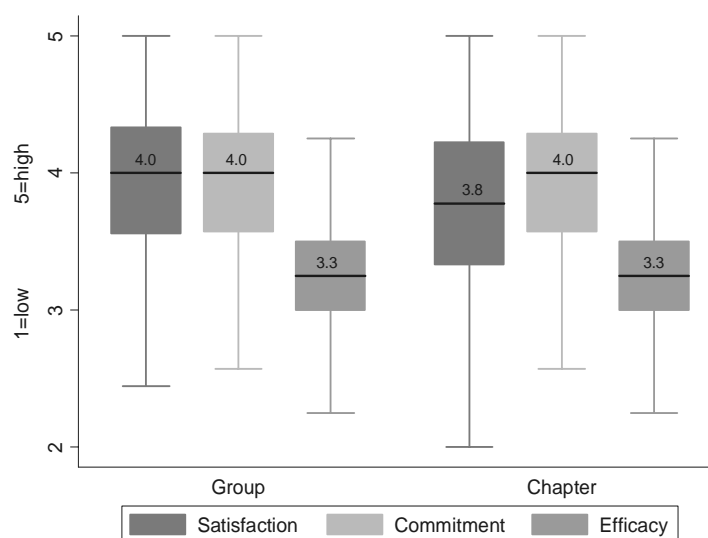
How do the skills and attitudes of Sierra Club leaders look overall? How much do they vary? Most ExCom members are learning something about self-management and task management, but not a great deal. They learn less about managing other people. **Chart 1a** displays the pattern of skill development in the Club as a whole.

Chart 1a: Leadership Skill Development in Groups and Chapters

The horizontal axis (x) on the bottom arrays the different types of skills. The vertical axis (y) shows the level of skill development from 1 (not learning) to 5 (learning a lot). Most Groups cluster around 3, the midpoint in a 5-point scale. The upper and lower lines show that some people are learning a lot more and others are not learning at all. This chart also shows that ExCom members are learning more self-management and task-management skills than the skill of managing other people.

Chart 1b shows how motivational attitudes develop in the Club. ExCom members feel highly committed to their work and they derive a great deal of satisfaction from working with their fellow ExCom members. On the other hand, they experience far less personal efficacy, as indicated by a median just above 3. Comparing this with skill development, ExCom members feel more motivated to do the work than able to do it.

Chart 1b: Leadership Attitudes in Groups and Chapters



To measure leader practices, we focused on recruiting and retaining new volunteers, especially those who assume leadership responsibilities. We asked if the people an ExCom member recruited still participate or play leadership roles in the organization. We used two measures: the number of volunteers recruited per ExCom member (Volunteer Recruitment Quotient or VRQ) and the number of those recruits who now hold leadership positions (Leader Recruitment Quotient or LRQ).

As **Chart 2** shows, the median Group ExCom member recruited one volunteer. The median Chapter ExCom member recruited three volunteers. Of those recruited, about 30% now serve as leaders.

Chart 2: Volunteer and Leader Recruitment in Groups and Chapters

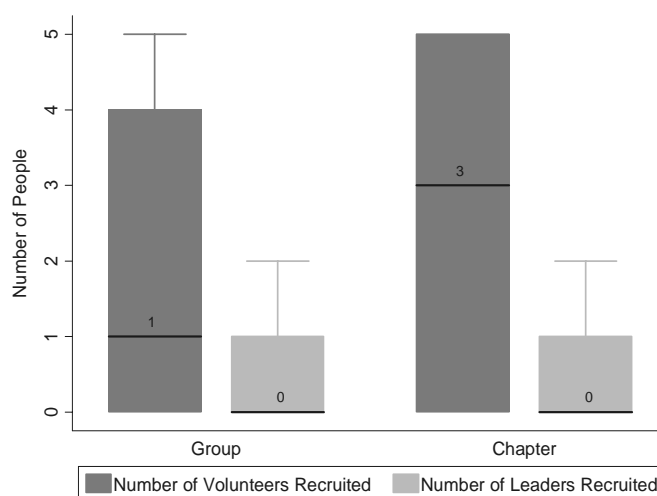
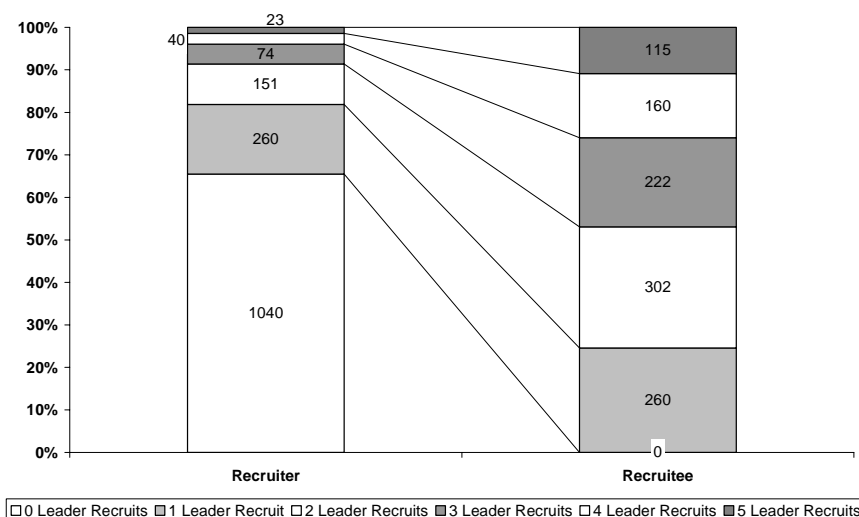


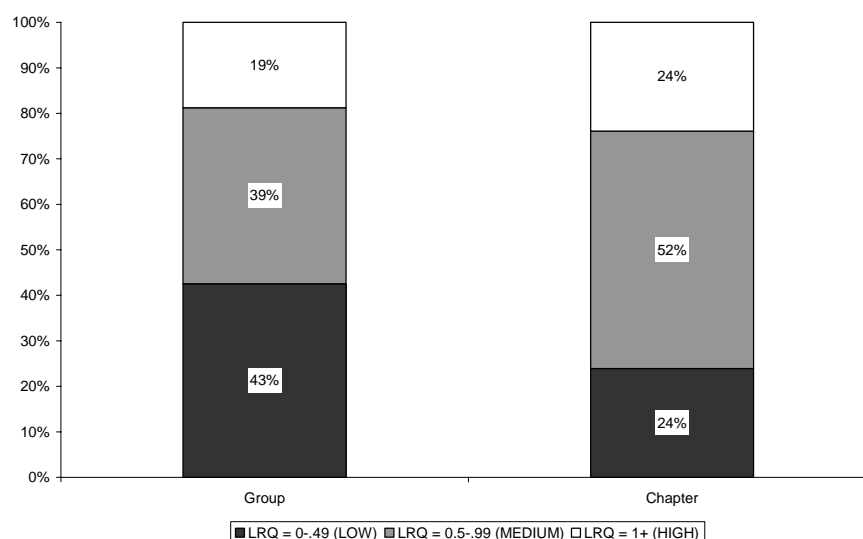
Chart 3 shows that leader recruitment is highly concentrated. The left bar divides the total number of ExCom members into categories by the number of leaders they recruited in the last five years. Two-thirds of ExCom members recruited no leaders. The right bar shows the number of leaders recruited, allowing us to compare the percentage of leaders recruited with the percentage of leaders doing the recruiting. Only 10% of ExCom members recruited half of the leaders, while 70% of ExCom members recruited no leaders. In sum, the success of an ExCom at recruiting is a function of the number of individual recruiters on the ExCom.

Chart 3: Concentration of Leader Recruitment: The Number of Leader Recruiters and the Number of Leaders They Recruited



What does this look like at the Chapter and Group level? In **Chart 4** we divide Chapters and Groups into high, medium and low based on recruitment. ExComs that recruit at least one new leader for each current leader we classified as 'high'. These ExComs should generate at least enough new leaders to replace themselves. Those that recruit .5 to .99 new leaders for every ExCom member we classified as 'medium'. These ExComs may generate enough new leaders to maintain themselves. And those that recruit less than .49 new leaders for every existing leader we classified as 'low'. These ExComs are finding it difficult to replace themselves.

Chart 4: Leadership Recruitment Quotient in Groups and Chapters



Only 19% of Group ExComs and 24% of Chapter ExComs recruit enough new leaders to replace themselves. Of Group ExComs, 39% recruit in the medium range – as do 52% of Chapter ExComs. And 43% of Group ExComs recruit in the low range while 24% of Chapter ExComs do. Although there is more of a problem with Groups than with Chapters, few ExComs recruit enough new leaders to replace themselves, let alone generate a 'leadership surplus'.

Member Engagement

Member Engagement is the second way we measure effectiveness. Engaging members advances the agenda of the Club, but also can deepen member commitment, expand their social networks, and shift the orientation of the local community. Because Groups and Chapters recruit few new members and rely largely on the direct marketing efforts of the national organization, the size of the membership is not a good measure of Member Engagement. Instead, we evaluate effectiveness by the levels of active participation.

As Table 2 shows, we compared eight major forms of participation. Membership is the most basic form of participation in the Club and is the base from which other participants are drawn. As individuals, members can also participate in the 'national' organization by voting in national elections and subscribing to *The Planet* newsletter, forms of participation largely unaffected by local Group and Chapter activities.

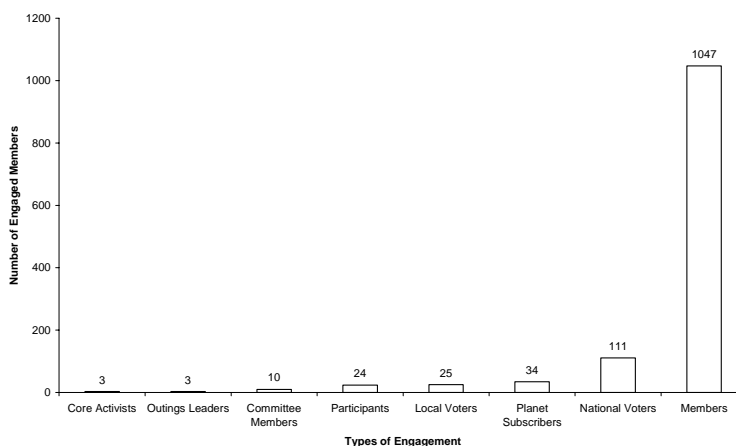
Table 2. Member Engagement in Groups and Chapters

Type of Engagement	Median Number of Members Engaged	
	Groups	Chapters
Core Activists	3	10
Outings Leaders	3	4
Committee Members	10	22
Participants	24	54
Local Voters	25	103
Planet Subscribers	34	211
National Voters	111	720
Members	1047	6498

The remaining five forms of participation are local to Groups and Chapters. Although voting in local elections is individual, the other four forms of participation are direct and relational. We measure direct participation by the number of core activists, committee members, outings leaders, and participants. Core activists invest five or more hours each week in Club work. Committee members accept formal responsibility for projects and programs. Outings leaders lead outings. Participants take part in Club activities regularly or from time to time.

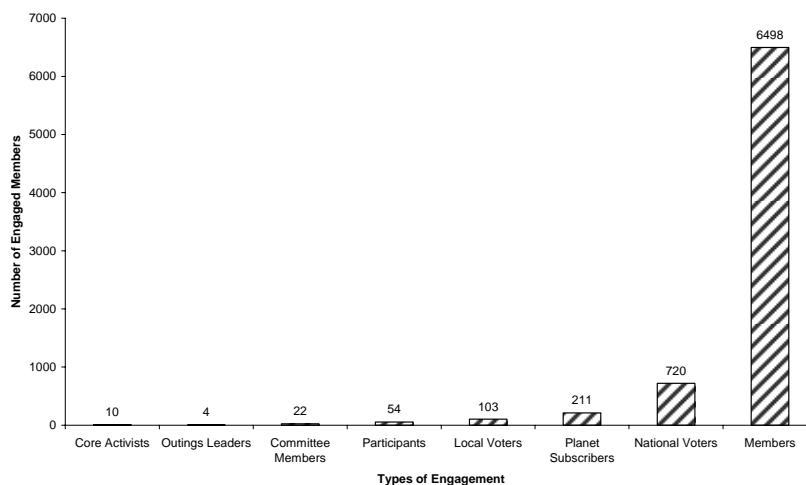
As Chart 5a shows, in the median Group of 1047 members, 111 or 11% vote in national elections, the most common form of participation. But only 34 members subscribe to the Planet and 25 vote in local ExCom elections.

Chart 5a: Member Engagement in Groups



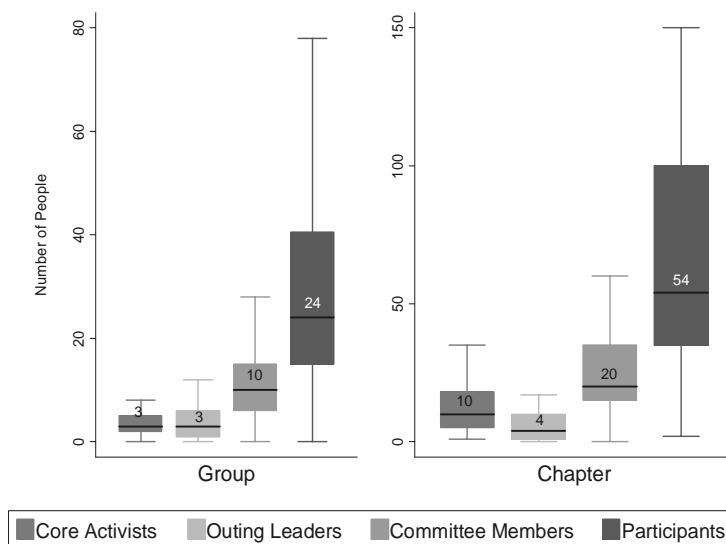
As **Chart 5b** shows, in the median Chapter of 6,498 members, 720 or 11% vote in national elections, 211 subscribe to *The Planet*, and 103 vote in local elections. In terms of direct or relational participation, the average Group or Chapter directly engages only 2% of its members.

Chart 5b: Member Engagement in Chapters



As **Chart 5c** shows, in the median Group, 3 members serve as core activists and as outings leaders, 10 participate in committees, and 24 participate in Club activities regularly or from time to time. Similarly, in the median Chapter, 10 members take part as core activists, 4 as outings leaders, 22 as committee members and 54 as participants.

Chart 5c: Member Engagement (Direct Forms of Participation) in Groups and Chapters



Nevertheless, some Groups and Chapters engage more members than others. In some Groups, no one participates, while in other Groups, 75 people participate regularly or from time to time. In some Chapters, only one person commits five or more hours per week as core activists, while others can count on 35 core activists. Our task in this report is to explain the sources of this variation – so that we can learn from it.

Public Influence

Although our first two measures of effectiveness focus on the impact of Sierra Club Groups and Chapters on their leaders and their members, our third measure of effectiveness examines the influence of Sierra Club Groups and Chapters on their communities and on public policy— their Public Influence. Although Public Influence is a matter of winning battles over public policy, court cases, and elections, it also involves earning recognition by policy makers as an authoritative advocate, serving the community as a source of valued information, and securing greater community access to the outdoors. We focus on the influence that Sierra Club Groups and Chapters achieve in four major arenas: advocacy, community, elections, and the outdoors.

We base our measures of Public Influence on the responses of Group and Chapter chairs to 22 questions as to specific advocacy, community, electoral, and outdoor activities during the previous year. As **Table 3** shows, Group and Chapter chairs reported on their organization's performance of activities showing Public Influence — such as advising political leaders, being a spokesperson for the media, or helping candidates win elections.

Table 3: Public Influence: Scale Items

Advocacy Influence

- State government leaders consult with us on environmental issues.
- Our efforts have placed important environmental issues on the political agenda.
- Our Group's [Chapter's] efforts have led to stronger enforcement of environmental standards and regulations.
- Local government leaders consult with us on environmental issues.
- Public officials take stronger stands on environmental issues because of our work.
- Local governments adopt new policies as a result of our advocacy.
- Our Group [Chapter] has helped to delay or block efforts that would have harmed the environment.
- Officials at public agencies consult with us on environmental issues.

Community Influence

- Our Group [Chapter] has been successful at raising awareness about environmental issues.
- The local media turns to us as an important spokesperson on environmental issues
- People in this area view our Group [Chapter] as a respected voice on environmental issues
- Our Group's [Chapter's] activities and positions are covered regularly in the local media.
- Our Group's [Chapter's] statements and reports influence public debate.
- Our Group [Chapter] is well known in the community
- Our Group [Chapter] is an important leader among community environmental groups
- We are key players in environmental policy issues in this area.
- Businesses leaders and groups know they have to deal with us on environmental issues.

Electoral Influence

- We help elect pro-environmental candidates that we endorse or support.
- Candidates for local office place a high value on our endorsement.

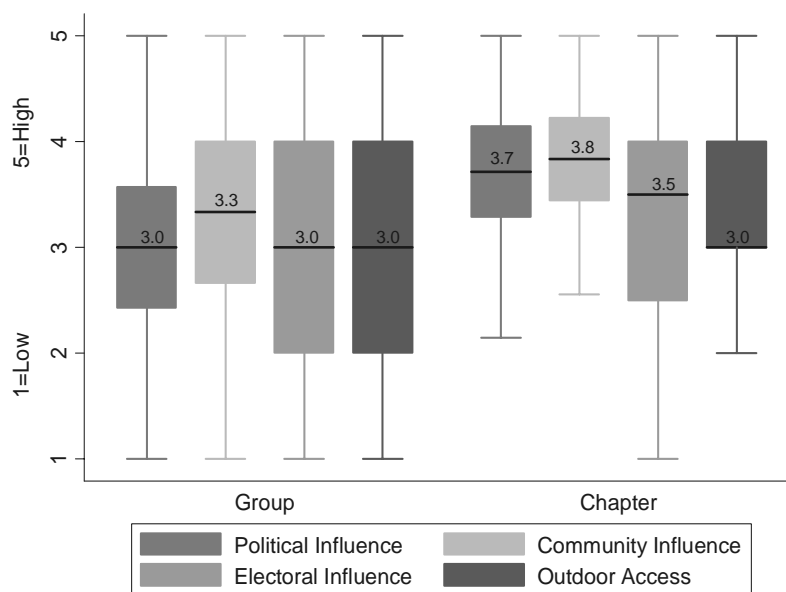
Outdoors Access

- We have increased access to the outdoors through our work.
-

Advocacy refers to advancing conservation objectives by influencing public policy through elected officials and government agencies. Community influence refers to affecting public opinion and debate and gaining support from other civic groups. Electoral influence refers to the election of candidates that the Sierra Club endorses. And securing greater access to the outdoors refers to the conduct of successful outings programs.

As **Chart 6** shows, Chapters enjoy more public influence on average than Groups do, except in improving access to the outdoors. Groups and Chapters have the most public influence on their communities, but average only 3.5 on a 5-point scale. Their advocacy influence is more limited and their electoral influence is more limited still and more closely tied to the politics of the local community. Some Groups and Chapters, however, report activities that indicate far more Public Influence than others.

Chart 6: Public Influence of Groups and Chapters



Overall Effectiveness

To provide an overview of the relative effectiveness of Chapters and Groups, we developed a summary measure for each outcome. We summarized Leader Development by averaging the three types of skills development. We summarized Member Engagement by comparing the number of participants, controlling for the size of the Group or Chapter. For Public Influence, we averaged each Group or Chapter's scores on the four types of Public Influence. Using these summary measures, we categorized each Group and Chapter into high performers (coded in light gray), low performers (coded in dark gray), and medium performers (blank). This only classifies Groups and Chapters relative to one another. In other words, 'light gray' Chapters are doing better only in comparison with other Chapters.

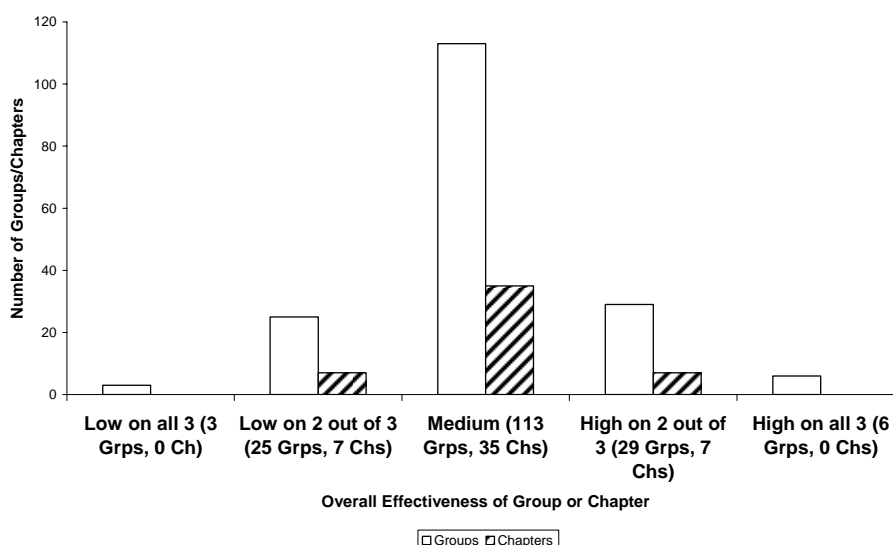
In **Table 4** on the following page, we array all of the Chapters in order of membership, from largest to smallest, and report on their revenue as well. The wide variation in Chapter performance is largely independent of size and revenue. We constructed a similar measure for Groups, but the Table is too large to display here.

Table 6: Overall Effectiveness in Chapters

Public Influence: Overall Influence	Leader Development: Overall Skills	Member Engagement: Participants	Membership Size	Total Receipts
High		Medium	56,383	Very High
Low	Low	Medium	40,872	High
High	Low	High	39,702	Very High
Medium	Medium	Medium	27,868	Medium
Medium	Medium	Low	26,527	High
Low	Medium	Medium	25,913	Medium
Medium	Low	Low	25,899	High
Medium	Medium	Low	24,800	High
High			22,703	High
Medium	Medium	Low	22,552	High
High	Low	High	22,057	High
High	Medium	Low	20,222	High
Low	Medium	High	20,220	High
Medium	High	Medium	20,002	High
High	High		19,438	High
Medium	Medium	Low	18,255	High
Low	Medium	Low	18,177	Medium
High	Medium	High	16,621	High
Low	Medium	Low	16,431	High
High	Medium	Low	16,312	High
Medium	Low	Medium	15,134	Medium
Medium	Medium	Low	13,234	High
High	Medium	Medium	12,353	High
Medium	High	High	11,520	Medium
Medium		Low	10,611	Medium
Low	Medium	Low	10,148	Medium
High	Medium	High	9,905	Medium
Medium	High	Low	7,651	Medium
Medium	Low	High	7,409	Medium
High	High	Medium	6,662	Low
			6,606	Low
High	Medium	High	6,389	High
Medium	High	Medium	6,219	Medium
Low	Medium	Medium	5,155	Low
	Low		5,105	Medium
Medium	Medium	Medium	4,949	Medium
Medium	Medium		4,611	Medium
Medium	Medium	Medium	4,554	Medium
Low	Medium	Medium	4,531	Medium
High	High		4,454	Medium
Medium	High	Medium	4,281	Medium
Medium	Medium	High	4,260	Medium
Low		Medium	3,985	Low
Low	High	Medium	3,834	Low
Low	High		3,518	Low
Medium		Medium	3,224	Medium
Medium	Medium	Medium	3,208	Low
Medium	Medium	Medium	2,972	Low
Medium	High	Medium	2,680	Low
Low	High	Medium	2,461	Low
High	Medium	Medium	2,331	Low
Low		Medium	2,253	Low
Medium	Low	Medium	2,143	Low
Medium	Low	Medium	2,016	Low
Medium	High	Medium	1,958	Low
Low	Medium	Medium	1,755	Low
Medium	Medium	Medium	1,702	Low
Low	Low	High	1,567	Low
High	Low	Medium	1,196	Low
	Medium		1,036	Medium
Medium	Low	High	716	Low
Low	Low	High	268	Low

How are the high, low, and medium performing Groups and Chapters distributed across the Club? As **Chart 7** shows, six Groups perform in the high range on all three measures, while no Chapters do. Seven Chapters, however, perform highly on two out of three of the measures. Three Groups perform in the low range on all three measures, while seven Chapters report being in the low range on at least two out of three measures.

Chart 7: Overall Effectiveness in Groups and Chapters



How common are “high performing” Groups and Chapters? Six Groups rank “high” on all three measures. They range in size from over 5000 members to a little over 200 members. Among Chapters, no one Chapter performed ‘highly’ on all three measures, but 7 Chapters ranked high on 2 out of 3. They range in size from 39,000 members to 6000 members. Three Groups and no Chapters perform poorly on all three measures. Most, of course, are in the middle, better at some things than at others.

To understand how Group and Chapter performance could be improved, we need to focus on what differentiates high performers from low performers. Our focus in the next chapter is to discover what we can learn from the experience of Sierra Club Groups and Chapters by introducing four major families of variables – community context, organizational structure, leadership and action – that can help to explain performance in the Sierra Club.

4. SOURCES OF ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

What Makes Sierra Club Groups and Chapters Effective?

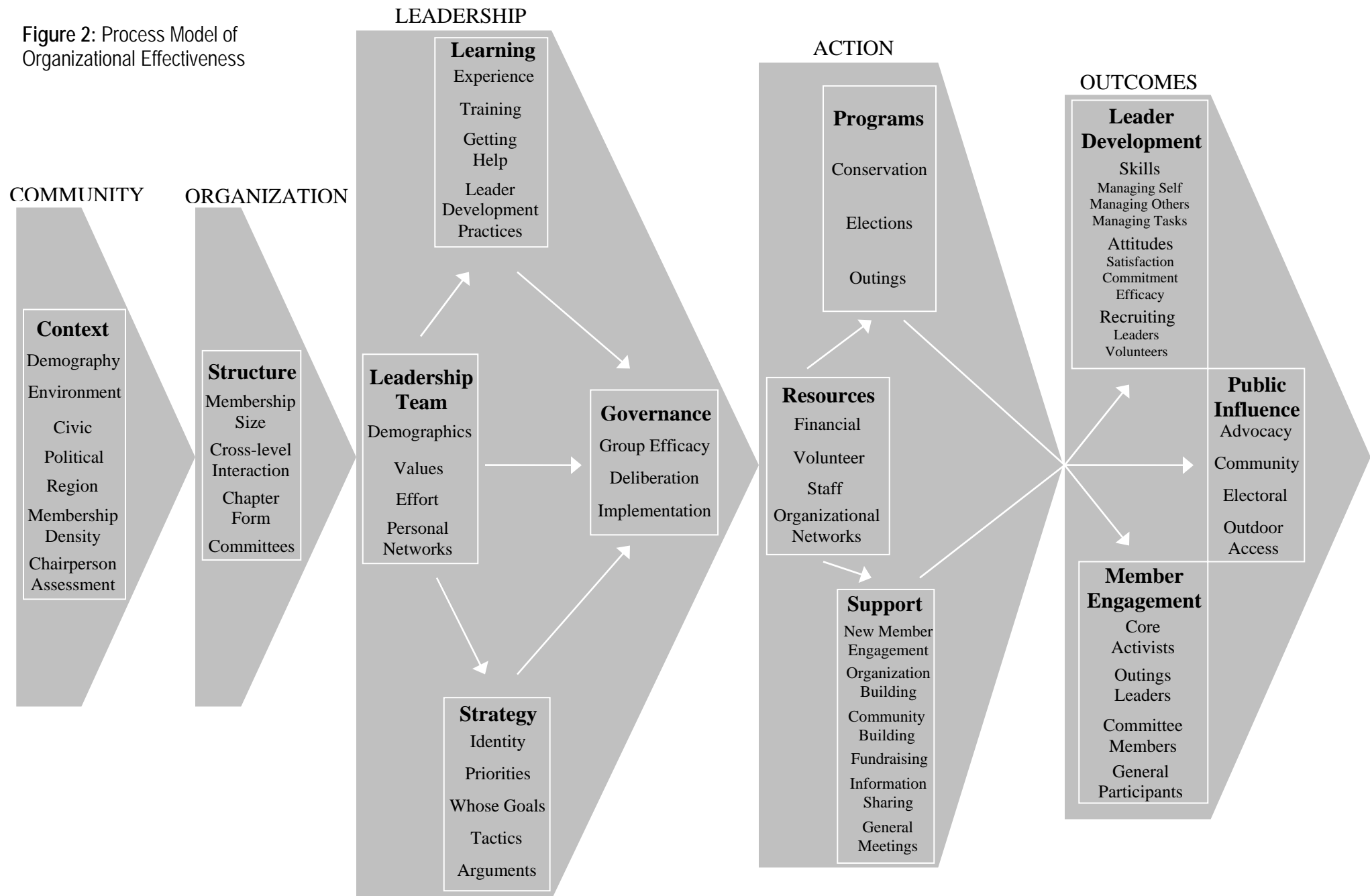
An Organizational Model

To explain why some Groups and Chapters are more effective than others, we constructed an ‘input-output’ model of how the Sierra Club works, illustrated in **Figure 2** (see following page). To the right we show the outputs: Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence. Reading left to right we show the inputs. Community context refers to the ‘friendliness’ of the local environment. Structure describes the rules, relationships, and resource configurations that shape the way the organization interacts with its environment. Organizational leadership, in this case, ExComs, make choices about what the organization does and how it does it. Leadership includes the people who make up the leadership team, how they learn to lead, their strategy, and how they govern themselves. Finally, we show how ExComs mobilize and deploy their resources in support and program activities. These activities then yield Leader Development, Member Engagement and Public Influence. These outcomes should then loop back around to influence the practices of the Group or Chapter as well as the community context. In this section of the report, we introduce each component and show how they interact with each other to lay the foundation for explaining the differences in Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence reported above.

Community Context: Demographics, Politics, Environment, Culture

Because community context could have an important influence on Group and Chapter effectiveness, we measure it in three ways, each of which tells a similar story. First, we use objective measures such as the level of education, voting patterns, and the number of civic groups in a community. Second, we calculate membership density – the concentration of Sierra Club members in the community. And third, we use the Group or Chapter chair’s assessment of allies, opponents, and local government, based on specific questions from the phone interview.

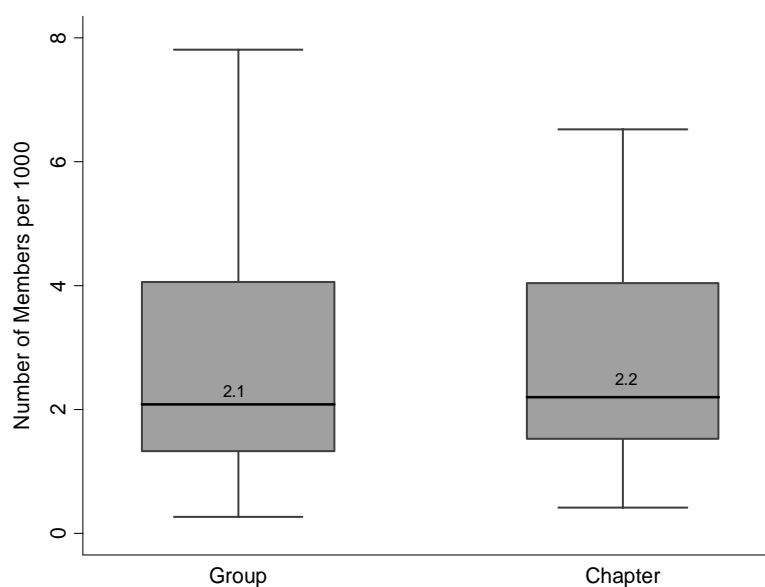
Figure 2: Process Model of Organizational Effectiveness



Two key points stand out. First, each way of measuring a favorable community context tells the same story. This is especially important because it shows that the chairs' perceptions of their communities very closely match two objective measures. Second, what really matters is levels of education, political liberalism, civic and environmental activism, and environmental quality.

Let us take a closer look at membership density. **Chart 8** shows that although the median of the membership density of Groups and Chapters is very similar – just above 2 Sierra Club members per 1000 people – membership density itself varies widely. On the one hand, the Rio Grande Valley Group in McAllen, Texas has almost 3 members per 10,000 people. On the other hand, the North Alameda County Group in Oakland, CA has almost 2 members per 100 people or 65 times as many members per capita than Rio Grande Valley.

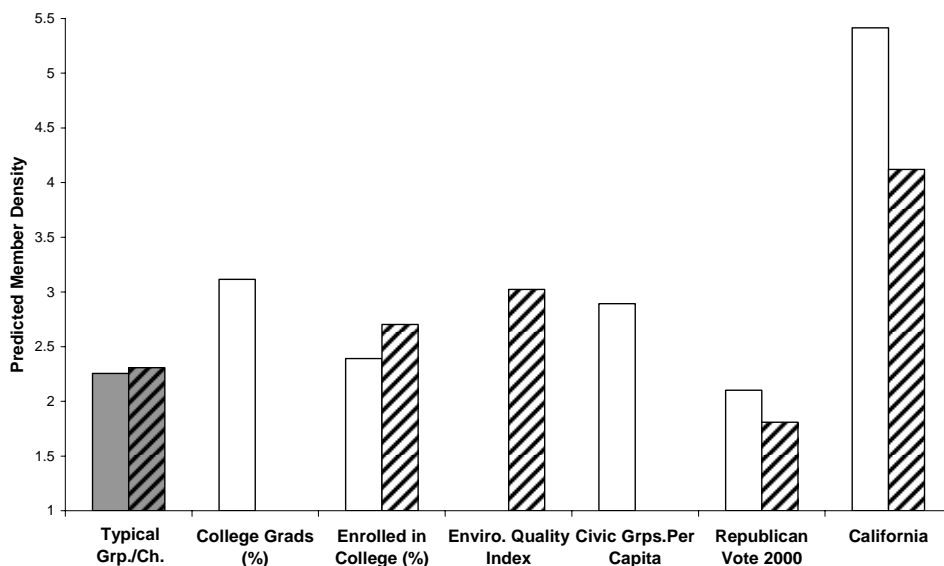
Chart 8: Membership Density in Groups and Chapters



How is member density related to other characteristics of the community? In **Chart 9** on the next page, the first bars on the left show the level of membership density in the territory of a typical Group or Chapter. Solid bars indicate Groups and striped bars indicate Chapters. Each bar to the right identifies a variable we found to have a statistically significant relationship to membership density. In this case, the level of income, the racial demographic, and the number of churches do not appear because they have no independent effect on membership density. The height of each bar shows the effect each variable would have on density if we increased it

by 25%. In other words, if the proportion of college graduates in the community in which our typical Group is located grew by 25%, this would increase membership density from 2.3 to about 3.2 – an increase of almost 50%! On the other hand, if the proportion of the Republican vote increased by 25% this would reduce density by about .10 or about 4%.

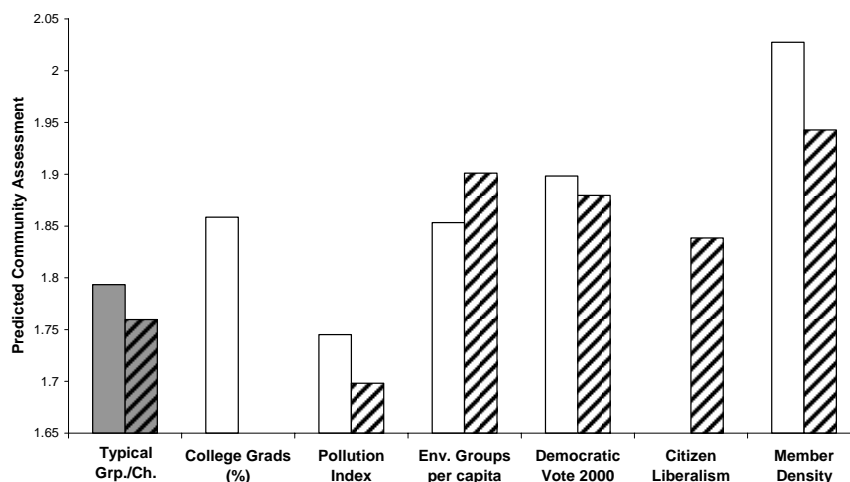
Chart 9: Factors Affecting Membership Density in Groups and Chapters



Other key factors related to density are the percentage of the population that are college students, environmental quality, civic groups, and whether or not a Group or Chapter is in California. Together these factors predict 75% of Group membership density. For Chapters, they predict 69% of Chapter membership density.

As **Chart 10** on the next page shows, ExCom chairs view their community as more favorable if membership density is greater. This factor has the strongest relationship to a chair's assessment. The chair's assessment is also related to characteristics of education, civic groups, environmental quality, and political liberalism. The fact that the chair's own evaluation is closely related to the more objective measures – education, civic groups, political liberalism, and environmental quality – underscores the credibility of Group and Chapter chair reports.

Chart 10: Factors Affecting the Chairperson's Community Assessment in Groups and Chapters



Structure: Size, Chapter Context, Interaction, Committees

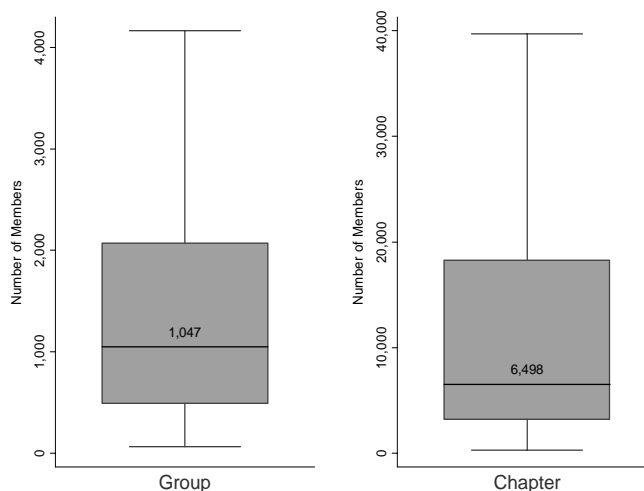
Our second major set of measures describes organizational structure: the rules, procedures, and resource configurations, often taken for granted, that shape the way Groups and Chapters do their work. We focus on four dimensions of structure:

- **Membership Size** – based on how Group or Chapter boundaries have been drawn, the number of members has implications for financial resources, staff support and potential leaders and participants.
- **Group/Chapter Interaction** – the structural relationships between Groups and Chapters, Groups and National, and Chapters and National.
- **Chapter Context** – the number of Groups and Activity Sections affiliated with a Chapter and where its hub is located.
- **Committee Structure** – the number and types of active committees (committees with at least 3 members that meet regularly), which provide opportunities for participation.

Of these, two have the greatest effect: membership size (based on boundaries) and the number of active committees (participation opportunities).

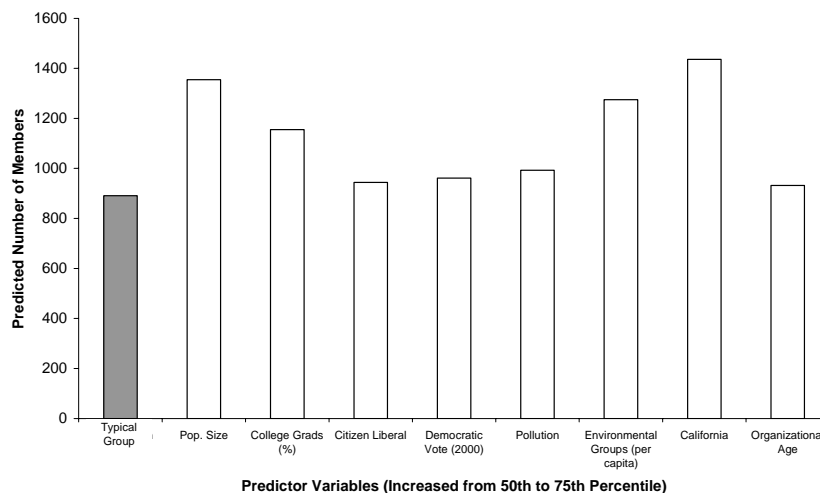
Chart 11 below shows that the typical Group has 1,047 members, ranging from 64 members to 14,060 members, although the few very large groups are farther from the median than the smaller groups. The typical Chapter has 6,498 members, but the variation range is much greater, from 268 members to 56,383 members.

Chart 11: Membership Size in Groups and Chapters



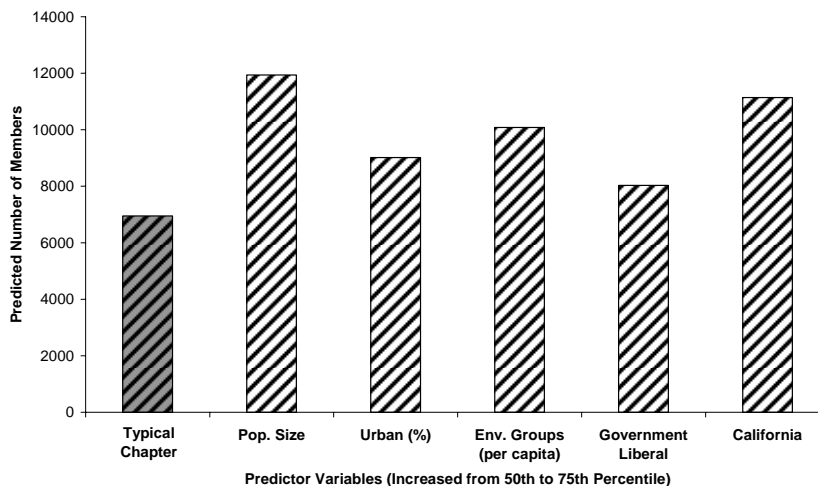
Charts 12 (below) and **13** (next page) show that the size of the membership of a Group or Chapter is related to the size of the population within its territorial boundaries and how environmentally oriented it is. Of variation in Group size, 86% is explained by population size, educational level, 'liberalness', how 'green' it is, how environmentally active it is, and by whether it is located in California or not.

Chart 12: Factors Affecting Membership Size in Groups



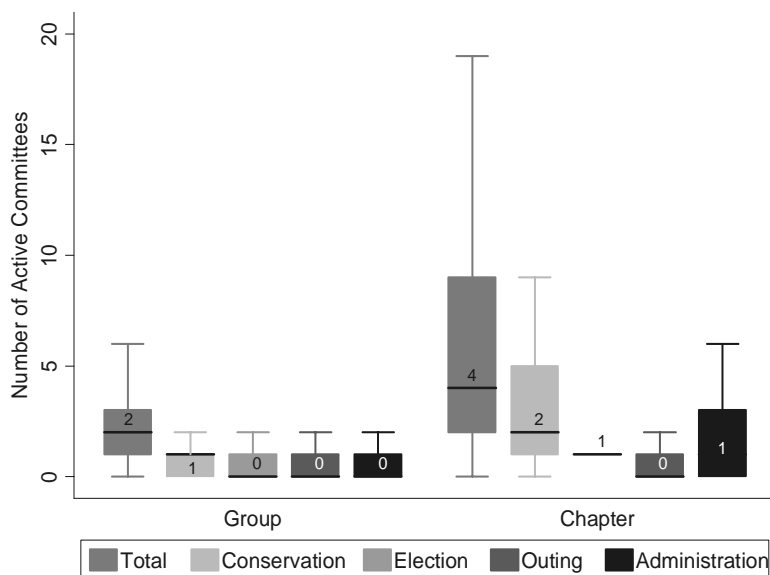
Of variation in Chapter size, 88% is explained by how urbanized its population is, how environmentally active it is and whether or not it is in California.

Chart 13: Factors Affecting Membership Size in Chapters



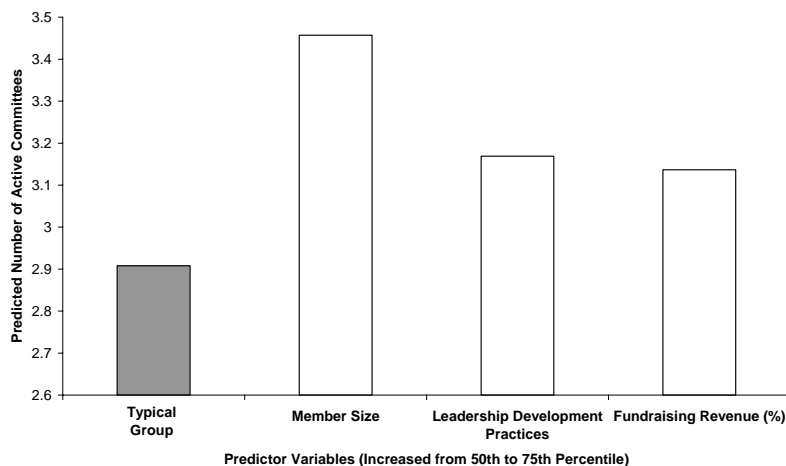
The median number of active committees in Groups is 2, a combination of conservation, electoral, outings, or administrative committees (Chart 14a). The Chapter median is 4 committees but most fall within a range of from 2 to 8 committees. Chapters typically have more conservation and administrative committees than Groups do.

Chart 14a: Number of Active Committees in Groups and Chapters



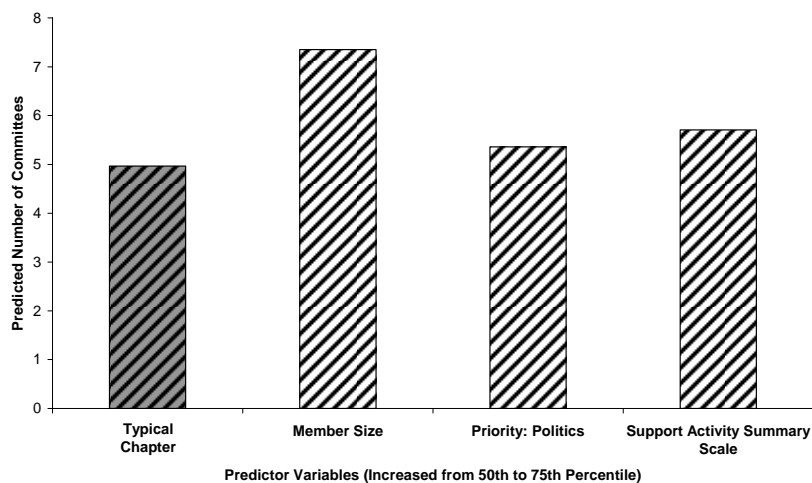
The number of active committees (**Charts 14b and 14c**) is related both to the size of the membership and the extent to which the ExCom engages in leader development practices. In addition, in Groups, more committees are related to more local fund-raising.

Chart 14b: Factors Affecting the Number of Active Committees in Groups



In Chapters, more committees are related to prioritizing political goals.

Chart 14c: Factors Affecting the Number of Active Committees in Chapters



Leadership: Leadership Team, Learning, Strategy, Governance

Leadership Team

First, we analyzed ExCom members' demographics, values, the amount of time they invest in Sierra Club work, and their social networks.

ExCom members (**Table 5**) are highly educated (88% finished college; 66%, postgraduate training; and 52%, postgraduate or professional degrees); older (their average age is 53, but only 1/3 of ExCom members are younger than 53), and of slightly above median income (60% enjoy household incomes over \$50,000 annually) and unusually flexible in their schedules – 48% work part time, are retired or have other sources of income.

Table 5: Demographics of Group and Chapter ExCom Members

	Category	Total	Groups	Chapters
Age	25-39	13%	12%	13%
	40-49	22%	23%	19%
	50-59	34%	33%	35%
	60-69	24%	23%	26%
	70-	8%	8%	7%
	Mean	53.6	53.6	53.6
Gender (25 yrs.+)	Male	57%	54%	62%
	Female	43%	46%	37%
Ethnic Identity	% of white	97%	97%	97%
Education	% of Post-	66%	64%	70%
Employment Status	Working Full-	51%	52%	50%
	Working Part-	13%	13%	13%
	Retired	23%	24%	23%
	Others	12%	12%	13%
Type of Employer	For-Profit	32%	33%	29%
	Non-for-Profit	15%	13%	19%
	Gov.	38%	39%	38%
	Self-	15%	15%	14%
Income	\$29999 or	18%	19%	17%
	\$30,000-	23%	24%	21%
	\$50,000-	40%	40%	40%
	\$100,000 or	19%	17%	21%
Family	% of Married	57%	57%	56%

The major sources of diversity among ExCom members, in addition to values, are gender and employment. Women serve in 47% of the positions, while men serve in 53%. As to employment, 38% work for government, 32% in the private sector, 15% for nonprofits, and 15% are self-employed. Younger ExCom members are also more likely to be women and work in nonprofits than older ExCom members.

Most important for our analysis, however, are the three clusters of values held by ExCom members: world changing, social-recreational, and self-fulfillment. We asked each ExCom member to evaluate the influence of each of 18 reasons for having become active in the Sierra Club on a scale from 1 to 5. **Table 6** shows on the following page that these values converge on

three themes: changing the world to protect the environment, enjoying the world in the company of others, and fulfilling one's potential.

Table 6: Leadership Values: Scale Items

I am active in the Sierra Club...

World-Changing

- to protect the quality of the environment.
- to fight against the weakening of environmental policy.
- to work on local environmental issues.
- to be part of an org. that stands for right ideas.
- to influence public policy.
- to work with an effective environmental organization.
- to change the values and beliefs of the public.
- to work on national environmental issues.
- to access resources to make a difference.
- to make the SC stronger.

Social-Recreational

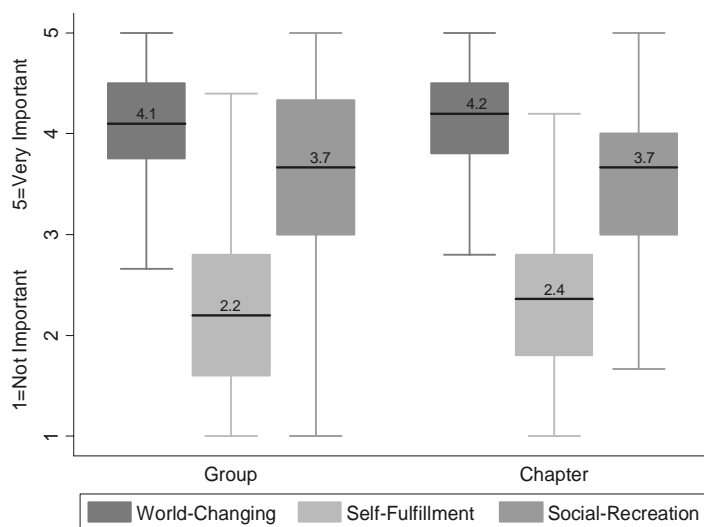
- to be with people who share my ideals.
- to be with people I enjoy.
- to explore outdoors.

Self-Fulfillment

- to have more influence on the direction of SC.
- to build skills that are valuable in other aspect of my life.
- to become a leader in my community.
- to gain recognition from people I respect.
- for the opportunity to further my job or career.

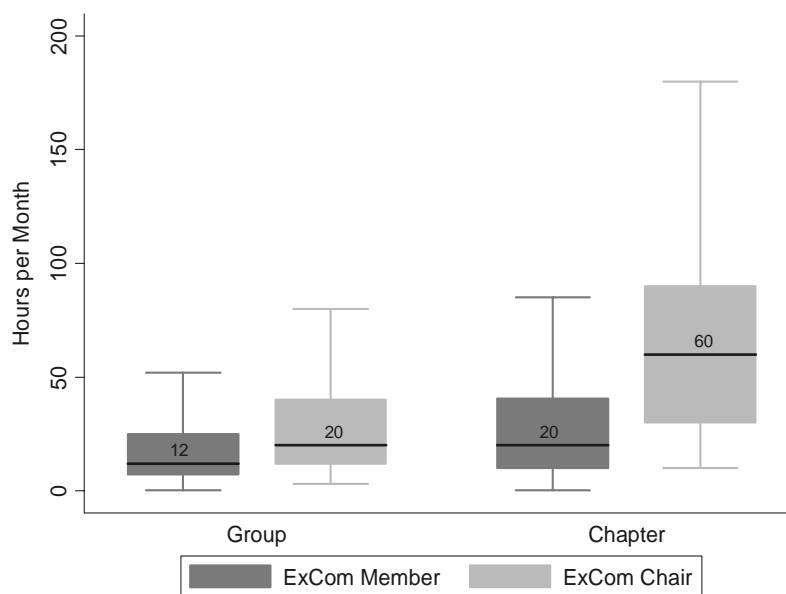
Because the value ExCom members place on world changing is relatively constant, most of the variation is in social-recreational and self-fulfillment values (see **Chart 15a** below). The interplay among these values is an important source of difference among Groups and Chapters.

Chart 15a: Leadership Values in Groups and Chapters



Finally, as **Chart 15b** shows, ExCom members invest significant amounts of time in Sierra Club work.

Chart 15b: Time Invested in Sierra Club Work (Hours per Month) by Group and Chapter ExComs

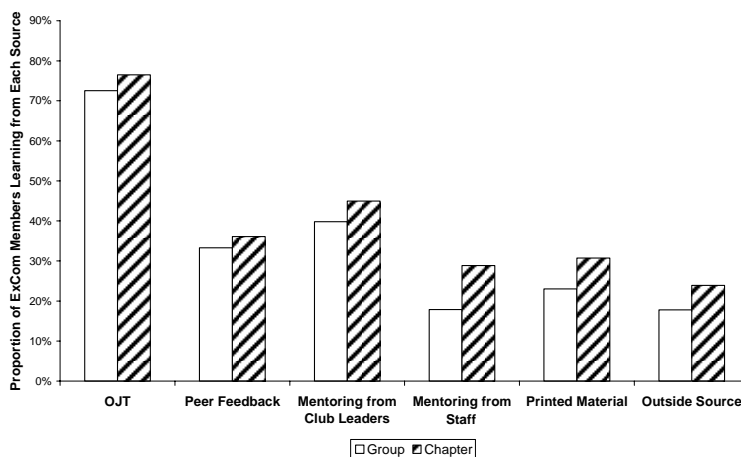


Chapter ExCom members invest 32 hours per month on average and Group ExCom members invest 18 hours per month. Chapter ExCom Chairs invest more than twice as much time as Group ExCom Chairs, 50 hours per month compared with 20 hours per month. Extrapolating, Group ExCom members club wide invest 41,000 hours per month and Chapter ExCom members invest 18,000 hours per month. At 59,000 hours per month, this comes to 708,000 hours per year, just among ExComs.

Learning

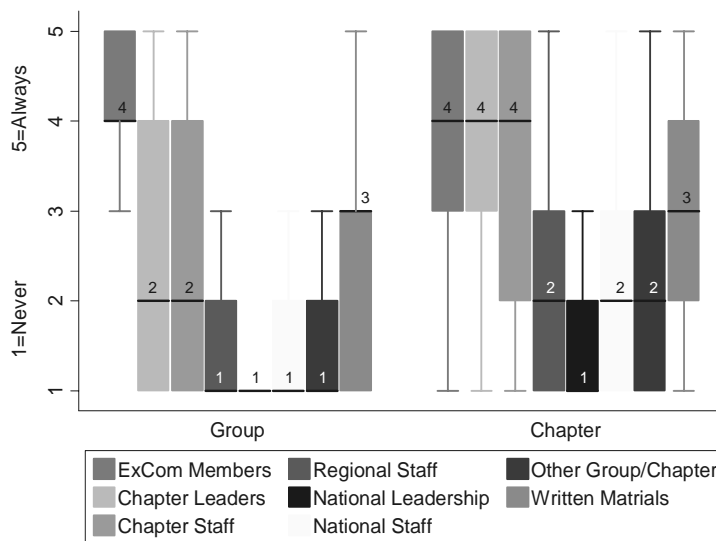
Another influence on leadership is the way that members learn to do their jobs: their experience on the job, where they turn for help, participation in formal training, and the benefit of leader development activities conducted by the ExCom. **Chart 16** on the following page shows that the greatest source of learning for both Group and Chapter ExComs is on the job training, supported by mentoring from Sierra Club leaders, peer feedback, and staff mentoring, and backed up by written materials and outside sources.

Chart 16: Sources of Learning on Group and Chapter ExComs



One source of on the job training is the people to whom ExCom members turn for help with the day-to-day performance of their jobs (Chart 17).

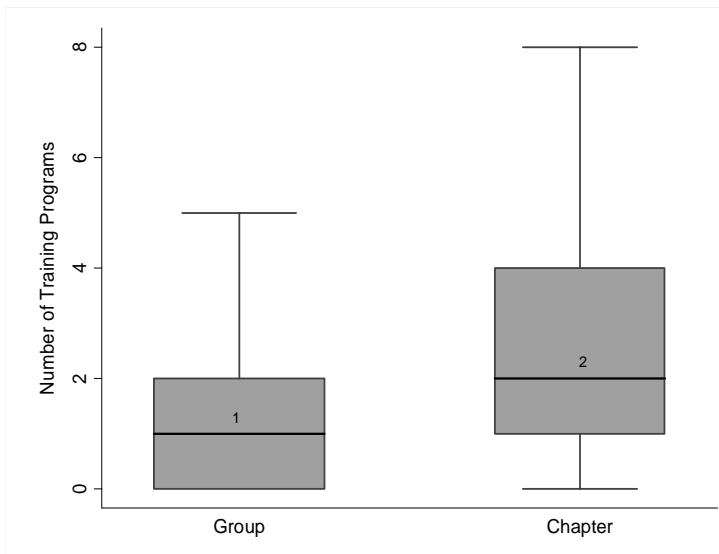
Chart 17: Sources of Help Group and Chapter ExCom Members



The most important source of help is other ExCom members. For Chapter ExComs, Chapter staff and leaders are equally important. Written materials follow, with national and regional staff next, along with other Chapters. They turn least frequently to national leaders. Members of Group ExComs, turn to Chapter staff and leadership after they turn to other ExCom members. Written materials follow, as do national and regional staff and other Groups. Group ExCom members rarely turn to the national leadership for help.

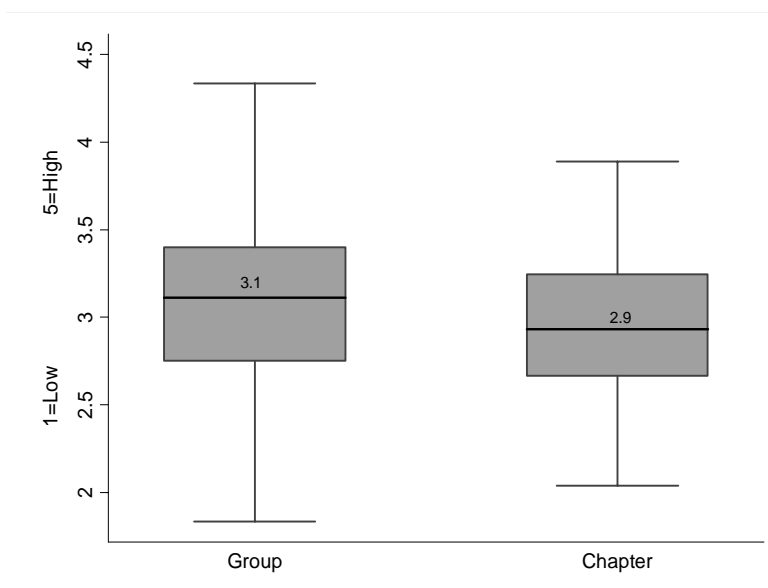
Another important source of learning for those who use them are training programs. But the typical Group ExCom member attended only 1 training program in the last 5 years (**Chart 18a**). Chapter ExCom members attended 2, and most participate in from 1 to 4.

Chart 18a: The Number of Training Programs Group and Chapter Excom Members Attended in Last 5 Years



Finally, some ExComs practice leadership development more explicitly than others. They identify potential leaders, bring them into new positions, and build their knowledge and skills. But as **Chart 18b** shows, the extent of this practice among Group and Chapter ExComs is very limited, especially among Chapters.

Chart 18b: Leadership Development Practices in Groups and Chapters

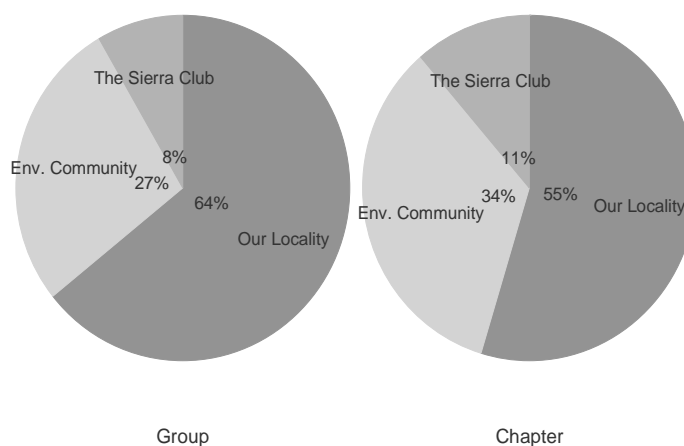


Strategy

ExComs take different strategic approaches to their work. They identify with different communities, establish different priorities, attend to the interests of different constituents, employ different tactics and make different arguments.

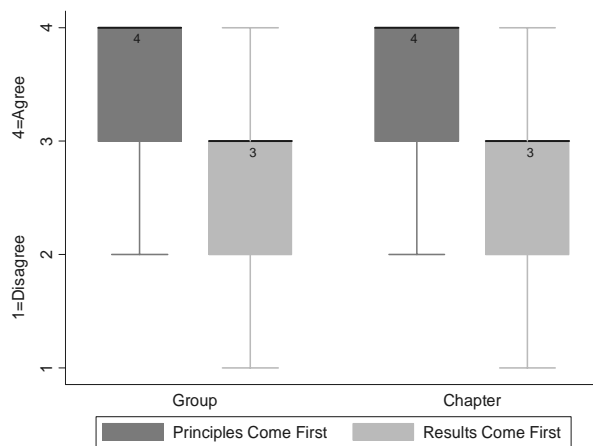
As **Chart 19** shows, most Group and Chapter ExComs identify with their local community: 64% of the Groups and 55% of the Chapters. Others identify with the environmental movement more broadly: 27% of the Groups and 34% of the Chapters. The fewest identify primarily with the national Sierra Club: 8% of the Groups and 11% of the Chapters.

Chart 19: With Whom Group and Chapter ExComs Identify



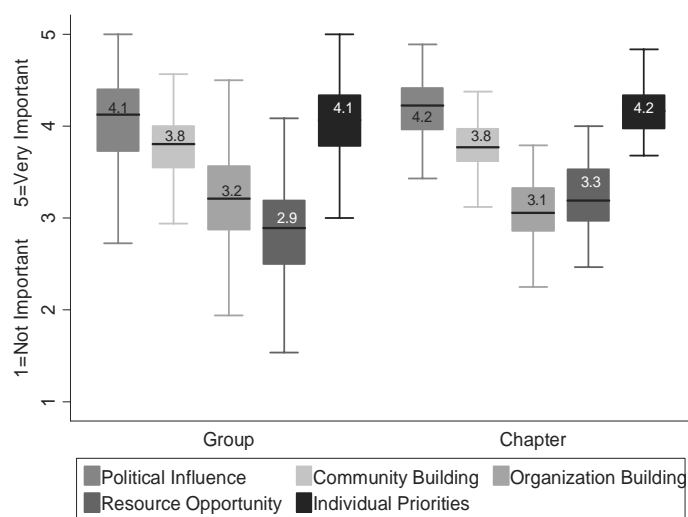
Both Groups and Chapters also claim to put principles substantially ahead of results in making strategic choices, as shown in **Chart 20**.

Chart 20: Principles versus Results in Group and Chapter ExComs



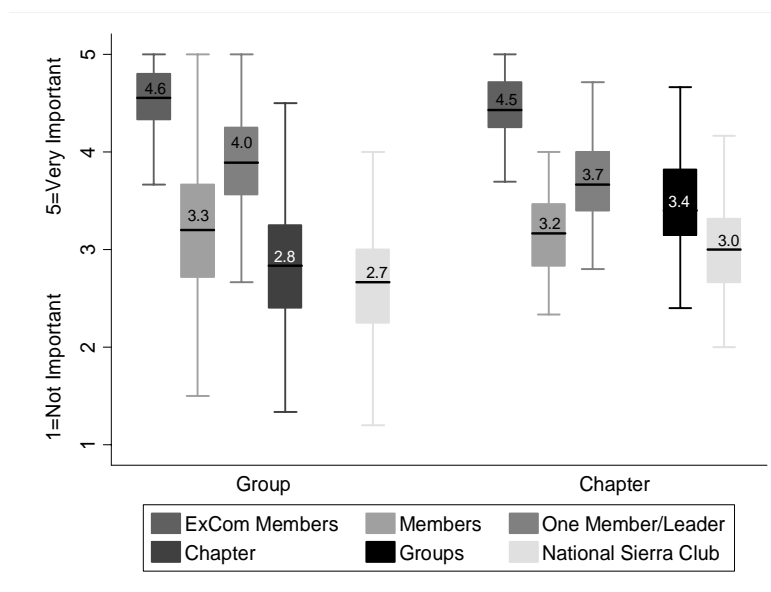
Which goals do Chapter and Group ExCom prioritize over others? And whose priorities matter most? **Chart 21** shows that Groups and Chapters prioritize seeking political influence and responding to individual issue concerns most, followed by community building. Groups consider organization building and resource opportunities next, but Chapters give resource opportunities a higher priority than organization building.

Chart 21: Goals in Priorities in Groups and Chapters



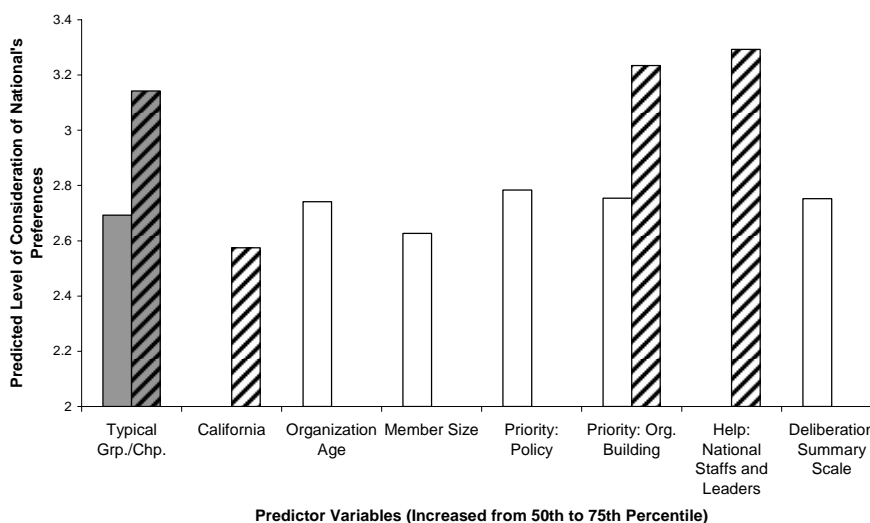
In terms of whose goals matter most, the preferences of other ExCom members and those of the highly committed individual are given the greatest weight by both Chapter and Group ExComs, as shown in **Chart 22** on the next page. For Groups, member preferences come third, followed by those of the Chapter and, finally, those of the National Sierra Club. For Chapters, the preferences of their Groups come next, followed by those of their members and the National Sierra Club. Although National Sierra Club preferences are given the least consideration by Chapter and Group ExComs, some ExComs do consider them more than others.

Chart 22: The Importance of Different Constituency Preferences to Group and Chapter ExComs



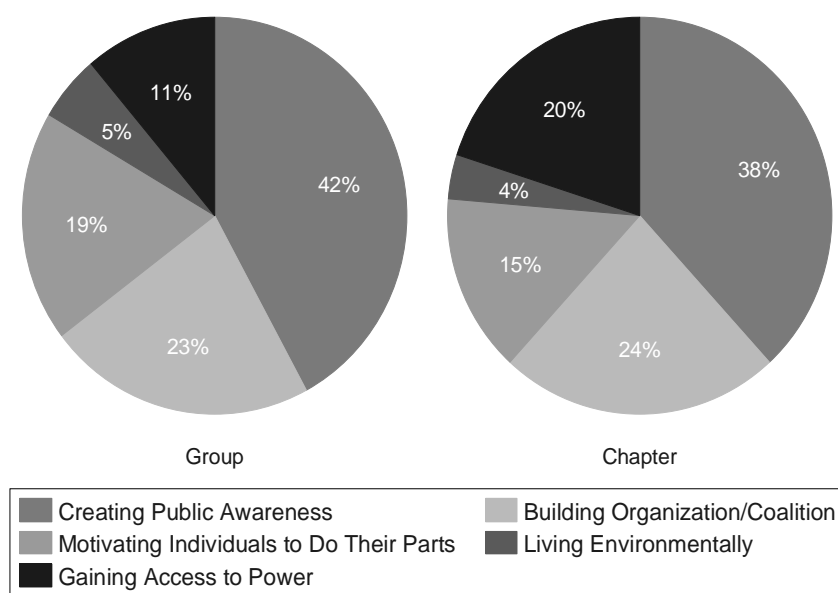
As Chart 22a shows, the Groups that give national concerns the most consideration are those that prioritize the pursuit of political and organization building goals and are well governed. Structurally, they are older and tend to be slightly smaller. Among Chapters, those that prioritize organization building also give more consideration to national preferences, as do those who call upon the national organization for advice and assistance. Most striking, however, is the fact that being located in California makes it far less likely that a Chapter will consider the preferences of the national organization.

Chart 22a: Factors Affecting the Consideration of National's Preferences



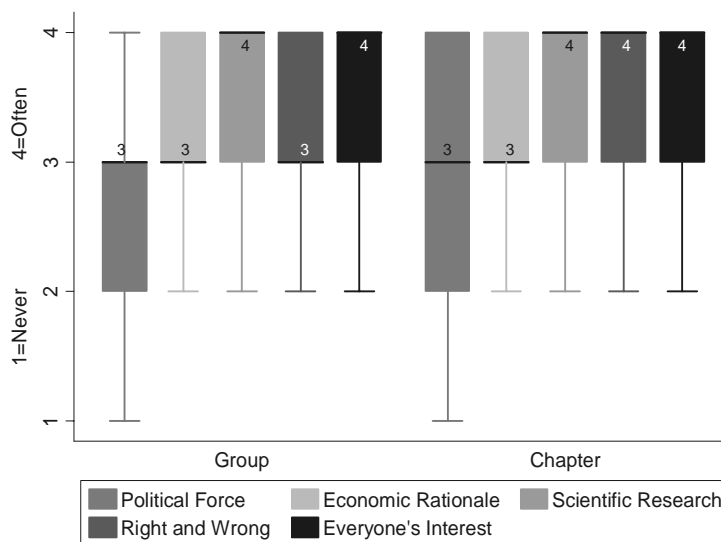
Groups and Chapters use different types of strategy for reaching out to their communities and mobilizing support for their goals as illustrated in **Chart 23** below. Group ExComs favor raising public awareness (42%), building powerful coalitions (23%), focusing on individuals (19%), insider politics (11%), and living 'green' (5%). Chapter ExComs also prefer strategy based on raising public awareness (38%) and building powerful coalitions (24%), but Chapter ExComs move to insider politics next (20%), then to individuals (15%), and finally, to living 'green' (4%).

Chart 23: Strategies for Outreach and Mobilization in Groups and Chapters



Similarly, they make different types of arguments to develop support for their goals, as shown in **Chart 24** on the next page. Group ExComs have the most confidence in arguments based on science and the common interest, followed by economic and moral argument. They have the least confidence in arguments based on political power. Chapter ExComs also rely on arguments based on science and the common interest, but also rely on moral argument, followed by economics and political power.

Chart 24: Arguments Group and Chapter Leaders Use to Develop Support



Governance

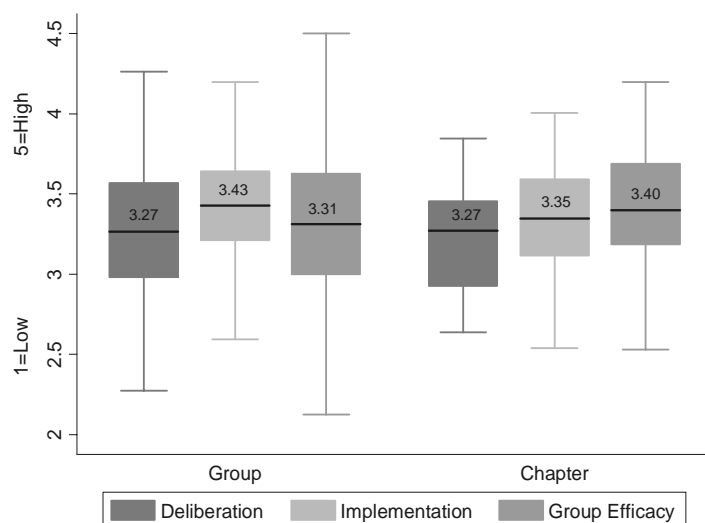
ExComs exercise leadership in deciding what to do and how to do it: in other words, governance. As **Table 7** shows, we evaluated deliberative side of governance based on the performance of specific practices aggregated as goal setting, planning, decision-making, adaptation, meetings, and inclusiveness. Similarly, we evaluated implementation in terms of practices of collaboration, delegation, accountability, rewards and recognition, establishing shared norms, and initiative taking. Well governed ExComs also develop a sense of group efficacy or confidence in their own competence at achieving their goals.

Table 7: Governance Practices: Scale Items

DELIBERATION	IMPLEMENTATION
<p>Goal-Setting</p> <p>Our ExCom has clarity about what we are supposed to do.</p> <p>All the members of our ExCom have a clear sense of what we are supposed to do.</p> <p>Our ExCom has explicit group discussions about whether or not to undertake a project.</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>Our ExCom has clear gameplans to guide our projects.</p> <p>Our ExCom has explicit discussions about committing resources to achieve our objectives.</p> <p>Our ExCom considers multiple approaches to achieving our objectives.</p> <p>Our ExCom works collectively to develop our gameplans.</p> <p>Our ExCom considers particularly innovative ways to do the work.</p> <p>Decision-making</p> <p>Our ExCom has a clear facilitator for discussions about particular projects.</p> <p>Our ExCom brainstorms alternatives before deciding what to do.</p> <p>Our ExCom has a clear decision-making process for choosing among alternatives.</p> <p>When our ExCom resolves conflicts, we all accept the resolution.</p> <p>Inclusiveness</p> <p>Our ExCom regularly consults with other Group or Chapter members in making decisions.</p> <p>People outside the ExCom participate in decision-making processes.</p> <p>Adaptation</p> <p>Our ExCom has clear benchmarks for measuring our progress throughout our projects.</p> <p>Our ExCom avoids mindless routines, i.e. falling into patterns without noticing changes in the situation during our projects.</p> <p>Our ExCom evaluates our work partway through our projects.</p> <p>Our ExCom makes changes based on re-evaluation.</p> <p>Our ExCom evaluates our work at the end of projects.</p> <p>Meetings</p> <p>Our ExCom has an agenda for our meetings.</p> <p>Our ExCom invests time in celebrating our work.</p> <p>Participants in our ExCom feel comfortable disagreeing in meetings.</p> <p>Our ExCom meetings start and end on time.</p> <p>Participants come prepared for our ExCom meetings.</p> <p>Our ExCom meetings are productive.</p> <p>I feel energized at the end of our ExCom meetings.</p>	<p>Delegation</p> <p>My responsibilities are clearly defined in Group or Chapter projects.</p> <p>People (or groups) in charge of projects delegate responsibility effectively.</p> <p>I have people who are accountable to me.</p> <p>Initiative</p> <p>I have room for the exercise of judgment or initiative.</p> <p>We have to make many "judgment calls" as we do our work.</p> <p>Collaboration</p> <p>I have to work with other members of a team to do my work.</p> <p>A lot of communication and coordination is necessary with other members to generate outcomes.</p> <p>I depend heavily on other members to get the work done.</p> <p>Accountability</p> <p>Our ExCom holds people accountable for doing what they say they will do.</p> <p>I feel accountable to someone (or group) to complete my responsibilities.</p> <p>Rewards</p> <p>Excellent performance pays off on the ExCom.</p> <p>The ExCom reinforces and recognizes individuals that perform well.</p> <p>Our ExCom recognizes all kinds of good work.</p> <p>Norms</p> <p>Expectations for member behavior on this ExCom are clear.</p> <p>We agree about how members are expected to behave.</p> <p>Our ExCom holds members accountable for meeting group expectations.</p>

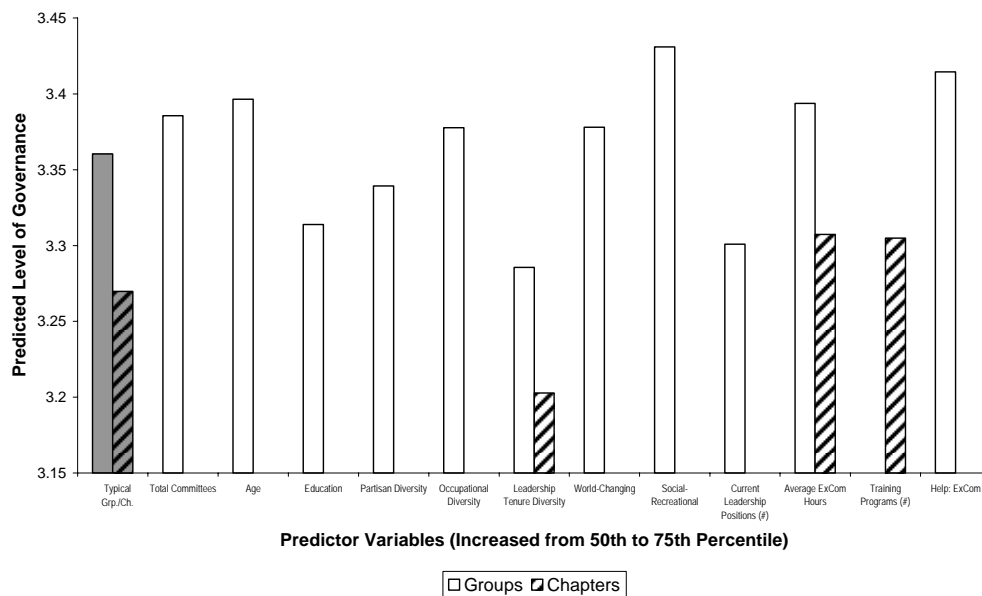
Chart 25 on the next page also shows that Groups evaluate themselves right in the middle in terms of the quality of their deliberation, implementation, and group efficacy. Chapters evaluate themselves a bit better in group efficacy than Groups, but a bit worse in implementation.

Chart 25: Governance Practices in Groups and Chapters



Where does good governance come from? As **Chart 26** below shows, although a Group or Chapter with more active committees is more likely to be well-governed, good governance is primarily the result of who the ExCom members are and how they learned to lead. On Group ExComs, members with social recreational values influence governance positively, as do those who are older and who have world changing values. Education, on the other hand, has a slightly negative influence.

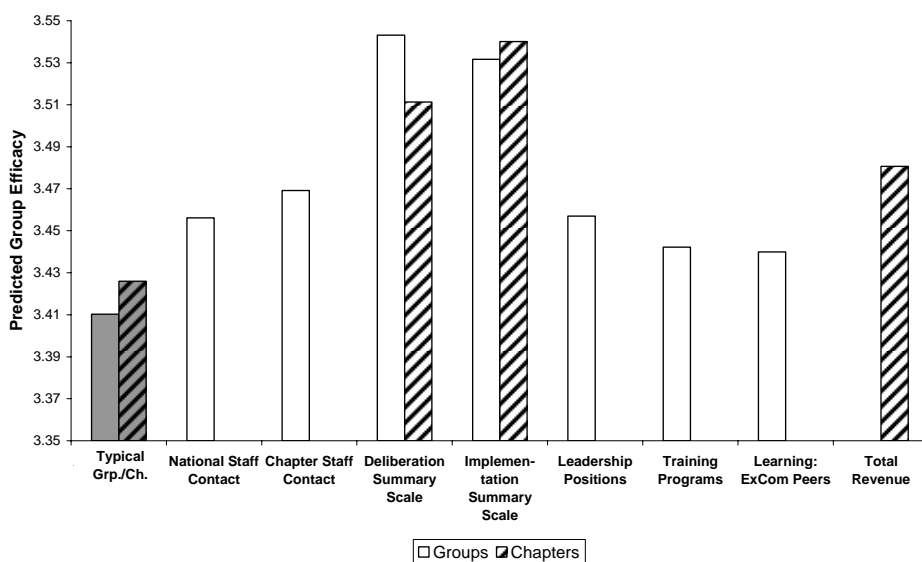
Chart 26: Factors Affecting Governance in Groups and Chapters



Occupational diversity among ExCom members supports good governance, but diversity in leadership tenure and partisanship poses challenges. Another challenge is posed by the fact that ExCom members often hold multiple leadership positions. Finally, Group ExComs in which members are able to turn to one another for help, govern better. Chapter ExComs whose members invest more hours and attend more training also govern better.

Another dimension of governance is the extent to which ExCom members believe their group to be competent at fulfilling required tasks – group efficacy. As **Chart 27** shows, for both Groups and Chapters, group efficacy is the product of good governance. For Groups, it is also the product of learning, holding multiple leadership positions, training, and contact with chapter and national staff. For Chapters, it is linked to resources – those that bring in more money experience a greater level of group efficacy.

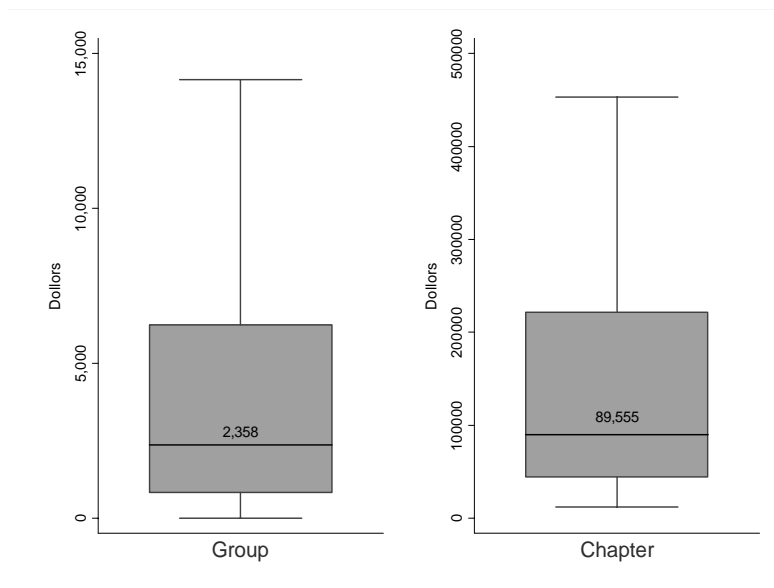
Chart 27: Factors Affecting Group Efficacy in Groups and Chapters



Action: Resource Mobilization, Support Activities, Program Activities

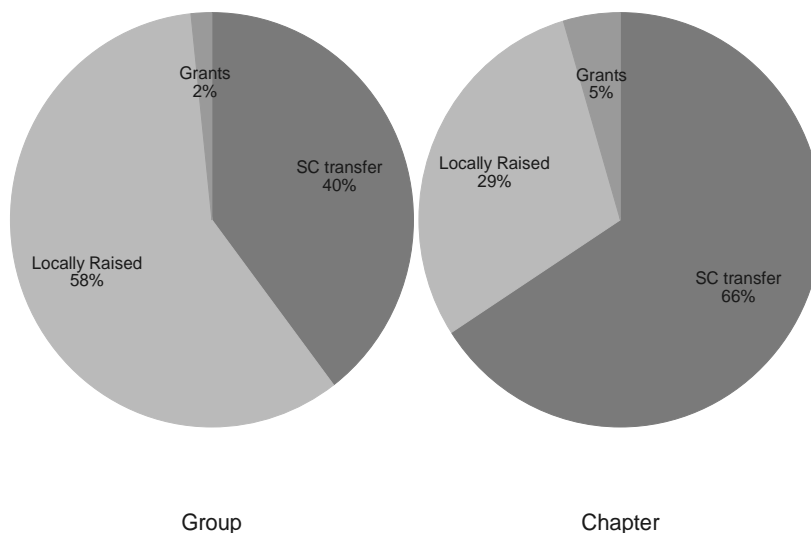
It takes resources to translate strategy into action: money, time and connections. We looked at the Group and Chapter income and expenses; time contributed by volunteers and staff; and ExCom links to community networks. Chapter annual revenue comes to \$10,607,994, while Group revenue comes to \$2,507,376, totaling \$13,155,370. A typical Group operates with revenue of \$2,358, although it ranges from \$0 to \$227,000 for one Group (**Chart 28a**, next page).

Chart 28a: Annual Revenue in Groups and Chapters



Over half of the Groups operate with less than \$2,500 in revenue. A typical Chapter operates with revenue of \$89,555, but Chapter revenue ranges from \$12,141 to \$1,000,000. Over half of the Chapters operate with less than \$100,000 in revenue. Although Groups and Chapters differ widely in both the size and structure of their revenue, on average Groups raise more money locally (58%) than they receive from Chapters (40%). On the other hand, Chapters receive more money from the National (66%) than they raise locally (29%) (Chart 28b).

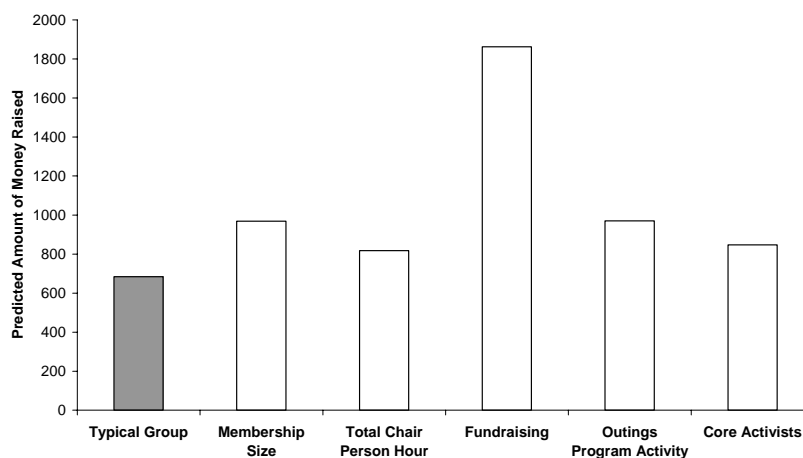
Chart 28b: Sources of Revenue in Groups and Chapters



The amount of money a Chapter receives from the national organization is based on the size of its membership. The amount of money Groups receive from Chapters, however, depends largely on how much money the Chapter receives, although their own membership size and general level of activity matter as well.

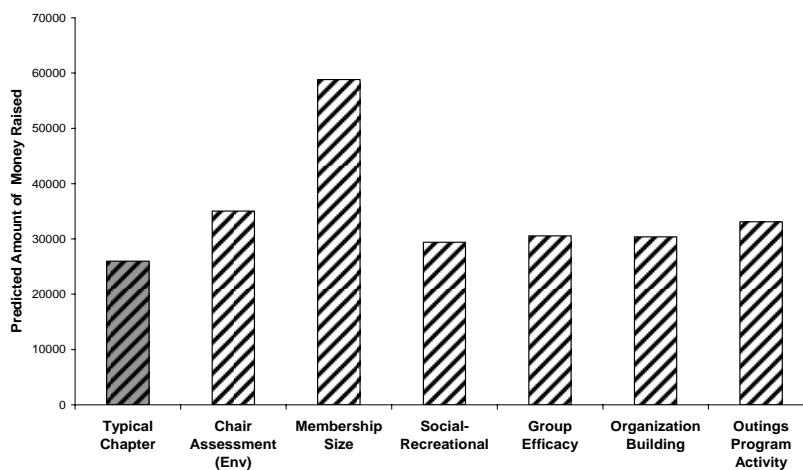
Groups and Chapters earning more revenue generally raise money locally in addition to the money they receive from the National or the Chapter. Groups with more members and that conduct more outings programs and regular fundraising activities raise more money locally. Their ExComs also invest more time and engage more core activists (**Chart 29a**).

Chart 29a: Factors Affecting Amount of Money Raised Locally by Groups



Chapters with more members that conduct more outings programs also raise more money locally. Their ExCom members are also more oriented toward social recreational values, enjoy a greater sense of group efficacy, and do more organization building (**Chart 29b**).

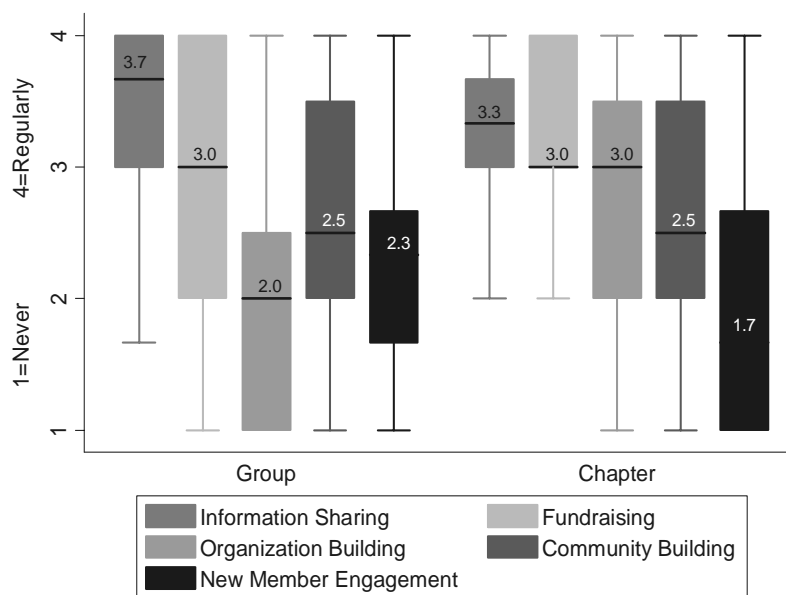
Chart 29b: Factors Affecting Amount of Money Raised Locally by Chapters



Support Activities

Important support activities include community building (social events, celebration), organization building (retreats and training), new member meetings, and general meetings. **Chart 30** shows that among both Groups and Chapters, fundraising and information sharing are most widely practiced. Chapters do much more organization building than Groups do. Groups and Chapters do about the same amount of community building. And neither Groups nor Chapters do very much new member engagement.

Chart 30: Support Activities in Groups and Chapters



Program Activities

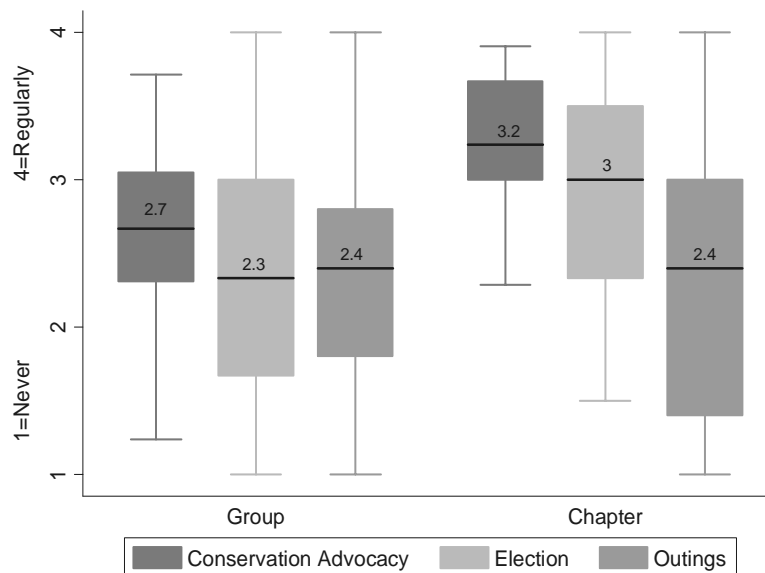
Program activity is the heart of the work that Groups and Chapters do – conservation, elections, and outings. Our measure of program activity – conservation, elections, and outings – is based on questions we asked chairs about how regularly their Group or Chapter did 35 specific activities during the past year (the last 2 years for electoral work) (See **Table 8** on the next page). The regularity and type of program activity plays a major role in answering many of the questions that we have posed about the effectiveness of Groups and Chapters.

Table 8: Program Activities: Scale Items

Conservation Program	Elections Program
<i>Public Advocacy</i>	Endorsing candidates/issues
Members Contact Officials	Mobilizing Voters
Members Write Letters to Editor	Promoting candidates to the public
Contacting Local Media	Recruiting volunteers for candidates
Attending Public Hearings	Sponsoring a debate/forum
Issuing press releases	Sponsoring Canvassing
Sponsoring petitions/tabling	
Participate in Community Events	Outings Program
Holding Press Conferences	Hiking/Biking Trips
Sponsoring Rallies/Marches	Sponsor Clean-up/Restoration
Presenting in Public Schools	Service Outing
<i>Leadership Advocacy</i>	Backpacking/Mtn. Climbing
Relating with other organizations	Technical Trips
Relating with community leaders	
Relating with public officials	
Meeting with government agencies	
Meeting with legislators	
Presenting at Public Meetings	
Relating with local media	
Meeting with advisory committees	
Relating with business leaders	
Participating in lawsuits	
Drafting policy/legislation	

So why are some Groups and Chapters more active than others? **Chart 31** shows that Groups and Chapters engage in more advocacy activity, although Chapters do more than Groups. For Groups, outings and elections follow. But for Chapters, electoral activity exceeds outings.

Chart 31: Program Activities in Groups and Chapters



The regularity of Group or Chapter program activity is influenced by four factors: organizational structure, such as active committees; leadership, especially ExCom members' values; resources, especially money invested in program activity; and Member Engagement, including development of core activists to lead activities. The friendliness of the community does not affect the level of activity, with one exception: electoral activity. Electoral activity is related to membership size, which, in turn, is related to the kind of community in which the Group or Chapter operates.

Turning first to conservation programs, as **Chart 32** shows, the regularity of Group conservation activity grows out of (1) Group structure, especially active committees; (2) leadership – ExCom members who value world-changing and who put in more time; and (3) the number of core activists they engage. The Chapters that prioritize member interests do more conservation activity, as do those whose leaders invest more time. Access to financial resources and staff influence the level of Chapter conservation work as well.

Chart 32: Factors Affecting the Level of Conservation Program Activity in Groups and Chapters

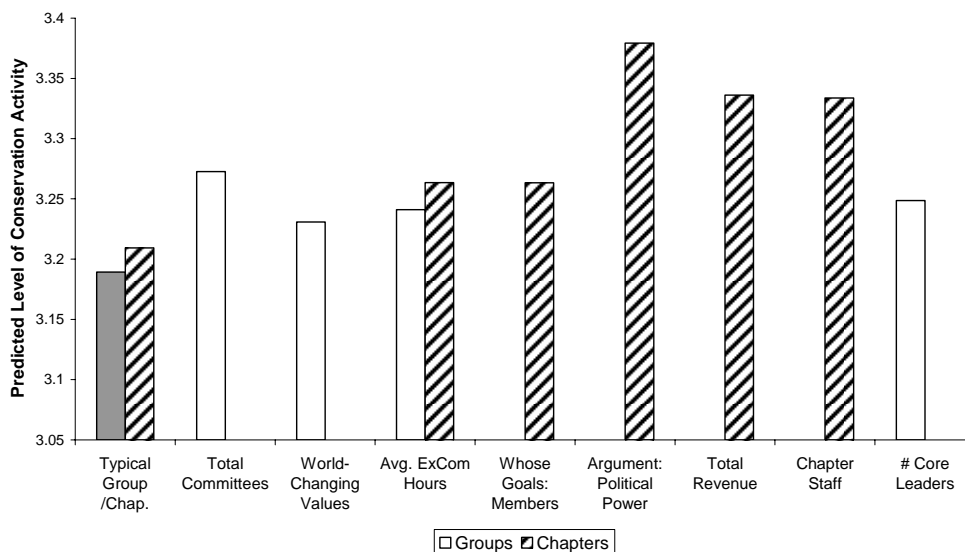
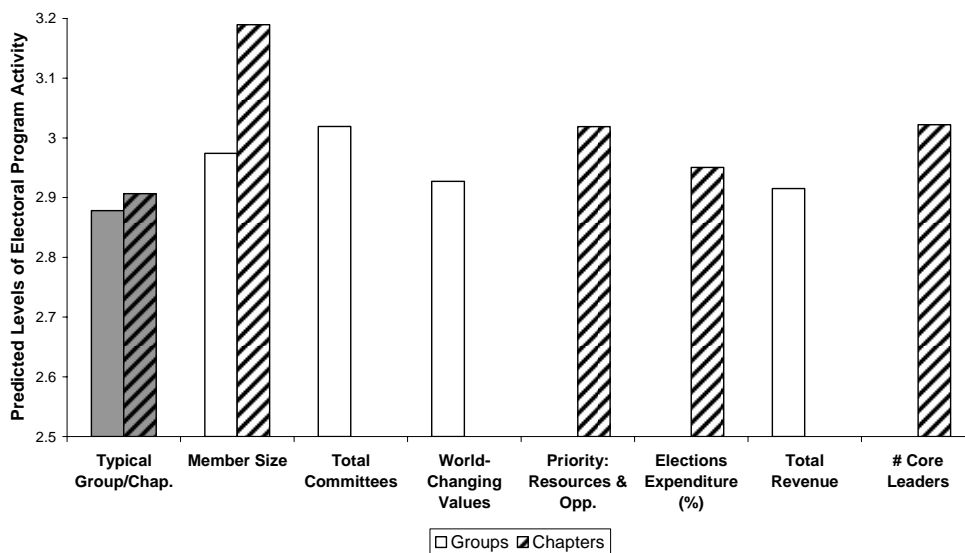


Chart 33 on the next page shows that electoral activity also depends on structure, leadership - including core activists - and resources. But it is also related to size, which depends on community context. Groups and Chapters with more members do more electoral work. In Groups, active committees, world-changing leaders and more revenue are related to electoral

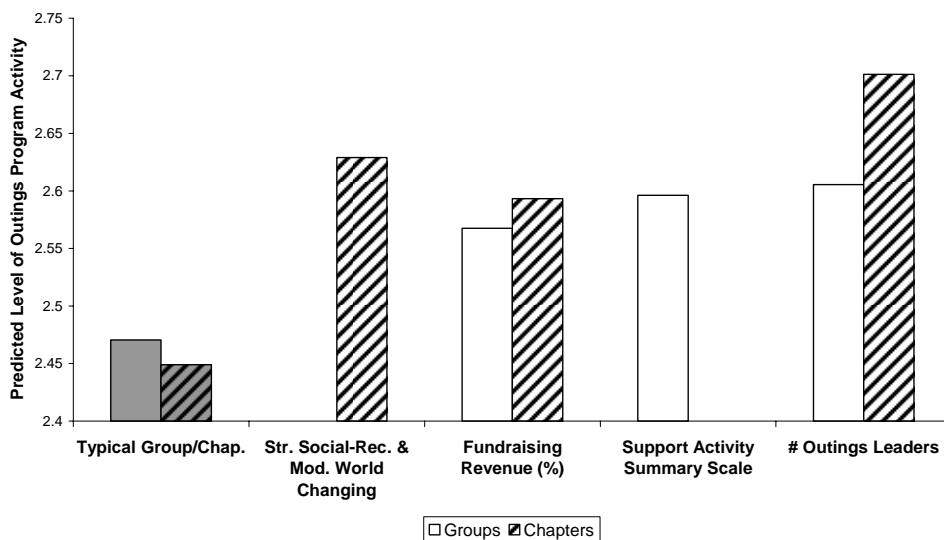
activity. In Chapters, ExComs who engage more core activists, prioritize opportunities to generate organizational resources, and who have access to more funding do more electoral work.

Chart 33: Factors Affecting the Level of Electoral Program Activity in Groups and Chapters



Finally, as **Chart 34** shows on the next page, the level of Group outings program activity is associated with outings leaders, support activities, and local fundraising. Although the values of ExCom members have no direct effect on the regularity of outings activity, social-recreational values are related to the number of outings leaders. At the Chapter level, ExComs whose members combine social recreational values with moderate world-changing values are also more likely to do more outings activities. More outings leaders also mean more outings activity, as does more local fundraising.

Chart 34: Factors Affecting the Level of Outings Program Activity in Groups and Chapters



Having examined the way the community context, organizational structure, leadership, and the activities of Sierra Club Groups and Chapters unfold, we turn now to consider why some Groups and Chapters achieve greater effectiveness in Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence than others.

5. EXPLAINING SIERRA CLUB EFFECTIVENESS

Keys to Effectiveness

We turn now to the question at the heart of this report: Why do some Groups and Chapters do Leader Development, Member Engagement, and Public Influence better than others? How does this relate to differences in community context, structure, leadership, and action? And what can we learn from this analysis to strengthen Groups and Chapters and the Sierra Club as a whole? We begin with Leader Development.

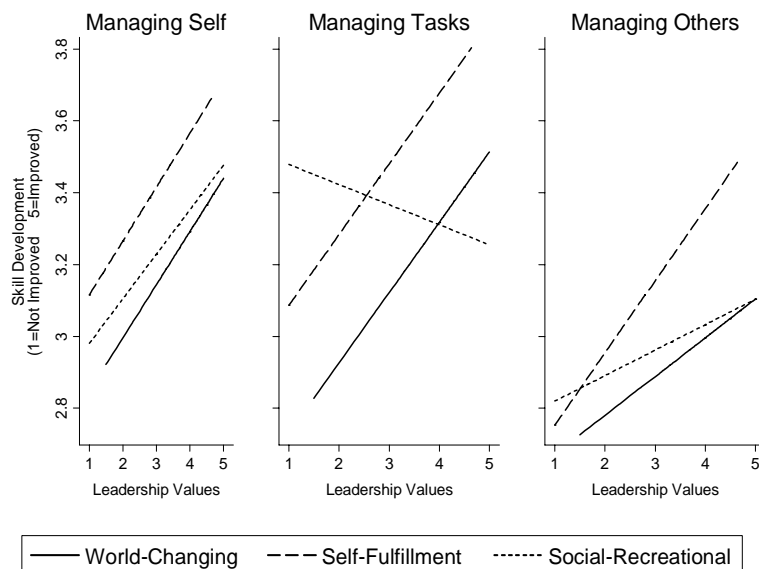
Leader Development: Skills, Attitudes, Behaviors

Leader Development occurs as a result of the interaction of the experience that ExCom members contribute to the organization and the way the organization contributes to their experience. Members contribute their demographic backgrounds, social networks and most importantly, the values that motivate them. Their experience within the Club sorts into three domains: learning, strategy, and governance. Learning refers to how, where, and from whom they learn skills; strategy refers to how they prioritize constituency, pragmatism, goals, tactics, and arguments; and governance refers to how they deliberate over collective choices and implement them.

Leadership Skills

Values of world-changing, social-recreation, and self-fulfillment are strongly related to skill development, as illustrated in **Chart 35** on the following page.

Chart 35: Effect of Leadership Values on Skill Development in Group and Chapter Leaders

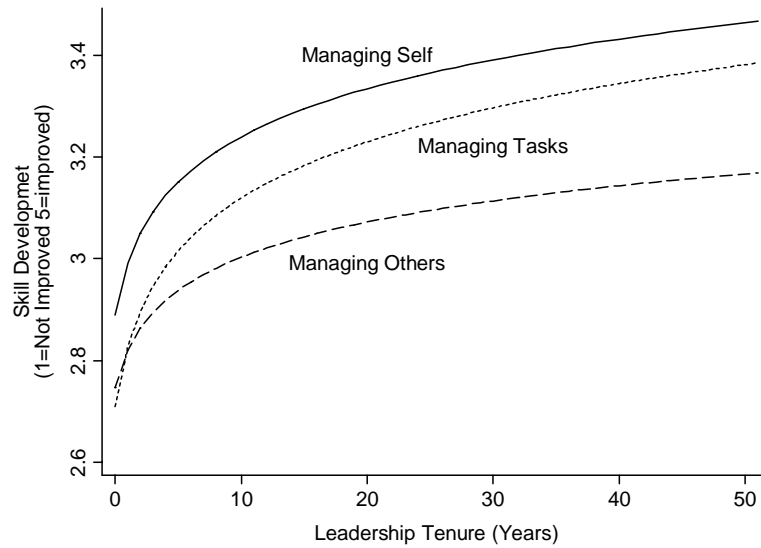


The horizontal axis (x) measures the importance of a value to an ExCom member and the vertical axis (y) shows how much they are learning. World changing and self-fulfillment values facilitate learning to manage tasks while social and recreational values discourage it. ExCom members with world-changing values do more conservation and advocacy work – to which most of the tasks are related – while those with social and recreational values engage in other forms of activity.

However, social and recreational values positively influence learning to manage others, the skill in shortest supply. All three values motivate learning self-management skills. Perhaps most important is the fact that although self-fulfillment values influence skill development the most, ExCom members are least likely to report self-fulfillment as important to them in their decision to become active.

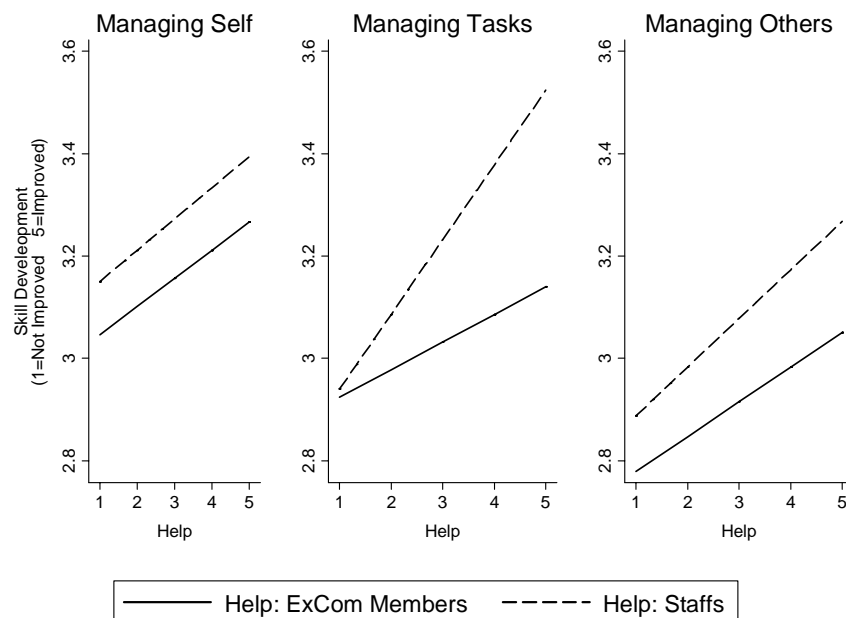
A second source of skill development is an ExCom member's experience within the Club, measured by the number years they have been active or their tenure. The learning curve in **Chart 36** on the next page shows the relationship between leadership tenure and skill development. Most learning occurs early in one's experience, leveling off after 10 years. Of the three leadership skills, ExCom members learn to manage tasks and self more quickly than they learn to manage others. In fact, they do not learn much at all about managing others from their experience in the Club.

Chart 36: Effect of Leadership Tenure on Skill Development in Group and Chapter Leaders



How do differences in their sources of learning influence acquisition of organizational skills by ExCom members? With on the job training, sources of coaching and mentoring are particularly important. As shown in **Chart 36a**, ExCom members who can turn to other ExCom members for help and advice learn more skills.

Chart 36a: Effect of Sources of Help and Advice on Skill Development in Groups and Chapters

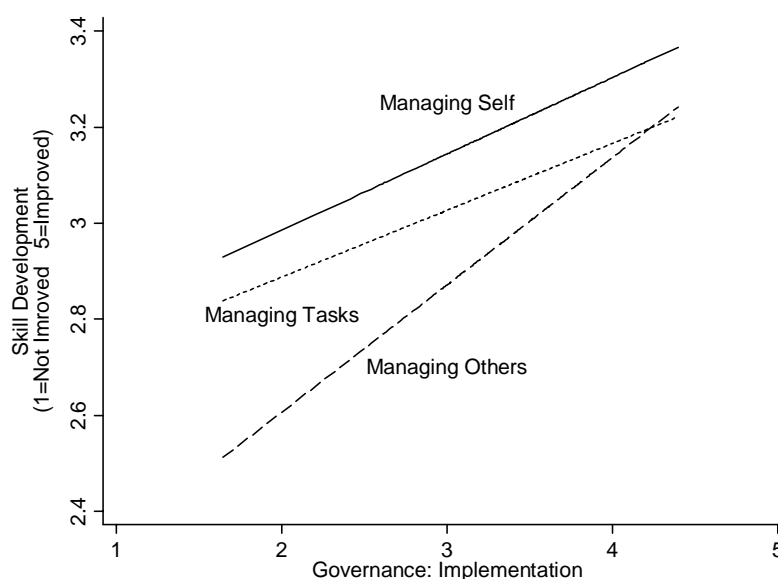


Club staff is also an important source of learning, although ExCom members' access to them is limited. On the other hand, many ExCom members turn to written material for help, but we find no evidence that ExCom members that use these materials differ from those that do not in their skill development. While not shown in the chart, conservation program activities teach self-management and task management, but not managing others.

How is governance related to skill development?

Good governance teaches all three skills, as **Chart 37** shows, and better governance is related to more learning, indicated by the upward moving lines. But good governance has the greatest effect on learning to manage others. In other words, we learn skills required to work well with others by working well with others. These include deliberation characterized by planning, decision-making and goal setting and implementation characterized by accountability, delegation, and shared norms.

Chart 37: Effect of Governance on Skill Development in Group and Chapter Leaders

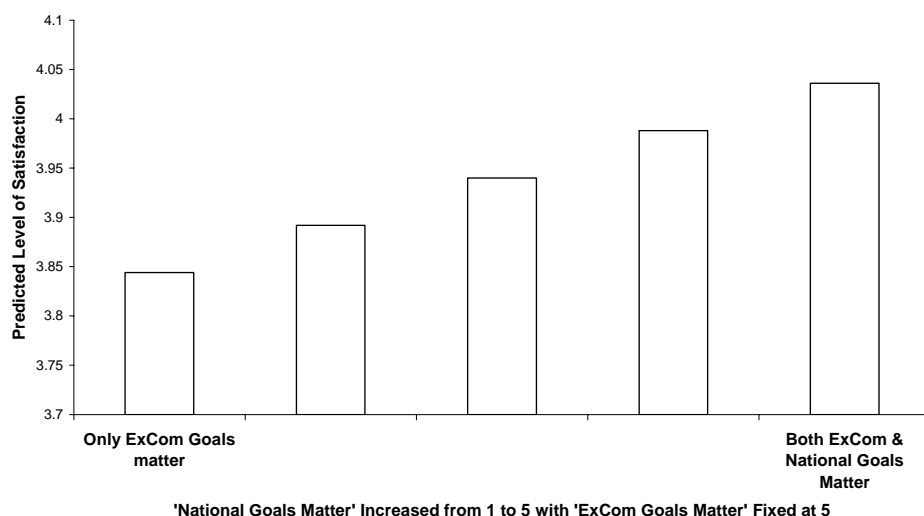


Leadership Attitudes

Considering motivational attitudes of commitment, satisfaction, and efficacy, factors contributing to commitment and satisfaction are similar to those that influence skill development: values, learning, strategy, and governance. World-changing and social recreational values matter most

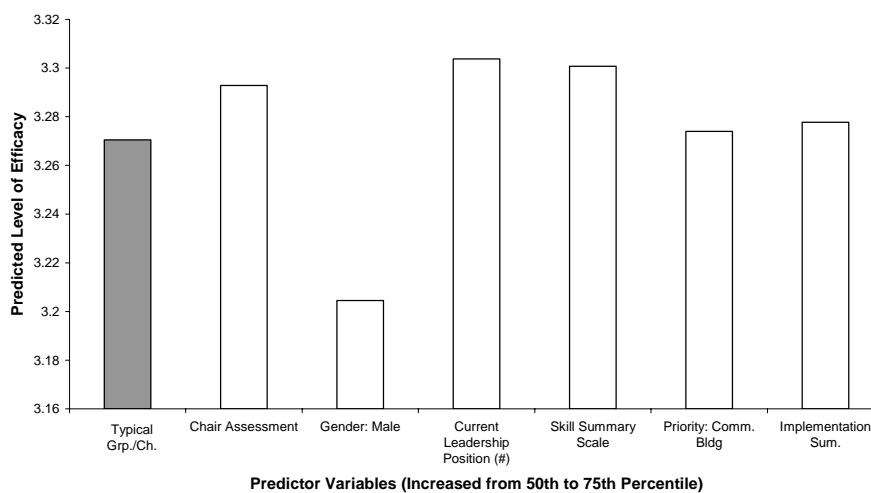
for commitment and satisfaction, as does learning from other ExCom members and staff. Another important influence on satisfaction is ExCom strategy, specifically; whose preferences receive the most consideration. **Chart 38a** displays the different levels of satisfaction experienced by ExCom members. At the far left, the Chart shows the level of satisfaction experienced by ExCom members who consider only the preferences of their ExCom. To the far right, the Chart shows the level of satisfaction experienced by ExCom members who also consider the preferences of the national organization. The greater consideration that ExComs give to national preferences, along with their own, the greater the satisfaction they experience in their work.

Chart 38a: Effect of Prioritizing Local and National Goals on Leadership Satisfaction



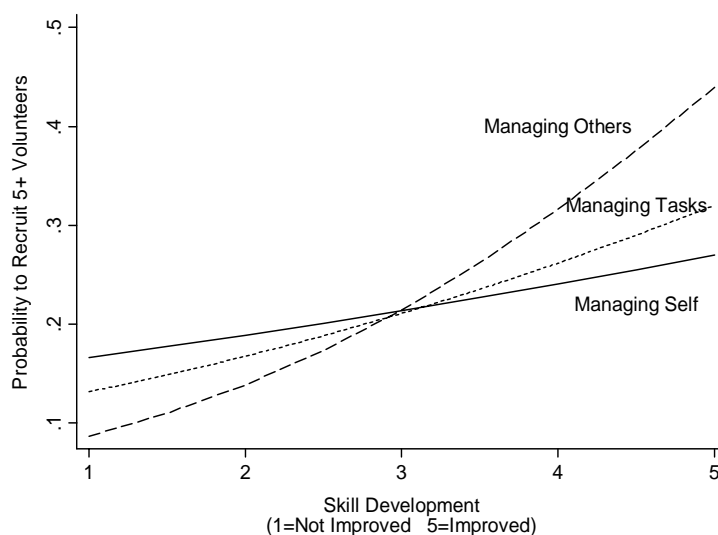
Feelings of personal efficacy show a different pattern. As shown in **Chart 38b** on the following page, its sources are both fewer and more limited to learning. In fact, personal efficacy is largely about learning leadership skills – learning any of the skills contributes to a greater sense of personal efficacy. Personal efficacy is the only attitude influenced by the community context – the more friendly the environment, the greater one's sense of personal efficacy.

Chart 38b: Factors Affecting Personal Efficacy in Group and Chapter Leaders



The practice of recruiting, like efficacy, is related primarily to experience and learning. How long an ExCom member has been active and the number of different leadership roles he or she plays is most important. It also helps to have participated in formal training. ExCom members who participate in other environmental organizations are also better recruiters – they know more potential activists. Similarly, the number of active committees influences recruiting leaders, most likely because they create opportunities for leaders to develop. Finally, skill development and motivational attitudes all contribute to recruiting. **Chart 39a** below shows that the skill of learning to manage others has the greatest influence on recruitment.

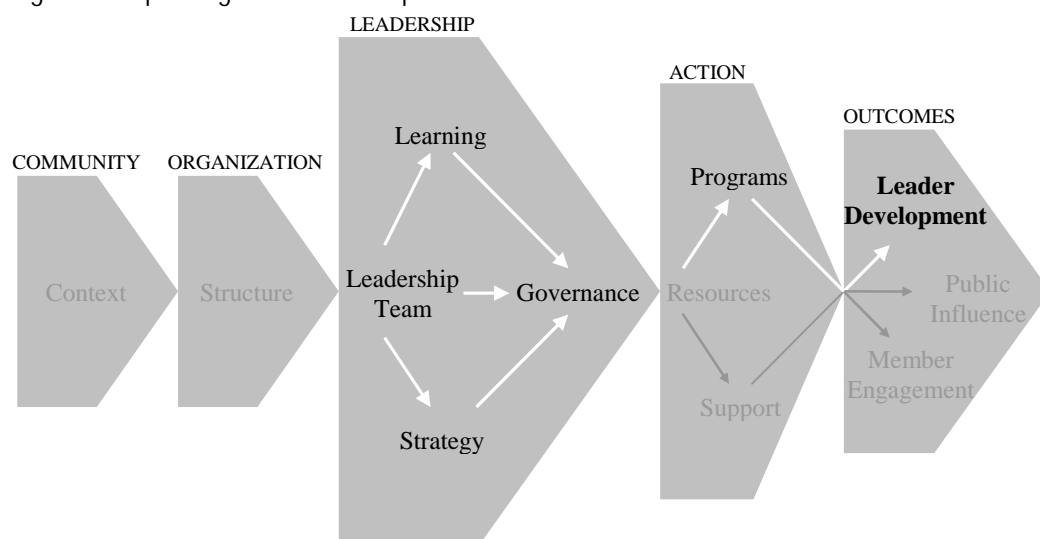
Chart 39a: Effect of Leadership Skill Development on Volunteer Recruitment in Groups and Chapters



Conclusion

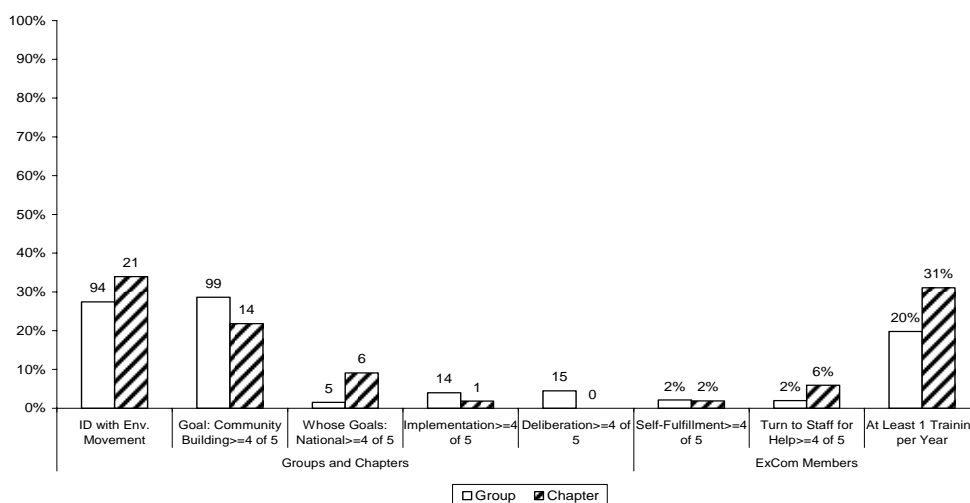
As shown in **Figure 3**, ExCom members' values motivate their acquisition of skills 'on the job': occupying leadership roles, participating in program activities, and interacting with other leaders. Learning organizational skills in the Sierra Club, however, is very limited, although ExCom members do learn more about managing the self and managing tasks than about managing others. The principal source of learning to manage others is the experience of good governance. While ExCom members experience relatively high levels of commitment and satisfaction – especially to the extent that local and national goals align – they experience less personal efficacy due to limited skill development. For similar reasons only 10% of ExCom members recruit half of the Club's leaders and two-thirds of ExCom members recruit no new leaders.

Figure 3: Explaining Leader Development



Finally, as shown in **Chart 39b**, we have learned why those Groups and Chapters that develop leaders are successful in doing so, but the number and percentage of Groups, Chapters or individuals who engage in practices that encourage leader development is very limited.

Chart 39b: Groups, Chapters, and Individuals With Practices Encouraging Leader Development (% and Numbers)



Member Engagement

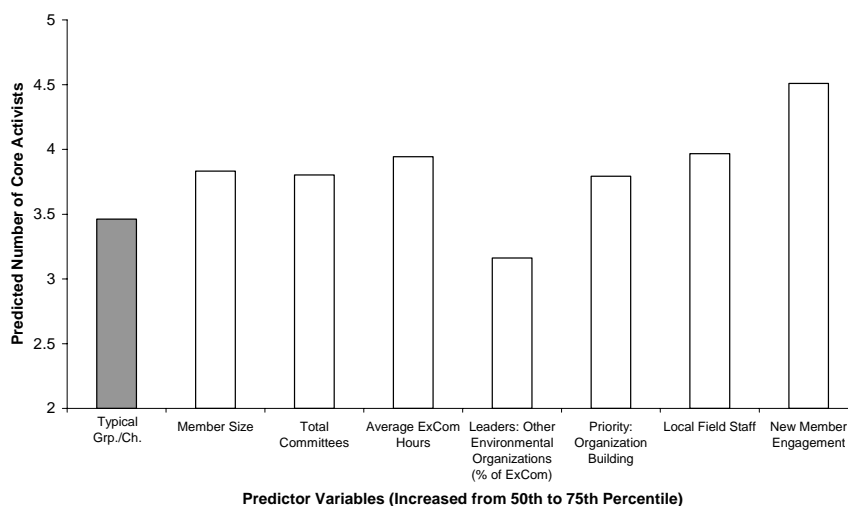
Core activists – and outings leaders - are the key to engaging participants in local activities. Chapters and Groups with more active committees or activity sections recruit more core activists. ExComs that focus on member interests, prioritize organization building, and conduct regular new member engagement activity, especially new member meetings, recruit more core activists, particularly if they can access local field staff. More core activists recruit more participants and generate more conservation and outings activity. And more activity creates the opportunity to engage more participants.

Although the size of Groups and Chapters is related to all forms of participation, it is not as important as we might expect. We focus here on the four forms of direct participation in Groups and Chapters: the number of core activists, outings leaders, committee members, and regular and time-to-time participants.

Core Activists

Among Groups, the number of Core Activists is related to the structural factors of membership size and the number of active committees, as illustrated in **Chart 40**.

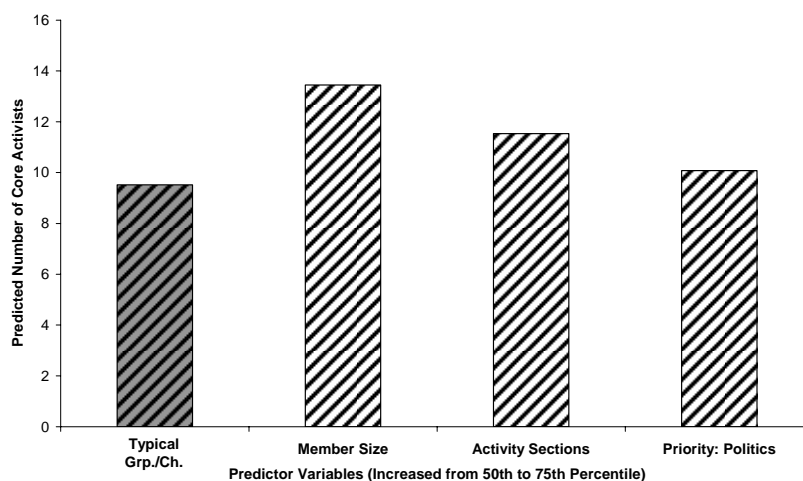
Chart 40: Factors Affecting the Number of Core Activists in Groups



In terms of leadership strategy, Group ExComs that prioritize organization building engage more core activists. The activity most related to more core activists is the amount of new member engagement a Group does. This includes sending welcome materials to new members, making personal contact with new members, and holding new membership meetings. Engaging members when they join pays off. Contact with locally assigned field staff – usually EPEC staff – also encourages core activists. On the other hand, the larger the proportion of ExCom members who hold leadership positions in other environmental organizations, the fewer the number of core activists, a result, perhaps, of trying to do too much.

The engagement of core activists in Chapters works in a similar fashion, but is simpler (see **Chart 41** on the next page). In terms of leadership, assigning strategic priority to politics is associated with more core activists, perhaps a result of a need for activists who can sustain advocacy and electoral activity. Structural factors of membership size and activity sections create availability and provide opportunity.

Chart 41: Factors Affecting the Number of Core Activists in Chapters

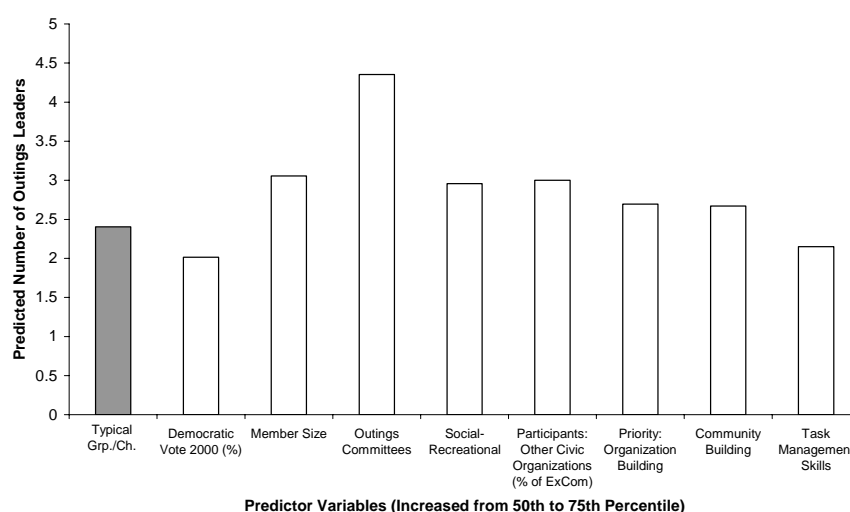


Outings Leaders

Outings leaders become engaged in Groups based on the same structural factors as core activists: the size of membership and number of active committees, specifically outings committees, as shown in **Chart 42** below.

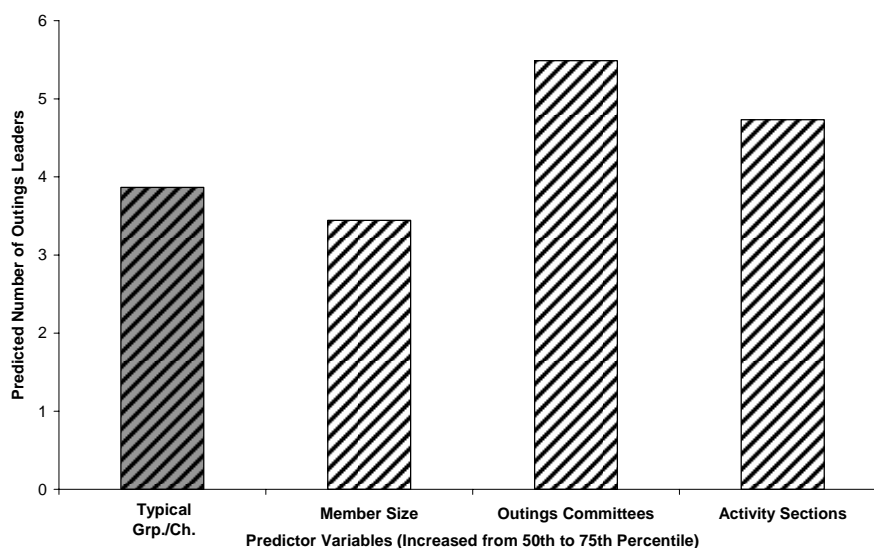
In terms of leadership, the stronger the social and recreational values of ExCom members, the more outings leaders they develop. Unlike the involvement of ExCom members as leaders in other environmental groups, their involvement in other civic groups has a positive effect, perhaps as a recruiting opportunity. Organization building priorities are associated with more outings leaders, as are community building support activities; i.e. social events and celebrations.

Chart 42: Factors Affecting the Number of Outings Leaders in Groups



In Chapters (see **Chart 43**), the story is a bit different. Structural factors cut in two different directions: the number of outings leaders is negatively related to the size of Chapter membership, but positively related to the number of active outings committees and activity sections, which provide an opportunity for outings leaders to emerge at the Chapter level.

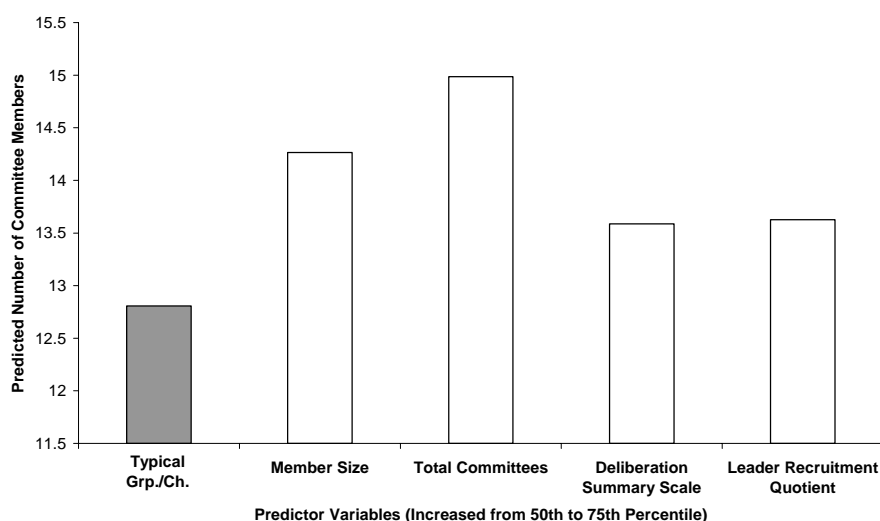
Chart 43: Factors Affecting the Number of Outings Leaders in Chapters



Committee Members

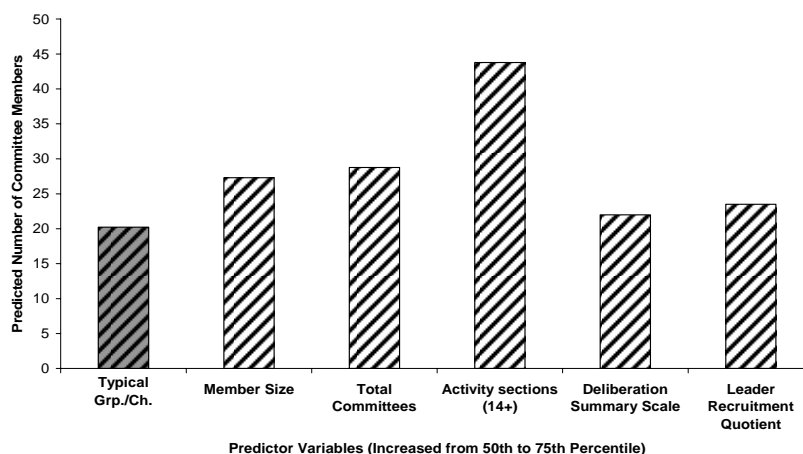
Factors related to the number of Committee Members in Groups (**Chart 44**) are similar to those linked to core activists and outings leaders.

Chart 44: Factors Affecting the Number of Committee Members in Groups



Structural factors of membership size and active committees are related to more committee members. In terms of leadership, an ExCom that deliberates well encourages broader committee involvement. ExComs whose members do more direct recruiting of leaders also have more committee members. The same is true for Chapters (**Chart 45**).

Chart 45: Factors Affecting the Number of Committee Members in Chapters

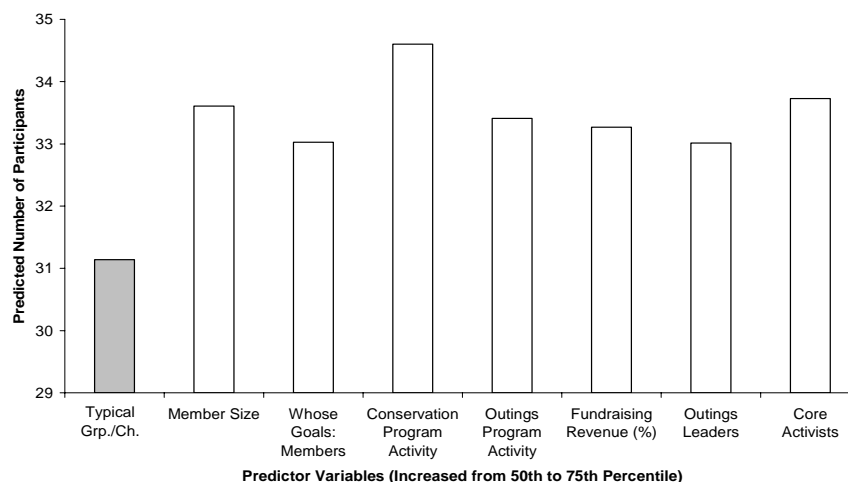


The three forms of engagement we have considered so far have all been forms of leader engagement: core activists, outings leaders, and committee members. They make up the central core of a Group or Chapter. Now we consider those who are not leaders, but engage directly by participating regularly or from time-to-time in Group or Chapter activity.

Participants

Although the engagement of participants in Groups works similarly to the engagement of leaders, the opportunities for engagement differ, as shown in **Chart 46** below.

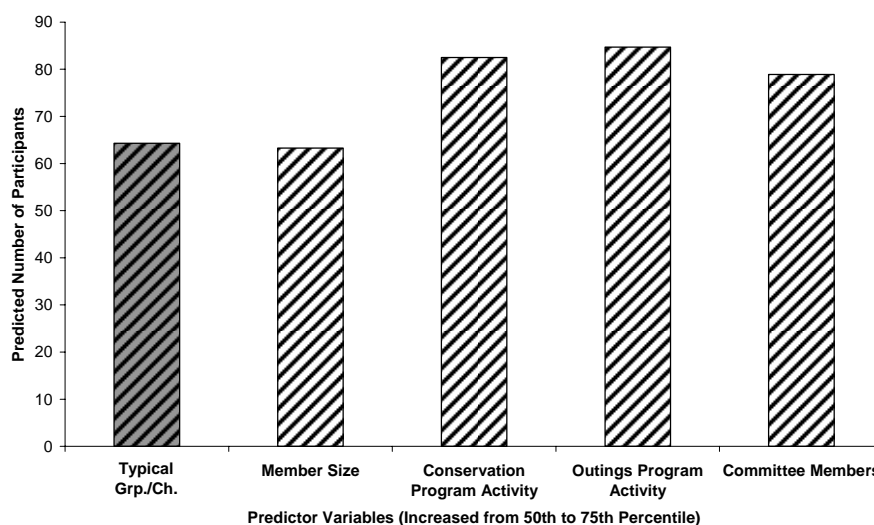
Chart 46: Factors Affecting the Number of Participants in Groups



As with leaders, the size of the membership matters. But the number of committees has no direct effect. Leadership strategy matters in that an ExCom that prioritizes member interests will engage more participants. The key to engaging participants, however, is action. Groups that sustain high levels of conservation and outings activity – the opportunity equivalent of committee work for the core activists – engage more participants. Also, Groups that generate a greater proportion of their revenue locally engage more participants because local fundraising events are another engagement opportunity and indicate a focus on the local community and local membership, similar to the focus on member interests.

Engaging participants at the Chapter level works similarly, as illustrated in **Chart 47**.

Chart 47: Factors Affecting the Number of Participants in Chapters

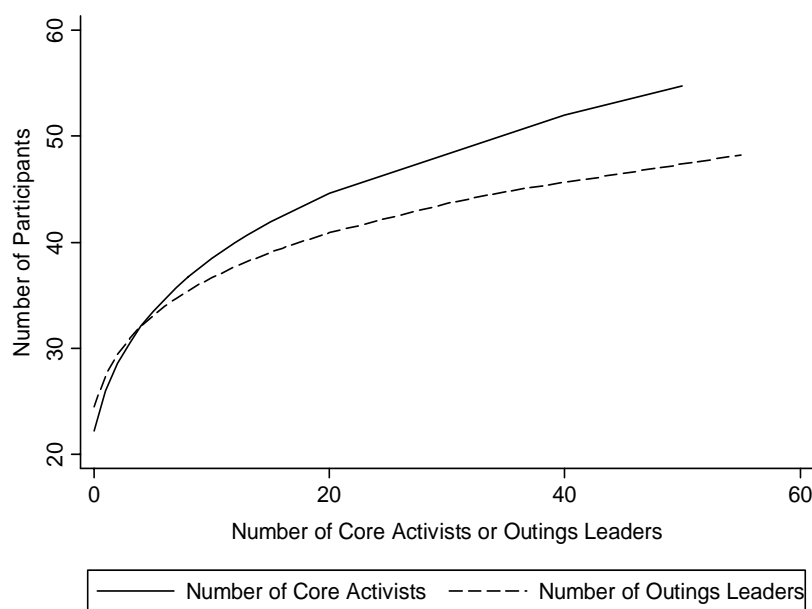


Membership size matters for availability. Conservation and outings programs provide opportunities. Here, the number of committee members, rather than core activists or outings leaders, indicates the leadership influence. This may reflect the fact that Chapters have, on average, 36 committee members as compared with an average of 9 for Groups.

The relationship between core activists and participants creates a positive feedback loop that encourages higher levels of Member Engagement in Groups with more core activists or outings leaders. Groups with more core activists and outings leaders have more people to reach out and recruit others to participate. Groups with more core activists generate stronger conservation and outings programs that provide opportunities to participate.

Focusing on the relationship of core activists and outings leaders to participants in Groups, **Chart 48** shows that in the short run, outings leaders produce a greater return in participants. However, core activists quickly begin generating more participants than outings leaders.

Chart 48: Effect of Core Activists and Outings Leaders on the Number of Participants in Groups



Membership Size

Although membership size significantly influences all four forms of direct engagement that we have considered, beyond a certain point it has little further effect. As **Table 9** shows below, we expect a Group of 250 members to engage 28 participants.

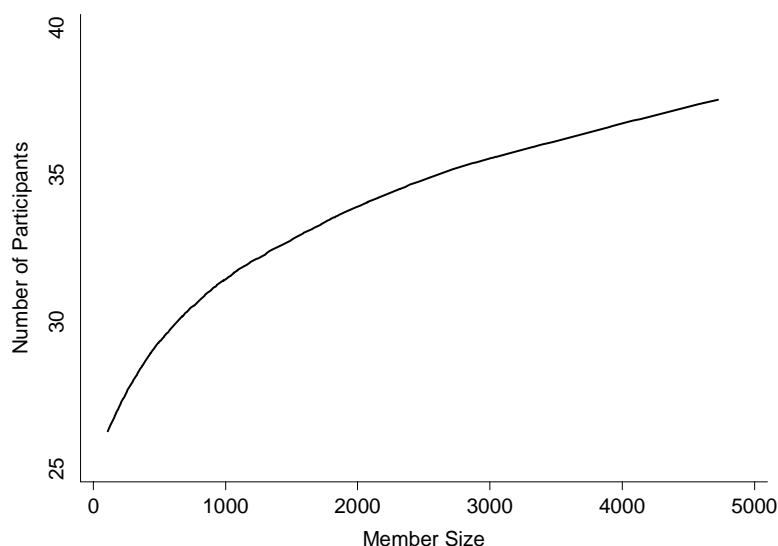
Table 9: The Decreasing Effect of Membership Size on Engaging Participants

# of Members	Expected # of Participants
250	28
500	30
1000	32
1500	33
2000	34
2500	35
3000	35

But we also expect that a 1000-member group would engage only 32 participants. Adding 750 members yields only four more participants. Similarly, a Group of 3000 members would engage only 35 members – 2000 additional members yield three more participants. Looked at in another way, we would expect one 2000 member Group to have 34 participants, but two 1000 member Groups to have 64 participants.

Chart 49a below demonstrates this dynamic relationship between membership and participation.

Chart 49a: Effect of Membership Size on the Number of Participants in Groups

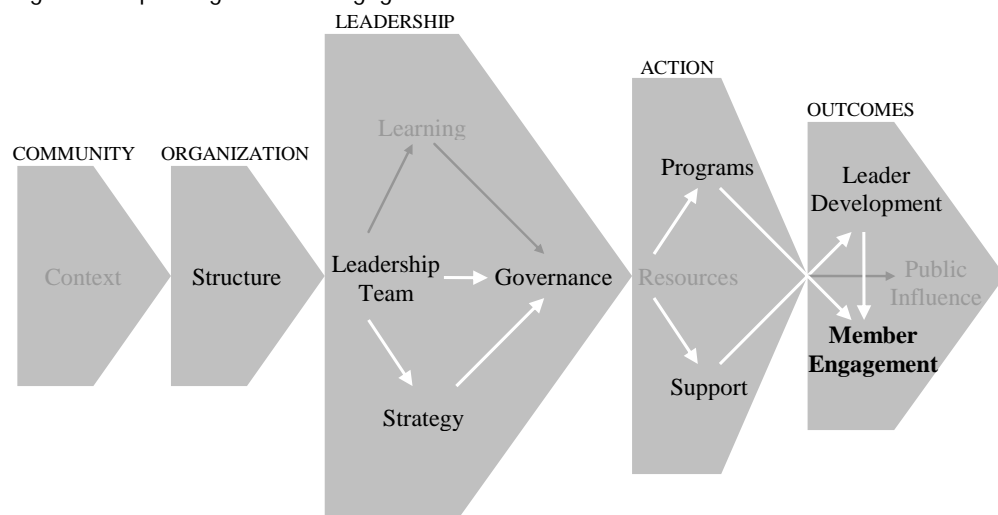


As the number of members grow, the gain in participants becomes smaller and smaller. This may be because both the opportunities for participation and motivation to participate fail to keep pace with the growing pool of potential recruits. Improving member engagement practices, however, would likely engage more participants, regardless of Group or Chapter size. Nevertheless, the fact that increasing membership has a diminishing return on member engagement must be considered when crafting appropriate Group and Chapter boundaries.

Conclusion

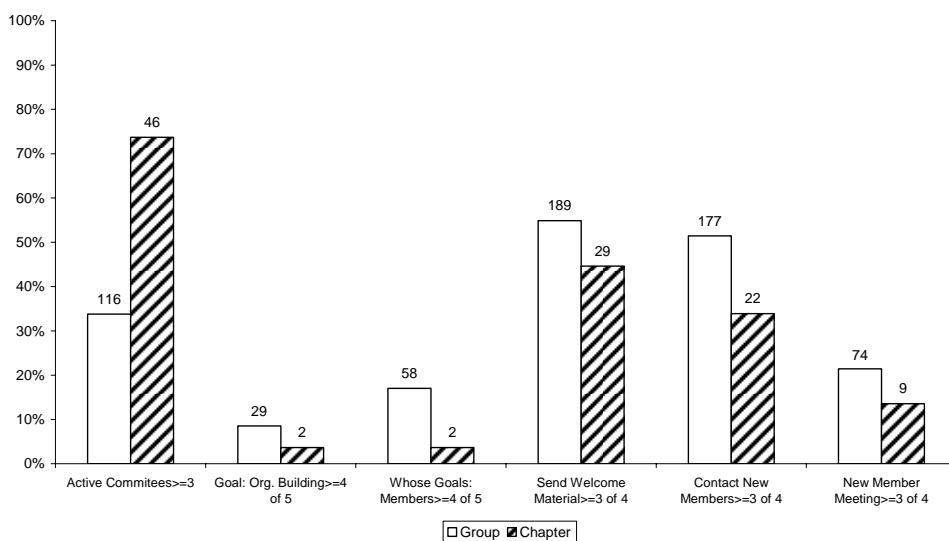
In sum, as shown in **Figure 4** on the next page, structure influences Member Engagement in two ways. Membership size defines the base of available people that could be engaged. Committees and activity sections provide opportunities for core activists to become involved, but conservation and outings activities create opportunities for general participants' engagement. Leadership also matters. ExComs, whose members recruit others, prioritize members' interests and focus on organization and community building engage more members, as do those that are better governed. Engaging more core activists and outings leaders generates more participants, which may occur through direct recruiting and the generation of greater levels of activity.

Figure 4: Explaining Member Engagement



Finally, as **Chart 49b** shows, although we learned why those Groups and Chapters that engage their members are successful, the number and percentage of Groups and Chapters or individuals who engage in practices that encourage member engagement is very limited.

Chart 49b: Groups and Chapters With Practices Encouraging Member Engagement" (% and #'s)



Public Influence

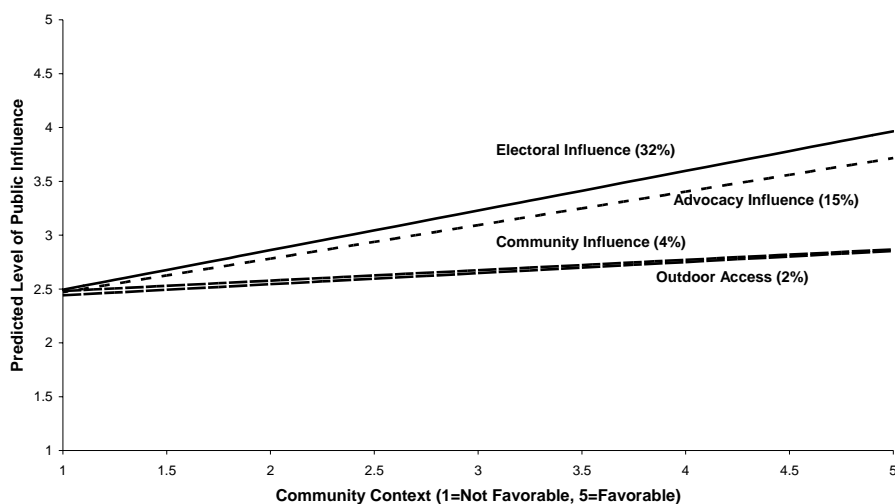
All four types of Public Influence are related to three domains: leadership, specifically the quality of ExCom governance; action: program activities in which Groups and Chapters engage their communities, support activities that enhance these programs, and resource generating activities; and the community context within which Groups and Chapters work. Furthermore, Leader Development and Member Engagement also affect Public Influence. Groups and Chapters that develop their leaders are also more likely to have ExComs with the skills, commitment, and governance practices needed to gain Public Influence. A Group or Chapter that engages its members, especially core activists and outings leaders, is also more likely to develop the program activities it needs to influence its community.

Community Context

Groups located in communities that are well educated, have a high proportion of college students, are politically liberal, have a well-organized civic community, and have a relatively high density of Sierra Club members – such as the Yolano Group in Davis, California – are likely to have more Public Influence than groups like the Sawtooth Group located in Twin Falls, Idaho – a very different kind of community.

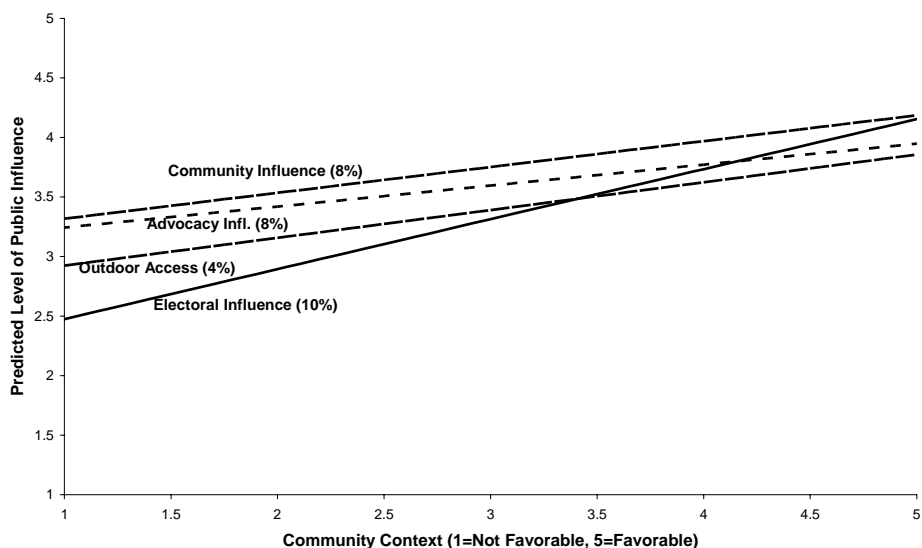
But, as **Chart 50** shows on the next page, although the community in which a Group or Chapter is located matters, it matters far less than many assume. Electoral influence depends most on community context – community context explains 32% of the difference among Groups. But it explains only 15% of the differences in advocacy influence, and less than 5% of the differences in community influence and outdoors access. Community context, in other words, explains twice as much of the difference in electoral influence than in advocacy influence, and more than six times as much of the difference in community influence and outdoor access.

Chart 50: Effect of Community Context on Public Influence in Groups



Among Chapters, our analysis tells a similar story (Chart 51). Electoral influence depends on community context more than the other types of influence. On the whole, however, the Public Influence of Chapters depends less on community context than that of Groups. Chapters conduct more extensive program activities that may help overcome the effects of community context. Of the differences in electoral influence among Chapters, 10% can be explained by community context. Of differences in advocacy and community influence among Chapters, 8% are explained by context. Outdoor Access is the least dependent on community context – only 4% of the differences among Chapters can be explained by context.

Chart 51: Effect of Community Context on Public Influence in Chapters



In sum, community context has a limited effect on Public Influence. Even with respect to electoral influence, it explains only a third of the differences among Groups. It explains far less of the differences in the other types of influence.

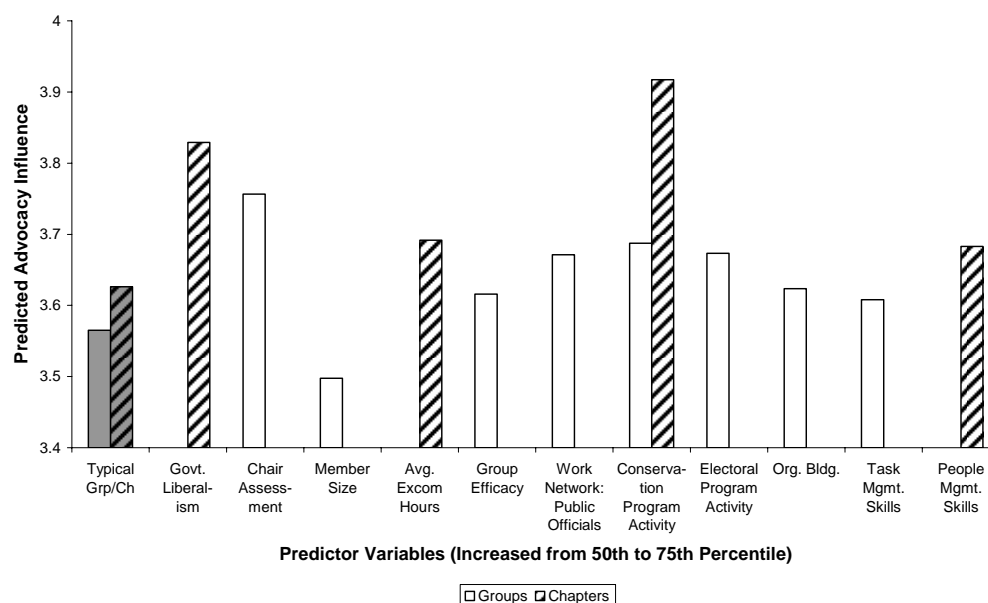
Organizing Public Influence

Groups and Chapters acquire Public Influence by engaging their communities in active programs. More extensive program activity can make the most of community context. Program activities, however, do not occur in a vacuum. We have already learned that high levels of Member Engagement, especially among core activists and outings leaders, can lead to high levels of program activity which, in turn, leads to more Public Influence. Program activity requires planning and implementation by an effective leadership team; the commitment of volunteer and material resources; and the backing of capacity building support activities. Below, we discuss the ways that leadership; program, support, and resource generating activities; and community context contribute to the four different types of Public Influence.

Advocacy Influence

Chart 52 identifies the factors that impact advocacy influence in Groups and Chapters. Looking first at leadership, we see that Group leadership affects advocacy influence through the quality of governance practices that generates group efficacy.

Chart 52: Factors Affecting Advocacy Influence in Groups and Chapters



High levels of group efficacy encourage more conservation activity. Groups whose ExCom members have learned task management skills which specifically relate to conservation activity also acquire more advocacy influence. Groups with leaders who can better manage more extensive conservation activities are more likely to have advocacy influence. Among Chapters, the most important specific contribution that ExCom leaders make is through their own commitment of time, which is a key factor in increasing program activity. Mastery of skills in managing others also has its own direct effect, suggesting the greater management challenge that Chapters face.

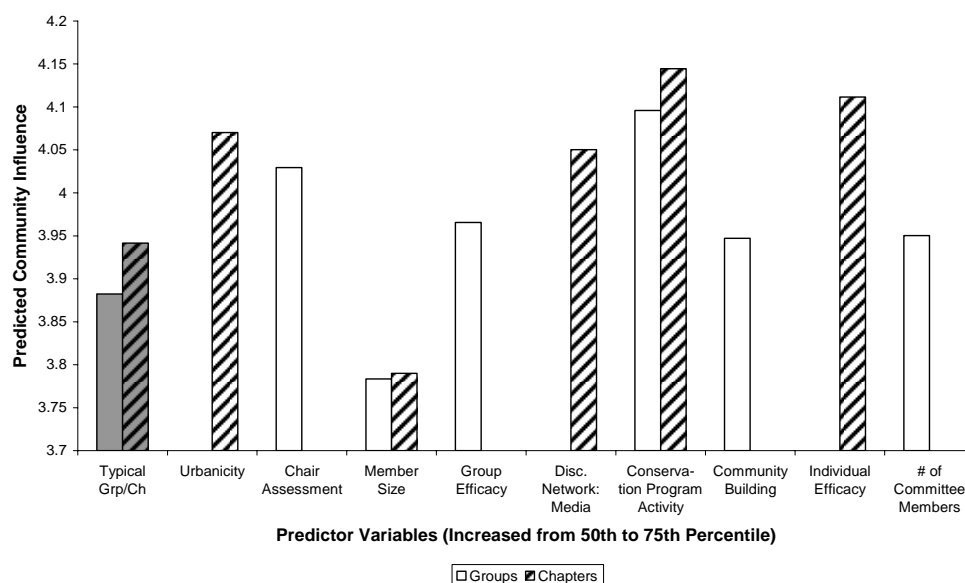
With respect to program activity, the advocacy influence of Chapters grows out of its conservation work, while the advocacy influence of Groups grows out of both conservation and electoral work. Chapters, however, engage in activities specifically related to advocacy at much higher rates than Groups do. While 86% of Chapters regularly engage in lawsuits, only 29% of Groups do. While 69% of Chapters regularly draft policy or legislation, only 25% of Groups do. Among Groups, program activity supported by networking with public officials and organization building activities like retreats and trainings, yields more advocacy influence. These activities help Group leaders develop skills they need to advocate with public officials. Although the same is true of Chapters, these activities do not stand out because most Chapters with strong advocacy programs also network and do organization building. Many Groups, however, conduct advocacy program activities without adequately supporting them, thus those Groups that do support them stand out. Only 30% of Groups hold retreats, conduct trainings, and engage in other forms of organization building on a regular basis, as compared with 63% of the Chapters.

Both Groups and Chapters support their program activities with volunteer resources. Volunteer participation in more conservation activity is related to greater advocacy influence. Although organizational structure has little impact on advocacy influence, among Groups the size of the membership can become a liability if it overwhelms organizational capacity. Finally, community context affects advocacy influence. Groups are more successful to the extent that their community base is educated, liberal, and civically and environmentally active. For Chapters, the liberalism of the government bodies with which it interacts matters more because the kind of conservation work that Chapters do largely depends on a positive policy environment.

Community Influence

Unlike advocacy influence, which is about influencing politics directly, community influence is about shaping public opinion and gaining support from other civic groups. **Chart 53** identifies the factors that affect community influence in Groups and Chapters.

Chart 53: Factors Affecting Community Influence in Groups and Chapters



Leadership impacts community influence in Groups through group efficacy, largely a matter of the quality of governance practices. And, as with advocacy influence, group efficacy leads to more conservation program activity, which leads to more community influence. In Chapter ExComs, ExCom members who have gained a sense of individual efficacy have a positive impact on community influence. Individual efficacy, as discussed earlier, grows out of the acquisition of skills that can help Chapter leaders manage complex programs.

The strongest predictor of community influence for both Groups and Chapters is conservation programs. In their activities, however, Chapters focus outward more than Groups. Groups are more likely to do conservation work that relies on member participation, such as mobilizing their members to write letters to the editor or contact public officials. Chapters, on the other hand, conduct a broader range of activity, including issuing press releases and contacting local media.

Groups and Chapters are consistent in the different ways they focus their program activity to acquire community influence and how they support that activity. Groups achieve higher levels of community influence by supporting conservation programs with community building activities –

social events and celebrations – that can help Groups more easily mobilize members to write letters and contact elected officials.

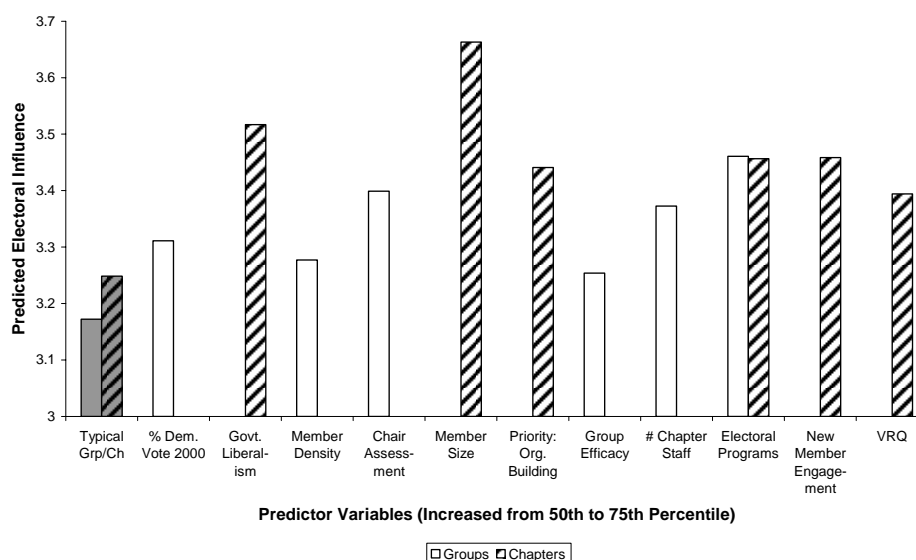
On the other hand, Chapters that support conservation programs by maintaining discussion networks with the media acquire more community influence. In addition, although volunteer participation in Group and Chapter programs enhances community influence, its impact is reflected in the level of activity. In Chapters, community influence is also related to volunteer participation in outings. In Groups, on the other hand, volunteer participation in committees is related to greater community influence.

Size can have a negative effect on the community influence of both Groups and Chapters. This means that smaller Groups and Chapters that can sustain levels of conservation activity as intense as larger Groups and Chapters may acquire more community influence, perhaps because their communities are smaller. Context has only a modest impact on community influence. Chapters located in more urbanized areas enjoy more community influence.

Electoral Influence

Chart 54 identifies the factors that affect levels of electoral influence in Groups and Chapters. Leadership affects electoral influence in Groups through good governance by enhancing group efficacy. In fact, an ExCom with a strong sense of group efficacy is more likely to acquire public influence at a given level of activity than one with less efficacy – even in a hostile setting.

Chart 54: Factors Affecting Electoral Influence in Groups and Chapters



Among Chapters, leadership affects electoral influence by the strategic priorities it establishes. Chapters who prioritize organization building (as indicated by good recruiting practices) are more likely to achieve more electoral influence.

For both Groups and Chapters, the extensiveness of their electoral program activity is the key predictor of electoral influence, but resources and support activities matter as well. Chapter staff also helps Groups achieve more electoral influence. The electoral influence of Groups thus seems to be more related to the resources and strength of the Chapter than other forms of influence.

Among Chapters, capacity building activity enhances the influence of electoral programs, especially by recruiting activists. New member engagement activities are almost as significant a predictor of electoral influence as the level of electoral program activity. Effective recruiting combines personal recruiting by ExCom members with activities that cast a wide net. On the one hand, ExComs with more recruiters among their members have more electoral influence. On the other hand, for engaging new members, new member meetings have more influence than mailing welcome materials or making a personal contact. Finally, Groups and Chapters that do more volunteer recruiting overall have greater electoral influence, evident in the level of program activity. It is worth noting, though, that volunteer participation in Chapter outings activity is also related to more electoral influence.

Finally, Groups and Chapters who support their electoral programs by networking with public officials are more likely to have more electoral influence – an effect that also plays out through the level of electoral program activity.

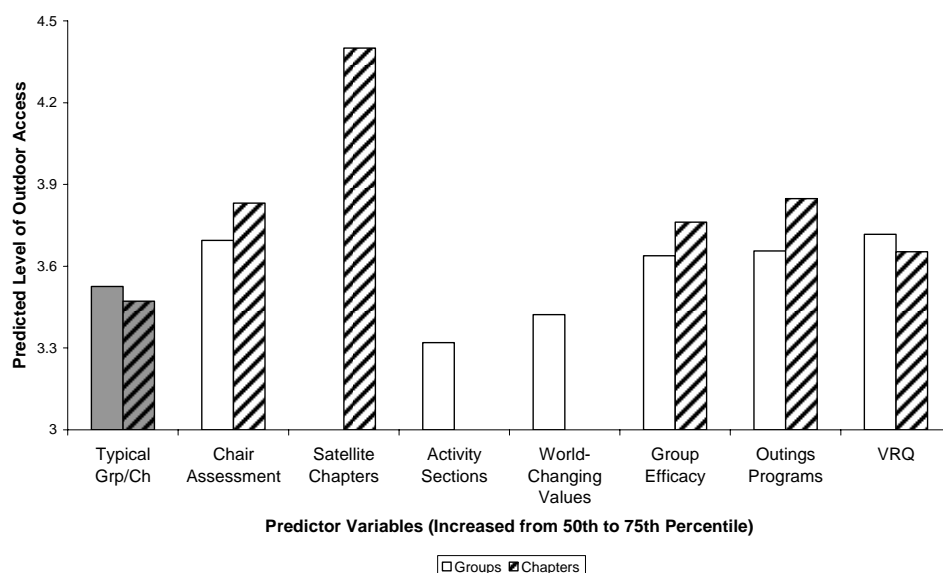
Community context affects electoral influence more than the other types of Public Influence. For Groups, the general supportiveness of the community helps, as does a higher member density and the presence of more Democratic voters. For Chapters, membership size matters – the bigger the better. The most significant dimension of community context for Chapters is government liberalism, which creates an environment that makes it easier to affect elections.

Outdoors Access

As is the case with other forms of influence, good governance leads to more group efficacy and that in turn leads to more Public Influence. **Chart 55** on the next page shows how governance

and other factors affect outdoor access in Groups and Chapters. Specifically with respect to outdoor access, however, greater efficacy is tied to ExCom members who recruit and retain more volunteers (VRQ, or the Volunteer Recruitment Quotient).

Chart 55: Factors Affecting Outdoor Access in Groups and Chapters



On the other hand, the greater the world-changing orientation of Group ExComs, the less their influence gaining access to the outdoors, since world-changing values are associated more with conservation and electoral programs than with outings programs. Groups and Chapters with active outings programs are more likely to generate greater outdoor access in their communities.

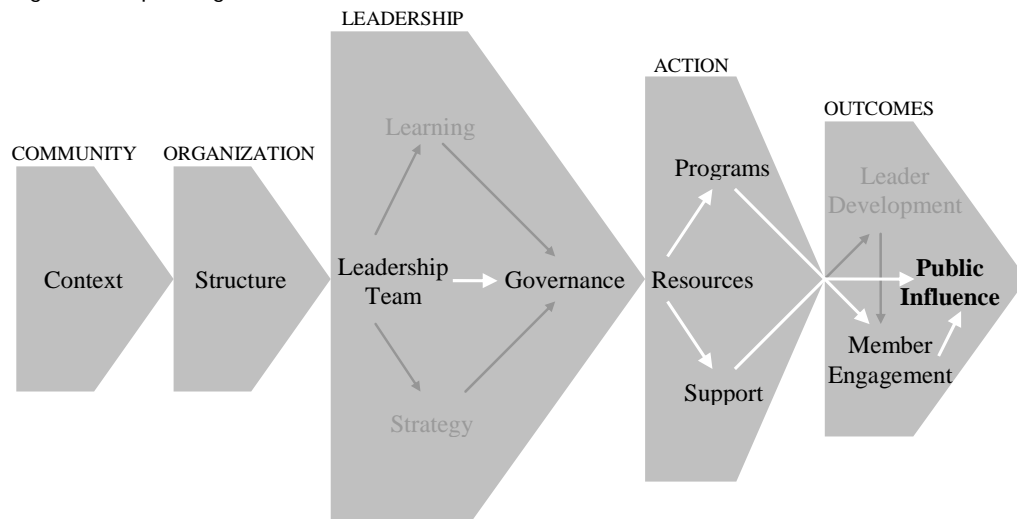
Structural characteristics can also affect access to the outdoors. Although there are relatively few Chapters without a Group in their hub city, those Chapters (called Satellite Chapters on **Chart 55**) do much more in the way of outdoors activities than other Chapters. On the other hand, Groups affiliated with Chapters that have activity sections report gaining less access to the outdoors. Groups in Chapters with activity sections compete for volunteers—and thus may have more trouble increasing access to the outdoors.

Finally, a favorable community context can help generate greater outdoor access for both Groups and Chapters, although the effect is modest.

Conclusion

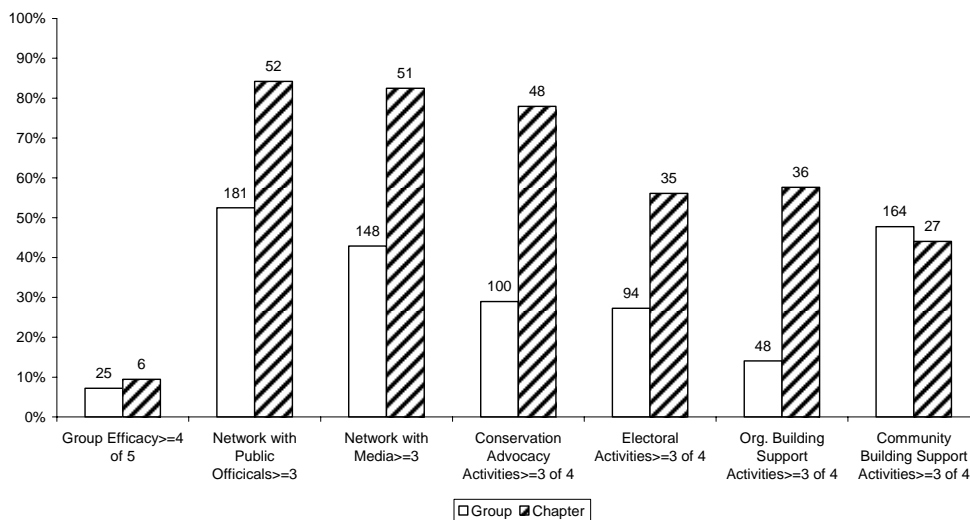
In summary, as shown in **Figure 5**, we find that all four types of Group and Chapter Public Influence result from their community context, the way they engage with their communities through program activity, the way they support those programs with resources and support activities, and leadership, particularly the governance practices of the ExCom. We also saw that running active, well-supported, and well-governed programs was the number one thing Groups and Chapters could do to make the most of their community context. The values of the leadership team, the level of Member Engagement, the internal structure of the Group or Chapter, and their financial resources, also impact Public Influence through their impact on program activity. The centrality of program activity to Public Influence emphasizes the importance of Leader Development and Member Engagement in enhancing Public Influence. Groups and Chapters who do a better job of developing their leaders and engaging their members will have the resources they need to run active, effective programs and thereby achieve Public Influence.

Figure 5: Explaining Public Influence



Finally, as **Chart 56** shows, although we learned why those Groups and Chapters that exert public influence are successful, the number and percentage of Groups and Chapters who engage in practices that contribute to public influence is very limited.

**Chart 56: Groups and Chapters With Practices Encouraging Public Influence
(% and #'s)**



6. IMPLICATIONS FOR ACTION

Five Opportunities for Action

While the Groups and Chapters that excel in developing leaders, engaging their members, and asserting public influence are relatively few, we can learn from their experience. Making effectiveness the rule, however, rather than the exception, requires action. Our report points to five implications for action.

- **Commitment**

Commit the staff, financial and moral resources to developing effective Chapters and Groups. Affirm that development of the Club's volunteer leadership and the Chapters and Groups they lead is a critical investment in the strength of the organization as a whole and the environmental movement more broadly.

- **Governance**

Transform the governance practice of Group and Chapter ExComs by training them in the skills of deliberation and implementation, establishing clear measures of performance and providing ongoing coaching by trained staff and leadership. A focus on governance will enhance the quality of leader development, member engagement, and public influence.

- **Leader Development Program**

Establish leader identification, recruitment, and development programs in each Group and Chapter to (1) provide urgently needed training in organizational skills, especially in managing others; (2) conduct ongoing new member engagement based on personal contact and regular new member meetings; (3) enact explicit leader development practices including identifying potential leaders, bringing them into new positions, and enhancing their skills; and (4) provide coaching and mentoring. A new focus on leader development will not only enhance the quality of leader development, but of member engagement, and public influence as well.

- **Group and Chapter Support Activity**

Review the ongoing support activity expected of each Group or Chapter. Although most ExComs share information, especially newsletters, and raise funds, only fundraising influences effectiveness. On the other hand, organization building (training, retreats), community building (social events, celebrations), and new member engagement all impact Group and Chapter effectiveness regardless of strategy, but are much less widely practiced.

- **Structural Reform**

Determine the structural changes that can best support effectiveness by examining the question of size, the extent of participation opportunities in both committees and activities, how to make Chapter and Group interactions more productive, evaluating the contribution of activity sections and considering funding mechanisms that could create greater incentives for community engagement.

None of what we suggest will be easy, but neither is it overwhelmingly complex – it is just plain hard. But the Sierra Club is not starting from scratch: its people have a vision of the world as they would like it to be, depth of experience grappling with the world as it is, and the values, willingness to work, and imagination to make it happen. What this work most requires is a clear-eyed commitment to the proposition that the only way the Sierra Club can fulfill its national purpose at this point is to invest its financial, staff, and moral resources in developing its leaders, enhancing its organizational capacity, and conducting programs of effective local action – rekindling the movement that the Sierra Club played such a key role in launching.

7. METHODOLOGICAL APPENDIX

COLLECTING, ASSESSING, AND ANALYZING NPLA DATA

In this appendix we summarize the methods we used to collect, assess, and analyze the data for this project.

Collecting Data

One of our initial tasks was defining the population of entities and individuals for the study. To construct an accurate list of entities, we began with the list of active Sierra Club Groups and Chapters provided to us by the Office of Volunteer and Activist Services of the Sierra Club. We deleted Groups in 'reorganization' (we counted members of these Groups as part of the Chapter's overall membership, unassigned to any Group) as well as Canadian Groups and Chapters. We found missing mailing addresses and phone numbers by consulting the Group and Chapter WebPages, newsletters, and online phone directories. Two Group Chairs identified their organization as being no longer active when contacted to participate in the phone interview and were subsequently dropped from the population.

More challenging was determining the size of Groups and Chapters ExComs. Despite the fact that no complete list exists, we needed accurate counts so that we could calculate the proportion of ExCom members who participated in the ESAS and ELS. We estimated the total number of ExCom members by triangulating on multiple sources including the Sierra Club's WILD (Web Interactive Leader Directory) database, Chapter and Group websites, and reports of ESAS facilitators. When sources conflicted, we chose the larger number so that our estimates of response rate and potential bias would be conservative. When there were discrepancies, the numbers reported on websites and by facilitators were typically larger than those reported on WILD. For example, the total number of ExCom members listed in WILD was 2,475 but our final estimate was 3,184. This difference is primarily the result of a reporting error in WILD due to the fact that the position of 'ExCom Member' was one that had only recently added. We used our

estimate to calculate the final response rate of the ELS and to measure the ExCom size of Chapters and Groups.

Our next major challenge was collecting the data. We collected data from September 2003 to March 2004. Collecting data on the scale needed and within the time frame required that the Sierra Club provide volunteer facilitators to administer the individual surveys and conduct the self-assessment sessions. The Sierra Club recruited 147 volunteer facilitators supported by 17 regional lead facilitators, coordinated by 3 national leaders.

This team carried out a 7 step program over the course of 13 weeks: (1) assigning each local ExCom to a facilitator responsible for leading and reporting on the self-assessment session; (2) working with facilitators to confirm dates for the self-assessment session; (3) reviewing a checklist of steps to prepare for self-assessment session; (4) conducting the session; (5) debriefing each session on-line; (6) reviewing a follow-up checklist to make sure that all the data was collected; and (7) submitting the data.

To prepare for the self-assessment sessions, ExCom members completed a written ExCom Leader Survey (ELS) inquiring into their goals, motivations, and backgrounds, as well as their evaluation of their ExCom. The survey was divided into seven sections: (1) why did the respondent become active in the Sierra Club and how do they encourage others to become active; (2) how does their ExCom prioritize its goals and objectives; (3) how does the ExCom conduct its strategic deliberations; (4) how does the ExCom organize to act on its plans; (5) how does the ExCom explain its successes and failures; (6) how leadership operates within the Group or Chapter; and (7) what are their demographics. Each survey took about 1.5 hours.

Facilitators brought ExCom members together for a self-assessment of their ExCom based on aggregation of the data gathered in the ELS. Each session took about three and a half hours. They were held from October 2003 to February 2004. The meetings were based on the structure of the ELS and divided into nine sections: (1) why ExCom members became active in the Sierra Club; (2) how ExCom members engage others; (3) which priorities shape the ExCom's goals and objectives; (4) how the ExCom deliberates; (5) how the ExCom organizes itself for action; (6) how ExCom members allocate their Sierra Club time; (7) how the ExCom explains its successes and failures; (8) sources of satisfaction and challenge for ExCom members, and; (9) the strengths and weaknesses of the ExCom. These facilitated sessions

allowed us to gauge the ExCom's collective assessment of itself. Data collected from these sessions included aggregated individual ELS data, note-taking sheets that summarize the discussion, and online reports from the facilitators on each meeting and their conduct of it.

While the ELS and ESAS were being completed, we conducted individual phone interviews with the chairs of each ExCom. The interviews focused on organizational structure, activities, networks, practices, community assessments, and effectiveness. To prepare for the interviews, the Sierra Club leadership sent letters to each ExCom chair describing the NPLA project, informing them that they would be called, and asking them to participate. The results of this data collection are summarized in Table E of the Appendix.

Data Cleaning: To prepare the data for analysis we had to 'clean' it first to standardize our analysis across all Groups and Chapters. Our biggest challenge was missing data – cases in which survey participants did not complete certain questions or sections in the ELS. This problem required a refined strategy. We determined that 28 surveys were unusable because more than 50% of the questions remained unanswered. On the remaining 1,588 surveys, the fact that some were missing specific responses posed a potential problem for scale construction. To manage this problem, we used multiple imputation technique – a statistical technique that allows one to substitute an estimate for each missing value based on other information provided by the respondent. Multiple imputation methods can correct for other sources of bias, including underestimating standard error and overestimating test statistics.

The other challenge we faced in using ELS data grew out of the fact that although individual leaders completed the survey, we are also interested in the collective assessment by ExCom members of their Chapter or Group. So we had to avoid the situation in which the opinion of a single ExCom member – if he or she were the only one to fill out the survey – could be taken as the collective judgment of the whole Group. To determine whether Groups with high rates of participation differed from those with low rates of participation, we conducted a response bias analysis using measures of demography and leadership commitment. We found that ExComs with 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, and 90% response rates were statistically indistinguishable from ExComs with 100% response rates. Based on this analysis, we included any ExCom that had 3 or more respondents. We thus had sufficiently complete data on 182 (53%) ExComs to include them in our analysis of questions based on the aggregation of assessments of individual ExCom members as reported in the ELS.

Assessing the Data

Another issue that we had to consider is potential bias due to nonparticipation of some Chapters, Groups, and individuals. To assess response bias, we used secondary Sierra Club data that included information on all the Groups and Chapters. In this way, we could assess the extent to which participating Groups and Chapters differed from those that did not participate on key organizational characteristics: (1) the number of individuals holding leader positions in the Group or Chapter; (2) the number of ExCom members; (3) the percentage of ballots returned in the 2003 National Board election; (4) the number of members in the Group or Chapter; (5) the average leadership tenure; and (6) the average number of leadership positions held by each individual leader.

In evaluating our phone interviews with Group and Chapter Chairs, we compared the means of participating Groups to non-participating Groups and found no statistical difference between them.

We evaluated the ExCom Leader Survey (ELS) in the same way, comparing ExComs for which we had ELS data to ExComs for which we did not. We found that non-participating Group ExComs had slightly smaller leadership cores than those that participated. Thus, our ELS data is slightly biased because the Group ExComs that participated tended to be the ones with larger leadership cores. But in our analysis of Chapter ExComs, we found no statistical differences between participants and non-participants.

Finally, in assessing response bias among the entities who participated in the ExCom self-assessment session (ESAS), we found that while there was no difference among Chapters, there was a difference between participating and non-participating Groups. Groups with small leadership cores, small membership size, and longer leadership tenure tended to be less likely to hold a self-assessment meeting.

In sum, our analysis gives us confidence that the data provides a clear and accurate picture of Sierra Club Groups and Chapters. While some parts of the data are biased against smaller ExComs, on the whole our data is representative – because we have a clear understanding of the existing bias, particularly the ESAS data on Groups, our interpretation of the data will be

stronger. Finally, a research design that includes multiple data sources, most of which are unbiased, allows us to buttress our claims through triangulation.

Analyzing the Data

Scale Construction and Factor Analysis

For many of the analyses in this report, we created scales from the original data in the ELS and the chair phone interviews. Scales help us measure things that we can conceptually describe, but cannot directly measure. For example, in the Leader Development sections, we wanted to measure the kinds of learning that individual Sierra Club leaders might be doing. But learning is difficult to measure directly. To develop a quantifiable measure, we asked respondents a set of 21 questions about skill improvements during their leadership tenure in the Sierra Club. We use factor analysis to organize these 21 items into 3 scales – relational learning, self-management, and organizational skill.

The primary method we used in constructing scales was factor analysis. Factor analysis is used to identify underlying concepts, or factors, that explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables. Factor analysis is often used to identify a small number of constructs – such as types of learning – that explain most of the variance observed in a much larger number of variables. Thus, to see how many and what kinds of learning Sierra Club leaders experience, we did an exploratory factor analysis on the 21 items in ELS Question 6-3. The factor analysis examined the patterns of correlation between the items, and indicated groups of items behaving similarly to each other. Each unique grouping of items is a factor, and each item has a factor loading that indicates how strongly it is related to the other items in the factor. In the case of individual leader learning, 3 factors emerged – our examination of the items in those three groups revealed three types of learning – relational, organizational, and self-management.

Once we identified the related items, we created scales. In the analyses described in this report, we created scales based on the mean of each individual's scores on a set of items. To create a scale, we took the respondent's average score on those 9 items.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is the primary tool that we have used to conduct our explanatory analyses of factors that contribute to the organizational effectiveness of Groups and Chapters (see **Tables A, B, C, and D** at the end of this appendix for the regressions reported in this report). In regression analysis, a regression equation summarizes the relationship among two or more variables. Linear regression assumes a linear association between two (or more) variables, such as the number of members and the amount of financial revenue. Regression analysis is most useful, however, for examining the influence of various factors simultaneously – multiple regression or multivariate analysis. This is important because organizational effectiveness is complex and multidimensional. These analyses can tell us two important things:

- How much each factor matters, independent of everything else that we are considering in our regression model (a process often referred to as ‘controlling’ for other factors). A regression coefficient summarizes the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable;
- How much of the differences between Groups or Chapters we can account for with our regression model, often referred to as the amount of variance explained.

In conducting regression analyses, we also apply tests of statistical significance to rule out the likelihood that the pattern we have discerned could be a chance occurrence.

Linear regression analysis assumes that variables are normally distributed, approximating the well known ‘bell curve’. Many of our variables are distributed this way. Some measures require more careful treatment, however, especially counts, such as the numbers of members or the amount of fiscal revenue. These types of measures often have a highly skewed distribution, due to a relatively small number of cases with very high values such as the number of members in the New York City Group. In these cases, we use a standard procedure of transforming the variable by taking the natural logarithm. We also use negative binomial regression that accounts for skewed distribution in the dependent variable. These techniques allow us to analyze the key patterns without allowing a small number of cases to overly influence our results.

Hierarchical Linear Modeling

In addition to linear regression, we used an additional technique to analyze leader development. We measured leader development at an individual level – how individual leaders learn skills, feel motivated, and recruit others. But leader development is the result of social interaction between individual and organization and individuals are located in different social settings. They have relationships with different people, belong to ExComs that work in different ways, and are connected to Groups or Chapters that have different structures. In this sense, leader development is also a collective or organizational phenomenon. Social scientists refer to this as multilevel or hierarchical structure and have developed statistical models to address this structure properly.

Applying conventional statistical techniques to multilevel phenomenon could make it hard to examine the relationship between individual and organizational level variables correctly. To examine how different individual or organizational factors are related to leader development, therefore, we used a statistical technique called ‘hierarchical linear modeling’. This technique allows us to estimate the effects of individual characteristics more precisely and to examine how organizational level factors influence individual leadership development. We used this technique to analyze all three dimensions of leader development – skills, attitudes, and recruitment.

Variable Inventory

To develop a clearer picture of what influences what, we prepared the “variable inventory” (see **Table 10** on the following page). With the help of this grid, we could discern patterns across independent variables as well as dependent variables, making it possible to develop a more focused set of recommendations.

Table 10: Variable Inventory – Significant Effects on NPLA Outcome Measure

	LEADER DEVELOPMENT								MEMBER ENGAGEMENT								PUBLIC INFLUENCE							
	Skills			Attitudes			Recruiting		CA's		OL's		CM's		PART		EI		AI		CI		OA	
	TM	OM	SM	Sat	com	Eff	5+Vols	1+Ld	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch	Gr	Ch
COMMUNITY CONTEXT																								
Member Density																		X						
Chair Assessment						X												X		X			X	X
Demography																						X		
Environment																								
Civic																								
Political																		X	X		X			
Regional																								
STRUCTURE																								
Member Size									X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NEG	X	NEG	NEG	NEG	NEG
Interaction										X			X		X		X							
Chapter Context									X				X		X									X
Committees								X	X		X	X	X	X										
LEADERSHIP TEAM																								
Demographics																								
Age	NEG	NEG	NEG		X																			
Gender	M					F																		
Values																								
World Change	2	3	3		2	1		X																NEG
Self-Fulfill	1	1	1		NEG	3		X																
Social Recreational	NEG	2	2		1	2					X													
Effort									X											X				
Networks																								
Ldr/Env. Groups									NEG															
Part/Env. Groups								X	X															
Part/Civ. Groups										X														
LEADERSHIP OUTCOMES																								
VRQ													X	X								X	X	
LRQ													X	X										
CA'S															X									
OL'S															X									
CM'S															X									
LEARNING																								
Experience																								
Years of Tenure	X	X	X		NEG				X	X														
Multiple Positions	X					X	X		X	X														
Training	X	X	X			X			X	X														
Where Leaders Get Help																								
ExCom	X	X	X		X	X																		
Staff	X	X	X			X			X															
LD Practices									X															
Skill Summary Scale					X	X	X																	
Mang. Others Scale																				X				
Mang. Task Scale																								
Satisfaction																								
Commitment																								
Efficacy																						X		
STRATEGY																								
Identity	EM		EM																					
Priorities	CB	CB	CB		CB	CB	CB		OB	POL	OB								OB					
Whose Goals	Nat'l	Nat'l	Nat'l		Ex/Nd	Exc									MBR									
Tactics																								
Arguments																								
GOVERNANCE																								
Deliberation													X	X										
Implimentation	X	X	X		X	X	X																	
Group Efficacy																			X				X	X
ACTIVITIES																								
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION																								
Financial																								
Total Revenue																X								
Local FundRaising																								
Volunteer									X															
Staff																								
Networks																								
Public Work Network																				X				
Media Disc. Network																						X		
SUPPORT ACTIVITIES																								
New Member Eng.									X											X				
Organization Bldg.																				X				
Community Bldg.											CB													
Fund Raising																								
Info Sharing																								
Gen'l Meetings																								
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES																								
Conservation	X		X		X										X	X				X	X	X		
Electoral																				X	X	X		
Outings																								X

Table A: Unstandardized OLS Coefficients from the Regression of Prior Outcomes on Organizational Characteristics

Independent Variables	Membership Density		Chairperson's Assessment		Membership Size		Active Committees		Prioritizing Nat'l.s Preferences		Governance		Group Efficacy				Local Fundraising		Conservation Programs		Electoral Programs		Outings Programs	
	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups ^a	Groups ^a	Chapters ^a	Chapters ^a	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters
Leader Engagement																								
# Core Activists																	.637*		0.15**		0.212†			
# Outings Leaders																						.333***	0.219†	
Programs																								
Outings Activity																	.875***	.405***						
Support Activities																								
Summary Support Scale							.067†																.377***	
Organization Building Activities																		.315*						
Fundraising Effort																	1.002***							
Resources																								
Elections Expenditures																					0.267*			
Total Revenue															0.066†	0.052			0.152**	0.04†			.447***	1.78†
Proportion of Budget Raised Locally							.349**																	
Locally Assigned Field Staff																								
# Chapter Staff																			0.179*					
Governance																								
Implementation Scale														0.566***	0.467**									
Deliberation Scale									0.2†				0.439***		0.459***									
Group Efficacy																			.564*					
Goal Setting														0.242***										
Meetings														0.185*										
Team Self-Coaching													0.333***	0.242***	0.474***									
Rewards													0.123*	0.185*										0.465*
Adapting Plans																0.515***								
Strategy																								
Priorities: Politics							.576*	0.31***																
Priorities: Resource Opportunities																						0.345**		
Priorities: Organization Building									0.17*	0.35*														
Strategy: Powerful Organization																					0.25*			
Whose Goals: Members																			0.162					
Arguments: Political Power																			-0.17**		-0.21***			
Learning																								
Avg. # Training Programs Attended												.037†		0.045*										
Leader Tenure Diversity												-.023***	-.031**											
Leader Development Practices							.309**																	
Get Help: ExCom Members												.159**												
Get Help: National Staff/Leaders										0.36*														
Learn From: ExCom Peers													0.189*	0.178†										
National Staff Contact													0.059†											
Chapter Staff Contact														0.046†										
Leadership Team																								
Avg. # ExCom Hours per Month											.080*	.154†					258† (Chair Hours)		0.12*	0.303*				1.143†
World-Changing/Socializing Mix																								
World-Changing Motivation											.185*								0.26*		0.31†			
Social-Recreational Motivations											.216***								.497*					
Avg. # Positions held by ExCom Mbrs											-.090***		0.07**											
Multi-organization Participants																					0.673**		0.606*	
Occupational Diversity											.296†													
Partisan Diversity											-.214*													
ExCom Education Level											-.285**													
Average Age of ExCom Members											.009*													
Structure																								
# Active Committees (logged)											.103**									0.21**		0.35***		
# Activity Sections (logged)																					-0.253*			
Chapter Form: Satellite																						-0.62*		
Organizational Age (logged)										0.28**														
Membership Size (logged)							.236***	0.292**	-0.09*								.498***	.792***	-0.07*		0.13*	0.245***		
Context																								
Chairperson Assessment																			.300*					
Membership Density			.384***	.307*																				
College Graduates (proportion)	16.447***		5.026*		4.964***																			
College Students (proportion)	10.470†	63.165***																						
% Votes for Gore in 2000			.969*	1.370†	.007*																			
% Votes for Bush in 2000	-0.022†	-0.072***																						
Citizen Liberalism			.013†	.010**																				
Government Liberalism					.005†																			
Environmental Quality Index		0.046***			.009***																			
Pollution Index			-0.044*	-0.060*																				
Per Capita Environmental Groups			.119*	.222*	3579.2***	14204***																		
Per Capita Civic Groups	2.716136																							
% Population in Urban Areas					2.512***																			
Population Size (logged)	-0.917***				.763***	1.085***																		
California dummy	3.159***	1.812**			.477***	.472*				-0.57**														
Entity Age					.009*																			
constant	9.019***	.240	1.584***	.671	-5.655***	-10.276***	-1.783***	-4.165***	-0.050	1.39*	0.747	2.907	0.1	-0.333	-0.181	-0.154	-4.891	-2.863	.228	1.735**	.420	-1.114	.662**	-0.613
Adjusted R-squared	199	53	.357	.475	.8430	.869	.2396	.416	0.166	0.274	0.345	0.230	0.665	0.643	0.686	0.712	0.447	0.758	0.2561	0.399	0.4439	0.483	.4451	0.204
N	.738	.690	.179	.51	.187	.53	.180	.46	.185	.55	.181	.55	.174	.178	.55	.55	.285	.51	.180	.53	.173	.49	.178	.46

†p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001 (two-tailed test)

^a Implementation and Deliberation scales are correlated at .9. Separate regression models are conducted for group efficacy to assess these distinct components of Governance.

Table B: Unstandardized HLM Coefficients from the Regression of Leader Development on Organizational Characteristics

Independent Variables	Skill Improvement			Attitude Development			Behavior	
	Managing Tasks	Managing Self	Managing Others	Satisfaction	Commitment	Efficacy	Recruit 5+ Volunteers	Recruit 1+ Leaders
Leader Development								
Skill Development Summary Scale				.155***	.218***	.170***	.527***	.577***
Managing Others Skills								
Commitment							.281*	.364*
Satisfaction							-.218*	
Programs								
Conservation Activity	.132*	.132**						
Governance								
Implementation	.139*	.159**	.265***	.383***	.137***	.186***		
Learning								
# Training Programs	.108**		.138***		.034†		.407***	.426***
Leader Development Practices							.248†	
Help: ExCom Members	.054*	.055**	.068***	.124***	.083***			
Help: Staff	.146***	.061*	.095***		.040*		indirect	
Strategy								
Goals: Organization Bldg								
Identity: Sierra Club								
Identity: Environmental Movement	.102*	.102*						
Priority: Community Building	.104***	.101***	.105***	.068**	.048*	.071***		
Whose Goals: ExCom					.058***			
Whose Goals: National	.051*	.057**	.058***					
Whose Goals: ExCom & National				.039**				
Leadership Team								
# Leader Hours								
World-Changing Values	.196***	.148***	.108**	.077*	.285***		.207†	
Social-Recreational Values	-.056*	.124***	.071**	.110***	.049**			
Self-Fulfillment Values	.197***	.150***	.201***	-.048*	-.033†		indirect	indirect
Multiple Organization Participation							.193†	.250†
# Current Leadership Positions	.101**				.146***	.048*	.523***	.419***
Leadership Tenure	.171***	.146***	.107***	-.064***			.173*	.344***
Gender dummy (male=1)	.132**					-.066*		
Age	-.008***	-.004†	-.005*	.004**				
Structure								
# Active Committees (logged)								.166†
Context								
Chairperson's Assessment						.039*		
Log Likelihood	-1144.756	-1257.710	-1093.033	-906.448	-749.995	-846.573	-1882.832	-1207.470
N (Individuals)	1074	1237	1098	1198	1221	1217	1255	1154
N (ExCom)	221	251	221	250	233	234	274	251

†p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001 (two-tailed test)

Table C: Unstandardized OLS Coefficients from the Regression of Member Engagement on Organizational Characteristics

Independent Variables	Forms of Direct Engagement							
	Core Activists		Outings Leaders		Committee Members		Participants	
	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters
Leader Engagement								
# Core Activists							.230**	
# Outings Leaders							.169**	
# Committee Members								.450***
Leader Development								
Leader Recruitment Quotient					.187†	.355†		
Task Management Skill Development			-.332**					
Programs								
Conservation Activity							.358***	.738**
Outings Activity							.171*	.340**
Support Activities								
New Member Engagement	.317***							
Community Building			.151*					
Resources								
Proportion of Budget Raised Locally							.295*	
Locally Assigned Field Staff	.107**							
Governance								
Deliberation					.197†	.427†		
Strategy								
Priority: Organization Building	.202*		.233*					
Priority: Politics		0.467†						
Whose Goals: Members							.137*	
Leadership Team								
# Leader Hours	.234***							
Multiple Organization Leaders	-.418*							
Multiple Organization Participation			.647***					
Social-Recreational Motivations			.453***					
Structure								
# of Activity Sections		0.253†		0.518**				
Many Activity Sections (14+ dummy)						.747†		
# Active Committees (logged)	.256***				.547***	.488***		
# Active Outings Committees (logged)			.653***	1.073***				
Membership Size (logged)	.109*	0.275**	.240***	-0.087	.147**	.250**	.101*	-0.013
Context								
% Votes for Gore 2000			-.011*					
constant	-1.544***	-2.028†	-2.068**	1.700†	.183	-1.583	.042	-0.332
Adjusted R-squared	.463	.359	.496	.546	.390	.623	.444	.522
N	181	52	180	47	180	49	172	46

†p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001 (two-tailed test)

Table D: Unstandardized OLS Coefficients from the Regression of Public Influence on Organizational Characteristics

Independent Variables	Types of Public Influence							
	Advocacy Influence		Community Influence		Electoral Influence		Outdoor Access	
	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters	Groups	Chapters
Member Engagement								
# Committee Members			0.133*					
Leader Development								
Managing Tasks	0.187†							
Managing Others		0.485†						
Efficacy			0.85**					
Volunteer Recruitment Quotient					0.312*		0.253**	0.388*
Programs								
Conservation Activity	0.428***	0.873***	0.747***	0.609**				
Electoral Activity	0.217**				0.576***	0.416†		
Outings Activity							0.326**	0.47*
Support Activities								
New Member Engagement					0.28*			
Organization Building	0.117*							
Community Building			0.13*					
Resources								
# Chapter Staff					0.182*			
Discussion Networks: Media			0.213*					
Work Networks: Public Officials	0.153**							
Governance								
Group Efficacy	0.153†		0.249**		0.244†		0.339†	1.008*
Strategy								
Priority: Organization Building					0.737**			
Leadership Team								
Average # Leader Hours		0.365*						
World-Changing Motivation							-0.652*	
Structure								
Chapter Form: Satellite								0.928†
Activity Sections dummy							-0.297*	
Membership Size (logged)	-0.091*	0.103	-0.134**	-0.132†	0.046	0.36**	-0.077	-0.073
Context								
Chairperson's Assessment	0.335***		0.257***		0.396***		0.296*	0.42*
Member Density					0.161†			
% Votes for Gore in 2000					1.281†			
Government Liberalism		0.007**			0.009*			
Per Capita Environmental Groups								
Urbanicity (% urban population)			1.24*					
constant	-0.446	-3.238**	0.091	-1.208	-1.48*	-5.128***	3.539**	-2.806
Adjusted R-squared	0.529	0.571	0.447	0.482	0.468	0.606	0.178	0.363
N	175	52	178	51	178	47	180	51

†p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001 (two-tailed test)

8. RESEARCHER BIOGRAPHIES

Kenneth Andrews is Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research examines social movements, political institutions and social change. His recently published book – *Freedom is a Constant Struggle: The Mississippi Civil Rights Movement and Its Legacy* (University of Chicago Press, 2004) – analyzes the influence of the civil rights movement on electoral politics, school desegregation, and social policies. His current research projects examine the growth and influence of contemporary social movements, including the environmental movement in North Carolina.

Marshall Ganz is Lecturer in Public Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He entered Harvard College in the fall of 1960 but left before graduating to volunteer in the 1964 Mississippi Summer project. In 1965 Ganz joined Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers union. During his 16 years there, he learned union, community, issue and political organizing; developed programs with union, electoral, issue, and community groups, and founded an organizing institute. In 1991 Ganz returned to Harvard College after a 28-year leave of absence. In 1992 he graduated *magna cum laude* with a degree in history and government. He continued his studies at Harvard, earning a Master in Public Administration degree in June 1993 and a Ph.D. in Sociology in 2000. Since 1994 he has taught organizing at the Kennedy School. Ganz has published articles in the *American Prospect*, *American Journal of Sociology* and the *American Political Science Review*.

Matthew Baggetta is a Ph.D. candidate in Sociology at Harvard University. His academic interests lie in fields of social movements and voluntary associations. His previous research has focused on attitudes surrounding the race-riots of the late 1960s in the U.S. and the mobilization of members and volunteers into contemporary environmentalist organizations. Baggetta graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of Notre Dame in 2001 with a B.A. in Sociology and Computer Applications and received an M.A. in Sociology from Harvard University in June of 2005.

Hahrie C. Han is the Knafel Assistant Professor of Social Sciences in the Department of Political Science at Wellesley College. Han received her Ph.D. in American Politics from Stanford University and her B.A. in American History and Literature from Harvard University. Han's principal research interests focus on congressional elections, legislative representation, and political participation. She is currently working on a book that examines the way strong personal commitments to political issues can enhance political participation and legislative representation. She also is working on a research project with the Brookings Institute examining the causes and consequences of partisan polarization in America. Han was a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow from 2002-2005, and received Stanford University's Centennial Teaching Award in 2002. Han also has multiple years of practical experience in political organizing, and has designed training sessions for community activists. She served for two years as a Research Associate with U.S. Senator Bill Bradley's National Issues Project (a Washington D.C.-based think tank) and one year as a National Issues and Policy Advisor on Bradley's 2000 presidential campaign.

Chaeyoon Lim is a Ph.D. candidate in Sociology at Harvard University. His interests lie in non-profit and voluntary organizations, social movements, and quantitative methodology. He has many years of experience in survey research and quantitative data analysis. Lim is currently developing his Ph.D. dissertation in which he will examine how organizational contexts influence various aspects of volunteer leadership development including leader recruitment, career trajectory, and leader commitment. He earned his B.A. and M.A. in Sociology from Seoul National University in Korea.

For copies of the full report or more information contact:

Marshall Ganz, Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138
Email: marshall_ganz@harvard.edu

Kenneth Andrews, Department of Sociology
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
Email: kta@unc.edu

Or visit Clubhouse, the Sierra Club leader extranet, at:

http://clubhouse.sierraclub.org/go/leaderpositions/national_purpose/