

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Photo by: Arlie Sommers



Executive Director Remarks

This is the Idaho Organization of Resource Councils 2023 annual report. This is an overview of our accomplishments, financial health, and chapter and campaign updates.

This past year IORC has seen quite a few changes. Our longtime director, Breland Draper and Megan Carter who was our Communications and Membership Coordinator left our organization. Senior staff Doug Paddock and I stepped in as Co-Directors. In April, Doug left IORC to pursue a great job opportunity. I, with board approval, became the sole Executive Director in May of 2023. Ag and Food organizer, Samantha Guerrero continued her organizing job and added the title of Communications Specialist to fill the void we had on our communications side. The Board of Directors along with staff worked extremely hard to ensure the survival of our organization. IORC is in a better place financially and emotionally. I want to thank all of the folks who were instrumental in making sure IORC came out better on the other end.

As we enter 2024, IORC is going to start its strategic planning process to map out the next five years of the organization. This includes looking into our mission, vision, and theory of change to reflect the evolution of our work and campaigns. Moving into a more inclusive and diverse organization is something that is important to us and we hope our organization reflects the communities we are organizing in as well as issues that affect them.

We hope you will support us by renewing your membership and supporting IORC as we look forward to another ten years of grassroots organizing in Idaho.

Irene Ruiz

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



"Farm workers deserve to be protected and treated with respect and IORC will support this community in every way possible."

*Alejandra Hernandez
Visión 2C Member*

Meet our team

Irene Ruiz

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Irene Ruiz is the daughter of Mexican Immigrants, she grew up in Hazelton, ID where she also worked in the fields with her family. She received her Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and her Bachelor of Arts in Spanish from Boise State University. Irene currently lives in Boise, ID.

Irene co-founded and organized a coalition of 11 non-profit organizations to support the Latinx, immigrant, and farm-working community called the Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance that started in 2020 to support those communities during COVID-19 pandemic and issues arise.

Irene was recently selected as one of 28 women to be a part of the U.S. Grassroots Accelerator Program from the Women's Earth Alliance which will support her work on environmental justice while building alliances with other powerful leaders working to protect the environment.

Samantha Guerrero

BILINGUAL ORGANIZER AND COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Samantha Guerrero is a first-generation Idahoan and the daughter of Mexican Immigrants. As an activist for human rights and a community organizer for IORC, she connects members to campaigns and our network partners. As the new communications coordinator, she creates strategies and stories to support IORC campaigns uplifting the narratives of our communities. Samantha is a co-founder of the Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance and a founding member of Vision 2C Resource Council. She graduated in 2017 from the College of Idaho with a dual Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology/Sociology and Political Economy.





2023 Board of Directors

Elaine Kazakoff

BOARD CHAIR

Marielena Vega

VICE CHAIR

Benjamin Trieu

TREASURER

Linda Leeuwrik

SECRETARY

Christina Stucker-gassi

AT LARGE

Carrie Seymour

V2C REPRESENTATIVE

Liana Litzsinger

PRC REPRESENTATIVE

Campaign updates:

Food and Ag Team

The Ag and Food team has not met since their first meeting this year April 15, 2023. **No update on the Farm Bill**

Farm Aid

Carrie Seymour attended the Farm Aid Festival with WORC. She will be doing a blog on her experiences and where she see's IORC grassroots organizing filling the gaps when it comes to the agriculture issues we are facing.

Milpa Project

Project information on our website has not been updated. Asked Guy Hand for video footage to add on the website.

Homegrown Stories

Jessica Plance did a piece on IORC and Global Gardens for homegrown stories.
<https://www.homegrownstories.org/global-gardens-cultivating-diversity-community-and-resilience>



Financials

Our financial position going into 2022 was on uncertain foundations: IORC had missed a \$75,000 grant we'd been expecting, staffing went from 5 people to 2 people (including a shift in Executive Director), and our ability to pay the bills was in doubt. Thanks to work and dedication from the staff and board (especially Irene Ruiz), we have significantly increased our cash reserves and can look ahead to a more stable future.

I think some numbers that demonstrate this well are:

- In September of 2022, we had a bank balance of \$10,677
- In September of this year, we had a bank balance of \$132,670

As Treasurer, I think the numbers above best show the change in our position, as the budget has been complicated in the past couple years. The budget looks a little less impressive than this, because in 2022 we pushed forward \$100,000 in promised grants from WORC to keep the org afloat financially. This ended it being put before the Annual Member Meeting, so was on those financials and not these.

\$25,000 of those grants ended up also falling through, and we had to pay it back to WORC. We have not needed to push forward any grants this year and will be receiving a \$75,000 JPB grant from WORC next month (as we normally do every year).

If this all sounds confusing, it has been! We all have had to put a lot of work into slimming down budgets, conversations with WORC to keep us out of debt, and lots of applying for grants to keep our revenue above our expenses and give us a better financial cushion.

In the end, the focus should be on this: we are projected to end 2023 with over \$100,000 in our bank account: twice as much as we ended 2022 with. We will continue to work on increasing our grants, donations, and memberships in the following year, as well as utilizing the increased financial stance to further our work for a better world.

Ben Trieu

IORC TREASURER

Financials November 2022 – October 2023

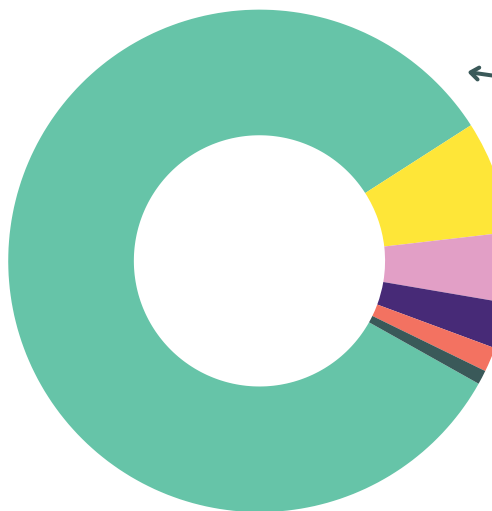
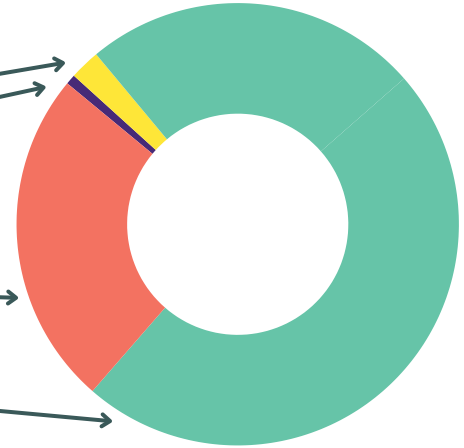
Income

Individual Contributions - \$ 4,960

Memberships - \$ 882

Misc Revenue - \$ 60,775

Grants - \$ 179,000



Expenses

Salaries & Benefits - \$ 171,118

Contractors - \$ 14,992

Telecom & Supplies - \$ 9,328

Rent - \$ 6,118

Travel & Conference - \$ 3,255

Other - \$ 1,876

Totals

Total Income - \$ 245,617

Total Expenses - \$ 206,631

Net Income - \$ 38,896





Chapters



PRC Website goes live!

Thanks to the hard work of new members Terry Lay and Elizabeth Mandela, PRC launched a new website. It highlights our two major campaigns, “Put Water First” and “Clean Energy & Electrification” and showcases PRC’s award-winning Sustainable Idaho podcast on KISU public radio. Check out the new PRC Website.

Put Water First Campaign and the Portneuf Valley Aquifer

This spring, the “Put Water First” team scored a major win by submitting science based written and verbal public testimony on the City of Pocatello’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan. In the draft version, Protection and Enhancement of Water Resources was the fifth Environmental Resiliency Goal. PRC members advocated to elevate clean water’s priority and encouraged the City to include pursuing a Sensitive Aquifer Designation. Their strong recommendations were adopted in the final draft; City planners put Water Quality as the first goal in the Environmental Resiliency section when they presented it to the Pocatello City Council. Now that’s putting water first!

Sustainable Idaho, KISU Weekly Podcast on Public Radio

Sustainable Idaho is an award-winning environmental podcast sponsored by the Portneuf Resource Council, Idaho State University (ISU) which airs twice weekly on KISU. Funding is always tricky and originally PRC provided all the funding for the program. Recently, PRC and SI received a grant from ISU’s Center for Ecological Research and Education (CERE) that funds the lion’s share of the program with ongoing allocations for the student intern hosts.

- SI now in it’s fourth year has produced more than 100 unique podcast segments.
- In the spring, SI hosts just completed a 9-part series on the Stibnite Mine near McCall, ID. This is the most expansive and longest topic yet on Sustainable Idaho.
- This summer SI continued to produce a number of high-quality podcasts on a variety of topics including a five part piece on the controversial Lava Ridge wind development project near Minidoka as well as 4 episodes related to water in Idaho on a wide range of

perspectives from climate impacts, water rights, water quality, infrastructure and management.

Clean Energy Campaigns

Electric Vehicle (EV) and Electrification Advocacy

For 2023, PRC kicked off a new campaign related to our Clean Energy objectives. PRC is advocating for and disseminating information on the benefits and incentives of Electric Vehicles and Home Electrification. PRC prepared materials on recent federal initiatives, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act and the Inflation Reduction Act. As part of kicking off the Electrification Campaign, PRC (Linda E) gave two presentations to the Boise Metro Rotary, one on the advantages and cost effectiveness of EVs and the second was on Electrification and federal monies available to consumers through the Inflation Reduction Act. Later in the year, Linda gave the same EV presentation to the Twin Falls Rotary. Additionally, at numerous tabling events, PRC discussed EVs and Electrification with the public.

This Fall, the Portneuf Resource Council sponsored the 2023 Pocatello EV Expo held in conjunction with National Drive Electric Week. Our event on Sept 30th was one of 217 EV Expos across the County. Our event had 14 EV's, 9 were private owners and 4 were new vehicles provided by local dealers. The EVs included Battery EV's and Plug-in Hybrid EV's. The events was held adjacent to and in conjunction with the Portneuf Valley Farmer's Market in Pocatello, Idaho.

We advertised through an interview on PRC sponsored Sustainable Idaho, a twice weekly podcast on our local NPR station, KISU. Here is the link to the interview with Mike. We also announced with a press release in the local paper, on Facebook, and through the Yellowstone-Teton Clean Cities Coalition newsletter. The Portneuf Valley Farmer's Market also promoted the event.

The event had great participation from the public and the owners and dealer representatives were very engaged the entire time of the event which ran from 9 am to 1 pm. We estimate that at least 300 people engaged with the EV owners and 100's more walked by while browsing the Farmers Market. The EV owners were very excited to share and generally the public was curious and had many questions about range, batteries, recycling, charging, and maintenance - as one might expect.

We also invited environmentally or sustainability focused local NGOs. The Portneuf Resource Council sponsored the event and we also tabled there. We also had Citizens' Climate Lobby of Pocatello, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust and Watershed Guardians. The NGO's also reported good engagement with the public.

Overall, we had a great event and we appreciate working with NDEW to help promote EV's and show the public a great way to reduce their carbon footprint.

Rooftop Solar Advocacy

PRC continues to participate in the Idaho Solar Mobilization Team which meets every 2 weeks. At the end of 2022, the Idaho Public Utilities Commission accepted and approved the Idaho Power VODER study (Value of Distributed Energy Resources). This paved the way for Idaho Power to propose lowering the exported energy credit rates. The Solar Mobilization team continues to advocate for residential solar in Idaho and created a strategy to oppose Idaho Power's proposed export credit rate change.

PRC, working with the Solar Mobilization Team, helped create informational graphics and talking points and reached out to our members and regional solar supporters with numerous calls to action to attend the workshops in August and to provide written testimony to the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) by the Nov 7th deadline. PRC submitted written

testimony and published an OpEd in the Idaho State Journal. Additionally, Linda and Liana, using Google Maps to identify 88 home owners with solar, distributed pamphlets urging written testimony. IPUC received more than 670 written comments with dozens coming from southeast Idaho.

In part due to volunteer bandwidth constraints and in part due to the unfortunate ruling approving the VODER study and despite the return of the full 30% federal tax credit for solar installations, PRC decided to not pursue a Solarize Campaign in 2023. Until a final change is made to the net meeting rate, it is very difficult to determine and communicate the return on investment for residential solar which is a key part of a successful Solarize campaign.

Additional Accomplishments

PRC joined Center for Biological Diversity, Western Watersheds and several other NGOs in signing an Amicus Brief in support of the Bannock Shoshone Tribe's lawsuit over a Simplot - BLM land swap for expanding the phosphogypsum waste stack at Simplot's Don Plant in Pocatello.

PRC Members Linda Engle and Liana Litzinger met with City of Pocatello grant writers on the opportunities available through the federal IRA and Solar for All programs. PRC let the City know that the Bonneville Environmental Foundation filed a Notice of Intent for the grants on behalf of cities in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. A follow up meeting is scheduled with the BEF to discuss potential next steps.

PRC tabled at several local events this summer, including the Scout Mountain Ultra race on June 2nd, the Poky Paddle on June 16th and a NAACP Juneteenth celebration on June 17. Typically, we provide graphical information on EV tax credits, and rebates for electrification of home appliances available from the new Inflation Reduction Act. Additionally, PRC has sign-up sheets for getting more information

about PRC and/or how to become a member.

PRC signed a letter of support for the City of Pocatello grant application for an EV charging station at Centennial Park in Pocatello.

Climate Action Film Series,

In the winter of 2023, PRC and Citizens' Climate Lobby held the first public screening of an environmentally focused film since the pandemic. Suspended for a couple years due to COVID-19, these informative movies are typically held in the late fall and winter months and free to the public to attend.

This year we hosted two film screenings, the first was "Kiss the Ground" an inspiring film about regenerative agriculture and the promise it holds for sequestering carbon. The second film, 2040, is an optimistic film about the current solutions for climate change that are available today and can make a difference by 2040, provided humans have the political will to move in the right direction.

"We need a farm bill that puts the wellbeing and livelihood of our communities, of our farm workers, as a priority."

*-Marielena Vega
IORC Vice Chair*



Farmworker Storytelling Project

The storytelling project started in June in conjunction with a Boise State University team. 15 farmworkers were interviewed. It is a film making project that will tell the stories of those who are directly affected by climate change that will be showcased in 2024 at various events around the valley with the help of Boise State University Public Policy department and film department.

Education & Outreach

Mari and Irene participated in The Power of Our Roots: From the Fields to the Stage StoryFort session. They shared their personal experience and stories on how they came from the fields and how they are helping and advocating for Idaho's farmworkers today. They shared this space with Bobby Gaytan, Alejandra Hernandez, and Rosseli Guerrero.

In March, Mari participated in the Farmers for Climate Action: Rally for Resilience in Washington, D.C. Mari received this opportunity to attend this rally, sponsored by HEAL Food Alliance, through nomination from Samantha Guerrero. Mari had the opportunity to share space with other HEAL Food Alliance Members and Organizations in advocating for a 2023 Farm Bill that prioritizes: the well-being of BIPOC and rural communities, safeguard the dignity and fair working conditions of food chain workers, support producers in building resilience to climate change, and provide healthy nutrition for all.

V2C participated in National Farmworker Awareness Week (March 25th - 31st) by sharing information on Idaho's Farmworkers and Farmworkers nationwide through all social media platforms. Advocating for change and protections for all farmworkers and food chain workers.

Mari and Irene were a part of a short film that was created by The Nature Conservancy that showcased the importance of climate justice in Idaho. They talked about the farmworker justice campaign and how climate change affects farmworkers. You can watch here: [Tackling Climate Change in Idaho | The Nature Conservancy](#)

Irene had the opportunity to table in Canyon County twice in April at the Nampa Public Library for their Go Green event and the Idaho Immunization Project's Health Fair at the Hispanic Cultural Center.

Samantha and Irene participated and shared their expertise at the Idaho Interfaith Roundtable Against Hunger to Speak about "Honoring and Supporting Essential Workers in Agriculture."

Irene was invited to present at the Consulate of Mexico in Boise for Labor Rights Week regarding advocacy work for farmworkers in Idaho.

Aide & Partnerships

Supported the Community Council of Idaho with their local long sleeve t-shirt drive in collaboration with the AFOP Health & Safety Programs.

In May V2C made 100% of their fundraising goal for Idaho Gives with 25 donors making this possible! \$1085 out of \$1000 goal.

V2C has continued to help support the Heat and Smoke Fund that the Idaho Immigrant Resource Alliance has led. Marielena was able to personally deliver some gloves, water, electrolytes, bandanas, sunscreen, and reusable ice packs to a crew working in the Nampa/Caldwell area.

School of Political Leadership (SoPL)

Irene and Alejandra went to Washington D.C. to lobby for the Farmworker Campaign and the Farm Bill to promote the health and safety of Idaho's farm working community in June. They met with Senator Crapo and Risch's offices to talk about the work they have been doing to support farmworkers. Irene and Alejandra graduated from SoPL in June. IORC was eligible for a small \$5,000 grant to continue the campaign. Here is the SoPL blog post about their experience:

<https://healfoodalliance.org/giving-a-voice-to-those-who-sustain-us-reflections-on-field-base-building-through-sopl/>

Future Work

V2C has continued to keep ties and be in conversation with Dr. Dora Johnson to schedule classes on heat, smoke, pesticides, and health for farmworkers for 2024. Genesis Community Health has been a partner in providing free scheduled health checks for farmworkers year-round.

V2C will work with United Farmworkers to help advance federal regulations through OSHA to be able to ensure farmworkers are protected working in the heat.

IDAHO IMMIGRANT RESOURCE ALLIANCE



Heat and Smoke Fund

This is the third year of the heat and smoke fund. We set the goal of 10,000 for the Heat and Smoke Fund and have raised \$6,000. We have been able to donate hundreds of items to about 100 farmworkers in Idaho.

Ayuda Para Nuestras Familia

Ayuda Para Nuestras Familias fund has around \$13,500 left to support those who are in need. Will be distributed by recommendation.

Communications

We have had a lot of media coverage due to our work around the heat and smoke fund.

Interviews were given to KIVI, KTVB, Tropico FM, Idaho Statesman, Boise State Radio and Idaho Capital Sun.

The Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs featured IIRA for Hispanic Heritage Month focusing on Tortilla recipe that was presented on KTVB's morning show in October.

Social media

We continue to collaborate with our coalition organizations to uplift their news and events.

Samantha created a social media toolkit for the heat and smoke fund.

"Moving into a more inclusive and diverse organization is something that is important to us and we hope our organization reflects the communities we are organizing in as well as issues that affect them."

Irene Ruiz
IORC Director

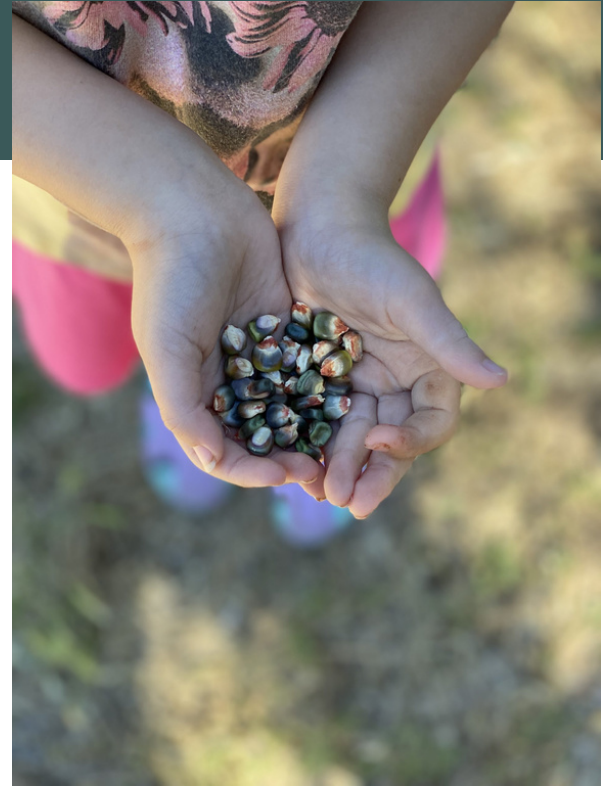
Bringing people together
through community organizing.

Support IORC today

With your help, we can make real
change in Idaho.

Will you join our many leaders who work hard every
day to make Idaho the place we all want to live?
We're enthusiastic about what the future can be if
our members and supporters come together to
support grassroots change.

Please give today at www.iorcinfo.org



910 Main Street, Suite 234
Boise, ID 83702

Address service requested

