

# *MOVING TO HIGHER GROUND*

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*POTENTIAL ROLES FOR PHILANTHROPY IN HELPING  
WASHINGTON'S COMMUNITIES COPE WITH DISASTERS*

*June 4, 2009*

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BILL & MELINDA  
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The Seattle Foundation

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United Way of King County

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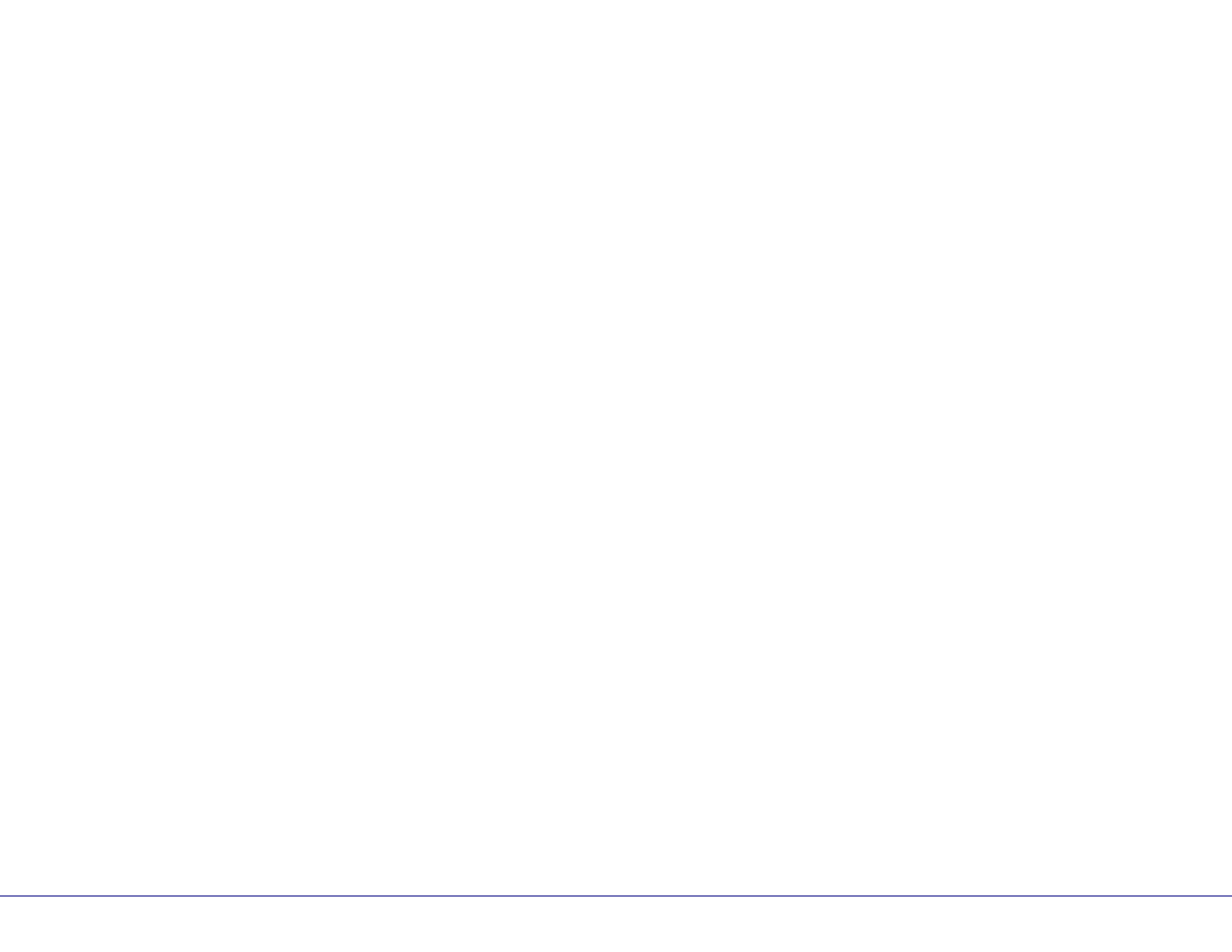
Shorey Road  
Photo: Jim Thode

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

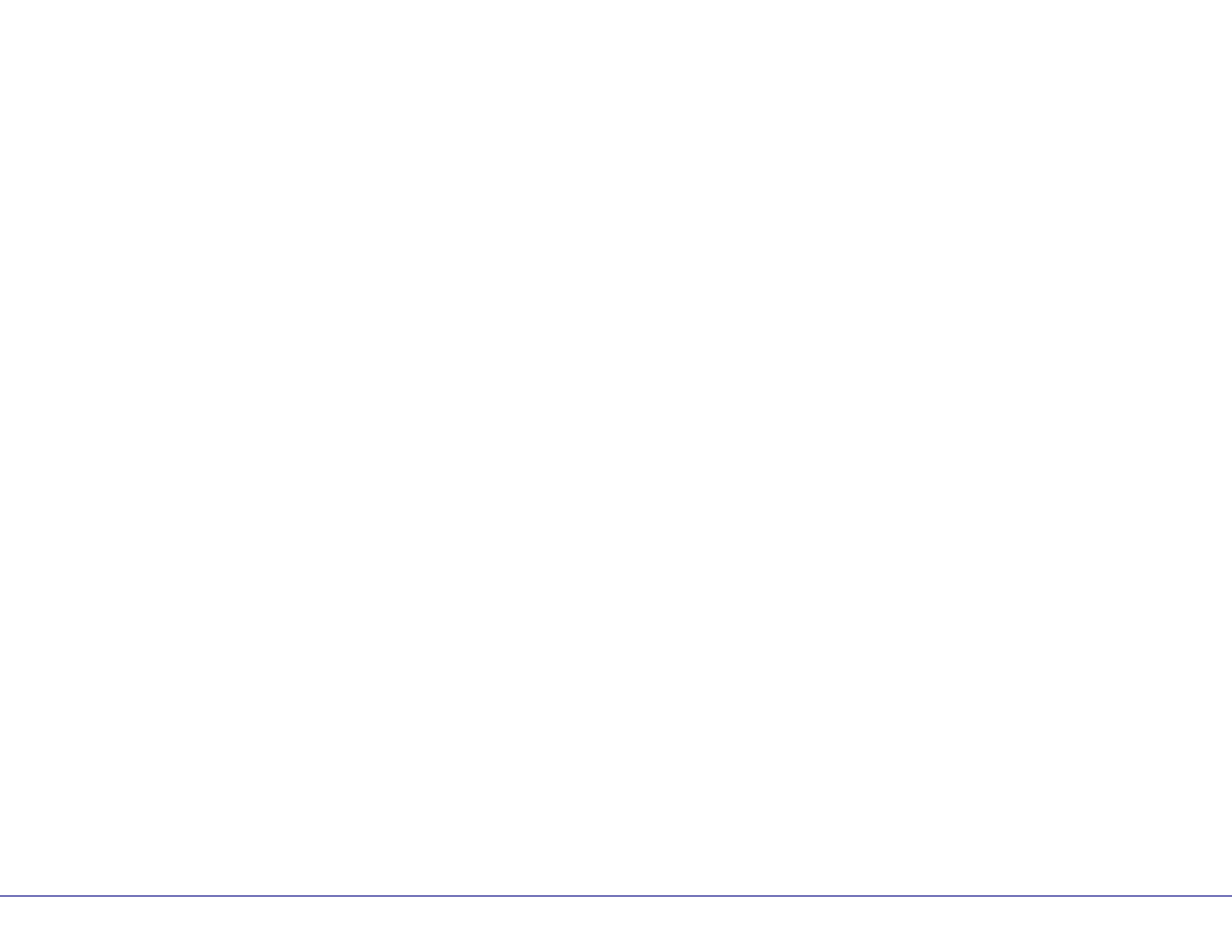
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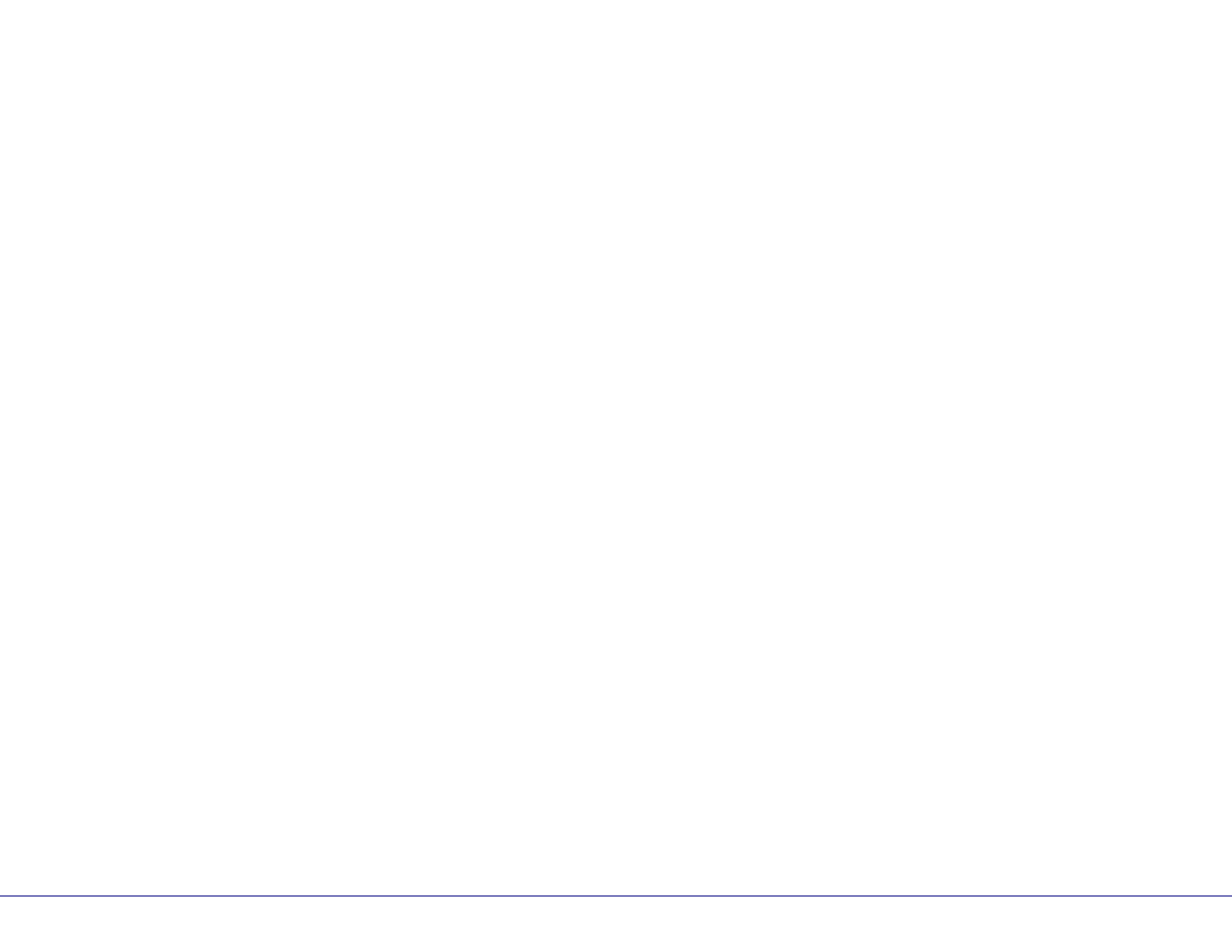
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## CONTENTS

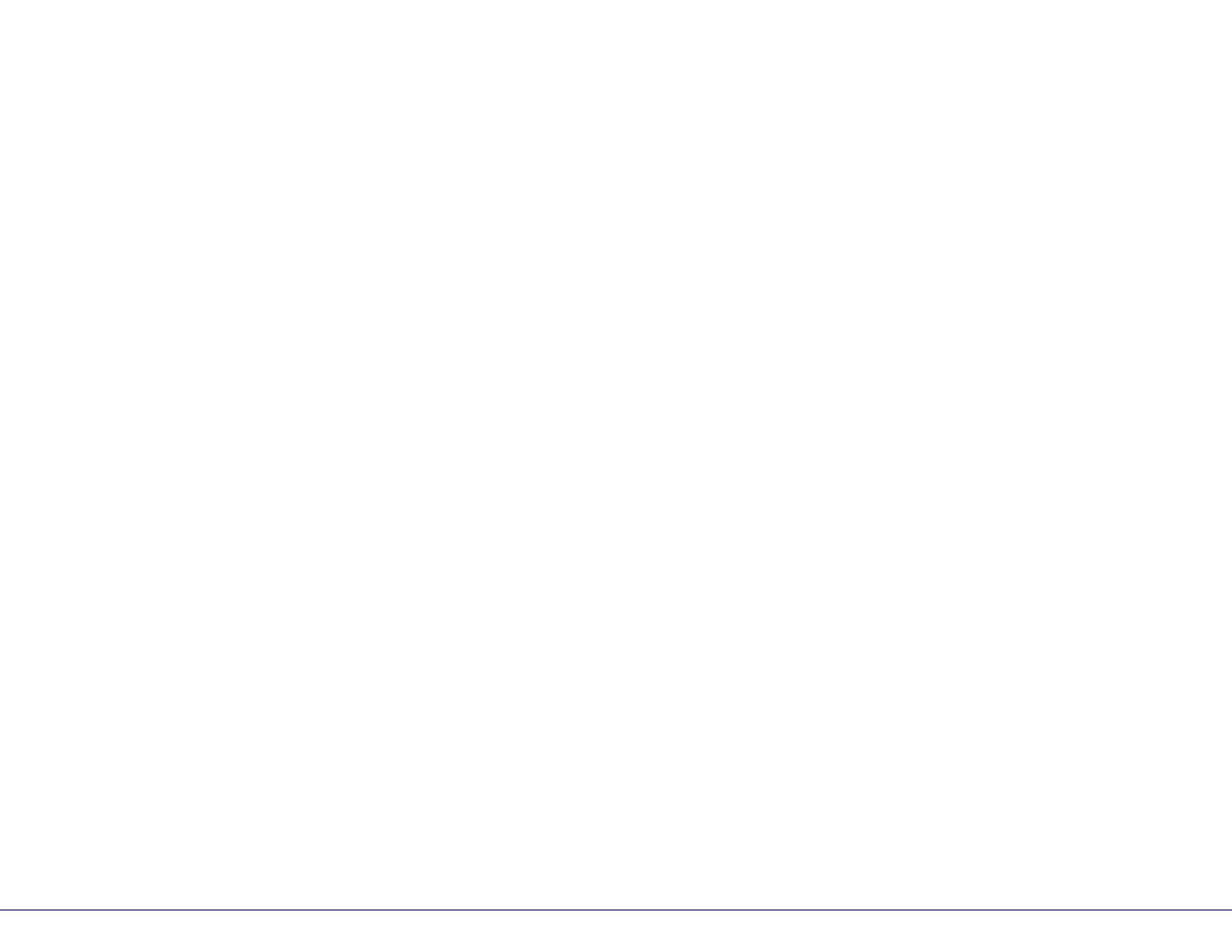
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	ES-1
PROJECT BACKGROUND.....	1
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	5
The Four Phases of Disaster Management.....	5
The Emergency Management System.....	6
Strengths and Weaknesses of Washington’s Disaster Response Capabilities.....	11
Philanthropy’s Response to Disasters.....	21
Strengths, Challenges and Lessons of Philanthropic Engagement.....	30
Promising Practices.....	33
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	37
1. A call for community-wide action.....	38
2. Making the most of our assets.....	40
3. Creating a culture of inclusion.....	41
4. Stewarding the natural and built environments.....	42
NEXT STEPS.....	43





Credit: Marja Flick-Buijs

*Whether a foundation's primary interest is community development, enhancing the arts, alleviating poverty or almost any other charitable purpose, it will almost inevitably be confronted with the need to respond to some form of disaster, because the impact of these events is felt in every sector.*

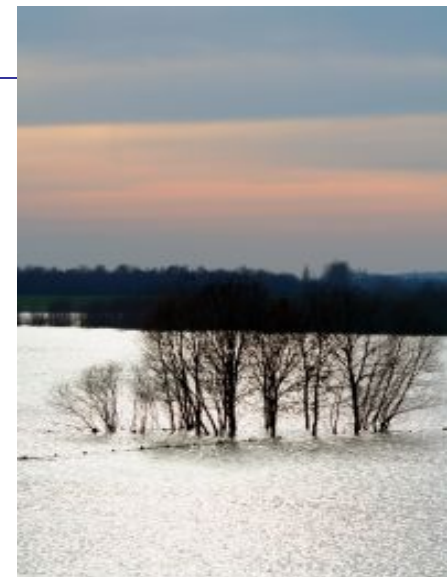


## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was commissioned by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Seattle Foundation and United Way of King County to identify potential roles for philanthropy in strengthening the resilience of Washington communities when confronted with disaster. Although few Washington philanthropies have disaster preparedness and relief as an explicit focus of their giving, many are finding that requests for their involvement in this field are coming more often and with greater urgency. For philanthropies working with disadvantaged populations, this trend is especially acute, because those groups are at greater risk, suffer more severe effects, and take longer to recover from a disaster than others.

Many philanthropists have responded generously to recent disasters with one-time grants. However there has been an understandable reluctance to become more deeply involved in this field because until recently disasters were regarded as rare occurrences that affected local communities. The events of September 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina—accented by the December 2007 floods in Southwest Washington—marked a watershed in this perception. Here in Washington, the increasing frequency and severity of flooding, windstorms and other disasters attest to the need for greater effort to prepare our communities to endure and recover from such events.

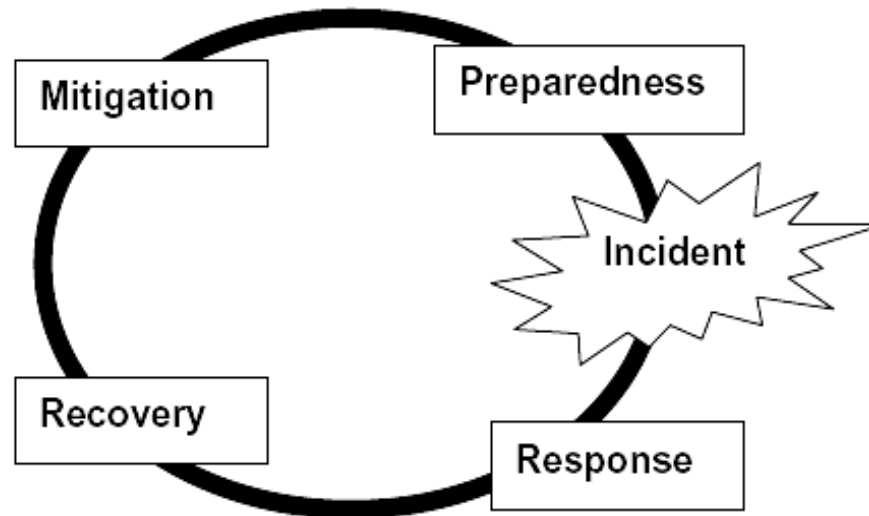
This report explores the possibility that philanthropy could play critical roles in making Washington's communities more resilient when confronted with disasters. To identify philanthropy's potential roles, a Task Force comprised of experts from across the state examined the various stages of disaster and the capabilities of the parties responsible for taking action at each stage. The sequence of stages is shown in the diagram on the next page:



Source: [www.stockxchng.com](http://www.stockxchng.com)

***Washington ranks 14<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the number of federal disaster declarations since 1956, with a total of 43. Most have been for severe storms with a combination of flooding, landslides and/or mudslides. Washington has also had 20 fire management assistance declarations.***

*—Data from FEMA Web site, “Washington Disaster History”*



Source: National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), *Long-Term Recovery Manual*, 2004

In general, preparedness and the initial response to a disaster are perceived to be the province of government agencies, while responsibility for recovery and mitigation is more diffuse, with community organizations and the private sector more directly involved.

## Strengths and Gaps in Washington's Capabilities

As the Task Force reviewed Washington's current capabilities, several key findings emerged:

1. The level of preparedness and the ability to respond have improved in our state during the past two decades as a result of hard work by state and local officials to respond to federal mandates and learn lessons from past crises. Lines of responsibility have been clarified, communities are better equipped, and regular training exercises are conducted in most communities to expose and correct problems. All 39 counties and 23 local and tribal jurisdictions have Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) to coordinate the actions of public agencies in a crisis. Schools and many public agencies have emergency plans in place. However, serious gaps remain:

- Most families, individuals and businesses are not fully prepared for emergencies.
- Rural areas often do not have the same level of emergency resources as urban communities.
- Vulnerable populations remain at greater risk.
- Language and cultural barriers continue to be a major challenge, and alternative communication methods are needed to reach individuals who are deaf or deaf/blind.
- Funding for emergency services is precarious, especially in the current economic climate.

2. During the recovery phase, the Task Force found that there is a profound difference between the public's expectations and the reality of most victims' experience. In general, disaster victims expect their government to restore them to the conditions in which they were living before the disaster occurred, but that is rarely what happens. The process to secure federal disaster relief is slow at best, leaving most victims without financial assistance for an average of eight to 10 weeks while public officials complete the steps necessary to survey the damage and complete the required paperwork. Nonprofit and faith-based organizations do their best to help victims through this period, but their resources are often not equal to the task.

When government financial aid finally arrives, it is rarely sufficient to compensate the victims for the damage they have suffered: The average disaster relief grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is less than \$5,000, and the statutory limit for such payments is just \$30,300 per family, which is certainly not enough to rebuild a home destroyed during a disaster. This mismatch between expectations and reality during recovery is painfully evident in the experience of the victims of Hurricane Katrina, many thousands of whom are still struggling to recover more than three years after the flood. Here in Washington, neither the public sector, nor private nonprofit agencies have sufficient tools to help all families and individuals recover fully after a disaster.



Ed Palmer, who has severe arthritis, has had to rely for the past 10 days on a generator to power his oxygen and electric wheelchair. (December 25, 2006)

Credit: Meryl Schenker/Seattle Post-Intelligencer  
2006 Storm/Seattle PI/December 29, 2006



Toddler outside a home marked after the Katrina flooding in New Orleans.  
Source: [www.TheWE.cc](http://www.TheWE.cc)

3. Although mitigation is not always treated as an integral part of disaster planning, it is an area that holds great promise, for if the causes of a disaster can be identified and removed, future losses can be prevented. Studies have shown that each dollar invested in proven mitigation techniques avoids \$3 to \$4 dollars in future costs.

During the 1990s, the federal government had a formal policy of investing 10 percent of the total cost of a disaster in mitigation projects aimed at preventing a recurrence of that disaster. Under this policy flooded homes were purchased and removed from flood plains, wetlands and other natural systems were restored, and buildings were stabilized against the effects of earthquakes. While some federal funding continues to be dedicated to mitigation, the level of effort is dependent on annual appropriations, and the interest of the Administration and the Congress has waxed and waned during the past decade. At the local level, mitigation strategies, such as Seattle's Project Impact, have not captured the attention of the philanthropic sector, or secured ongoing public investment. As a result, our communities have missed opportunities to analyze the causes of certain disasters and take actions to mitigate them.

4. Vulnerable populations – the poor, the elderly, disabled individuals and those who do not speak English – continue to be at greatest risk during all phases of a disaster. The poor tend to live in the least desirable areas, which are also most prone to floods and other disasters. Populations with limited English or communities new to the United States do not always have access to timely information in a language they can understand or from sources they trust.

Elderly and disabled individuals living alone are in special jeopardy unless they have a network of support in a time of crisis. Some organizations have taken important steps to address the challenges. For example, Public Health – Seattle & King County has recently implemented strategies to improve communications across language and cultural barriers, and foundations have provided funds to enable some key community agencies to develop their own emergency plans to keep vital services operating when disaster strikes. However it is apparent that much more work is needed to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and individuals.

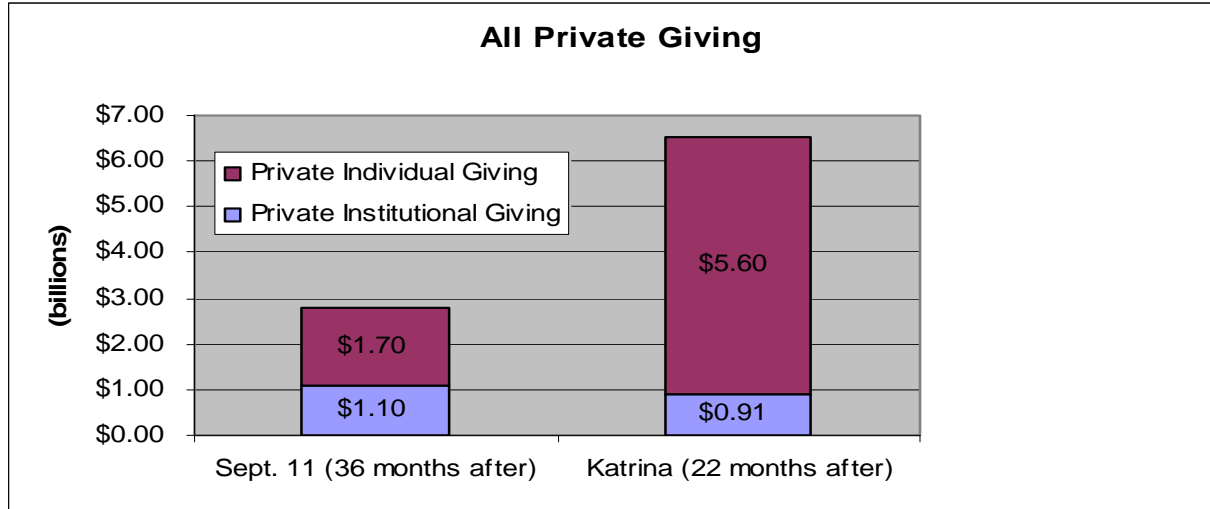


## Philanthropy's Response

In such a complex field, with so many actors and such high stakes, philanthropies across the nation are still searching for a strategic response to the challenges posed by disasters. To date, most foundations have funded disaster-related activity on an ad hoc, case-by-case basis and have not identified it as a program area or developed specific guidelines for grantmaking in this field.

While there is a growing body of literature regarding philanthropy's response to specific incidents such as Hurricane Katrina, there has been little analysis across disasters to identify trends. In the course of this study, data from the Foundation Center and Georgetown University were used to compare philanthropy's response to September 11<sup>th</sup> with the giving that followed Hurricane Katrina. A number of findings emerged:

1. **The contributions of foundations and corporations, while generous, were eclipsed by the donations of individuals, especially in the early stages of the disaster.**



Source: Renz, "Final Update" pp. 86, 88; Lorenz, p. 6.

***"The ability of nonprofits and government agencies to collaborate and communicate in a disaster is critical to effective emergency response and needs to be improved. . . . Relationships . . . must be built in advance of an emergency so that this collaboration and communication can occur when needed."***

*—United Way of King County, A Region at Risk: Improving Our Readiness to Respond to Disaster," 2007*



Loading water salvaged from Wal-Mart  
Photo: Jim Thode

*Giving by individuals often far exceeds institutional giving immediately after a disaster, but these surges in giving and volunteerism do not always translate into effective action in the field.*

While individual charitable giving generally exceeds institutional giving, this phenomenon was especially evident 22 months following Hurricane Katrina, when individual giving (sometimes called “horizontal philanthropy”) generated \$5 billion in aid, compared to \$910 million for all philanthropic institutions. Even that staggering number understates the true value of horizontal philanthropy’s response, since it does not include the value of the labor of individuals, community organizations and faith-based groups who volunteered countless hours to help the victims.

2. **While this outpouring of individual philanthropy is profoundly inspiring, it presents challenges as well as opportunities.** Most of this type of giving occurs immediately after a disaster when the images of devastation are fresh in the public consciousness. The difficulties of managing these sudden surges of individual gifts and volunteers were described in vivid terms by members of the Task Force recounting their own experiences. In one example, a local official issued a call for volunteers to place sandbags on the banks of a flood-swollen river, only to have 20 times the number of volunteers she needed, while other areas along the river remained desperately short of help. Another Task Force member recalled how donors swamped her community with donations of clothing for flood victims (including nine wedding dresses) when the most essential supplies (drinking water and food) remained in extremely short supply.
3. **The contributions of foundations and corporations to victims of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina continued over a longer period of time than the surge of contributions by individuals.** These philanthropies also made donations to a wider range of needs, such as community redevelopment and arts organizations, rather than focusing solely on the immediate needs of the victims.
4. **The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> and Hurricane Katrina marked a watershed for the philanthropic sector.** While most foundations and corporations are still coming to terms with the potential changes that will be required for the sector to play a more pivotal role in responding to future disasters, our research identified many examples of philanthropies that have initiated significant changes in their policies and practices to work toward that goal.

## Recommendations

The recommendations that follow reflect an underlying vision and set of principles about how the system of disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery should work in Washington state.

### ***Vision and Principles***

- *Families, individuals, businesses, schools, and institutions will be well-informed and prepared to care for themselves and their neighbors in a disaster.*
- *Public agencies will have well-designed plans and adequate resources to respond, and mutual aid arrangements with other jurisdictions.*
- *Nonprofit agencies, civic groups and faith communities will have well-established relationships of trust with public agencies, and clearly delineated roles for each to play during recovery.*
- *Philanthropies will have plans in place to channel resources to meet extraordinary needs in a timely way.*
- *All these partners will have a medium to communicate with one another to coordinate their actions and capture and deploy the surge in resources in times of crisis to meet needs in a timely way.*
- *The Partners will conduct a systematic review of each event to improve performance, and to identify causes that can be mitigated to prevent recurrence.*

To achieve the vision will require the cooperation and hard work of all sectors. To identify philanthropy's most promising opportunities to play a role in achieving the vision, the Task Force drew on findings in the report, including promising practices in Table 7A, and focused on two types of activities:



Community dinner  
Source: [www.stockxchng.com](http://www.stockxchng.com)

- Strategic actions that lie at the intersection of major needs in disaster management and the competencies, strengths and orientations of the philanthropic sector; and
- Catalytic actions that will help to trigger additional gains through the actions of other parties.

Those opportunities appear to fall into four major areas that closely parallel the central interests of many Washington philanthropies: *The need for community-wide action; the desire to make the most of our assets; the importance of creating a culture of inclusion; and the importance of stewarding our natural and built environments.*

## 1. A call for community-wide action

The Task Force found that the spirit of collaboration and the open communication fostered by this project have enormous potential to aid in building our communities' resilience when faced with disaster. To build upon that foundation, philanthropies can take actions both within the sector and across sectors to build a stronger *community-wide* response to disasters.

Within the philanthropic sector, individual philanthropic organizations can *lead by example* by:

- A. Helping grantees develop plans to continue their operations in a disaster.
- B. Preparing their own internal disaster plans.
- C. Identifying fund sources that could be freed up to meet community needs in a time of crisis.
- D. Streamlining grantmaking processes to put those funds to work quickly.

- E. Establishing partnerships with other foundations so the sector as a whole can be more effective in responding to disasters.

Beyond the sector, philanthropy could also play a lead role in connecting the disparate sectors of our community including government, nonprofit organizations, citizens, the business community, and others, to build the trust needed for successful disaster management. The following activities could be considered:

- F. Create a framework to sustain the community dialogue that has been sparked by this project so that all sectors are better organized and prepared to respond to the challenge. This could involve convening periodic gatherings to share information and conduct joint emergency planning, or bringing key players together after a disaster to share lessons learned, identify mitigation strategies and forge joint initiatives.
- G. Build relationships and lines of communications with emergency management officials in advance of a crisis. These lines of communications are necessary to ensure that FEMA assistance regulations are not breached and to make philanthropic aid as effective as possible.
- H. Help launch a project to create a Web-based tool to foster communication across sectors and in real time. The tool could also be designed to facilitate timely and effective individual giving and volunteer service by providing up-to-the-minute information via the Internet about where help is needed. It might also be designed to provide a mechanism for citizens to make direct contributions to specific disaster survivors based upon the model established by Web sites such as <http://www.KIVA.org>.
- I. Build partnerships to create specialized resources (such as surge capacity in the regional hospital system) which no one institution or local jurisdiction alone can provide.
- J. Provide the catalyst to create mechanisms for urban communities to share specialized resources with rural underserved communities.
- K. Convene a community effort to focus on the pivotal importance of schools in disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

***“In Pierce County we have an annual summit of all the organizations that work to help people. We are training their staff and some clients in how to prepare for disasters. Also many nonprofits and faith groups are involved in Citizen Corps. They provide volunteers who can be vetted and trained in advance to help in shelters, and to manage the spontaneous donations of goods and people who just show up to help.”***

Steve Bailey, President, Washington State Emergency Management Association, and Director, Pierce County Department of Emergency Management

## 2. Making the most of our assets

The evidence shows that the level of contributions and volunteerism surge dramatically in the wake of a disaster. Indeed, the Task Force found that individual giving is the most powerful source of financial help as well as volunteer labor in a crisis, outpacing the contributions of foundations and corporations combined. However the Task Force also discovered that the surge in giving and volunteer energy that occurs immediately after a disaster does not always translate into effective and well-coordinated action in the field. Nor does that surge of civic energy last long enough to drive improvements during stages other than the immediate response to the crisis.

*There is a tremendous opportunity for organized philanthropy to provide the tools to make citizen energy and generosity more effective in times of crisis.*

There would seem to be a tremendous opportunity for organized philanthropy to provide the tools to make this citizen energy and generosity more effective. These actions would include activities that help communities channel individual giving and volunteer energy to where they are most needed during an emergency, and to fill large gaps that exist in the areas of *preparedness and recovery*. Specific activities that deserve consideration include those that:

- A. Provide local communities with the resources to organize Citizen Corps groups to make volunteers more effective. The successful model currently in place in Pierce County and some other jurisdictions provides the blueprint for others. The Corps members would receive training in advance, and could be deployed in a variety of capacities during an emergency, such as sand bagging, traffic control, and debris removal. The Citizen Corps framework also provides a way to take advantage of the specialized skills of volunteers in fields such as medicine and nursing (Medical Reserve Corps), engineering or construction. Citizen Corps also provide the basic structure from which to create “Care Teams” (see point C. below).
- B. Provide communities that experience frequent disasters with the resources to establish volunteer reception centers to organize volunteers on-site and deploy them where needs are greatest.
- C. Provide training, equipment, and resources to enable existing Citizen Corps organizations to develop Care Teams to provide case management services for vulnerable persons and help families and individuals throughout the recovery process. A detailed description of Care Teams in Pierce County is shown in Appendix E.

- D. Provide the catalyst to link Citizen Corps organizations with volunteer groups to special skills, such as the American Institute of Architects and the Structural Engineers of Washington so that damage assessment and repairs can be completed more rapidly.
- E. Provide communities with the communication tools and technology to channel financial contributions to the areas of greatest need throughout all stages of a disaster.
- F. Provide resource-poor and rural communities with specific capital equipment that is needed for disaster response (generators, public-safety radios, etc.).

### 3. Creating a culture of inclusion

The needs of *all* members of our communities must be met in times of crisis. The Task Force found evidence that vulnerable populations—including the poor, those who are elderly or disabled, and those with limited English—are disproportionately affected through all stages of a disaster. They are least prepared beforehand, most unable to respond in the immediate aftermath, and face the greatest barriers to long-term recovery. Emergency management agencies recognize the need for and are working toward more effective disaster management for vulnerable communities, but significant gaps remain. Because many Washington philanthropies have a long history of working on issues affecting vulnerable populations, the sector is uniquely positioned to help bring greater social equity to the way our communities take action before and after disasters.

Community nonprofit organizations—many of which are philanthropy’s current grantees—provide an indispensable link to vulnerable populations, especially through informal networks that often play essential roles in vulnerable communities. At present these organizations lack adequate financial and human resources and technical knowledge to bridge the gaps effectively in emergencies. Activities that should be considered include:



Alverna Palmer puts gasoline in the generator. The Carnation family finally saw the light Sunday night, when crews restored heat and light to the beleaguered community. (December 25, 2006)

Credit: Meryl Schenker/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

***“Advocacy groups are an important component in the special needs communities.***

***These groups can bring specialized information, subject-matter experts, and additional resources to the table. These organizations frequently find themselves being the lifeline to people with special needs during and after a crisis.”***

*—Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Populations with Special Needs, 2006*

- A. Advocate for the direct involvement of representatives of vulnerable communities to be directly involved with public agencies in developing the policies and procedures for disaster management.
- B. Build the capacity of community-based organizations, including informal organizations that are often important communication links to vulnerable populations, to play their essential roles in disaster management and to advocate for their constituents in times of crisis.
- C. Provide resources for projects to improve communications with non-English speaking populations and those who are deaf or deaf/blind during all phases of disaster preparedness and response.
- D. Provide the resources to train volunteer chore service workers, home health care personnel and other care givers to aid their clients in a crisis.
- E. Identify and test additional strategies to meet the needs of isolated seniors and other vulnerable individuals who do not have formal case management services but may need help during a disaster.
- F. Remind the news media about the critical importance of providing coverage of disaster events that occur in rural areas or disadvantaged communities.

#### **4. Stewarding the natural and built environments**

Many of the disasters that have afflicted Washington’s communities in recent years were caused, in whole or in part, by alterations in the natural and built environments. Our community has the ability to repair that damage and prevent or mitigate future disasters through thoughtful policies and day-to-day actions. To address that challenge, the Task Force suggests that philanthropy:

- A. Convene community leaders and public officials after disasters to thoroughly evaluate the causes, review after-action reports and develop and implement action plans to mitigate the causes.



- B. Help to educate the community and policymakers about the relationship between the stewardship of the natural and built environments—and disaster prevention and mitigation.
- C. Advocate for and help to fund projects that restore natural systems and infrastructure and their capacities to prevent disasters such as flooding and wildfires when there is sound scientific evidence that restoration could prevent or mitigate future damage and other calamities.
- D. Provide resources to test innovative strategies to address specific environmental hazards.

By acting on these opportunities, philanthropy could help to create a community-wide response to the challenges posed by disasters that, in the very act of its creation, will help to accomplish many of the greater goals Washington's philanthropies are striving to achieve.



Source: Flickr



## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The severity of flooding in Lewis County and Southwest Washington in December, 2007 led to an emerging realization among numerous philanthropic organizations in Washington state that the 2007 flood was not a 100-year event—but is emblematic of potential, recurring weather-related disasters. Not only did the 2007 flooding signify, on the heels of a major weather event in 2006, that major weather events are likely to repeat with more frequency—it dramatized that these events are likely to affect all areas of the economy that impact peoples' lives and livelihoods. Moreover, the 2007 winter storm flooding in Western Washington revealed that many philanthropic organizations in Washington state didn't have a point of view about how philanthropy can leverage its strengths to play a meaningful role in disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. These events, coming in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and other disasters at both the local and national level, stirred discussion within Washington's philanthropic sector about how philanthropy could help build the capacity of our communities to meet the challenges posed by such disasters. As a result of those discussions, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Seattle Foundation, and United Way of King County commissioned this examination of the strengths and weaknesses of Washington's current disaster response capability, and the lessons learned by philanthropy when confronted with disasters in other areas of the country.

Few Washington philanthropies have disaster preparedness and relief as an explicit focus of their giving, but many are finding that requests for their involvement in this field are coming more often and with greater urgency. There are a number of reasons for this trend:

- September 11<sup>th</sup> and Hurricane Katrina were watershed events in which philanthropy played larger roles than in past events, leading to increased expectations of the sector.
- Scientists report that climate change and other alterations in the natural environment are causing natural disasters to occur more frequently.
- After 9/11 there was a shift in the government's focus toward funding activities associated with terrorism rather than general disaster preparedness, leaving major gaps in funding for public health and other essential services.
- As the current economic recession has grown worse, the ability of government agencies to cope with disasters has been constrained by resource limitations.



Credit: FOIA to the US Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District.



Wildfire on sky  
Source: [www.stockxchng.com](http://www.stockxchng.com)

***“A regional approach must be taken when addressing large or catastrophic disasters.”***

*—Emergency Management Council,  
Statewide Emergency Preparedness,  
2007-08 Annual Report to the  
Governor, 2008*

As a consequence, foundations, corporations and United Way organizations are increasingly being asked to fill the gaps when local disaster management agencies are tapped out. The net result is that whether a foundation’s primary interest is community development, enhancing the arts, alleviating poverty or almost any other charitable purpose, it will almost inevitably be confronted with the need to respond to some form of disaster, because the impact of these events is felt in every sector. For philanthropies with a focus on working with disadvantaged populations, this need is especially acute, because the evidence shows those groups are at greater risk, suffer more severe effects, and take longer to recover from a disaster than others.

Many philanthropists have responded generously to recent disasters with one-time grants, intended to ameliorate the human suffering that inevitably follows a disaster. There has been an understandable reluctance to delve more deeply into this field, because until recently, disasters were regarded as rare occurrences affecting local areas. In addition, disasters have been regarded as the province of government and nonprofit relief agencies (such as the Red Cross) with specific expertise in emergency response. Yet the tragic events of 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, and the increasing frequency of flooding, windstorms and other events here in Washington, have caused many to believe that more must be done to see that our communities are prepared to endure and recover from disasters.

In late summer 2008, the project sponsors selected the Cedar River Group and Trang D. Tu Consulting to conduct research and provide staff support to a Task Force comprised of public and tribal officials, leaders of nonprofit organizations and communities of faith, and representatives of other philanthropies with experience in disaster response. The Task Force members and their affiliations are listed in the acknowledgements.

During the past several months, the Task Force members have given generously of their time and expertise to guide the research that formed the basis of this report. The research was drawn from three sources:

- A literature review, including reports from the Washington State Emergency Management Council, the Emergency Management Division and many other sources regarding the State’s current capabilities and philanthropy’s response to past disasters throughout the nation (see Appendix E);
- Interviews with Task Force members and other experts (see Appendix A); and
- Presentations and discussion at the Task Force’s meetings.

The Task Force also invited other experts from the public, private, philanthropic and media sectors to participate in two full-day workshops that focused on the strengths and vulnerabilities of Washington's current system, and on best practices that have emerged from the experience of philanthropies throughout the country. (The workshop agendas, panelists and summaries are included in a separate document, "Record of Proceedings.") At its final meeting on March 27<sup>th</sup> 2009 the Task Force reviewed the findings and refined the recommendations that appear in this report.

In the course of their work, many of the Task Force members commented that the dialogue that occurred during their meetings – across sectors and transcending differences of organizational culture and terminology – had broadened their perspective and sparked new possibilities for collaboration. Hopefully this report will provide a catalyst for continuing that community-wide conversation.



A northbound kayak on I-5  
Photo: Jim Thode

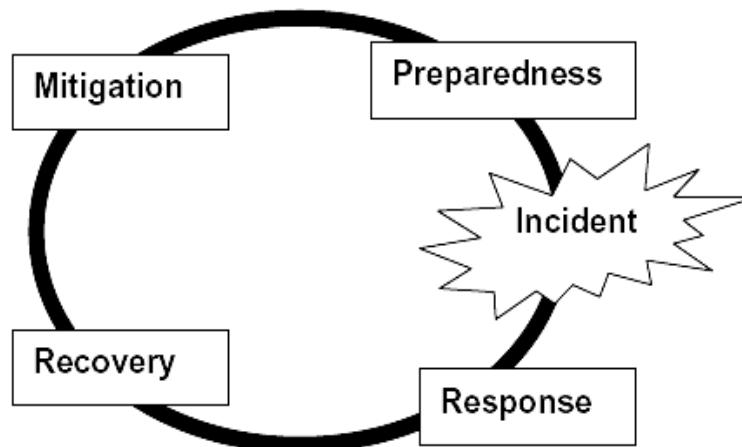


## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### The Four Phases of Disaster Management

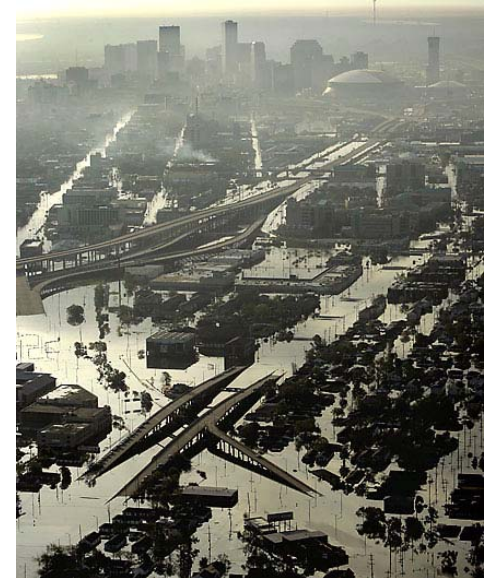
To place the research in context, it is useful to evaluate our communities' capacity for resilience in each of four phases of disaster management, as illustrated and described below.

Figure 1. Four Phases of Disaster Management



Source: National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD), *Long-Term Recovery Manual*, 2004

- **Mitigation** – The mitigation phase occurs between events, when communities and individuals have an opportunity to take actions that reduce or eliminate the long-term risks from natural and technological hazards. These can be risks to the people, property, the environment and/or the economy. Examples of mitigation are building code requirements, disaster insurance, hazard information systems, public education, risk mapping, safety codes and tax incentives.
- **Preparation** – In addition to mitigating hazards, communities and individuals must prepare for those threats that cannot be eliminated through mitigation. Examples are alert systems, emergency communications, emergency operations centers, emergency plans, mutual aid agreements, and training exercises.



Hurricane Katrina aftermath, New Orleans, 30 August-5 September

Photo: Michael Appleton, USA, New York Daily News



Source: [www.stockscng.com](http://www.stockscng.com)

***“During the emergency and relief phases following a disaster, organizational presence, volunteers and resources may be abundant. Soon thereafter, volunteers and resources become scarce.”***

*—National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, Long-Term Recovery Manual*

- **Response** – The response phase includes actions agencies and individuals take immediately before, during or after an emergency occurs. These are actions that will save lives, minimize damage to property and the environment, and make recovery more effective. Examples are activating emergency plans and warning systems, instructions to the public, emergency medical assistance, shelter and evacuation, and search and rescue.
- **Recovery** – During the recovery phase actions are taken to return a community’s utilities, roads and other key systems to a basic operating level, and return life to normal or improved levels. Examples are damage assessment, decontamination, crisis counseling, disaster application centers, disaster unemployment assistance, temporary housing and reconstruction. Ideally, the recovery phase spurs more mitigation actions.

The research suggests that Washington is generally stronger in the areas of Preparation and Response than in Mitigation and Recovery. Each of these two groupings has at least one thing in common: who plays the primary role. In the preparation and response phases, government plays the lead role. Emergency management agencies spend much effort in preparing for disasters. First responders and emergency management agencies take the lead in the initial response after a disaster. Certainly, emergency agencies also play key roles in mitigation and recovery. But for these two phases to be successful, the community must also play a big role. For example, community-based organizations need to train community leaders to help families and individuals mitigate the hazards in their homes and businesses by taking such actions as securing shelves to the walls so they don’t fall over in an earthquake. For full recovery to take place, everyone in the affected community must be involved over the long term to help the victims recover and rebuild the community’s infrastructure.

## **The Emergency Management System**

When a disaster occurs, emergency personnel begin a highly-structured process to assess the impact and determine the appropriate response. The table below summarizes the steps that are taken by government agencies during the course of a disaster, and Figure 2 diagrams the sequence of actions that lead to a federal disaster declaration.

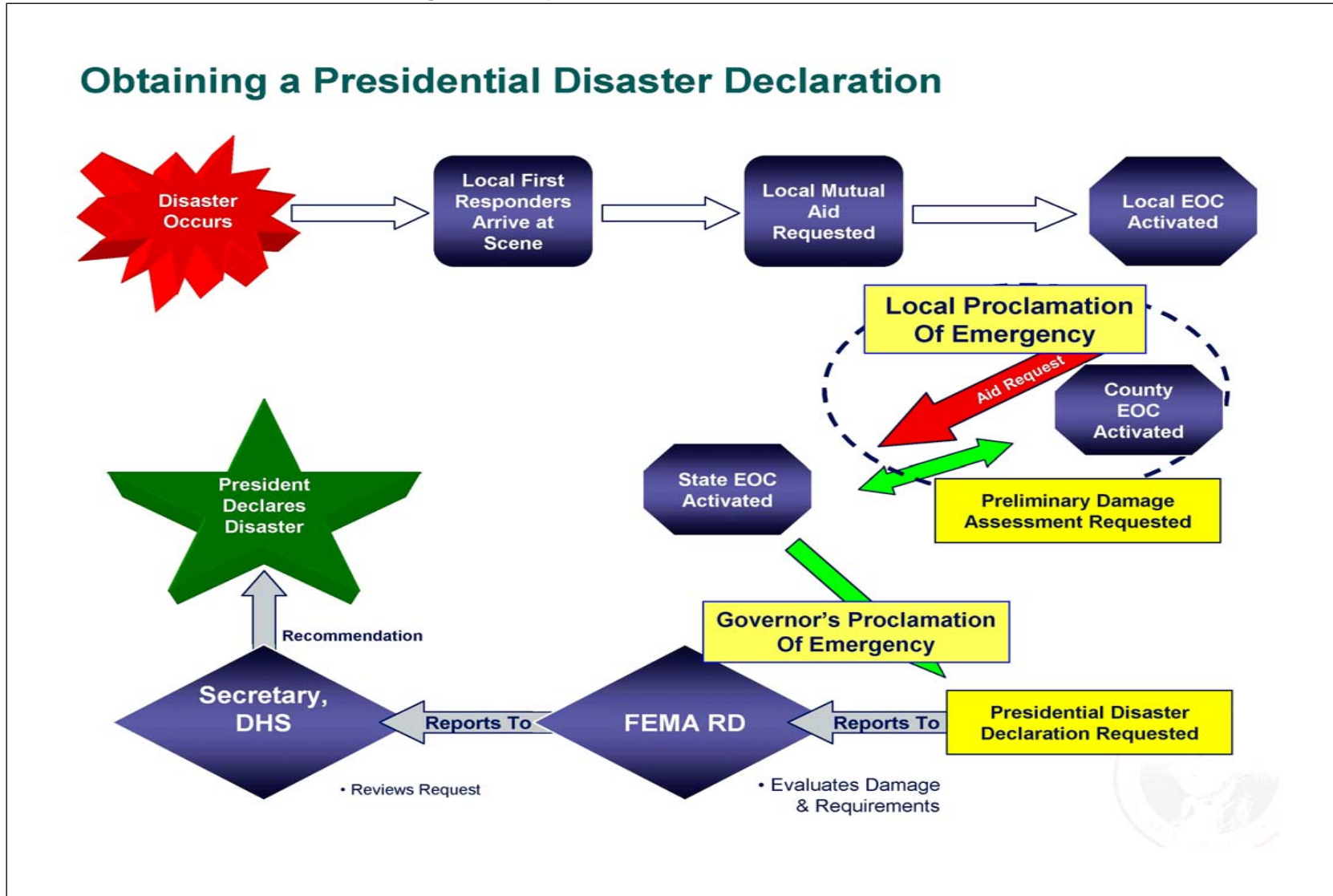


**Table 1: Emergency Management and Process of Declaring a Disaster**

Government Agency and Functions	Steps in Declaring a Disaster
<b>LOCAL LEVEL</b>	
<p>Disaster management in Washington state begins at the local level. Each area has its own <b>first responders</b>, including police, fire fighters and paramedics. There are <b>39 county, and 29 city and tribal emergency management agencies</b>. Local emergency management agencies identify hazards in their area and ways to respond to the emergencies that might arise. They create disaster management plans and coordinate training for emergency situations.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Local disaster response.</b> When a disaster occurs, first responders are first on the scene.</li> <li>2. The local emergency management agency opens and staffs its Emergency Operations Center. The job of this center is to be the central point for communication and coordination of the response.</li> <li>3. If the first responders or the local emergency management agency need help, they can call upon the other jurisdictions who have agreed to help as needed (mutual aid agreements).</li> <li>4. In addition, there are local private organizations (such as the Red Cross), community groups and volunteers who help respond to emergencies. They take on such tasks as staffing emergency shelters, and canvassing neighborhoods to identify disaster survivors and aid them in getting help.</li> <li>5. <b>Local emergency declaration.</b> If the disaster is widespread, the county or city declares an emergency. The local emergency management office then notifies the state Emergency Management Division (EMD).</li> </ol>
<b>STATE LEVEL</b>	
<p>The state <b>Emergency Management Division (EMD)</b> is part of the Washington State Military Department. The EMD identifies hazards in the state and ways to respond, and develops a comprehensive disaster management plan. The EMD also reviews local emergency plans, coordinates mutual aid, provides 24/7 alert and warning services, maintains the state Emergency Operations Center, provides training and exercises, provides public education, and serves as the link for federal-level assistance.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <b>State response.</b> When a local emergency management agency asks EMD for help, the EMD activates the state Emergency Operations Center to coordinate the response across jurisdictions, and makes statewide resources available.</li> <li>7. If the emergency affects a large area, the state asks local and federal officials to conduct a joint, preliminary assessment of the damage. They review how much damage the disaster has caused and what impact it has had on residents and public facilities.</li> <li>8. <b>State emergency declaration.</b> In a widespread or major disaster, the governor proclaims a state emergency. With this declaration, the governor can ask the federal government for help, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).</li> </ol>
<b>FEDERAL LEVEL</b>	
<p>The <b>Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</b> is part of the federal Department of Homeland Security (DHS). FEMA works to reduce the loss of life and property, and protect the nation from all hazards. It develops and provides models of hazard assessment plans and comprehensive disaster management plans, and provides training and education. FEMA also has assistance programs that can provide grants or loans to help cities and counties repair infrastructure damaged in the disaster, and to help households and businesses recover.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9. <b>Federal response.</b> When a state governor declares an emergency, FEMA evaluates the damage and requirements, and reports them to the Secretary of DHS.</li> <li>10. The Secretary of the DHS reviews the request. If it meets the criteria for a federal emergency, the Secretary makes a recommendation to the President of the United States.</li> <li>11. <b>Federal emergency/disaster declaration.</b> The President makes either a federal emergency declaration or a federal disaster declaration. These declarations make federal resources available to the affected state. A disaster declaration also means that disaster survivors can apply for grants from FEMA.</li> <li>12. <b>Federal aid for recovery.</b> FEMA grants for temporary housing, housing repairs and other expenses are limited to a maximum of \$30,300 per household. But the average grant nationwide is less than \$5,000. Homeowners and businesses can also apply to the Small Business Administration (SBA) for a loan to rebuild.</li> </ol>



Figure 2: Steps to a Federal Disaster Declaration



Source: Washington Military Dept., Emergency Management Division, "State Assistance to Local Jurisdictions" presentation.



## ***The Limits of Government's Response***

As the Task Force members examined the current process and recounted their own experiences, it became apparent that there are several important points about government's response to disasters that most residents and businesses do not fully understand:

- Individuals, families and businesses need to be able to survive by themselves for at least three days without power, heat, fresh water or outside sources of food. The conditions during an emergency may make it difficult for emergency responders to reach everyone right away or may overwhelm the resources available. There also may be no telephone and cell phone service.
- FEMA grants are available only if the disaster rises to the level of a presidential disaster declaration (that is, has gone through the steps above).
- FEMA grants are intended to help disaster survivors recover, but they are generally not sufficient to make survivors whole. Unfortunately, many survivors think that the government will restore them to the conditions in which they were living before the disaster, and that is rarely the case.
- It can take eight to 10 weeks before FEMA grant funding is available.
- FEMA grant funding is limited to a maximum of \$30,300 per family. The average FEMA grant nationwide is less than \$5,000.

***“Two major themes emerged from the After-Action Report from the windstorm of 2006: (1) government needs to more fully engage the private sector in all phases of preparedness, response and recovery operations, and (2) safety warnings and emergency preparedness messages need to be communicated in a variety of languages to safeguard community members who are not fluent in English.”***

*—Major General Timothy J. Lowenberg, Washington Military Department, “Team Washington Homeland Security Update,”*

## **Strengths and Weaknesses of Washington's Disaster Response Capabilities**

With these basic facts in mind, the study team and Task Force members sought to identify the strengths and the gaps in our state's existing disaster management system. A detailed chart of strengths and weaknesses organized by the four phases of disaster management is provided in Appendix B. Many of the strengths and weaknesses span two or more of the phases of disaster

management. But several topics or themes emerged as being significant. So the summary below is organized by theme.

## 1. Organization and Staffing

**Strengths:** The organization and staffing of emergency management in Washington is generally sound. The structure — starting at the local level, progressing to assistance from nearby jurisdictions, then the state, then the federal government — is a good one. Most cities, counties, Tribes, and the State have developed solid emergency management plans, and are carrying out efforts to mitigate hazards. The first responders and emergency agency staff are professional, trained and skilled at what they do. The local and state agencies and the Tribes generally have a strong capacity for emergency response.

In addition, nonprofits such as the American Red Cross and Salvation Army are ready to fill important roles in response and have provided excellent service. The emergency management agencies in many communities also help to coordinate groups of individual volunteers — Voluntary Health Care/Medical Reserve Corps (for health care providers) and Citizen Corps. These individuals get training in advance to respond to disasters and can activate quickly when needed.

Washington Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (WAVOAD) has taken a leadership role in helping communities organize long-term recovery. WAVOAD itself is made up of nonprofits, faith-based organizations and government agencies. The nonprofit and faith-based groups are capable and well-connected in their communities. They have strong experience in helping disaster survivors and communities identify their needs and in guiding them through the steps to get back on their feet. The WAVOAD members are competent, compassionate and committed.

**Weaknesses and Gaps:** In spite of these strengths, there are shortcomings in organization and staffing. A key factor is the level of funding for disaster management agencies and their nonprofit partners. Expectations for what emergency management can do, especially for national security, have been increasing in recent years, while state and federal funding have been decreasing. In some cases, agencies have received funding to launch a new program, but after the time-limited funding ends, they have trouble sustaining the effort. Even at the national level, funding for disaster management



Rail line with silage bales at 603 and Twin Oaks  
Photo: Jim Thode

is not a given. Federal funding for disaster mitigation, for example, needs annual support in Congress.

In addition, the level of resources for emergency management in Washington varies from county to county. This means that the quality of emergency management services is inconsistent across the state. The biggest funding challenges arise in disaster events that affect multiple counties, such as recent windstorms. Another need is for adequate funding to enable health care personnel to take part in disaster training exercises to ensure that disaster response is rapid, effective and well-coordinated.

Other needs related to organization and staffing are:

- Performance standards for use at the local level.
- Model plans that apply to rural communities.
- Back-up communication systems so that responders can stay in touch with each other and the Emergency Operations Center.
- Standard methods to assess the health and human services needs of disaster victims quickly.
- Surge capacity to provide health care and human services during and after a disaster.
- An adequate number of medical volunteers, especially in smaller and rural counties.
- Sufficient staff resources in long-term recovery organizations to help victims throughout the full recovery process.
- A system to identify potential mitigation strategies in the wake of each disaster.



Two trees uprooted at this Renton apartment complex, among others. December 19, 2006.

Source: Office of Washington State Climatologist Web site. Compiled by Wolf Read.



**Frustrated' immigrant family sticks together, wishes for normalcy**

Roberto Perez, 12, and his sister Mirsa, 10, try to stay warm as they play a game of Battleship to pass time. The family has had no electricity at their apartment since Thursday.

Credit: Dan DeLong/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

## 2. Shelter

**Strengths:** The emergency management agencies and nonprofits have developed good sheltering capability in most areas of the state. The American Institute of Architects and the Structural Engineers Association of Washington have organized their members to provide volunteer assistance to property owners to complete damage assessments of their homes and businesses. This assistance often helps people to return to their homes and jobs more quickly.

**Weaknesses and Gaps:** There is a need for more shelters across the state for people who are “medically fragile,” such as those who need help with the activities of daily living, or who need oxygen or special medical equipment. There is also a need for shelters that can address cultural needs, such as separate quarters for men and women, and religious and cultural requirements for diet. Finally, there is a need for more shelters for pets, since many people are less likely to come to a shelter if they have to leave their pets and animals unattended at home.

## 3. Relationships and Coordination

**Strengths:** Emergency management agencies and first responders coordinate well with each other across the boundaries of jurisdictions. It is becoming common across the state for agencies and staff to come together in a regional approach to disasters. For example, emergency management and public health agencies in Walla Walla, Benton, Franklin, Klickitat and Yakima counties work together as a region through mutual assistance agreements. Most school districts have safety plans in place. School administrators also are being trained in emergency management to give them a broader perspective. Additionally, some government agencies and nonprofits appear to understand the need to communicate with each other before disasters happen.

**Weaknesses and Gaps:** Generally, emergency management agencies need to work on building relationships across all sectors in their communities, and businesses and nonprofits need to get involved in planning for disasters. Specifically, the research for this project identified the following needs:



- Stronger relationships and information-sharing agreements are needed among all agencies and businesses that provide critical infrastructure in each region (utilities, telecommunications, roads, transportation and fuels).
- More widespread mutual aid is needed especially to assist rural areas.
- Better coordination of emergency management across jurisdictions is essential, especially in the critical initial hours of a disaster.
- Relationships and trust must be built between government agencies and nonprofits so that each knows whom to call and what to do when a disaster strikes.
- Community-based organizations need the resources to help the people they serve prepare for and recover from disasters.
- Relationships need to be built between philanthropy and emergency management agencies, and among philanthropic organizations around disaster management issues.
- Better communication mechanisms are needed across all sectors.

#### 4. Vulnerable Populations

**Strengths:** The Task Force identified some areas of strength related to working with people who need extra assistance or a different approach in a disaster. These “vulnerable populations” may have physical disabilities, or differences in language and/or culture that mean that a mass approach to disaster planning and response does not work well for them. With these needs in mind, some local funding organizations like Public Health – Seattle King County, the City of Seattle and United Way of King County have been helping community leaders in nonprofit service organizations to train staff and volunteers prepare for disasters. Similarly, some special purpose organizations such as



Inside the fire station volunteers are preparing meals for community members. The vehicle shown here is called an Emergency Response Vehicle and it is used to provide food and supplies to communities who have been affected by disaster.

Credit: Beverly Bean/American Red Cross

***“[T]he strength of our community response is dependent on the ability of nonprofits to continue to endure and serve in a disaster. Generally, nonprofit human services agencies are not adequately prepared to ensure continuity of services during a major disaster.”***

*—United Way of King County, A Region at Risk: Improving Our Readiness to Respond to Disaster,” 2007*

Red Cross chapters are training community leaders and citizen volunteers within their regions in personal preparedness and service continuity planning. In addition, cultural communities have many strengths that can help their members in the response and recovery phases. Community leaders trained in disaster preparedness can help to make the most of those strengths.

Emergency management agencies are starting to form connections with community-based organizations who work with vulnerable populations. An example is Public Health – Seattle & King County, which has developed a Vulnerable Populations Team to assess needs, make connections, and identify the most useful media outlets and alternate pathways for communication. Translated materials about disaster preparedness are now available in Spanish and other languages.

**Weaknesses and Gaps:** Generally, funding is not adequate to serve vulnerable populations in disasters. Emergency management agencies have limited and inconsistent funding to identify and prepare for the needs of vulnerable populations, and community-based agencies don’t have the funding to help their communities prepare or recover. This means that the government is not prepared to help people outside of a mass care framework. Vulnerable populations are less likely to get the services they need immediately after a disaster. This lack of services and resources means that disasters tend to worsen the effects of poverty, and to further isolate vulnerable groups and individuals.

Specific needs of vulnerable populations for disaster management include the following:

- Information for emergency management agencies on the special care needs of people living in their own homes.
- Case management, both for individuals receiving ongoing support services, and for vulnerable individuals who aren’t receiving services through health and human services agencies but who require assistance in an emergency.
- Greater attention to the need for emergency plans at group care facilities (such as retirement homes, group homes and child care centers) and training for their staff in emergency response.

- Partnerships between emergency management agencies and community-based organizations serving immigrant and refugee communities and other vulnerable populations, to start two-way communication about disaster preparedness.
- Training and technical assistance for community-based organizations so they can help their communities with disaster preparation and response.
- A Community Communications Network (such as in King County) to reach vulnerable residents with important messages in emergencies, and further work to identify communications channels to reach individuals with few connections to the community.
- More translations of safety warnings on equipment for home use and of disaster preparedness information.
- Resources to connect first responders to interpreters so they can better help limited English-speaking residents.

## 5. Disaster Relief, Recovery and Mitigation

**Strengths:** Nonprofit relief organizations such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army have performed very well during many recent crises. Pierce County is leading the way in creating new models for tapping volunteers' energy by creating a Citizen Corps and "care teams" to work one-on-one with families during the recovery phase. Greater attention is being given to building the capacity of "long-term recovery organizations" in many areas of the state.

The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) will issue a White Paper in the summer of 2009 to spur a dialogue regarding a national mitigation strategy which may provide an opportunity for philanthropy to educate the public and policymakers about the importance and cost-effectiveness of effective mitigation strategies.



Repairing the damage after 2006 windstorm.  
Credit: Grant M. Haller/Seattle Post Intelligencer



2001 Nisqually earthquake  
Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org>

***“Community disaster education is where we can get the most bang for the buck. We use a ‘teach the teacher’ model to train community leaders, who then train their own community members.”***

*—Dr. Larry Petry, President and CEO, American Red Cross serving King and Kitsap Counties*

**Weaknesses and Gaps:** In general, recovery and mitigation receive the lowest amount of resources and are the most challenging to address, since no one entity is clearly “in charge.” Yet everyone in the affected or potentially affected region has a stake in the success of these efforts.

Some specific needs related to immediate disaster relief and to long-term recovery are:

- Ways to manage “flash philanthropy” – large-scale, voluntary contributions of goods and money by individuals, businesses and philanthropic groups.
- Tools to manage spontaneous volunteers.
- Timely assistance for survivors during the eight- to 10-week gap before FEMA funding assistance is available.
- More widespread use of grassroots “care teams,” such as Pierce County uses, to find disaster survivors, help identify their needs, and assist them through the process of applying for assistance and getting on their feet.
- Ongoing and long-term help for the recovery of families and businesses/organizations, especially those who have been wiped out by the disaster.
- Funding and a coordinated effort to retrofit homes and commercial buildings, such as mitigation for earthquakes.
- Broad community-wide involvement in mitigation efforts.
- Pathways for turning mitigation strategies into building codes and standards, and for combining these strategies with other assistance for homeowners, such as weatherization programs.

## 6. Public Communication and Education

**Strengths:** There are many public communication and education services in place in Washington communities to help residents prepare for and effectively respond to disaster events. Examples of a few of these services, include:

- The Regional Public Information Network (RPIN) in the Puget Sound region, a one-stop resource to which more than 75 government, transportation, utility, health, and emergency response agencies contribute.
- The “3 Days, 3 Ways” public education campaign in King County, and other such programs, focused on helping local residents anticipate and prepare for disasters and emergencies.
- Citizens Corps, a grassroots strategy sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to bring together government and community leaders to involve citizens in all-hazards emergency preparedness and response projects.
- American Red Cross personal and workplace disaster preparedness trainings offered at no or low cost in many local Washington communities.

Additionally, many schools have disaster plans in place. Some schools do an excellent job of teaching their students about how to prepare for disasters. As mentioned above, some organizations such as Public Health – Seattle & King County are developing new tools to communicate with vulnerable populations. This study and other projects have helped to spur greater communication across sectors.

**Weaknesses and Gaps:** Many of the services identified above, tend to be used by residents who have the knowledge, time, and means (e.g., English language fluency, and mobility) to access and use these services. The extent to which these services are familiar to and/or are used by vulnerable populations seems to be modest given the disproportionate effects of disasters overall among the poor and other vulnerable populations.



Source: [www.stockscng.com](http://www.stockscng.com)

***“If the schools are closed, it doesn’t matter if the roads are clear. If schools are open, parents have a window of time to start dealing with the family’s needs.”***

*—Jim Mullen, Director,  
Washington Military Department  
Emergency Management Division*



**Sinkhole causes flooding in West Seattle**  
Jackson's backyard a few hundred feet away.  
(December 15, 2006)

Credit: Meryl Schenker/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

Furthermore, there are two key misunderstandings that most members of the public and many businesses have about disasters. One is that they don't need to prepare because government agencies or other services will be there to help them. The other is that they will receive sufficient government funds to return to normal after a disaster. Because of these misunderstandings, many residents and businesses are not prepared to survive on their own for several days, and after a disaster, they expect to get a government grant for the full amount of their losses. Clearly there is a need for more and better public education about the limits of government's ability to help in a disaster. Another challenge is that the public – and even some officials – do not have an appreciation for the pivotal roles played by schools in disaster recovery. As one Task Force member stated, "If the schools are closed, it doesn't matter if the roads are clear. If schools are open, parents have a window of time to start dealing with the family's needs." Another pointed out that "in some communities, 80 percent of the children rely on school nutrition programs for most of their diet. If the schools are closed, and their family wasn't prepared, they'll go hungry." Other specific communication and education needs include:

- Effective ways to measure the results of public education and community outreach efforts.
- Ways to use schools and existing organizations to deliver disaster preparedness information.
- Robust communication and emergency notification systems in schools.
- Use of alternative communication channels for the deaf, blind, for those with limited or no English language skills, and for the homeless and others who do not have access to newspapers, radio or television.
- Communication methods using new technologies (such as cell phones, Twitter and social networking Web sites).
- Ways to encourage businesses to do their own risk analysis and mitigation of their buildings and operations.

- Better ways to encourage residents and businesses to develop their own emergency plans and stock supplies, and for businesses to train their staff.
- Ways to share information about good practices for mitigation of buildings, property and households.
- Methods to encourage the media to give attention to disasters that occur in rural or disadvantaged communities.

Clearly much has been accomplished in recent years through the hard work of many agencies and individuals. Yet the research also reveals the great distance still to be traveled to help all of Washington's communities become truly resilient in the event of disaster.

## **Philanthropy's Response to Disasters**

The second major topic of the team's research was the identification of trends and promising practices in philanthropy's response to disasters across the nation. The research focused upon four key questions.

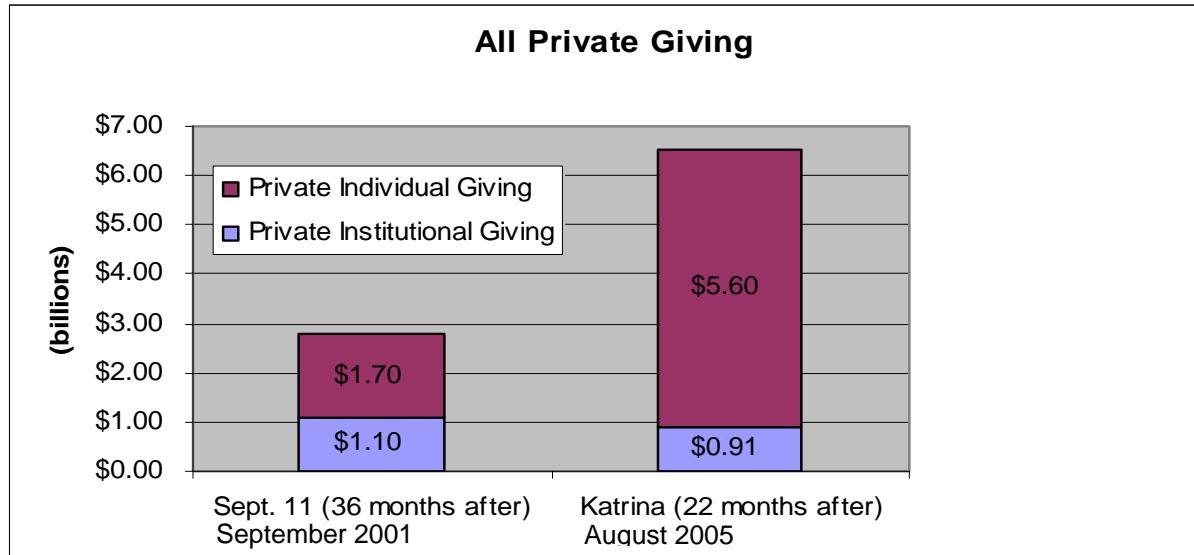
1. What trends or patterns are evident in past grant making for disaster management?
2. What criteria have guided philanthropies' decision making?
3. What have been the major challenges and lessons learned?
4. What examples of promising practices can be found that might be relevant to Washington state?

In our national scan of the literature on these questions, we did not find any comprehensive analyses of grant making across multiple disasters that included both quantitative and qualitative data. However, the Foundation Center and Georgetown University have completed two significant studies. The Foundation Center collected nearly comprehensive quantitative data on charitable giving after the September 11th terrorist attacks and after Hurricane Katrina.<sup>1</sup> Georgetown University's study included domestic and international disasters over the past 10 years and focused on identifying qualitative trends in disaster grant making.<sup>2</sup> The highlights from the studies are as follows:

- **The magnitude of giving varies by disaster.** The chart below shows that 36 months after 9/11, total private giving amounted to \$2.8 billion. Giving after Hurricane Katrina was much greater, with more than \$6.5 billion contributed only 22 months after the storm.
- **Contributions from individual donors exceed the contributions of foundations and corporations combined.** The chart also reveals the extent to which individual philanthropy (sometimes called horizontal philanthropy) played a central role in both disasters and the dominant role after Hurricane Katrina. Individual donors to the Gulf Coast storm victims accounted for \$5.6 billion, while foundations and corporations together contributed \$910 million.
- **Giving can vary by type of donor.** The second chart on the following page breaks down institutional giving for both disasters.<sup>3</sup> In the case of 9/11, the \$1.1 billion given by institutional donors included \$722 million from corporations and \$360 million from foundations.<sup>4</sup> Two years after Hurricane Katrina, institutional giving included \$519 million from corporations and \$387 million from foundations.<sup>5</sup>

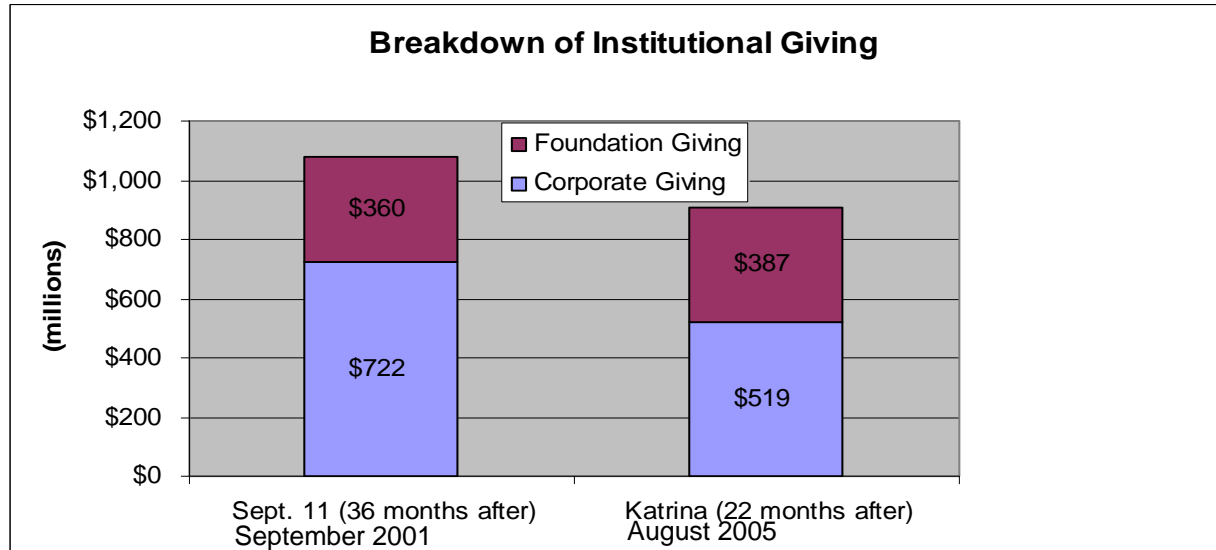


**Figure 3: Private Giving for September 11 and Hurricane Katrina Relief**



Source: Renz, "Final Update," pp. 86, 88; Lorenz, p. 6.

**Figure 4: Institutional Giving for September 11 and Hurricane Katrina Relief**



Note: "Foundation giving" includes that from independent, community and public foundations. "Corporate giving" includes that from corporations and corporate foundations. These figures do not include in-kind gifts or other non-monetary forms of support. Source: Renz, "Final Update," pp. 86, 88; Lawrence, p. 6.



Children waiting at the Superdome, New Orleans, after Katrina.  
Credit: Bellacio

- **Different types of donors give at different stages.** The bulk of individual giving takes place immediately after a disaster, while institutional giving occurs over a longer time horizon. The first chart above suggests this in the relatively larger share of individual giving 22 months after Hurricane Katrina compared with 36 months after 9/11.<sup>6</sup>
- **9/11 foreshadowed a shift in disaster grantmaking.** The Foundation Center's analysis also indicated that 9/11 was a "watershed" disaster that broadened the scope of philanthropies' giving and role well beyond the more narrow boundaries within which the sector had responded to past disasters.<sup>7</sup> Hurricane Katrina, with its especially long timeframe for recovery, expanded that scope even further.

### ***Types of Recipient Organizations***

- **Relief funds and national disaster relief organizations are major recipients of disaster philanthropy.** The table on the following page shows a significant percentage of funding after 9/11 went to "corporate and other relief funds." In fact, more than 280 relief funds were established after that disaster.<sup>8</sup> After Hurricane Katrina, the American Red Cross received a preponderance of institutional grant dollars.<sup>9</sup>
- **Corporate and foundation donors differ in the types of organizations funded.** Corporate givers were more likely to donate to relief funds and national relief organizations. After 9/11, 81 percent of the sector's funding went to corporate and relief funds versus 54 percent among foundations. Similarly, after Hurricane Katrina, 31 percent of corporate funding versus only 10 percent of foundation funding went to the American Red Cross. Conversely, foundations were more likely to fund direct service organizations, which after 9/11 amounted to 44 percent of sector funding compared with 9 percent among corporate donations.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 2: Corporate and Foundation Giving by Recipient Type**

<b>Sept. 11</b>		
	Corporate Giving	Foundation Giving
	share of sector funding	share of sector funding
Corporate and other relief funds	81%	54%
Direct service organizations	9%	44%
Undesignated or unspecified	10%	3%
<b>Gulf Coast Hurricanes</b>		
	Corporate Giving	Foundation Giving
	share of sector funding	share of sector funding
American Red Cross	31%	10%
Undesignated	33%	4%
Other named recipients	23%	64%
Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund	3%	5%
Salvation Army	3%	6%

Note: Shading highlights major differences between Corporate and Foundation giving  
 Source: Renz, "Final Update," pp. 95, 96; Lawrence, p. 29.

***Purpose of Giving***

- **Human services is a top-funded category; beyond that, areas of giving can vary by disaster.** The table on the following page reflects this for both 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina. For the former, the top two categories for giving (not including giving to relief funds) were Arts and Culture and Human Services, while for the latter, Human Services eclipsed all other categories for top funding.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 3: Giving by Subject Area, September 11 and Gulf Hurricanes**

	Sept. 11		Gulf Coast Hurricanes	
	\$ (millions)	% share	\$ (millions)	% share
Arts and Culture	\$55.6*	25.0%	\$15.2	1.7%
Human Services	\$54.6	24.5%	\$365.9	40.4%
Public/Society Benefit	\$43.6	19.6%		
Education	\$28.9	13.0%	\$92.9	10.3%
Health	\$23.2	10.4%	\$38.9	4.3%
International Affairs	\$9.1	4.1%		
Environment and Animals	\$3.0	1.4%	\$6.4	0.7%
Science and Social Science	\$2.7	1.2%		
Religion	\$1.7	0.8%	\$9.4	1.0%
Housing and Shelter			\$56.6	6.2%
Economic and Community Development			\$27.6	3.0%
Civil Rights and Public Affairs			\$15.9	1.8%
Other			\$72.7	8.0%
Undesignated			\$204.60	22.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$222.4**</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$906.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Note: Shading shows top categories.

\*In Sept. 11 giving, the high ranking of "Arts and Culture" reflects giving to "performing and visual arts groups and museums in the New York metropolitan area that suffered displacement or substantial loss of income following the attacks. Cultural recipients also included public broadcasting and other media organizations." (Renz, "Final Update," p. 97).

\*\*Does not include giving to disaster relief funds, so figure is less than the \$1.1 billion in institutional giving shown in figures 3 and 4.

Sources: Renz, "Final Update," pp. 97, 98; Lawrence, p. 30.

- Corporate donors targeted a narrower range of areas while foundations covered a broader range.** The table below shows corporate giving after Hurricane Katrina spread among five major categories; in contrast, foundation giving spanned double the number of funding categories.<sup>12</sup>

- **Corporate donors focused more on basic and/or immediate needs while foundations were more likely to also support long-term recovery.** Among corporate dollars, the top percentage shares went to housing and human services or were undesignated, while foundations also gave significantly to education, economic and community development.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 4: Corporate and Foundation Giving by Subject Area**

<b>Gulf Coast Hurricanes Comparison of Giving by Subject Area</b>		
	<b>Corporate Giving</b>	<b>Foundation Giving</b>
	% share	% share
Human Services	43%	35%
Education	6%	20%
Undesignated and Other	42%	17%
Health	2%	7%
Environment and Animals		2%
Housing and Shelter	8%	3%
Economic and Community Development		7%
Civil Rights and Public Affairs		4%
International Affairs		1%
Arts and Culture		4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	101%	100%
	Universe: \$519 m	Universe: \$296.5 m

Note: Shading shows top categories for each giving source.  
Source: Lawrence, pp. 6, 9.

### ***Change in Giving Over Time***

The following chart shows post-Hurricane Katrina giving for each of the three years following the disaster. Several observations emerge.

- **Overall giving declines with time.** Among institutional grants tracked by the Foundation Center, total giving fell from \$472 million in 2005 to \$8.5 million in 2008.

- **The vast majority of initial giving is for emergency relief/response.** Immediately after the storm, \$332.4 million of \$472.4 million was for “safety/disasters” and nearly all of that was emergency relief funding.
- **Preparedness and mitigation are comparatively underfunded.** Very little of the \$332.4 million was for preparedness or mitigation. Other information sources confirm this as a pattern across geographies and disasters.<sup>14</sup>
- **Over time, the share of funding for response wanes and share of funding for long-term recovery rises.** Funding for “safety/disasters” is gone by 2008. A similar pattern exists for “health” funding. In contrast, “community development” increases as a share of total funding and is the top funded category in 2007 and 2008.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 5: Change in Giving Subject Area, 2005–2008**

Gulf Coast Hurricanes Changes in Giving Over Time				
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Safety/Disasters	\$332.40	\$96.50	\$5.80	
Education	\$33.90	\$32.90	\$18.20	\$0.55
Health	\$31.70	\$15.80	\$3.50	\$1.40
Housing and Shelter	\$23.70	\$13.70	\$9.20	
Human Services	\$9.70	\$14.30	\$5.10	\$0.20
Agriculture/Food	\$9.40	\$3.90		
Community Development	\$9.40	\$28.70	\$18.90	\$3.50
Arts and Culture	\$9.20	\$8.50	\$2.60	\$1
Religion	\$7.90			
Science	\$5.10			
Civil/Human Rights		\$3.10	\$8.90	\$1
Environment		\$2.40		\$0.15
Mental Health/Crisis Services			\$3.90	
Public Affairs			\$3.30	
Crime/Law Enforcement				\$0.45
Social Sciences				\$0.30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$472.40</b>	<b>\$219.80</b>	<b>\$79.40</b>	<b>\$8.55</b>

Note: Shading shows top categories per year. Source: Foundation Center Online Database of Hurricane Katrina Giving, Jan. 2009.

## ***The Process of Giving***

Besides quantitative data on disaster grant making, our research also garnered qualitative information about trends in the *process* of disaster grant making.

- **Most philanthropies fund disaster management on an ad hoc, case-by-case basis and do not have existing program areas or guidelines.**<sup>16</sup>
- **Disaster philanthropy is often treated as a “one-off” relief effort,** so many institutions are not set up to take a longer term view of disasters.<sup>17</sup>
- **Because disasters are “recurrent,” some philanthropies find themselves engaged on a recurrent basis and seek to improve the effectiveness of their grant making.**
- **The most prevalent funding criteria** include:
  - Scale of the disaster, and whether it overwhelms government capacity;<sup>18</sup>
  - Whether the philanthropy has existing relationships with nonprofits in the affected area;<sup>19</sup>
  - Capacity of potential grantees to absorb an infusion of dollars; and
  - Alignment with philanthropy’s mission and/or existing program areas.



Couple holding hands one year after the Katrina flooding in New Orleans.  
Source: [www.TheWE.cc](http://www.TheWE.cc)

## Strengths, Challenges and Lessons of Philanthropic Engagement

The following table highlights general strengths and weaknesses of past philanthropic engagement in disaster management.

**Table 6: Strengths and Weaknesses in Philanthropy’s Approaches to Disaster Giving**

Strengths <sup>20</sup>	Weaknesses
❖ General mission to serve public good	❖ Ad hoc decision making
❖ Tend to have strong community relationships and knowledge	❖ Ability to identify needs and potential grantees after disaster
❖ Ability to convene	❖ Rigid decision making structure can limit a timely, flexible response
❖ Relatively apolitical decision making	❖ Identifying “right” time to engage, and right time close out efforts
❖ Programmatic flexibility can permit creative, strategic response	
❖ Administrative flexibility can permit timely action <sup>21</sup>	



## ***Lessons and Considerations***

### **1. Funders can engage in important nongranteeing activities.**

- Craft internal plan of action and granting frameworks in advance.<sup>22</sup>
- Convene essential sectors (nonprofits, government) to improve coordination and communication before and after disaster.
- Compile and share information about needs.
- Provide technical assistance in areas of strength (e.g., outcomes, evaluation, community outreach and nonprofits)

### **2. How funding happens is as important as what is funded.**

- Identify potential grantees, build relationships in advance.
- Use flexible approach to be responsive and timely.<sup>23</sup>
- Form funding collaboratives.<sup>24</sup>
- Put “boots on the ground” to better understand needs.<sup>25</sup>
- Avoid “parachuting” in; rather, tap strengths of local community (philanthropic, nonprofit) and help build its capacity.<sup>26</sup>

### **3. Take a long-term and/or more comprehensive view.**

- Give attention to disaster preparedness and mitigation.<sup>27</sup>
- Identify strategic niche(s) in the timing of grant making.
- Recognize systemic inequities in vulnerable communities.

***At the onset of the windstorm, a significant percentage of the high-risk populations had not been incorporated into any formal outreach or assistance plans.”***

—Washington State Military Department, *December 2006 Windstorm Response After-Action Report*, March 2007



## Promising Practices

Building on the Lessons and Considerations in the previous section, the table below provides a summary of promising philanthropic practices in response to past disasters. Examples are listed by disaster stage, and include a synopsis of each.

**Table 7A: Promising Practices by Philanthropy in the Preparedness Phase**

Disaster Stage	Organization/Project	Synopsis
<i>Preparedness</i>	Philanthropic Ventures Foundation	This foundation provides flexible granting in response to disasters by identifying and completing due diligence on nonprofit grantees before a disaster. The foundation then develops Memoranda of Understanding with the nonprofits that allow reimbursement for expenses incurred by the nonprofit to resume/continue operations after a disaster. <sup>28</sup>
<i>Preparedness</i>	Redefining Readiness Project	<p>This project, undertaken by the New York Academy of Medicine with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, focuses on culturally-responsive and community-based disaster planning. An initial study in 2004 surveyed over 2,500 citizens across the United States. It found that a significant percentage of the public would not comply with instructions in a public emergency, due to lack of responsiveness to citizen concerns in emergency plans.</p> <p>From the study, the Academy has organized more than 200 focus groups with 2,000 citizens at four demonstration sites around the country. The focus groups have brought citizens into the process and integrated their knowledge and needs into emergency plans. From this information, the Academy has developed toolkits to assist local jurisdictions in conducting similar community-based emergency planning.<sup>29</sup></p>
<i>Preparedness</i>	Medina Foundation	The Medina Foundation has crafted the Nominator Network, a network of leaders and citizens from communities in which the foundation grants. This group helps to identify and nominate grantee candidates after a disaster takes place. Their knowledge of affected areas helps ensure timeliness and effectiveness of grants. <sup>30</sup>
<i>Preparedness</i>	Weyerhaeuser Foundation	The Weyerhaeuser Foundation has done internal work to prepare for disaster grantmaking. The foundation has created a matrix to determine how giving will happen after an event. By doing so, Weyerhaeuser is improving its ability to respond more effectively after a disaster. <sup>31</sup>
<i>Preparedness</i>	United Way of King County	Since 2007, United Way of King County has invested approximately \$240,000 per year to enhance disaster preparedness and community resiliency in King County, Washington, by assisting nonprofit human service agencies that serve vulnerable populations. This work – much of it done in collaboration with a leading edge Vulnerable Populations Action Team at Public Health – Seattle King County, and other nonprofit and public partners – provides nonprofit human service agencies with the tools for and information about the practice of emergency planning and resources to help develop, test, refine and implement agency emergency plans.

**Table 7B: Promising Practices by Philanthropy During the Response Phase**

Disaster Stage	Organization/Project	Synopsis
<i>Response</i>	Multiple grantmakers after Hurricane Katrina	A number of foundations adapted, streamlined or otherwise altered standard grantmaking procedures to respond to the special circumstances and needs created by the hurricane. These included the Ford Foundation, the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation and the Marguerite Casey Foundation allowing existing grantees to repurpose funds for emergency needs. The 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Foundation streamlined grant application procedures. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation made limited term grants outside of existing programs, and the Greater New Orleans Foundation permanently expanded programs to support ongoing rebuilding work. <sup>32</sup>
<i>Response</i>	New York Regional Association of Grantmakers (NYRAG)	Shortly after Hurricane Katrina, this regional association of grantmakers compiled a comprehensive resource guide to assist foundations in grantmaking in the region. The guide included an inventory of nonprofits working with affected populations in the region, and an inventory of nonprofits funded by NYRAG member agencies. NYRAG also organized forums and convenings to connect the philanthropic sector with each other and with local sources of information about needs. NYRAG's leadership is a good example of the importance of compiling and sharing essential information about needs and mobilizing the sector. <sup>33</sup>
<i>Response</i>	Business Executives for National Security (BENS) Business Force	The Business Force initiative is a network of businesses that form regional public/private partnerships to help close gaps in public sector disaster management. The projects tap comparative strengths and expertise of the business sector in one or more of four areas: assets, volunteers, information sharing and strategic support. Examples of activities include databases of business resource support, provision of volunteer manpower, business "emergency operations centers" to parallel that of government agencies, and assistance in supply chain management. This is a potential model that the philanthropic sector could replicate to tap its comparative strengths and organize itself in parallel with government agencies. <sup>34</sup>
<i>Response</i>	Medina Foundation	The Medina Foundation has provided grant support to communities affected by flooding disasters in Washington state in recent years. In doing so, the foundation has focused on short-term response with an eye toward building long-term capacity of nonprofits serving rural areas. <sup>35</sup>

**Tables 7C & 7D: Promising Practices by Philanthropy During Recovery & Mitigation**

Disaster Stage	Organization/Project	Synopsis
<i>Recovery</i>	Gulf Coast Fund for Community Renewal and Ecological Health	This fund is an example of strongly collaborative grant making among not only funders, but between funders and local leaders. The fund is structured to directly involve community leaders in the grant making process, thereby helping to ensure effective targeting of grants. With a focus on systemic inequities and social justice concerns, the fund focuses on responding to short-term needs in a longer term context.
<i>Recovery</i>	Greater New Orleans Community Data Center and Brookings Institution	In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, these two organizations joined forces to publish the <i>New Orleans Index</i> . This ongoing publication provides a source of credible data in accessible form on the progress of recovery. It has proved useful for policymakers, citizens and advocates alike. The partnership combines the strengths of both organizations, with Brookings providing policy advocacy and communications expertise, and the Data Center translating data into accessible information for citizen and community use. The project is also building the capacity of the Data Center as a local organization that can continue to provide this knowledge.
<i>Recovery</i>	Rockefeller Foundation	Among the foundation's contributions to Gulf Coast recovery has been support for the development of New Orleans' rebuilding plan. In addition to a \$3 million grant for this effort, the foundation also put staff on the ground in New Orleans to manage the grant. The staff became a strategic information resource, convener and essential implementer. By being housed at the Greater New Orleans Foundation, the staff presence also helped build capacity of that local philanthropy. <sup>36</sup>
Disaster Stage	Organization/Project	Synopsis
<i>Mitigation</i>	The Seattle Foundation, United Way of King County, other local foundations	The Building Resilience Fund is a collaborative grantmaking effort to strengthen community resilience. The Seattle Foundation, United Way of King County, and others are capitalizing a \$6 million fund over three years. The fund is intended to strengthen communities' resiliency in recovering from disasters, including "slow-moving" disasters such as the current economic recession. <sup>37</sup>
<i>Mitigation</i>	Oxfam America/PolicyLink	<p>Oxfam America, as a national intermediary, has deployed a multi-pronged strategy to support recovery in the Gulf Coast. The program aims to achieve this by building capacity of local communities to advocate for equitable policies in affordable housing and worker rights. Oxfam's capacity building strategy has combined grants, organizing support, training and technical assistance, and strategic communications tools.</p> <p>Similar to Oxfam America's work, PolicyLink has also focused on policy advocacy in the Gulf Coast. One characteristic of PolicyLink's approach has been to help build capacity for equitable recovery inside government agencies simultaneous with strengthening the ability of citizens to engage in the policy environment.</p>
<i>Mitigation</i>	Ford Foundation	After Hurricane Katrina, the Ford Foundation played an instrumental role in forming the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation (LDRF). Based in Baton Rouge, LDRF fills an important gap in local philanthropy by promoting a recovery that is equitable for all citizens across the state.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations that follow reflect an underlying vision and set of principles about how the system of disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery should work in Washington state.

### ***Vision and Principles***

- *Families, individuals, businesses, schools, and institutions will be well-informed and prepared to care for themselves and their neighbors in a disaster.*
- *Public agencies will have well-designed plans and adequate resources to respond, and mutual aid arrangements with other jurisdictions.*
- *Nonprofit agencies, civic groups and faith communities will have well-established relationships of trust with public agencies, and clearly delineated roles for each to play during recovery.*
- *Philanthropies will have plans in place to channel resources to meet extraordinary needs in a timely way.*
- *All these partners will have a medium to communicate with one another to coordinate their actions and capture and deploy the surge in resources in times of crisis to meet needs in a timely way.*
- *The Partners will conduct a systematic review of each event to improve performance, and to identify causes that can be mitigated to prevent recurrence.*

To achieve the vision will require the cooperation and hard work of all sectors. To identify philanthropy's most promising opportunities to play a role in achieving the vision, the Task Force drew on findings in the report, including promising practices in Table 7A, and focused on two types of activities:



Community dinner  
Source: [www.stockxchg.com](http://www.stockxchg.com)

- Strategic actions that lie at the intersection of major needs in disaster management and the competencies, strengths and orientations of the philanthropic sector; and
- Catalytic actions that will help to trigger additional gains through the actions of other parties.

Those opportunities appear to fall into four major areas that closely parallel the central interests of many Washington philanthropies: *The need for community-wide action; the desire to make the most of our assets; the importance of creating a culture of inclusion; and the importance of stewarding our natural and built environments.*

## 1. A call for community-wide action

The Task Force found that the spirit of collaboration and the open communication fostered by this project have enormous potential to aid in building our communities' resilience when faced with disaster. To build upon that foundation, philanthropies can take actions both within the sector and across sectors to build a stronger *community-wide* response to disasters.

Within the philanthropic sector, individual philanthropic organizations can *lead by example* by:

- A. Helping grantees develop plans to continue their operations in a disaster.
- B. Preparing their own internal disaster plans.
- C. Identifying fund sources that could be freed up to meet community needs in a time of crisis.
- D. Streamlining grantmaking processes to put those funds to work quickly.



- E. Establishing partnerships with other foundations so the sector as a whole can be more effective in responding to disasters.

Beyond the sector, philanthropy could also play a lead role in connecting the disparate sectors of our community including government, nonprofit organizations, citizens, the business community, and others, to build the trust needed for successful disaster management. The following activities could be considered:

- F. Create a framework to sustain the community dialogue that has been sparked by this project so that all sectors are better organized and prepared to respond to the challenge. This could involve convening periodic gatherings to share information and conduct joint emergency planning, or bringing key players together after a disaster to share lessons learned, identify mitigation strategies and forge joint initiatives.
- G. Build relationships and lines of communications with emergency management officials in advance of a crisis. These lines of communications are necessary to ensure that FEMA assistance regulations are not breached and to make philanthropic aid as effective as possible.
- H. Help launch a project to create a Web-based tool to foster communication across sectors and in real time. The tool could also be designed to facilitate timely and effective individual giving and volunteer service by providing up-to-the-minute information via the Internet about where help is needed. It might also be designed to provide a mechanism for citizens to make direct contributions to specific disaster survivors based upon the model established by Web sites such as <http://www.KIVA.org>.
- I. Build partnerships to create specialized resources (such as surge capacity in the regional hospital system) which no one institution or local jurisdiction alone can provide.
- J. Provide the catalyst to create mechanisms for urban communities to share specialized resources with rural underserved communities.
- K. Convene a community effort to focus on the pivotal importance of schools in disaster preparedness, response and recovery.

***“In Pierce County we have an annual summit of all the organizations that work to help people. We are training their staff and some clients in how to prepare for disasters. Also many nonprofits and faith groups are involved in Citizen Corps. They provide volunteers who can be vetted and trained in advance to help in shelters, and to manage the spontaneous donations of goods and people who just show up to help.”***

Steve Bailey, President, Washington State Emergency Management Association, and Director, Pierce County Department of Emergency Management

## 2. Making the most of our assets

The evidence shows that the level of contributions and volunteerism surge dramatically in the wake of a disaster. Indeed, the Task Force found that individual giving is the most powerful source of financial help as well as volunteer labor in a crisis, outpacing the contributions of foundations and corporations combined. However the Task Force also discovered that the surge in giving and volunteer energy that occurs immediately after a disaster does not always translate into effective and well-coordinated action in the field. Nor does that surge of civic energy last long enough to drive improvements during stages other than the immediate response to the crisis.

*There is a tremendous opportunity for organized philanthropy to provide the tools to make citizen energy and generosity more effective in times of crisis.*

There would seem to be a tremendous opportunity for organized philanthropy to provide the tools to make this citizen energy and generosity more effective. These actions would include activities that help communities channel individual giving and volunteer energy to where they are most needed during an emergency, and to fill large gaps that exist in the areas of *preparedness and recovery*. Specific activities that deserve consideration include those that:

- A. Provide local communities with the resources to organize Citizen Corps groups to make volunteers more effective. The successful model currently in place in Pierce County and some other jurisdictions provides the blueprint for others. The Corps members would receive training in advance, and could be deployed in a variety of capacities during an emergency, such as sand bagging, traffic control, and debris removal. The Citizen Corps framework also provides a way to take advantage of the specialized skills of volunteers in fields such as medicine and nursing (Medical Reserve Corps), engineering or construction. Citizen Corps also provide the basic structure from which to create “Care Teams” (see point C. below).
- B. Provide communities that experience frequent disasters with the resources to establish volunteer reception centers to organize volunteers on-site and deploy them where needs are greatest.

- C. Provide training, equipment, and resources to enable existing Citizen Corps organizations to develop Care Teams to provide case management services for vulnerable persons and help families and individuals throughout the recovery process. A detailed description of Care Teams in Pierce County is shown in Appendix E.
- D. Provide the catalyst to link Citizen Corps organizations with volunteer groups to special skills, such as the American Institute of Architects and the Structural Engineers of Washington so that damage assessment and repairs can be completed more rapidly.
- E. Provide communities with the communication tools and technology to channel financial contributions to the areas of greatest need throughout all stages of a disaster.
- F. Provide resource-poor and rural communities with specific capital equipment that is needed for disaster response (generators, public-safety radios, etc.).

### 3. Creating a culture of inclusion

The needs of *all* members of our communities must be met in times of crisis. The Task Force found evidence that vulnerable populations—including the poor, those who are elderly or disabled, and those with limited English—are disproportionately affected through all stages of a disaster. They are least prepared beforehand, most unable to respond in the immediate aftermath, and face the greatest barriers to long-term recovery. Emergency management agencies recognize the need for and are working toward more effective disaster management for vulnerable communities, but significant gaps remain. Because many Washington philanthropies have a long history of working on issues affecting vulnerable populations, the sector is uniquely positioned to help bring greater social equity to the way our communities take action before and after disasters.

Community nonprofit organizations—many of which are philanthropy’s current grantees—provide an indispensable link to vulnerable populations, especially through informal networks that often play essential roles in vulnerable communities. At present these organizations lack adequate financial and human resources and technical knowledge to bridge the gaps effectively in emergencies. Activities that should be considered include:



Alverna Palmer puts gasoline in the generator. The Carnation family finally saw the light Sunday night, when crews restored heat and light to the beleaguered community. (December 25, 2006)

Credit: Meryl Schenker/Seattle Post-Intelligencer

***“Advocacy groups are an important component in the special needs communities.***

***These groups can bring specialized information, subject-matter experts, and additional resources to the table. These organizations frequently find themselves being the lifeline to people with special needs during and after a crisis.”***

*—Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Populations with Special Needs, 2006*

- A. Advocate for the direct involvement of representatives of vulnerable communities to be directly involved with public agencies in developing the policies and procedures for disaster management.
- B. Build the capacity of community-based organizations, including informal organizations that are often important communication links to vulnerable populations, to play their essential roles in disaster management and to advocate for their constituents in times of crisis.
- C. Provide resources for projects to improve communications with non-English speaking populations and those who are deaf or deaf/blind during all phases of disaster preparedness and response.
- D. Provide the resources to train volunteer chore service workers, home health care personnel and other care givers to aid their clients in a crisis.
- E. Identify and test additional strategies to meet the needs of isolated seniors and other vulnerable individuals who do not have formal case management services but may need help during a disaster.
- F. Remind the news media about the critical importance of providing coverage of disaster events that occur in rural areas or disadvantaged communities.

#### **4. Stewarding the natural and built environments**

Many of the disasters that have afflicted Washington’s communities in recent years were caused, in whole or in part, by alterations in the natural and built environments. Our community has the ability to repair that damage and prevent or mitigate future disasters through thoughtful policies and day-to-day actions. To address that challenge, the Task Force suggests that philanthropy:

- A. Convene community leaders and public officials after disasters to thoroughly evaluate the causes, review after-action reports and develop and implement action plans to mitigate the causes.

- B. Help to educate the community and policymakers about the relationship between the stewardship of the natural and built environments—and disaster prevention and mitigation.
- C. Advocate for and help to fund projects that restore natural systems and infrastructure and their capacities to prevent disasters such as flooding and wildfires—when there is sound scientific evidence that restoration could prevent or mitigate future damage and other calamities.
- D. Provide resources to test innovative strategies to address specific environmental hazards.

By acting on these opportunities, philanthropy could help to create a community-wide response to the challenges posed by disasters that, in the very act of its creation, will help to accomplish many of the greater goals Washington's philanthropies are striving to achieve.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Task Force convened for its last meeting of this project on March 27, 2009. The group expressed a clear desire to continue the work begun through this project and provide opportunities for the agencies involved to move forward in collaboration. The group decided on the following short-term action steps:

- Each agency represented on the Task Force will convene discussions with their colleagues and constituencies, to share the findings of the report and define the contributions they can make to a cross-sector collaborative.
- United Way of King County will organize and host a convocation of the organizations represented on the Task Force, and other stakeholders to continue the work initiated through the creation of this report.



Smoke from wildfire  
Source: [www.stockxchng.com](http://www.stockxchng.com)

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- <sup>1</sup> Lawrence, Steven and Josefina Atienza. Foundation Center. *Giving in the Aftermath of the Gulf Coast Hurricanes: Update on the Foundation and Corporate Response*. Aug. 2007. [http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/katrina\\_report\\_2007.pdf](http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/katrina_report_2007.pdf). Renz, Loren and Steven Lawrence. Foundation Center. *Giving in the Aftermath of the Gulf Coast Hurricanes: Report on the Foundation and Corporate Response*. August 2006. <https://folio.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/10244/12/GivingInTheAftermath2006.pdf?sequence=1>. Renz, Loren and Leslie Marino. Foundation Center. *Giving in the Aftermath of 9/11: 2003 Update on the Foundation and Corporate Response*. Dec. 2003. [http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/9\\_11update03.pdf](http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/9_11update03.pdf). Renz, Loren and Leslie Marino. Foundation Center. *Giving in the Aftermath of 9/11: Final Update on the Foundation and Corporate Response*. Dec. 2004. [http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/9\\_11updt04.pdf](http://foundationcenter.org/gainknowledge/research/pdf/9_11updt04.pdf).
- <sup>2</sup> Martin, Susan Forbes, Patricia Weiss Fagan, Alice Poole and Sabrina Karim. Georgetown University. *Philanthropic Grantmaking for Disaster Management: Trend Analysis and Recommended Improvements*. July 2006. [http://isim.georgetown.edu/Publications/SusanPubs/Grantmaking%20for%20disaster%20management%20\(gates%20foundation\).pdf](http://isim.georgetown.edu/Publications/SusanPubs/Grantmaking%20for%20disaster%20management%20(gates%20foundation).pdf)
- <sup>3</sup> Renz, “Final Update,” pp. 86, 88.
- <sup>4</sup> The Foundation Center’s analysis defined giving by “corporations” to include corporations and corporate foundations; “foundations” includes independent and family foundations, community foundations, other public foundations and associations.
- <sup>5</sup> Lawrence, p. 6.
- <sup>6</sup> Interview with Steven Lawrence, The Foundation Center.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> Renz, “Final Update,” p. 86.
- <sup>9</sup> Lawrence, p. 8.
- <sup>10</sup> Renz, “Final Update,” pp. 95-96. Lawrence, p. 29.
- <sup>11</sup> Renz, “Final Update,” pp. 97-98. Lawrence, pp. 9, 30.
- <sup>12</sup> Renz, “Final Update,” pp. 97-98. Lawrence, p. 30.
- <sup>13</sup> Lawrence, pp. 6, 9.
- <sup>14</sup> Martin, p. 25.
- <sup>15</sup> Foundation Center Online Database of Hurricane Katrina Giving, Jan. 2009.
- <sup>16</sup> The Council on Foundations and the European Foundation Centre. *Disaster Grantmaking: A Practical Guide for Foundations and Corporations*. 2007 Edition. [http://www.cof.org/files/documents/international\\_programs/disasterguide.pdf](http://www.cof.org/files/documents/international_programs/disasterguide.pdf), p. 7; Martin, p. 15.
- <sup>17</sup> Martin, pp. 19-22.
- <sup>18</sup> Martin, p. 16.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid, p. 19.
- <sup>20</sup> The Council on Foundations and the European Foundation Centre. *Disaster Grantmaking*, p. 1.
- <sup>21</sup> Martin, p. 14.
- <sup>22</sup> The Council on Foundations and the European Foundation Centre. *Disaster Grantmaking*, pp. 11-12.
- <sup>23</sup> New York Regional Association of Grantmakers. *Best Practices in Disaster Grantmaking: Lessons from the Gulf Coast*. 2008, [http://nyrag.org/s\\_nyrag/bin.asp?CID=6685&DID=16026&DOC=FILE.PDF](http://nyrag.org/s_nyrag/bin.asp?CID=6685&DID=16026&DOC=FILE.PDF), p. 3.
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 17; NYRAG, p. 3; Martin, p. 36.
- <sup>25</sup> NYRAG, p. 3.

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- <sup>26</sup> Ibid, p. 15. Alliance for Justice. *Power Amidst Chaos: Foundation Support for Advocacy Related to Disasters*. <http://www.afj.org/assets/resources/nap/monograph.pdf>, p. 5, 11. NYRAG, p. 3. Martin, p. 36.
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