How does society change in response to environmental change? Environmental problems are most often best addressed collectively. One of the major ways humans collectively seek to mitigate and adapt to these environmental changes is through creating and joining formal and informal organizations. This class will focus on how formal organizations from civil society seek to instigate societal solutions to environmental problems through influencing the political process and directly organizing individuals to engage in pro-environmental behaviors.

The objective of this class is to provide students a critical understanding of the various roles civil society organizations play in environmental problem solving. It should be useful to those who would like to research non-profit organizations or environmental politics and policy-making. This class should also be helpful to those who plan on working in or with environmental non-profit organizations. Students will gain this understanding by reading and discussing 1) theories of organizations in civil society 2) applied studies using these theories in relation to adapting and mitigating environmental problems. Students will also have the opportunity to engage with non-profit leaders and investigate organizations of interest to them.

Topics we will discuss:

- Community organizing
- Transnational environmental networks & eco-imperialism
- Interest groups and the political process
- Private/public partnerships
- The dark side of organizations
- Social movement organizations
- Tactical choices for pursuing goals
- Professionalization of social movements
- Co-optation/Goal drift
- The market and non-profits