

# LEGACIES

THE EARTH NEEDS A FEW GOOD FRIENDS

SUMMER 2023

## A LIFE OF SERVICE—A Legacy for the Future

### Marsha Mather-Thrift's fight

for a more healthy and just world has had a significant impact on both her career and her charitable giving. Marsha was a peace activist in college before she pursued her Ph.D. at Columbia University. While studying, she decided to become even more involved in changing the world for the better.

"I stumbled into my first nonprofit job, helping to build a new arts and culture center at Fort Mason in San Francisco," she said. "After my child was born, I needed consistent work hours. This led me to become the executive director of a wildlife rehabilitation center, which kickstarted my career in nonprofit work."

After serving as deputy director at Bluewater Network in San Francisco, Marsha advanced to the position of development director and manager of the West Coast office at Friends of the Earth following the merger of the two organizations—an exciting opportunity since she had long admired FOE founder David Brower's advocacy. "Working for a strong, tough, effective and smart organization with clout on Capitol Hill was exciting and gratifying—as was seeing how much difference we could make on climate impact and awareness," Marsha said.



Marsha Mather-Thrift

### When considering the biggest challenge

facing our planet, Marsha is emphatic: "The challenge is climate, hands down. Without drastic changes, our children and grandchildren face an unlivable world. We are making some changes now, but another bad election could set us back drastically. We can't take any of this for granted, and our youth are waking up to the tragic legacy we are leaving. Unless we release the grip fossil fuels have on our country, we are going nowhere," she continues. "It will take every one of us to

make changes and to provide the resources needed to keep an organization like FOE working on our behalf to change laws and policies."

### Friends of the Earth offers various programs

that focus on safeguarding the environment and combating corruption caused by corporate polluters. Among the most important to Marsha is FOE's work to end dependence on fossil fuels and protect our insect, marine and wildlife species. "FOE's work is crucial for inspiring the next generation in their efforts to save our planet," she said.

Bequest gifts are a valuable resource for Friends of the Earth in our pursuit of a better future, and many

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## Considering a Bequest?

If you are considering making Friends of the Earth a part of your legacy, please accept our thanks. Here is some suggested wording to share with your attorney:

“After fulfilling all other specific provisions, I give, devise and bequeath \_\_\_\_% of the remainder [or \$\_] of my estate to Friends of the Earth, a District of Columbia charitable corporation [tax ID #23-7420660] currently having offices at 1101 15th Street NW, 11th Floor, Washington, D.C. 20005.”

Have you already made a gift through your estate plans? Please let us know so we can thank you and welcome you to our Shared Earth Society.



## Does Your Will Live Up to Your Wishes?

**If you're interested in leaving a legacy for FOE and the future of our planet, it's crucial to have a properly written will and estate plan. Review the answers to frequently asked questions to learn if your estate will be distributed according to your wishes.**

### Q. Who needs a will?

**A.** If you intend to distribute assets, such as cash, investments, real estate, personal property or anything else, to your family and loved ones after your lifetime, it is important to have a will in place.

### Q. How can I be certain my will is up to date?

**A.** Life events such as marriages, births, deaths, moving to a new state, changes in tax laws, personal goals and other factors may require adjustments to your plans. Minor changes to your will can be made with a simple amendment. If you need to make more significant changes, you may

need to draft a new will. It's important to always consult with your advisor when updating your will.

### Q. Do both spouses need wills?

**A.** Yes. Both spouses need wills, even if much of their property is held jointly.

### Q. How do I include a gift to Friends of the Earth in my will?

**A.** Supporting FOE can be done in a variety of ways. One of the most common ways to make a gift is by leaving a bequest in your will. When making a bequest, you have the option to leave a specific amount, a percentage amount, specific property or all or a portion of your remaining estate after your loved ones' needs have been taken care of.

### More information

If you are considering including Friends of the Earth in your estate plans, please get in touch with our Gift Planning Advisor, Caroline Bruder, by calling (202) 222-0726 or visiting [foe.org/yourlegacy](http://foe.org/yourlegacy).

We appreciate you supporting our fight for a more healthy and just world.



## More Opportunities To Give

If you're age 70½ or older, you can donate any amount up to \$100,000 to Friends of the Earth directly from your IRA through qualified charitable distributions (QCDs). This can help you

### Did You Know?

The *SECURE 2.0 Act of 2022* has changed the age at which IRA owners are required to start taking minimum distributions. This year, the age has increased from 72 to 73. However, the age for making annual qualified charitable distributions from IRAs up to \$100,000 remains at 70½.

meet your required minimum distribution and reduce your income tax, even if you can't claim a charitable deduction.

You can support FOE by funding a charitable gift annuity with a QCD of up to \$50,000. Based on your age, your gift annuity can pay anywhere from 6% to 9.7% for life.

This election is a one-time opportunity that defers income tax until annual payments are made. It also helps satisfy required minimum distributions and provides essential support for Friends of the Earth.

The purpose of this publication is solely educational, namely to provide general gift, estate, financial planning and related information. It is not intended as legal, accounting or other professional advice, and you should not rely on it as such. For assistance in planning charitable gifts with tax and other implications, the services of appropriate and qualified advisors should be obtained. Consult an attorney for advice if your plans require revision of a will or other legal document. Consult a tax and/or accounting specialist for advice regarding tax- and accounting-related matters. © Copyright 2023 by Sharpe Group. All Rights Reserved. NNNPDF-23

# Are Your Beneficiary Designations Up To Date?

**It's important to also make sure your beneficiary designations on life insurance and retirement plans are current. Here's why:**

- Retirement plan accounts are, for many people, their largest assets. There are specifics about inheritance you need to know. For example, if you are married, federal law requires that your 401(k) plan (but not an IRA) automatically pass to your surviving spouse unless a spousal waiver has been signed. And, if you list a beneficiary on your IRA custodian's form and name a different beneficiary in your will or living trust, the beneficiary form prevails.
- An IRA is different from a 401(k) account in that it does not automatically transfer to a surviving spouse. Rather, how funds are passed is determined by the beneficiary designation on file with the IRA custodian. This can become an issue if the designated beneficiary hasn't been updated to reflect changes in circumstances or wishes.
- In most cases, the person named as the beneficiary on a life insurance policy will receive the benefits. However, it's important for policy owners to review and update

their beneficiary designations in case of any major life changes, such as marriage or divorce, to ensure that the intended recipient receives the benefits according to the owner's wishes.

## A Life of Service

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of our supporters, like Marsha, have generously included Friends of the Earth in their estate plans.

"I chose to make an estate gift to FOE because I've seen the real commitment and the immense creativity of FOE staff over the years, and I admire that," she said. "I believe FOE can achieve more victories on the national and international stage. I would urge others to make a legacy gift of any size because legacy gifts are crucial for an organization to establish a strong foundation that enables them to reach their full potential," she said.

"It is also a wonderful feeling to know that you are supporting the people who will continue to fight for the beauty and power of the natural world and for the well-being of all creatures on earth—humans included."



For more information on ways to include Friends of the Earth in your estate plans, please contact:

**Caroline Bruder**

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