**Synopsis**

**A Qualitative Study in Search for the New Ecological Paradigm within the Modern Environmental Movement**

1. I will be interviewing individuals who are members of three different environmental organizations to gain their ecological perspective. Fifteen individuals will be chosen based on interest to participate in my research. I have informally sought out these distinctly different environmental organizations in the central Texas area that could accommodate my aims in this research. Through informal discussions they have all agreed to assist me in any way with regards to this research. Participants in this research may represent different ages, genders, socioeconomic backgrounds and racial/ethnic backgrounds. Participants will not be asked questions about their health; however, as a result of the topic; dietary issues arising from environmental concerns could be addressed if the participant chooses to guide the interview in that direction. I am expecting that all participants being interviewed will be fluent in English thus these interviews will be conducted in English. Should the need arise for translation into Spanish, the interviewer is bilingual and will be able to accommodate the participant.
2. In order to recruit participants, initially, I conducted an online search for environmental organizations fitting the specific criteria that I am concerned with in this paper. Once I have IRB approval, I will make formal arrangements with these organizations by describing the purpose of this study and the methodology I will employ to collect information. Prior to any interview, a written consent will be provided for perusal by the participant (using attached consent document). In order to gain access to willing participants, I will seek recommendations of any other individuals who they believe would be interested in participating in this study.
3. The framework for this thesis is a qualitative methodology, with semi-structured in-depth interviews used to acquire data. The interview guide is presented at the end of this synopsis. These interviews will consist of open-ended questions and provide the participants an opportunity for alternative discussions in order to fully explore their perspective regarding the topic. The participants will be recruited purposively through snowball sampling, as described above (via referral from other respondents). Random sampling will not be utilized in this study. Each interview will be conducted in a coffee shop, restaurant, or office, which provides a semi-private area for communication within a public environment. Should the participants seek a more discreet environment, all measures will be taken to accommodate this request. I anticipate that each interview will take approximately forty-five minutes to one hour to complete. Prior to the interview process, each participant will sign and receive a copy of a consent form, which will give details to the participant before he/she signs the form. Also, with permission of the participants, each interview will be recorded and transcribed for later analysis.
4. This study is focused on the environmental perspective of individuals who are members of three different environmental organizations. It is not believed by the researcher that these conversations will in any way place the interviewee in any distress or danger. While status as a member of any organization can have an adverse affect on one’s public perception, this will be controlled by the use of pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity. At any time, the participants will feel free to pause, end or continue the interview at another time of their choosing. Under no circumstance will a participant feel pressured to answer a question they choose to pass on, and after completing an interview will have the option to withdraw from the study.
5. To minimize any potentially unforeseen dilemma or stress, the participants will be made to feel that they are not being judged for how they answer the questions. The participants will have the opportunity to expand or limit responses as they feel fit. In addition to the consent form and assurance of confidentiality, surroundings that generate a relaxed atmosphere should provide the participant with a comfortable milieu. Otherwise, it is my belief that this study will place it’s participants at a minimal risk, requiring no other measures to be taken.
6. The potential benefits of this study for the participants will largely arise from the ability to exchange ideas, experiences, thoughts, frustrations and beliefs regarding a topic they may feel passionate about in relation to this research. It is expected that these individuals will be knowledgeable on issues surrounding the environment. Subsequently, interaction with an individual representing academia may allow for a healthy exploration of both non-academic and academic issues in relation to the environment.
7. No monetary or other forms of compensation will be exchanged with research participants.
8. The minimal risk associated with this study allow for a substantially larger benefit in relation to society and the individuals participating in this research. Should at any point, in the interview process, if the participant relays to me (the interviewer) that they feel at risk for continuing the interview, they will be reminded of their option to desist.
9. This research will involve individuals active in various environmental organizations. Their unique experiences will be the subject of the interviews and not their participation in those organizations. This will eliminate the need to seek approval from any participants’ associated organization.
10. My interest in individual perspective regarding the environment stems from my status as a graduate student at Texas State in the Sociology Department. Through the duration of my thesis, Dr. Chad L. Smith will serve as my supervising thesis committee chairperson.
11. Dr. Chad L. Smith (his function mentioned above) has approved this thesis proposal, methodology, solicitation of participants and my interview guide. He has approved this synopsis and consent form. His contact information is as follow: 512-245-8453 and/or [clsmith@txstate.edu](mailto:clsmith@txstate.edu).
12. This project has not been previously reviewed by another IRB
13. I expect my thesis committee to have access to unpublished results of this study as it progresses and after its completion. Should the opportunity present itself, I will reserve the option to present my findings at a conference or to a journal. Consequently, those in attendance or subscribed will also have access to my findings. Should this study reach publication, it will be accessible through academic libraries meaning those who utilize this service will also have access to my findings. Participants will be given the option to view a final copy after its completion.

**PROPOSED INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**I. Demographic Questions**

1. How old are you?
2. What is your race/ethnicity?
3. What is your highest level of completed education?
4. Are you from this area or a transplant from another region, state, country?
5. If answered yes to number 5, where are you from?

**II. Questions about Background**

1. As a child/teen/young adult, did your family influence your stance or your views relating to environmentalism/wise-use ideologies?
2. If no to question 1, at what age were you exposed to environmentalism/wise-use ideology? Where were you were first exposed to environmentalism/wise-use ideology? Who was the most influential person(s) in steering you to your current beliefs regarding the issue of environmentalism/wise-use beliefs? When did you first become involved in environmental organizations?

**III. Attitudes Toward Environment Issues**

1. What is your opinion of Global Climate Change? How do you suggest society address this issue? Considering all the issues that face humanity, where would you place GCC on the level of importance?
2. The 21st century will likely face an energy crisis as populations expand and economies grow. What is your opinion on addressing this issue and how societies should proceed in trying to solve such problems?
3. As populations grow, and nations modernize, development will surely accompany such changes. Do you believe the planet can sustain the current trajectory of growth, development and population? What solutions do you believe can curtail this issue?
4. As individuals, what can people do to ease the burden on the planet? Do you feel that we need to change behaviors or do you feel that technology will be the answer to our problems? Do both need to converge or do we only need one to achieve sustainability?
5. Do you believe humans are unique in comparison to other life forms on the planet? If so explain, if not explain?
6. A hundred years from now, describe for me the planet as you see it?

**IV. Behavioral Adherence to Ideology**

1. What measures do you take to be environmentally friendly in your residence?
2. What forms of transportation do you utilize mostly? Does it differ per occasion, for instance going to work and going out to a social event?
3. What role do environment concerns play in influencing your purchases?
4. Does green labeling effect your decision to purchase an item? If so, what items have you purchased or purchase regularly that can be construed as environmentally friendly?
5. Is reuse part of your contribution to being environmentally friendly? For example, do you buy bottled water or do you use a canteen of some sort that you refill?
6. Can you think of other examples you feel that you contribute to sustainable environmental practices?

**V. Concluding Questions**

1. Do you feel there is anything I left out that you should mention regarding the issues we discussed?
2. Do you know of any other individuals who would like to participate in this research?