



**Sustainable Systems Research Foundation, Inc.**  
2861 Mission St., Suite 247  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Phone: 831-708-5836  
sustainablesystemsresearch@gmail.com  
<https://sustainablesystemsfoundation.org/>

December 15, 2020

Dear Friends & Colleagues,

We are coming to the end of a very difficult year, and I hope you and your family have made it through with minimal disruption. Our condolences to those of you who may have lost family, friends and acquaintances; may we do better by them in the future. And let us hope that 2021 is better in every way possible.

I'm writing to you—with some reticence—with an end-of-year request for your support for the activities of the [Sustainable Systems Research Foundation](https://sustainablesystemsresearch.org/), the Santa Cruz-based nonprofit of which I am cofounder and codirector. SSRF has been pushing forward with projects locally, regionally and across California, in several environmental issue areas that combine reproducibility and scalability and, we hope, offer models that can be applied on other parts of California, the United States and the world.

- [\*\*Accessory Dwelling Units in our Backyards \(ADUBS\)\*\*](#). We are developing a local program to facilitate and support construction of large numbers of accessory dwelling units in order to address the affordable housing crisis across the state.
- [\*\*Santa Cruz Westside Microblock \(SWIM\)\*\*](#). We are proposing and designing several solar + battery storage microgrids across the city of Santa Cruz as elements in a community energy system.
- [\*\*End Poverty in California with Solar \(EPICS\)\*\*](#). We are pursuing a project designed to provide a monthly basic income through the sale of the generated electricity from a 10 kilowatt share of the California Solar Commons.
- [\*\*Sustainable Urban Agriculture Initiative \(SUFI\)\*\*](#). We are collaborating with several local farms and gardens to deploy and test small-scale technologies in an effort to increase productivity and incomes while providing communities with healthy food.
- [\*\*The Sustainable Procurement Initiative \(SPIN\)\*\*](#). We are developing a database of products made of truly compostable and biodegradable organic-based plastics that can be used to help businesses procure their needs while reducing burdens on landfills and recycling facilities.
- [\*\*Empowering Students Campaign\*\*](#). Internships have become vital for college students to acquire critical professional skills, but many students cannot afford the time required for unpaid positions. We have launched a campaign to provide low-income, minority and

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first-generation students with paid internships at SSRF that will teach them critical professional skills while supporting their college education.

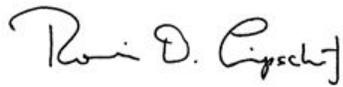
None of this comes for free, of course and, for the last two years, we have been operating on a shoe-string budget, with funds provided largely by the organization's two codirectors. We will continue to do this, of course, but we also want to pay people to work with us on our projects, whether as staff, interns or consultants. We have been writing grant proposals like crazy, but the competition for those funds is more furious than ever.

So, if you've gotten this far, here is the inevitable pitch: please consider making a year-end donation in support of SSRF's work and projects. SSRF is a 501(c)3 non-profit, and your contribution is tax deductible in the United States to the full extent of the law (those of you outside the U.S. are encouraged to donate, but you're on your own where taxes are concerned).

You can donate to individual projects [here](#) and [here](#). And whether you decide to donate or not, your interest and support are always welcome. If you have questions, suggestions or complaints, don't hesitate to write to me at [rlipsch@ucsc.edu](mailto:rlipsch@ucsc.edu).

I hope your holiday season is a joyous one and look forward to hearing from you.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronnie D. Lipschutz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Ronnie Lipschutz  
President & Co-director, SSRF