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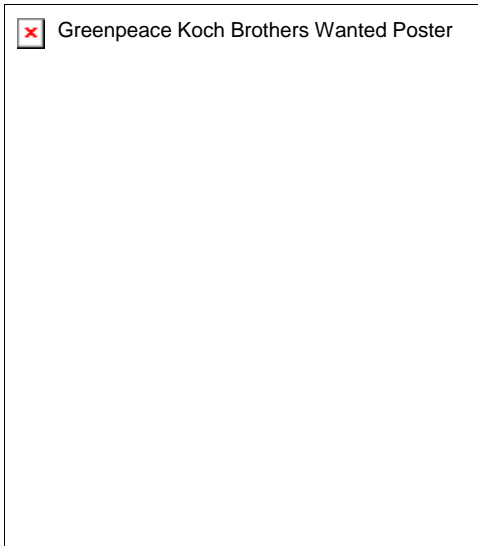
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The Biggest Polluter You Never Heard Of

by [Mike Gaworecki](#) March 20, 2010 02:14 PM (PT) Topics: [Climate Change](#)

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The [opening](#) of the David H. Koch Hall of Human Origins may sound like an innocuous enough event, so unless the name Koch means anything to you you'd probably be surprised to learn that it was actually the scene of a crime. A climate crime.

The new permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History cost just over \$20 million to build, \$15 million of which came from mega-rich oilman David H. Koch. Turns out Mr. Koch (it's pronounced like "Coke") is a generous man — this [Wonk Room post](#) lists a number of philanthropic donations to educational and research institutions made by the secretive billionaire that total well over \$200 million dollars.

But Koch's true legacy will not be exemplified by the David H. Koch Dinosaur Wing at the American Museum of Natural History or even the David H. Koch Cancer Research Building at Johns Hopkins University. David Koch's oil money may get his name on lots of

exhibits and buildings, but the true legacy that will be left behind by David Koch and his brother Charles — who together are the principal shareholders of Koch Industries, an oil supply and refining company that is one of the largest private corporations in America — is one of environmental crimes, lobbying to block clean energy, and funding global warming denial front groups.

David Koch likes to [brag](#) about his being “the biggest company you've never heard of,” so colleagues of mine from Greenpeace set out to change that last week by declaring the opening of the David H. Koch Hall of Human Origins a climate crime scene and handing out wanted posters for the Koch Brothers.

Koch Industries is among the biggest lobbying spenders in the oil industry and the Koch political action committee spent more on contributions to federal candidates since the 2006 election cycle than any other oil-and-gas sector PAC. The Kochs also funnel millions of dollars through their three “charitable” foundations to a whole bunch of the worst climate deniers, like the Cato Institute (\$5,278,400 from 1997 to 2008), the Heritage Foundation (\$3,358,000 from 1997 to 2008), and Citizens for a Sound Economy (a precursor to FreedomWorks, which was a major force behind the [astro turf](#) protests against health care reform last year; \$6,510,375 from 1997 to 2008).

From 2005 to 2008, the Koch foundations gave over \$24.8 million in funding to climate denial groups, outdoing even ExxonMobil, which gave about \$9.1 million to similar organizations over the same period of time. You can see the recipients of Koch's dirty fossil fuel money and the exorbitant sums each has received over the years by visiting www.greenpeace.org/kochmoney.

You've probably already seen or heard of the Kochs' handiwork, though you may not have known who was behind it. The [“Hot Air Tour.”](#) which aims to spread climate denial talking points and misinformation about global warming through a touring hot air balloon, was launched by the Americans for Prosperity Foundation (AFP). David Koch is the founder and chairman of AFP, which, not coincidentally, has received some \$5 million from Koch foundations.

Plenty more fun and interesting facts about how the Kochs spend their money to buy influence on Capitol Hill and ensure that we delay action on global warming long enough for them to rake in several more billions of dollars can be found in this [factsheet](#).

How can you help counter the Koch's influence on the climate debate? Help us shine a light on the Kochs'

funding of climate denial and make it so their bought and paid-for “experts” are outed as the industry shills they are. Share this post using the Facebook and Twitter buttons at the top.



[Mike G.](#)

Mike G. has been a progressive and environmental activist since he knocked on his first door as a canvasser in college. He is currently a Web Editor at Greenpeace USA, covering the org's global warming, forests, and nuclear energy campaigns. Mike has two English degrees: a Masters from San Jose State (in California) and a Bachelors from the University of Texas, Austin.

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