

“Moving Ahead on Climate Change”

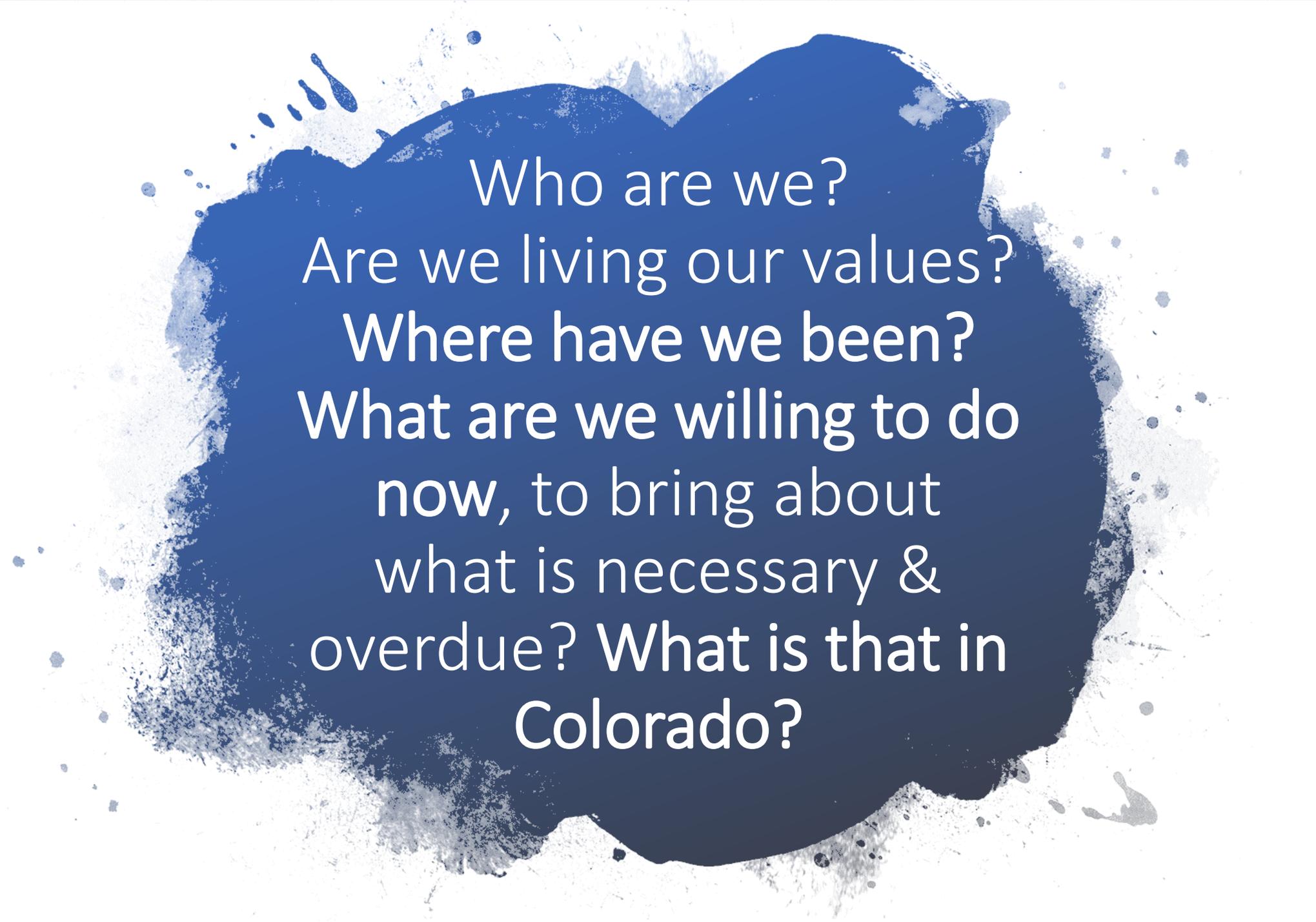
January 25th, 2021

Ethics and Ecological Economics (EEE) Forum

www.eeeforum.org



Marie Venner, Call to Action Colorado



Who are we?
Are we living our values?
Where have we been?
What are we willing to do
now, to bring about
what is necessary &
overdue? What is that in
Colorado?

Air pollution & health savings alone should spur shift off fossil fuels!

- Denver is in the top 4 large cities for air pollution nationally.
- It's killing people and causing over 20% of Alzheimer's cases, according to medical research
- More than a quarter of new childhood asthma cases are triggered by nitrogen dioxide
- From 2013 to 2019, GHG emissions from passenger cars and trucks **rose** as **more driving and larger vehicles** canceled out fuel economy gains.
- bit.ly/AQhealthSlidesMay2019
- bit.ly/PolluterDeceptionBinder
- <http://bit.ly/AQheadlines>
- Shindell testimony (Aug 2020)

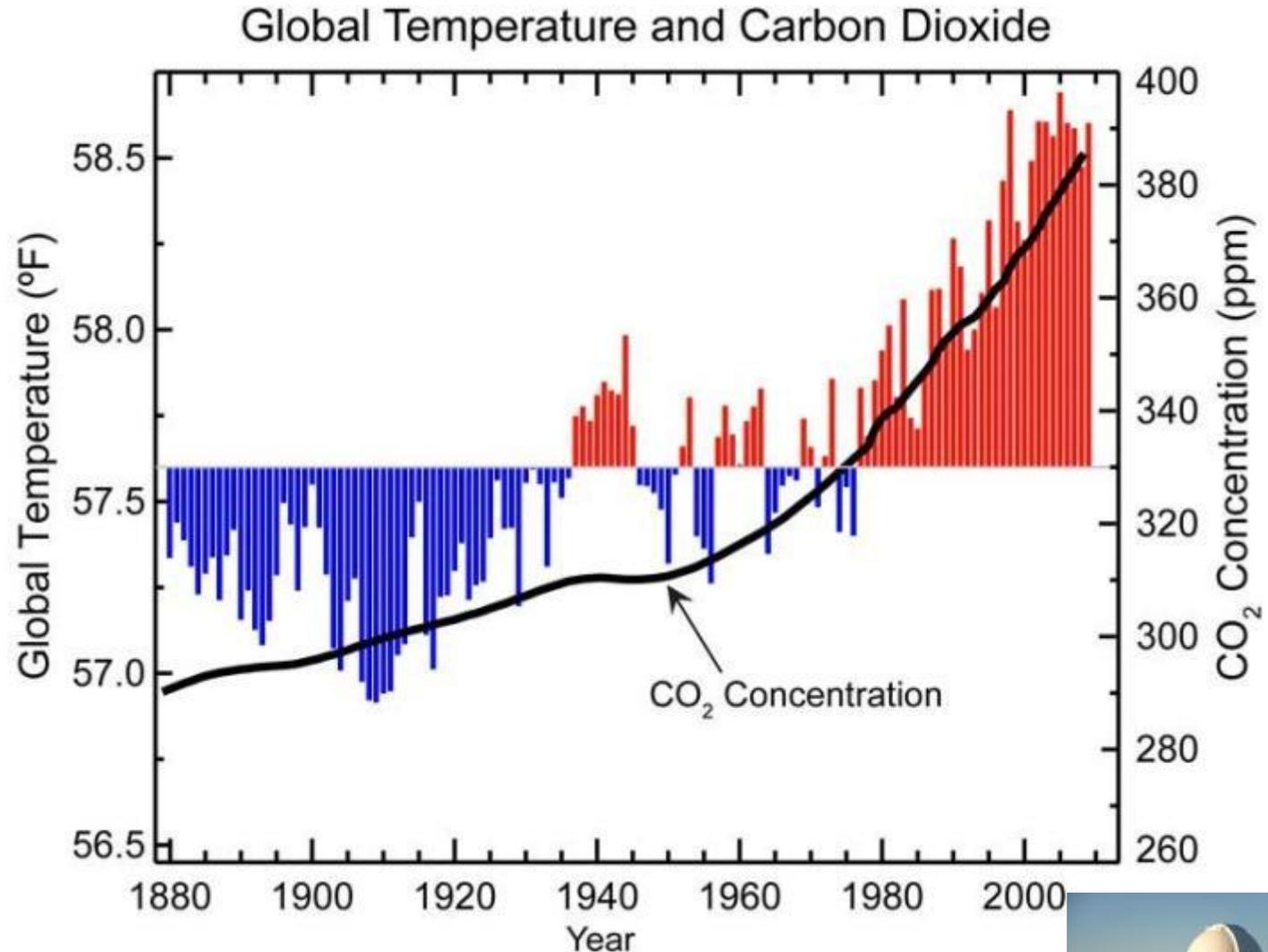


Scientists tracking climate change since 1800s, & in the news

- **1882-83**, [NYTimes](#), [Nature](#): “the increasing pollution of the atmosphere will have a marked influence on the climate of the world.” <http://bit.ly/WhereHaveWeBeen>
- **Between 1883 and 1912**, many newspapers, including the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Kansas City Star*, and *York Daily*, wrote articles about what rising carbon dioxide levels would do to the climate, including this example from a small town newspaper in 1912.
- **By the 1950s**, the US government, fossil fuel companies and the American Petroleum Institute were underwriting research and tracking CO₂ rise.

COAL CONSUMPTION AFFECTING CLIMATE.

The furnaces of the world are now burning about 2,000,000,000 tons of coal a year. When this is burned, uniting with oxygen, it adds about 7,000,000,000 tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere yearly. This tends to make the air a more effective blanket for the earth and to raise its temperature. The effect may be considerable in a few centuries.



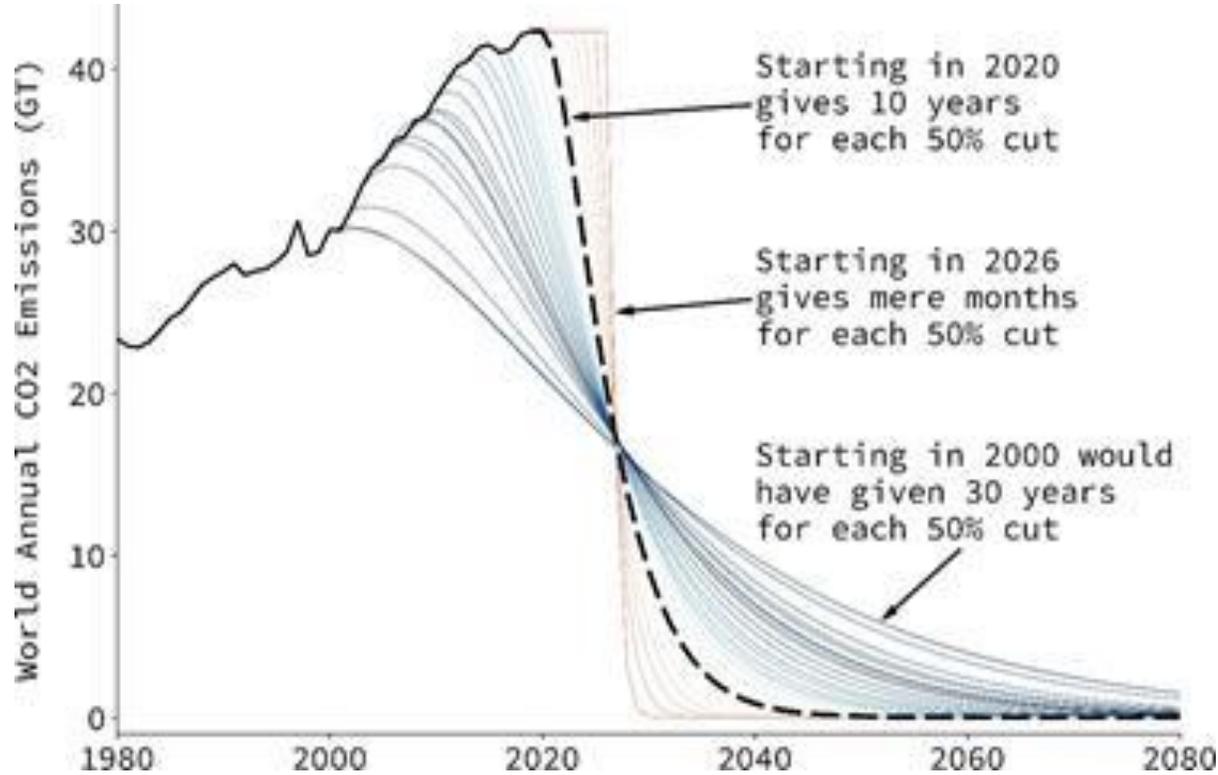
Government and industry have followed CO2 and temp rise since the 50s, 60s, 70s. Most of the emissions have been since the 1980s.

- **1965 White House Report on Climate Change accurately estimated CO2 & temp increase**, sea level rise risk and called for action. www.youtube.com/watch?v=So2_NxQLGxQ
- **1967 Time magazine issue** on smog optimistic about avoiding the threats of climate change by getting off of fossil fuels, rapid transition to electric cars -- reporters given rides by car manufacturers. See <http://bit.ly/TimeMagJan1967>
- **By 1968: Exxon, Petroleum Institute, SRI scientists reported and agreed on scientific consensus on climate change.** Clarity across government and business that fossil fuels are the issue.
- Oil shortages lead to beginning of serious investment in bike and walking infrastructure in some areas (e.g., Netherlands, Denmark).
- **80s, 90s, 2000s – Fossil fuel industry retrenchment** and promotion of uncertainty about climate change. Focus on change around the edges instead of system change
- Now we can see visualizations of a year in life of Earth's CO2 www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1SgmFa0r04

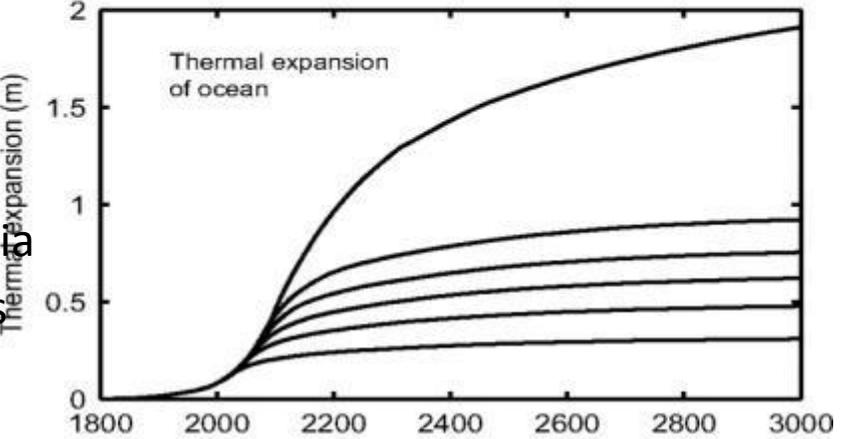
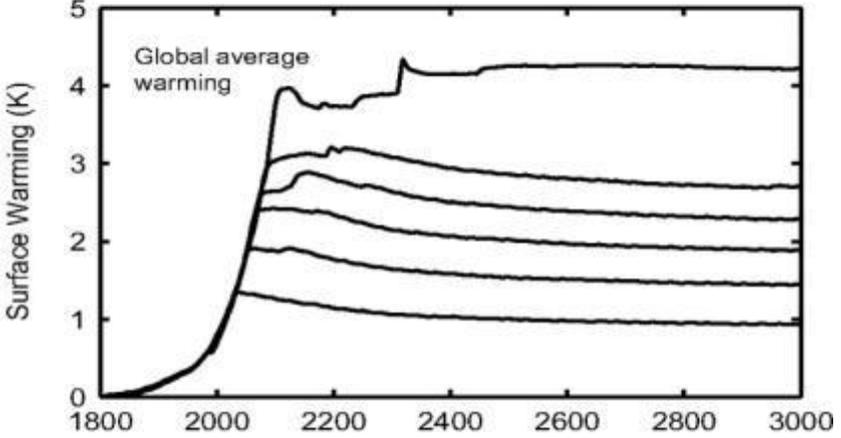
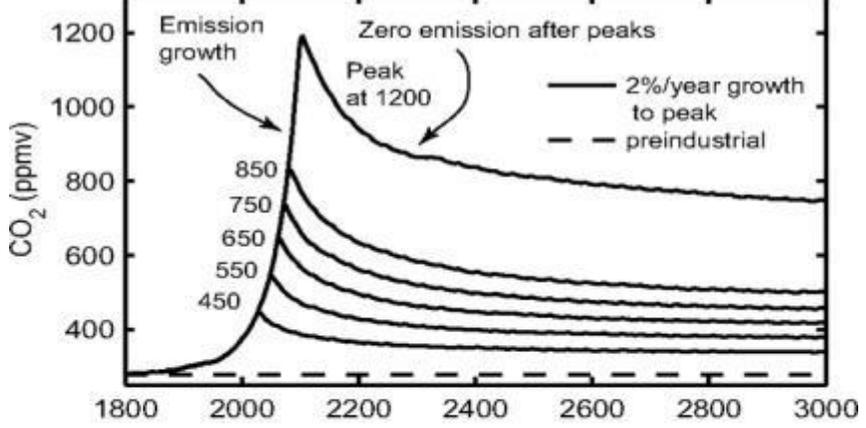


Fifty years ago this month President Johnson's science advisors delivered the first warning about rising greenhouse gas emissions to a sitting president. On Feb. 8, he warned Congress about altering the atmosphere with carbon emissions. Above, climate scientist Roger Revelle shakes hands with Johnson in the Oval Office. Photo courtesy Roger Revelle Papers, Special Collections & Archives, University of California, San Diego.

Fossil fuels and getting off them are the issue. And when we decide to turn around matters. This is a moral issue of the highest urgency.



- A substantial portion of the CO₂ we emit stays in the atmosphere for millennia
- Temperatures will remain close to where they are when we get off fossil fuels
- So, there are near permanent aspects to decisions we are making now!



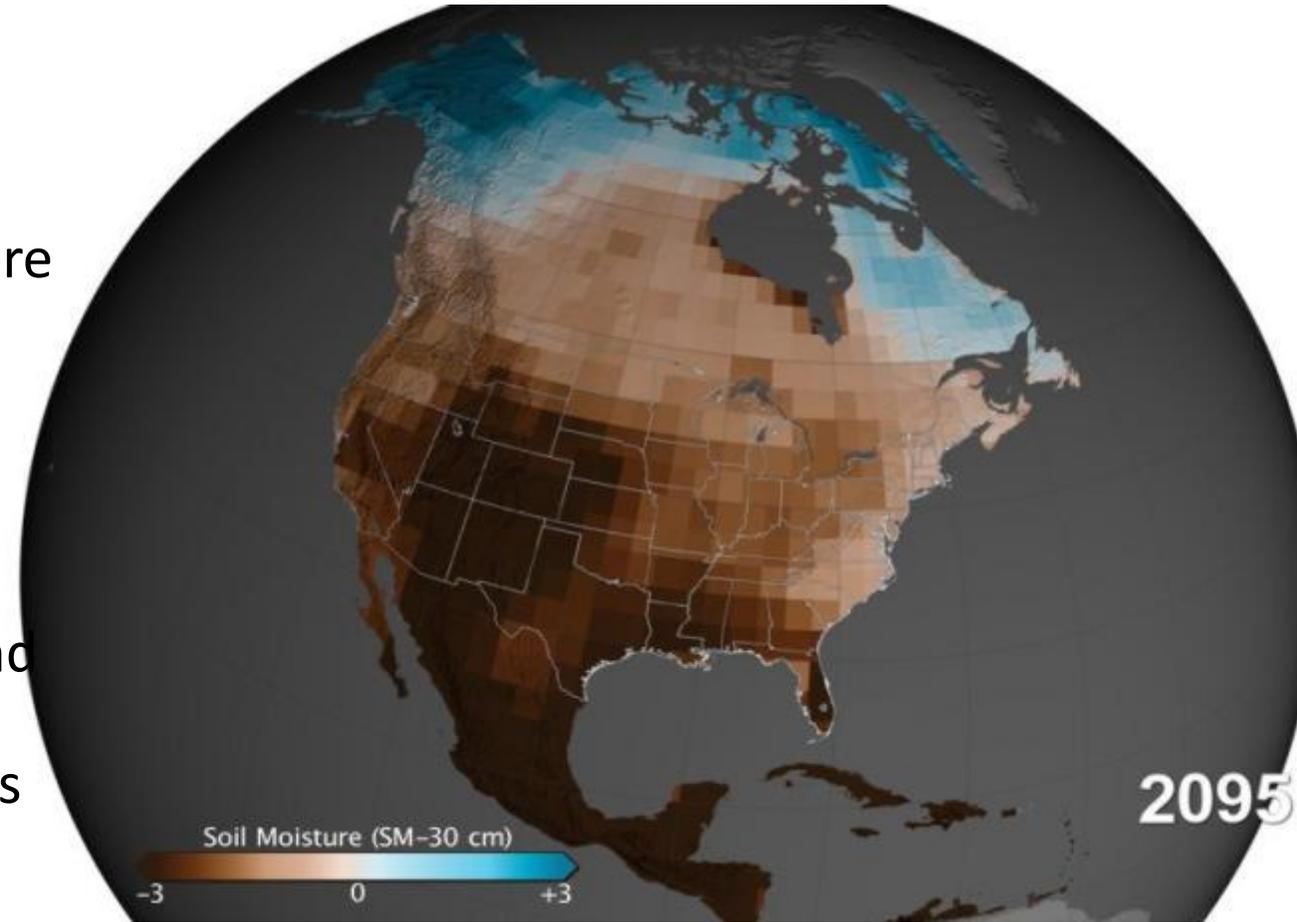
Clear job ahead – turning off the spigot of fossil fuels
80% clean by 2030 (closer to 2025 for electricity)

Our continued use of fossil fuels puts us on track for a 30+ year Dustbowl, with Colo. in the bulls-eye, this century.

UNEP wrote that “the gap can be closed before 2030 by adopting already known and cost-effective technologies, simply adopting or adapting best practice examples already deployed” including bans on new fossil fueled buildings or cars.

Close coal by 2025 is the most responsible and cost-effective path for electricity. Our electricity company is making long-term plans first quarter 2021 – RIGHT NOW. Email boardofdirectors@xcelenergy.com and governorpolis@state.co.us

Check out: <https://bit.ly/GridLabSept2020>



Let's do what we can NOW! It's straightforward!

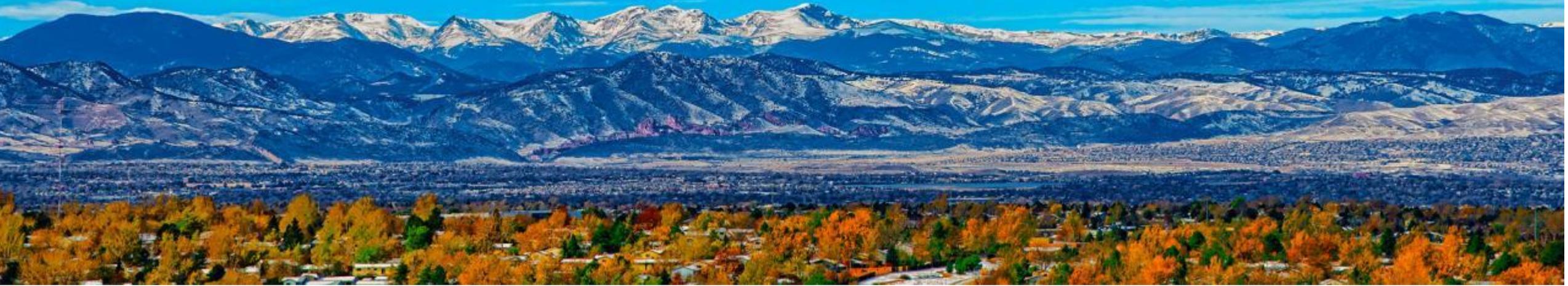
- **Close coal by end of 2024!**
 - 4 states have phased out coal. VA by 2024. 3 others, already.
 - Utility transition risk - Moody's said coal will be just 10% by 2030
 - In CO, Xcel has spent \$1.5 billion on coal this century and is still spending
- **Public banking** - can borrow at 0.25% and lend/invest at 1-3%
- **Enable solar on all parking lots** (could be a third of what is needed) and rooftops where it is good + batteries
- **When replacements or NEW investments occur - always electric not gas or diesel**
- Get workers what they need – not Wall Street & FF bailouts, execs, etc.

Make your next vehicle electric!

- There are now more than 40 types of plug-in vehicles available, with dozens more on their way, including SUVs and pickups as well as sedans.
- Big savings with EVs! **Easy charging at home!**
 - No more trips to the gas station - save time!
 - It costs about 50% less to fuel a vehicle with electricity versus gas. Consumer Reports estimates that CO EV owners can save \$800 to \$1,300 a year on fuel
 - Save 50% on repair and maintenance as compared to gas-powered cars.
 - 21,000 EVs in Xcel's Colorado territory have provided an additional estimated net of more than \$10 million to Xcel's grid in 2020, increasing utility revenues.



Legislation we already have is really good news for Colorado! How do we get the Polis Admin to use it?



- **Colorado is 1 of 4 states with statutory GHG reductions by deadline - 26% by 2025**
- **This law, developed in 2018 and passed during the session in 2019, relies on the state (APCD/CDPHE) to draft implementing regulations. Then the AQCC to considers and passes those. The Polis Administration has refused to do this.**
- **The legislature provided 6.5 new full time employees to draft implementing regulations for 1261/096 and gave them over a year to do so.**
- **But the Administration has drafted implementing regulations for LESS THAN 3% of the required reductions by 2025 and by 2030. 97% of what was supposed to be done was not done.**



What did the Polis Administration do instead re: 1261/096 Colorado's Climate Action Plan to Reduce Pollution

- Tried to never mention or acknowledge the deadline in law
- Avoided mentioning or acknowledging the state's responsibility to draft implementing regulations for 1261/096
- Tried to get everyone to look to/wait for the Roadmap, which was due AFTER the implementing regulations were required, in law.
- Kept pointing to existing/old regulations, suggesting regulations around their old set of work
- Spent a year endlessly telling the AQCC...
 - about limitations in "bandwidth"
 - all of the non-regulatory things the Energy Office (outside of the regulatory CPDHE) was doing
 - essentially saying that what could be done was mostly outside of their lane (the AQCC, APCD, CDPHE)
 - trying to pass the ball back to the legislature/denying or ignoring what could be done with the existing strong law that was passed.
- In sum, the Polis Administration has *tried to act like this important law doesn't exist.*



Colorado and the US stocked up on O&G extraction permits during the Trump and Polis Administrations



- Over 3000 fracking permits were issued **in the first year and a half of the Polis Administration in Colorado**, before the 2000 foot setbacks were implemented -- equivalent to what biggest companies procured nationally
- Polis Administration delayed establishing the new public health and safety mission for the COGCC (passed by SB 181 in spring 2019) for that long

Faith Communities Questions to Polis on Dec 3rd



- Will you have staff draft the missing/overdue implementing regulations for 1261/096 by March?
- Will you support closing coal by 2025?
- Will you support the most cost-effective path forward for CO, more solar gardens, distributed renewables

Unfortunately no “yes”



Colorado GHG Roadmap calls for the following good ideas. As people of faith and conscience our question is when/how soon?

- Shifting more off coal in favor of renewable wind and solar electricity
- Reducing methane pollution by the oil and gas industry
- Faster shifting to electric cars, buses and trucks
- Encouraging less driving through smarter land use
- Cleaning up energy used in buildings
- Cutting methane emissions from landfills and wastewater

Time to act like our house is on fire because it is!

- WWF) report that in September revealed an "average 68% decrease in population sizes of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and fish between 1970 and 2016."
- Biodiversity receives greater care and protection where there is Indigenous land ownership – 80% of the world's biodiversity is in that 20%.
- In California in 2020, twice as much land burned as had ever burned before in any year in the modern history of the state — five of the six biggest fires ever recorded.
- In Siberia, “zombie fires” smoldered anomalously all through the Arctic winter
- In Brazil, a quarter of the Pantanal, the world's largest wetland, was incinerated
- In Australia, flames took the lives of 3 billion animals.
- What is our responsibility to our kids and all life?

We can do it – common sense changes *but it does require change and now, without delay!*

- We love our kids, families, communities, state – let’s do this!
- We want a better future, health, life for all!
- For NEW construction, electric homes and cars are affordable and should start to be required.
- Coal can be closed affordably NOW and in the next couple years.
- Who can you talk to? Getting beyond the “enviros vs. state”.
- What is your story? The right story is one that is trusted and believed because it is told by the right person, for the right reasons, in the right way, at the right time, to the right people. **Who can YOU talk to? Help others imagine a future they can’t see yet? Try 15 min/week...**



Pay attention to delay discourses!

- (1) redirect responsibility;
- (2) push non-transformative solutions;
- (3) emphasize the downsides of climate policies; or
- (4) surrender to climate change.

Often used in combination to erode public and political support for climate policies.

Capstick S and JK Steinberger, professors in Psychology, Social Ecology and Ecological Economics: "Climate change delay is the new denial: how to spot the arguments" <https://energyindemand.com/2020/08/07/climate-change-delay-is-the-new-denial/>

Lamb WF et al. "Discourses of climate delay." [Global Sustainability](https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2020.13) 3, e17, 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2020.13> (2020).

McMahon J, "Scientists Dissect The Tactics Of Climate Delayers," Forbes ([Aug 2020](#))

Delay arguments are often different in type, but have the same desired effect – to undermine action on climate change.