

Eagle County Community Climate Action Plan

Summary Meeting Notes

March 21, 2016

This is the first of six stakeholder meetings to create an Eagle County community climate action plan. The focus of the plan is to recommend goals and projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Eagle County.

Walking Mountains Science Center has been contracted by Eagle County to serve as convener and facilitator to shepherd a community-led climate action planning process during 2016.

Today's goals:

- Understand climate science "101."
- Understand GHG emissions in the context of Eagle County
- Understand the climate action plan stakeholder planning process and timeline
- Understand the roles and expertise of each participant and get to know each other/how each organization can play a role (government, private sector, schools, etc.)

End of year goal: to create a public document shared with community with recommendations to reduce GHG emissions.

Climate change is happening and Eagle County is engaging the community to see how to address the issue. Eagle County residents and visitors create 30% more GHG emissions than US average.

Many other communities have created climate action plans. At the end of this year, we want a climate action plan that is meaningful, useful and implementable with goals and recommendations for communities throughout Eagle County.

Goals of Climate Action Plan

- Meaningful and achievable GHG emissions reductions targets
- Educate community (open house sessions in summer/fall)
- Work together/build on each other's goals/expertise
- Collaborate across towns, agencies, orgs
- Reflect larger goals (state, national, international)

Stakeholders roles/responsibilities

- Contribute ideas expertise, respect each other, commit to plan
- Communicate with your organization on progress/ideas
- Provide feedback to planning team on your needs – any ideas please share with Kim/Larissa
- Keep big picture in mind when representing your organization
- Think about long-term impact

What motivated you to be here:

- Bring back to students
- Build on community's 'great work'

- Excited to work on local climate action
- Interested in action part of plan (household level)
- Reducing transportation initiatives
- Develop multi-modal trails and increase use
- Monolithic industry – how will our community be a leader?
- Messaging – locally but also to the many visitors
- Opportunity to innovate through thoughtful land use planning and collaboration
- Get to know each other and share knowledge
- Learn how scientists research and understand climate change
- Excited to be moving forward with action!
- Opportunity to educate community
- Impact through energy efficiency – make impact via understanding it (eg: auditing)
- Potential of this group to combing and accelerate everyone’s efforts
- Think about problems/solutions in new ways (eg: insulation in your home)
- Local project to increase leadership on issue regionally
- Bring industry into discussion and what the benefits are to them
- Marketing- get businesses to engage, benefit to them
- Opportunity for shared planning – regional, collective impact
- What can one person do to have an impact?
- Unique opportunity to be a leader to others
- Build on multi-culturalism in the valley and diversify the social/community equitable approach to climate action
- Bring youth voice – behavior/motivation of our future leaders
- See overall/community metrics/goals and how to integrate programs

10:50 – break

Climate Change “power hour” – information sharing/projections/trends in CO₂, (Slides will be shared on website – text heavy)

Terminology:

- Weather – current and short term way the atmosphere is behaving
- Climate – average weather over 30 years
- Climate change – statistically significant variation in either the mean or in its variability (decade or longer) due to natural or anthropogenic causes
- Trend – understanding past, climate over short/long term timespans
- Projection – future expectations
- Mitigation – effort to reduce/prevent impact of GHG (ex: increasing bike paths to reduce cars)
- Adaptation – efforts by society or ecosystem to prepare/adjust to future climate change (ex: upgrading infrastructure for climate change)
- Resilience – capability to anticipate, prepare for, recover from, multi hazard threat

Acronyms

GHGs = CO₂, CH₄, N₂O, and H₂O (water vapor holds the heat – wet places hold temperature, humidity, oceans/clouds keep our climate stable)

National Climate Assessment – NCA – document/webpage, national climate data, trends/projections, regional synopsis for regional impacts/expectations

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – reports related to climate change

COP21 – Conference of Parties (2015 Paris climate summit)

1 metric ton = 1 hot air balloon

Eagle County government building/transit footprint releases 25 balloons every day (1% of Eagle County total)

Data from Colorado Water Conservation board: Average annual temp up 2 degrees over 50 years, warmer at night, snowmelt is happening 1-4 weeks earlier, less cold waves, more heat waves, no clear trend in precipitation/flooding, variability is changing

Projections – statewide annual temp up 5 degrees by 2050, summer temp will increase more than winter temp, snowpack decline, shift in peak snowmelt, in general more confidence in temp projections than precipitation, more extreme events (fires, droughts, floods)

For Eagle County action plan, we need to know:

- Amount/source of GHG emissions
- How to reduce
- Define goals
- Decide on projects/strategies/how

John Gitchell – Erica Sparhawk from CLEAR put together Eagle County GHG data slides:

- Eagle County residents, businesses and governments spend approximately \$243 mil on energy each year.
- GHG breakdown for all of Eagle County:
 - o 60% fuel
 - o 30 % electricity
 - o 12% natural gas
- Eagle County GHG emissions by sector:
 - o 60% from buildings (residential and commercial)
 - o 27% from transportation
 - o 10% from landfill
 - o 3% from aviation

Energy Use by community slide:

- Per capita is higher in Vail b/c of visitors, snow melt, hospital, 70% not residents of people who are using energy in Vail. Due to challenges in attribution and confusion due to visitors and second homeownership, per capita metrics may not be a useful comparison.

Transportation data – most from large SUV's. There are 31 large ECO-Transit buses, Eagle County government has been increasing electric vehicles, lots of work to do with diesel, natural gas, etc. Goal to

continue decreasing GHG by 5% each year, 2012 is baseline. One way to change is behavior change – wasted energy in space heaters, buying solar panels.

Kim – Slide on how much is being saved because of Energy Smart CO energy efficiency investments, in partnership with Holy Cross Energy and Eagle County Eco-Build, could be scaled up to have even larger impacts.

12:15pm – 12:50 – Lunch Break

Larissa: Group discussion

What does success look like for community climate action plan? Stakeholder discussion and feedback:

- Create a plan that other communities will model (ex: Vail's roundabouts)
- Common goal across the County (rather than city vs. city)
- Meaningful action on individual level
- Funding source for projects
- First step is that everyone in community is aware that there is a need and there is a plan in progress and there is an opportunity for them to take action
- Private sector involvement
- Community buy in at company and individual level, community ownership – they are invested and want it to succeed (won't get "shelved"), ongoing and action-oriented
- Provide tools
- A 'living' document, gets updated, shifted etc
- Diverse strategies/paths (other community plans is tackling a variety of areas/sectors)
- A component that addresses youth component (ex. curriculum/engagement)
- Looking for expertise in different places (ex: youth, creative people, farmers, etc.)
- Policy adoption at government level
- Attainable and measurable goals

What does success look for in your organization?

- Co-benefits for livability
- Decoupling economic growth from climate impact
- Encourage incentives over mandating
- Plan is written so that internal organizational goals match CAP (adaptability)
- Actively Green is good starting point
- Part of ongoing culture of community, organization, etc.
- Allocate resources to the goals
- Demonstrate best practices
- Divest from fossil fuels (CMC specifically)
- Saving money in the long term (investment)

What challenges do you anticipate?

- Language and communication
- Measurement

- Prioritizing funding
- Changes in leadership vs. lasting change in the community
- Avoid silver bullet – focus on multi-faceted approach
- Infrastructure – only so much you can do to some buildings
- Collaboration and interdisciplinary (social, economic, political)
- Implementation capacity – these changes take a lot of work
- Political prioritization – spending money on building vs. spending on education
- Resistance to change, breaking old habits, new ideas
- Not going to change global climate through local action (how measure our success)
- How to talk to people about it (VR talking to guests), when many think there's not point/doesn't matter
- Nay Sayers
- Unity of voice – each company/culture will interpret information differently

Kim – Process ahead of us:

Guiding Principles for the CAP

- Value each other's and the community's input and knowledge
- Keep in mind the triple bottom line (economy + environment + social equity)
- Take calculated risk
- Address all sectors that contribute to GHG emissions (transportation, waste, education, etc.)
- Develop goals/metrics
- Strive for informed consent

Stakeholder Process Overview

- Six total stakeholder meetings (keep to half day)
- Stay on schedule to complete by 2016
- Target reduction with target date (recommendation), by sector – tangible projects
- Finalization process – draft toward end of summer, inviting community input, community dialogues, pulling it together into a document and presenting to the community

Meeting dates

4/28 – stakeholder meeting #2

5/23 - stakeholder meeting #3

6/20 - stakeholder meeting #4

8/22 - stakeholder meeting #5

Early fall – public involvement

Mid fall – stakeholder meeting #6

Late fall – Finalize/approve plan

Next steps

- Next meeting – focused discussion about targets and implications
- Vote on time of next meeting – morning meeting
- Follow up on questions/bike rack items

For our next meeting

- Bring this back to your organization, share progress/ideas with others
- Visit WMSC website Climate Action Plan webpage – this is where we'll post notes, presentation, etc. we'll include notes about per capita emissions (not taking out slides), data, videos, etc. let us know if you have suggested resources
- Kim will send email/meeting invite for April meeting

Questions from Stakeholders:

1. What are the County commissioners committed to financially? County commissioners contracted Walking Mountains for \$52,000 for 2016 climate action planning process.
2. Did Aspen create goals for reduction that are net or total (i.e. include renewable energy or not)?
 - o Aspen – reduction (not based on how much renewable). Park City – just made a commitment to be a net zero by 2025, same idea that tourism driven economy and trying to send a different message.
3. Is there a county in Colorado doing better than natl/state average? Boulder
4. How should we address the per capita slide information shared with community?
 - o Aspen leadership moving away from emissions per capita –doesn't always reflect daily lives of community
5. Second home ownership (using energy but not home, pumps, humidification, etc.) – makes it look unfair but it's part of local economy, point is not to point blame
6. How can we enforce this recommendation?
 - o Good question. We want to build in recommendations throughout. The commissioners have asked for the plan. It'll be up to individuals and the community. Maybe jointly adopted by towns and counties – that can be a recommendation. Hopefully throughout process, there is communication that steers it to something that will be adopted. Please talk to your people and get feedback as to what they can do/sign on to/agree to. What is possible? Other communities are planning for individual cities (not entire County), counties are harder b/c of diversity of towns and their budgets/ideas/priorities/etc. Benefit is that unincorporated areas included, opportunity to overlap with city/county goals. You are representing your agency so let us know what is possible. You can make a commitment on behalf of your agency/organization.
7. Is Vail Mountain part of Vail GHG commercial data or part of unincorporated Eagle County data?

What other information do you need?

- o Three example action plans from similar size communities (low, medium, high impact) and their progress toward goals
- o What information from Holy Cross you might want
 - Goals of changing in the fuel source
- o Solicit help from someone representing 2nd home owners, private business reps

- Energy isn't only way we're going to reach goals, look at carbon cycle, educate schools, ecosystem, etc.
- Who is doing what now in the community? (e Blue print of where we're at now (what's already been done – towns, county, etc.)
- Other initiatives that are going on that we can support (co-benefits, healthy communities' initiative)
- Hard to start having conversation about reduction goals without talking about ways to reduce – build in hypotheticals and paths to reduction (ex: fewer cars, improved efficiency, etc.)
- Input from private business – real estate, chambers, board of realtors, etc
- Energy use triangle is not the only solution
- Progress of communities with CAP's. What is working/not working? What successes have they achieved?

Next stakeholder meeting will be on April 18 from 9 AM – Noon.