

Georgia Climate Change Coalition

Through education, advocacy and action, the Georgia Climate Change Coalition aims to increase awareness about climate change and its projected impacts; work in partnership with all Georgians and stakeholders to promote solutions and adaptations to the climate crisis; actively support local, state, national and international energy/climate change initiatives and legislation; serve as a clearing house for climate information.

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Georgia Climate Change Coalition Launches in Athens ***September 24 march and rally will call for reduced carbon missions***

Athens, GA -- Responding to extreme weather events, a punishing drought and growing concern about the impacts of climate change, an eclectic mix of Athens residents will officially launch the Georgia Climate Change Coalition on September 24, 2011.

The group, which consists of fly fishers, University of Georgia faculty and staffers, environmental activists and community members, is staging a march from the University of Georgia to Athens City Hall, where a rally will be held urging civic leaders to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The event will be affiliated with the worldwide "Moving Planet" rally planned for the same day by 350.Org. The non-profit group, founded by author-activist Bill McKibben, hosted the world's most widespread day of political action on Oct. 24, 2009, bringing together 5,245 grass-roots actions in 181 countries around the world.

Organizers hope the Moving Planet rally will eclipse the 2009 event, and the Georgia Climate Change Coalition is asking all residents of Athens and Georgia to join in this day of grass-roots action to raise awareness of man-made climate change, address climate change denial, and promote cutting carbon emissions to slow the rate of global warming.

"Let us come together on this historic day to pool our common efforts," Athens organizer Barbara Burnett said. "We need to conserve energy, reduce our burning of fossil fuels and begin conversions to alternative energy."

The Georgia Climate Change Coalition will begin preparing for the Moving Planet rally later this month, asking residents to fill out pledge cards to reduce their own energy, gas and water consumption.

Then on Wednesday, September 14, at 7 p.m., the group will host an Athens screening of a rolling teleconference hosted by former Vice President Al Gore, highlighting extreme climate events – floods, fires, storms, heat waves and drought – in every time zone around the world (www.climaterealityproject.org).

The screening will be followed by a climate change symposium at UGA's Ecology School auditorium on Friday, September 23, 5:00 - 8:30 p.m., discussing climate change impacts in the Southeast.

The following morning, Saturday, September 24, marchers are asked to gather at 11 a.m. on the greenway near Carlton St. and Agriculture Drive, UGA south campus, where University professor Chris Cuomo will kick off the event. The march will pass by the University's coal fired steam plant enroute to Lumpkin Street, and from there to City Hall in downtown Athens. Speakers will inform civic leaders that they have community support for reducing carbon consumption and that all Georgians must respond to this appeal.

"Our fly fishers work hard on stream improvements and habitat conservation," said Oconee River Chapter Trout Unlimited member Rich Rusk, whose group led the call last Spring for greater focus on climate change. "For us, trout are the canaries in the mining shaft. Fish dying in a recent North Georgia drought sends a message everywhere. We must all move with greater urgency on this massive threat not only to North American trout and salmon, but the entire planet!"

Those wishing to participate can find parade route, pledge cards and information about the Sept. 14, 23 and 24 events at the Georgia Climate Change Coalition website, www.georgiacclimate.org.

About the Georgia Climate Change Coalition

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The group is actively seeking coalition partners from across the state (see www.georgiacclimate.org).

618 words

For additional comment, please call either Barton King, Rich Rusk or Coalition members:

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