

Georgia Climate Change Coalition – GC3

Mission:

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.

History:

At a University of Georgia public forum on February 22, 2011, sixty persons signed this resolution:

Whereas there is international scientific consensus that the continued increase of greenhouse gases, primarily carbon dioxide (CO₂), in the atmosphere due to human activities threatens the stability of the global climate system;

Whereas CO₂ concentration in the atmosphere is currently significantly higher than the historic background level due primarily to the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation;

Whereas the potential impacts of global climate change, including long-term drought, extreme weather events, increased forest fires, increased invasive insects, rising sea levels, loss of glaciers and polar ice, land changes in the timing of the seasons may cause major disruption to flora, fauna, and human populations and threaten the resiliency and sustainability of the planet;

Whereas atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ are expected to continue to rise but there is great potential to reduce human impacts through constructive changes in technology, behavior, and energy and land-use policies;

Therefore be it resolved that the undersigned citizens and organizations attending the Panel Discussion, “Building an Effective Climate Change Coalition for Athens,” held at the Odum School of Ecology, University of Georgia on Tuesday, February 22, 2011, hereby resolve to create the Clarke County Climate Change Coalition.

(We changed this name to the Georgia Climate Change Coalition and adapted the rest of the resolution in the goals and actions described below).

Goals and Objectives:

1. Encourage GC3 members and the public to learn more about climate change and its projected impacts. Educate ourselves on what other communities are doing to respond to climate change.
2. Work closely with faculty and professional staff in the Georgia Initiative for Climate and Society, University of Georgia. Attend and promote Initiative events.
3. Invite all citizens to our public programs - including critics of climate science - respect all voices, proceed carefully on this controversial, heavily politicized issue, and become a unifying voice – not divisive – within our communities. With our emphasis on coalition building, work to broaden a climate action constituency beyond the traditional environmental movement.
4. Actively support and defend the work of Georgia’s climate scientists, the world’s climate scientists and the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change.
5. Work in partnership with Athens-Clarke County public officials, academic community, green organizations and community members to create a model city or “Transition Community” on climate change. While our initial focus is on Athens, we hope that GC3 could become a voice for statewide leadership on climate change, promoting ideas for Georgia towns and communities elsewhere.

Action Plan

1. Join with 350.Org's "Moving Planet," world wide rally on Saturday, September 24, 2011 to reduce fossil fuel emissions and advocate solutions to the climate crisis. Create an Athens-Clarke County Moving Planet Coordinating Committee to promote multiple events on September 24.
2. Host a public program on Friday, September 23 to build support for Moving Planet and GC3. Officially launch GC3 at this event.
3. With an Athens venue, host the Climate Reality Project's global teleconference on Sept. 14 to focus attention on the climate crisis. Use this event to build support for 350.Org's Sept. 24/Moving Planet.
4. Create and maintain a comprehensive website for the Georgia Climate Change Coalition.
5. Complete GC3 mission statement, goals and action plan for 2011; also draft a five year plan through 2015. Consider GC3's mission, goals and action plan a "living document," to be amended as needed and reviewed at GC3's annual meetings in January.
6. Build a film library, show films to GC3 members and the general public, and coordinate with the Athens Ecofocus Film Festival.
7. Create a Climate Change Book Club and environmental discussion group, with monthly meetings to begin after September 24, 2011.
8. Meet with local, state and national public officials to promote GC3 mission, goals and action plan.
9. Create a policy committee to help propose, and promote support for, governmental, energy/climate change initiatives and policies. Coordinate with Beyond Coal, Sierra Club, Environment GA and other policy advocates.
10. Participate in the Eco-film Festival, Earth Day, other Georgia conservation/green events. Actively recruit GC3 members at such events.
11. Support Oconee River Chapter Trout Unlimited's (ORCTU) call for TU National to join Moving Planet and involve their 450 chapters. Support ORCTU's efforts to recruit outdoor sportsmen's groups – hunters, fishers, hikers, bikers, birders – to become active on climate change.
12. Attend and promote the Georgia Initiative for Climate and Society's "brown bag lunches" programs and public events, and actively support their work. To coordinate our activities, a GC3 member (Miguel Cabrera) will attend the Center's steering committee meetings, and vice versa.
13. Actively work with media to encourage comprehensive coverage of GC3 events and public support for climate change initiatives.
14. Promote "best practices" energy and water savings measures and conservation tips that GC3 members and citizens can employ in the home and workplace. Encourage local initiatives that inform, motivate and empower citizens.
15. Create a speakers bureau on climate change issues. Promote speaking opportunities.

16. In fall 2011, create a committee to complete an organizational plan for GC3. Initial projections as an organization: our network shall begin with quarterly meetings in January, April, July, and November of each year We will meet on weekday nights (DATES NEEDED) in the seminar room, Odum School of Ecology, University of Georgia. Committees will be assigned as needed. The GC3 steering committee will meet as needed. Officers will include chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and treasurer. Agendas will be set and minutes recorded for all meetings. For initial fundraising, GC3 members will be asked to donate. Membership criteria will be established. When needed, develop a GC3 strategic plan.

17. Build a body of knowledge and available information on projected local impacts of climate change, as well as possible local adaptation strategies, for GC3's education and outreach.

18. Become knowledgeable of UGA's Climate Action Planning; remain engaged with UGA's Office of Sustainability in general and with this campus climate action planning effort in particular.