

Originally appeared in the Fort Collins Coloradoan on September 15, 2011

While federal lawmakers have been distracting us with mostly fatuous debates about the federal deficit and debt, municipal and state governments have been taking the lead on addressing the climate crisis.

Thanks in large measure to the "Climate Action Plan" adopted in 2008, Fort Collins reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 11 percent between 2005 and 2010. Similar efforts by other local and state governments helped reduce total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 8 percent between 2005 and 2009, the last year for which data is available from the EPA.

The vast majority of climate scientists, however, say that far greater reductions will be necessary in the coming decades if we are to avoid the worst consequences of global climate change. The investments needed to achieve these reductions in the U.S. can best be made by the federal government. Such investments would also help put people back to work in a struggling economy.

To encourage federal lawmakers to get started on addressing the climate crisis, the Fort Collins Sustainability Group is participating in the "Colorado Moving Planet Bike Ride" on Sept. 24. This ride will include stops at various locations between Boulder and Denver that we would like to see move beyond fossil fuels, such as Excel's Cherokee coal plant and Suncor's tar sands oil refinery. The ride will end at the State Capitol with a "green fair" from 5 to 7 p.m.

For more information or to join us at this event, please visit www.cjpe.org/fcsg or call us at (970) 419-8944.

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