

It is Time for Obama and the Nation to Act on Climate Change

Events of this past year have brought increasing evidence of manmade climate change with massive fires in the Rockies, severe drought in the Midwest, record ice melt in the Arctic and the devastation of hurricane Sandy. The warming of the climate is being driven by heat trapping greenhouse gases, of which CO₂ from fossil fuel is the major component.

The US League of Women Voters wrote a blog post on November 27 that stated “Climate change is the greatest environmental challenge of our generation, perhaps any generation. The League of Women Voters calls on President Obama to take the historically necessary step of controlling industrial carbon pollution. We believe that saving the world is a legacy worth fighting for. Join with us in calling on the President to do what he needs to do. “

The Woodland League of Women Voters joins the national league in urging Obama and the nation to act.

There are many who are joining the call for action now, both nationally and internationally. The World Bank recently issued a report on the need to avoid a 4 degree C rise in temperature with the hope that the dire nature of the predictions of a 4 degree C rise, including coastal inundation from sea level rise and the negative impacts on ocean ecology of ocean acidification, would shock people into action. Soberingly, a new report from scientists in the Global Carbon Project reported that global carbon emissions rose in 2011.

Locally and at a state level, we have seen some positive actions. The state of California has been a leader with AB32 and their renewable portfolio standard of 33%. Locally the Yolo Climate Compact has been a central source of information to municipalities seeking to lower their carbon footprint. Several cities including Woodland and Winters have passed or are in the process of preparing climate action plans. Davis is one of eight cities statewide participating in the CoolCalifornia challenge.

At a national level, however, there is much more that needs to be done. While there are other countries that presently emit similar or higher levels of greenhouse gases as the U.S., the U.S. has one of the highest per capita carbon footprints in the world. Also, historically, the US has contributed the largest portion of the total greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. It is time for the US to be a leader here. In a recent op-ed in the Washington Post, Columnist Eugene Robinson urged the President to address climate change in his State of the Union address. We agree with this. Whether in the Inaugural Address or the State of the Union or both, it is time for the president to clearly outline the dangers of climate change and the leadership role the US must take in addressing this. We hope that these speeches will signal a clear direction for the

nation to pay attention to impacts of climate change. We urge the President to put action and education on climate change in the forefront for the next four years.

The Board of the Woodland LWV
12-31-2012

The blog post from the LWVUS and a link to a letter to President Obama can be found at <http://www.lwv.org/blog/president-obama-must-lead-climate-change-fight>

The Woodland LWV position on climate change can be found at http://woodland.ca.lwvnet.org/files/WoodlandLWVClimateChangePositionFinal6-9-11_.pdf

This opinion piece was published in its entirety in the Woodland Daily Democrat on January 6, 2013