

Adapting to a Changing Climate Saturday January 31, 2009

Comfort Inn

33 Centre Street
Smiths Falls, ON

Workshop Agenda

- 8:30 AM Registration**
- 8:55 AM Welcome – Peter Au, Rideau Environmental Action League
- 9:00 AM The Science of Climate Change. Dr. David Pearson Co-Chair Ontario's Expert Panel on Climate Change
- 9:45 AM BREAK**
- 10:00 AM Introduction to OCCIAR. Al Douglas, Coordinator, Ontario Centre for Climate Impacts and Adaptation Resources
- 10:15 AM Climate Change and its Impact on Natural Systems: Implications for Forestry, Agriculture, Water Resources, Human Health, Tourism and Communities. Al Douglas, OCCIAR
- 11:15 AM Discussion Period
- 12:00 PM Closing Remarks

Dr. David Pearson – The human contribution to current greenhouse gas concentrations has propelled our planet into a state of continuous climate change. Greenhouse gas levels continue to rise in spite of our efforts to reduce emissions. Globally, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has stated in Assessment Report Four (2007) that “Warming of the system is unequivocal” and that the science is sound upon which they base their statements. The presentation by Dr. David Pearson will address the science of climate change, including our progression over the past 10,000 years and the carbon contributions that have brought us to where we are today. David will explain the difference between the natural cycles and human contributions to greenhouse gases in atmosphere and will explain key pieces of the natural systems, both from a geographic and geologic perspective, and how they have evolved over time. David will also give an overview of more recent climate data and projections of future climate and what that will mean for the earth’s systems and humankind. David will also highlight the importance of communications in the presentation of climate change.

Mr. Allan Douglas – Combined with our attempts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and sequester carbon, we must adapt to the imminent changes that personify climate change. Increased average temperatures, changes in precipitation regimes including droughts, extreme events including hail, wind or rain storms will all place stresses on both human and natural systems. Impacts from these climatic changes call upon decision-makers to increase the level of resilience in their systems. Adaptation as a response to climate change will be most important as we are already committed to a certain degree of warming over the next 2 decades. In his presentation, Mr. Douglas will highlight the impacts of climate change on various sectors including forestry, agriculture, tourism, water resources, human health and communities and will also highlight adaptive strategies that may be employed to reduce vulnerability and build resilience. Al will also introduce the risk management approach to climate change adaptation; a process that is looked upon as a successful method to mainstream climate change into decision making processes.