

Session Descriptions

Environmental Pragmatism

The effects of climate change are becoming more and more manifest, raising questions of what we are morally obligated to do about such change, particularly in the face of skepticism and other forms of resistance. Strong environmental advocacy tends to polarize people and issues rather than bringing them together. Environmental pragmatism takes a different approach and focuses on environmental problems rather than ideologies, allowing people to become more unified around a common problem than an ideology. This raises questions about the nature of problems, what motivates people to solve them, and how we go about solving them. Looking to our own region, and using some lessons from other parts of the country—particularly the Pebble Mine issue in Alaska—how can this approach be applied to the Adirondacks?

Welcome to the Anthropocene

We are entering a new period of Earth history in which humankind has become a force of nature of geologic scope. We have become so numerous, so interconnected, and so technologically powerful that we are changing the face of the planet, and our fossil fuel emissions alone will skew global climate for tens of thousands of years. What will life in that shockingly deep future be like? Exactly how the future plays out is ultimately up to us as we search for a sane, sustainable path forward in this new Anthropocene epoch, the "Age of Humans."

Finding Common Ground

In nature, ecologists have found that the resilience of an ecosystem to environmental stresses is more a function of the diversity of responses in species than the number of species. In human societies facing such stresses, there's been a tendency among environmental campaigners to reject diversity – seeking a common path to a better future. In his talk, Andrew Revkin – entering his fourth decade of environmental journalism – argues for the merits, on a complex and fast-changing planet, in embracing "the human way" – faults and all.

Bright Colored Storm Clouds

Using cartoons, humor and metaphor to engage people with Climate Change.

Powering the North Country: A Regional Approach to a Sustainable Energy Future

The North Country is endowed with a diverse array of renewable energy sources, from abundant wind to a plentiful supply of wood chips and other biomass resources. This presentation will provide attendees with a vision of how homeowners and business can meet their energy needs with the clean and abundant renewable sources of energy found within the region. A regionally appropriate energy strategy requires an assessment of current demand for energy and the opportunities to reduce energy consumption through efficiency and conservation. The presentation also covers the key economic and policy reforms necessary to accelerate the role that renewable sources of energy can play in reducing the region's carbon footprint.

Hip Hop is Good for the Planet

Hip hop developed out of the Bronx, NY into a global force whose reach can be found in just about every facet of modern society. Most relevant to future climate action is the fact that young people—the future leaders of our world—listen to its music, emulate its styles, and speak its language. Given this widespread influence, hip hop artists have the incredible opportunity to deliver positive messaging to the masses. Will hip hop become a conduit for "climate reality" and help guide the mainstream off of its perilous course? YES—and you will be part of the movement!

Education for Sustainability

Education can build our capacity to develop innovative regional climate solutions. We are making progress, but much more needs to be done. Bill Throop will briefly describe achievements in higher education and will challenge institutions in the region with vision for deep sustainability learning at the collegiate level. Steve Danna will speak about the power of conversations and networking SUNY Plattsburgh at Queensbury has taken to educate, inform, and empower North Country community members to understand and address climate change. Tim Scherbatskoy will describe how SUNY Adirondack is implementing a college sustainability plan that develops educational programming, energy and waste management and agricultural initiatives that address regional climate issues.

The 2nd Annual North Country Climate Reality Conference will empower participants to create climate solutions in their lives and in their communities. Inspiring speakers and musicians will motivate action-planning sessions. Participants will leave the conference energized and with purpose to help make the North Country a model for citizen action on climate change. Join us on June 17th for this exciting gathering.



Visit: North Country Climate site for more information
<http://northcountryclimate.org>



Register:
<http://tinyurl.com/jbqr4dp>
REGISTER EARLY, Seats will fill up quickly!

- Please feel free to bring your own eating utensils and dishes, lunch will be provided.
- It is also recommended that you bring your portable electronic device to reduce paper.

Directions

The North Country Climate Reality Conference will take place in the Scoville Auditorium on the SUNY Adirondack Campus on 640 Bay Road, Queensbury, NY. The conference is hosted by SUNY Plattsburgh at Queensbury in partnership with Green Mountain College.

Take I-87 (Adirondack Northway) to exit 19 toward Glens Falls. Head east on Aviation Road to Quaker Road. Continue on Quaker Road for approx. 1.5 miles. Turn left on Bay Road for approx. 1.6 miles. Use the first entrance to the campus at the traffic light. Parking is on the south end of Scoville. Scoville Building is highlighted in yellow as well as the parking lot.



Thanks to our sponsors!



Regional Higher Education Center
640 Bay Road
Queensbury, NY 12804
Phone: 518-792-5425
Fax: 518-792-3868
E-mail:
branchcampus@plattsburgh.edu
URL: Plattsburgh.edu/branchcampus

North Country
Climate Reality 2016

Inspiration, Common Ground and Action



North Country Climate Reality

Inspiration, Common Ground and Action



Friday, June 17, 2016

8:00 am— 4:30 pm

On the SUNY Adirondack Campus

Presented by

SUNY Plattsburgh at Queensbury and
Green Mountain College

Agenda

8:00-8:25	Check-in, coffee and snacks		
8:30-9:00	James Liszka	<i>Environmental Pragmatism</i>	
9:05-9:35	Curt Stager	<i>Welcome to the Anthropocene</i>	
9:40-10:10	Andy Revkin	<i>Finding Common Ground</i>	
10:15-10:30	Andy Revkin Curt Stager	<i>Music</i>	
10:30-10:45	Break, move to breakout session room		
10:45-11:25	Common Ground	Breakout Session I: <i>Where we are today?</i>	 
11:30-12:00	Michelle McCauley Kevin Kite	<i>Bright Colored Storm Clouds</i>	
12:05-12:20	Juxtapoze	<i>Music of Reflection, Hope and Inspiration</i>	
12:20-12:30	Distinguished Guests		
12:30 - 1:00	Lunch, please return promptly		
1:10-1:40	Steve Letendre	<i>Powering the North Country: A Regional Approach to a Sustainable Energy Future</i>	
1:45-2:15	Larry Montague	<i>Hip Hop is Good For the Planet</i>	
2:20-2:55	Inspiration	Breakout Session II: <i>What Can We Achieve Within a Few Years?</i>	  
3:00-3:30	William Throop Stephen Danna Tim Scherbatskoy	<i>Education for Sustainability</i>	
3:45-4:10	Action	Breakout Session III: <i>What We Can Commit to Doing?</i>	 
4:15-4:30	Wrap-up	<i>Final Comments</i>	  

KEY:



Inspiration



Common Ground



Action

Breakout Sessions

Three interactive break-out sessions will focus on common ground, inspiration and action. People will leave empowered to take specific climate change actions for our region. Where are we today? What can we achieve within a few years? What can we commit to doing?

Presenters



James Liszka received his Ph.D. from the New School for Social Research in 1978, where his dissertation on observation in the social and natural sciences won the Alfred Schutz Award. Dr. Liszka was editor of *The Graduate Faculty Philosophy Journal*, and *The Alaska Quarterly Review*, which he co-founded with Ron Spatz at the University of Alaska Anchorage in 1981. The journal has gone on to become one of the most prestigious journals for the publication of fiction and poetry. In 1989 he published *The Semiotic of Myth* with Indiana University Press—a study of narratives and values; in 1996 he published *A General Introduction to the Semeiotic of Charles S. Peirce* (Indiana University Press)—a study of the great American philosopher’s theory of signs and symbols. The book has become a classic in the field and has been translated into Chinese and Korean. In 1999, he published *Moral Competence* with Prentice Hall—the culmination of his many years of teaching ethics to undergraduates, which is now in its second edition. He has also published numerous articles in his areas of expertise and has given many presentations and workshops on professional, environmental and business ethics.



Curt Stager is an ecologist, educator and science journalist whose research focuses on climate change and the environmental histories of lakes in Africa, Peru and the Adirondacks. The author of “Deep Future: the Next 100,000 Years of Life on Earth” and other books, he has also published numerous peer-reviewed papers in major journals including *Science*, and has written extensively for the general public in periodicals such as *National Geographic*, *Fast Company*, *Huffington Post* and *Adirondack Life*. He has co-hosted *Natural Selections*, a weekly science program on North Country Public Radio, since 1989, and was named New York State Science Professor of the Year by the Carnegie-Case Foundation in 2013. Curt holds the Lussi Endowed Chair in Lake Ecology and Paleo-Ecology at Paul Smith’s College and has taken dozens of students on research expeditions to Africa, Peru and remote corners of the Adirondacks. When he is not too busy with research or teaching, he has been known to subject people to his banjo and guitar-playing, as well.



Andy Revkin has reported on science and the environment for more than three decades, from the Amazon to the White House, the Hudson Valley to the North Pole, mainly for *The New York Times*. He has written on global warming science and solutions and energy issues since the 1980s and is [among those credited with](#) first proposing that we have entered a “[geological age of our own making](#),” known increasingly as the Anthropocene.

As Pace University’s Senior Fellow for Environmental Understanding, he has developed or co-developed innovative courses in [blogging](#), [environmental communication](#) and [documentary film](#). He has also helped organize and run campus and online events on [urban resilience](#), the mix of [technology and tradition in agriculture](#), [renewable energy](#) opportunities and more.

Revkin has won the top [awards in science journalism multiple times](#), along with a Guggenheim Fellowship. He is widely recognized for fairness and a pursuit of reality in a polarized media environment. This doesn’t come without perils. The conservative radio commentator, Rush Limbaugh, once [suggested Revkin kill himself](#) if he thought population growth was such an important issue.

Revkin has written [acclaimed books](#) on global warming, the changing Arctic and the violent assault on the Amazon rain forest, as well as three book chapters on science communication. Drawing on his experience with his *Times* blog, [Dot Earth](#), which Time Magazine named one of [the top 25 blogs in 2013](#), Revkin has spoken to audiences around the world, including at the [United Nations](#) and [Vatican](#), about the role of communication innovation in forging progress on a turbulent planet.

In spare moments, Revkin is a performing songwriter and was [a frequent accompanist for Pete Seeger](#). His [2013 CD of original songs](#) was described as a “[tasty mix of roots goulash](#)” on Jambands, an influential music website.

Two films have been based on his work: “Rock Star” (Warner Brothers, 2001) and “The Burning Season” (HBO, 1994), which starred Raul Julia and won two Emmy Awards and three Golden Globes.



Michelle McCauley is Professor of Psychology at Middlebury College, where she chairs the Department of Psychology and directs the environmental studies conservation psychology focus. She is interested in contemplative environmental studies as well as the connections among values, psychological need satisfaction, mindfulness, environmental action and policy support. She also regularly writes for *Hurry Up Please It’s Time*.



Kevin Kite has been an artist since he could hold a pencil (his earlier crayon work is lost to us given the humid climate of his native Florida). He spent a few years detouring into other areas (e.g., getting an MA in literature from the University of Colorado at Denver and a JD from NYU). Now he draws, writes, teaches and works to see the humor in the now. He is the creator of a web comic on science, the environment and culture titled *Hurry Up Please It’s Time*. <http://www.hurryuppleaseitstime.com/>



Juxtapoze is a music trio from the Adirondacks, featuring Vinnie Leddick, Tim Ellifritz and Michelle Howland. They perform original music filled with emotion, turning everyday experiences into timeless melodic journeys in the spirit of good storytelling. Together they have several decades of experience as professional musicians performing in the region. Their collaboration features the song “On the Road to Lake Placid” on Vinnie’s recent CD *Heaven Help Me*, whose lyrics touch on the themes of environmental and personal introspection.



Steve Letendre is a professor of economics and environmental studies at Green Mountain College where he teaches courses on environmental economics and energy. He holds a masters degree in economics from Binghamton University and a doctorate in energy policy and economics from the University of Delaware. Steven is also an independent consultant currently working on electric vehicle and grid integration for the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority in partnership with the Vermont Energy Investment Corporation. He has served as a consultant to numerous other organizations including the Solar Electric Power Association, the Northwest Pacific National Laboratory, and Green Mountain Power. Dr. Letendre has published over 50 technical articles and reports on a variety of sustainable energy topics.



Larry Montague grew up in Queensbury, on Bay Road 1.7 miles from this campus. He attended SUNY Adirondack (when it was still known as Adirondack Community College) and studied forestry at Paul Smith’s College where he met Curt Stager, a huge inspiration and valuable mentor. He began writing poetry and hip hop music in junior high, viewing both media as platforms upon which to bring awareness to social and environmental maladies. Larry currently lives in Huntington, Vermont, with his wife, Jamie, his daughter, Francesca, and their retired sled dog, Tonzo.



Dr. Stephen Danna is Dean of the SUNY Plattsburgh at Queensbury Branch Campus. Stephen has 25 years experience in teaching and administration, and prior to that, worked with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office as an oceanographer. A middle school guest lecture at a school assembly in Bay St. Louis, MS, led him to discover a hidden passion for education. Dr. Danna has received teaching fellowships from Princeton University, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Drew University and was honored in 1997 with the National Science Teachers Association’s Exemplary High School Science Teaching Award. Steve maintains an active blog on climate change topics (<http://www.climategaga.org>), and has published papers with the National Staff Development Council, National Science Teachers Association, Journal of School Leadership and Phi Delta Kappan. Stephen resides and recreates within the blue line of the Adirondacks with his lovely wife of 25 years, Laura.



Tim Scherbatskoy holds a Ph.D. in plant physiology from the University of Vermont where he taught graduate and undergraduate classes in environmental science, forestry and philosophy of science. He was a founder and director of the Vermont Monitoring Cooperative, an environmental research center for long-term ecosystem studies, and was co-chair of the Vermont Advisory Committee on Mercury Pollution. He has published a dozen research papers on the effects of environmental pollutants in forest ecosystems, supported by over \$1.9 million in research grants. Tim is now a professor of ecology at SUNY Adirondack Community College in Queensbury, NY, where he teaches Biology, Botany, Ecology, and Sustainable Food. As director of the Sustainable Food Project at SUNY Adirondack, he runs the College Gardens program, works on creating sustainable transition communities through tending, mending and restoring our agricultural landscapes, and helps direct the College’s new degree programs in sustainable agriculture.



William Throop is Professor of Philosophy and Environmental Studies and Director of the Environmental Studies program at Green Mountain College. He was provost at Green Mountain for twelve years, during which he helped to build the sustainability focus of the College and led the creation of its graduate programs. At the national level, he served on the board of directors of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) for six years and was elected chair of the board for his last two years. He has also served on the editorial boards of *Restoration Ecology* and *Environmental Ethics*. His PhD work at Brown University focused on philosophy of science and epistemology, but his recent publications have been on ethical issues in ecological restoration and sustainability education. He is currently working on a book project titled: *Flourishing amid the Age of Climate Change – Finding the Heart of Sustainability*.