



Gray Is Green

Who are we?

Gray Is Green is an online gathering of older adult Americans aspiring to create a green legacy for the future. As environmentally conscious elders, we respond to a generational call: to co-create a future of economic justice, ecological sustainability and social justice.

We hold next generations of humans in mind and consider the future of ecosystems and other species. We are alert to the historic challenges facing our planet. And we are aware of the question arising from descendants generations hence:

What did you do, when you knew?

What do we do?

We aspire to embrace our eldership, living beyond consumerism and ageism. **Our Curriculum for Gray-Green Living** offers a variety of ways to join—and re-engage with—this elder movement.

We offer a periodic newsletter, a speaker's bureau, online resources, a [Facebook page](#) for relevant updates. In partnership with congenial organizations, we serve as a central clearinghouse of ideas and communications for older adults interested in greening their lives, learning about sustainability, advocating for sound public policy, being creative stewards or grandparents, emerging as elders, and mentoring young people.

*We invite **you** to get involved!*

www.grayisgreen.org

Community Resilience Climate Literacy

What is Climate Literacy?

Climate patterns are changing with noticeable local impacts. Preparing for these impacts is key to community resilience. Climate literacy is a framework that focuses on understanding¹ how you and others in your community might participate effectively in preparing for a resilient community in the face of climate variability.

Climate literacy involves the fundamentals of climate science—from understanding basic facts about how energy from various sources interacts with Earth's atmosphere, to more detailed guidance on what kinds of data might be useful to you in your local community. In this way, climate literacy is about knowing how climate variability is likely to affect your local community and what specific strategies for community adaptation you might take or advocate for where you live.

Impacts of Climate Variability

The Gray Is Green Climate Literacy topics describing ways in which local communities may be adversely impacted by current and future climate variability are based on the US Climate Resilience Toolkit² from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Water and Climate Variability

In a changing climate, higher sea levels and more frequent storms

will combine to increase the extent, frequency, and duration of floods³ in many places both coastal and along rivers. Take stock of your vulnerabilities by looking at how your economic centers, population centers, sewage systems, power grids, and fragile coastal ecosystems will be affected.

Climate variability also impacts water resources⁴, as some areas are expected to get wetter while others get drier. When water resources are in jeopardy from drought or due to pollution, adverse impacts can extend beyond water supply and wastewater management systems into farms and agriculture, energy production and distribution, and natural areas for plant and animal biodiversity.

Ecosystems underpin our economy and help protect people from extreme events. Wildfire regimes, water resources, and carbon sequestration may be substantially impacted⁵, threatening many unique forms of life in your local region and in places that you visit and love.

Climate Variability and Food

New temperature patterns and seasonal changes may affect local growing seasons, impacting what food can be grown where⁶ or making some land completely unusable for food production. Extreme weather events and fires may also disrupt harvests, processing and distribution of food.

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In order to create a food network that can handle these changes, your local community may want to research the effects of climate variability on local food supplies⁷ and consider local food resilience practices.

Physical Effects of Climate Variability

Extreme heat, extreme weather events, and increased air pollutants will all affect human health⁸ directly, as people struggle to deal with the physical effects of climate change. Older adults and children are particularly vulnerable to the adversities of extreme weather

events. Building health systems⁹ that serve vulnerable human populations during weather disruptions from climate variability is crucial on a local scale.

Resources

NOAA has many resources for climate literacy in your community¹⁰ including self-guided online courses and instructional materials for those who might lead courses with community groups. A wide array of materials are useful for all levels of experience so even those who are well-versed in climate science can learn something. NOAA also provides a guide to state climatologists and state agencies

that may be of service as you develop your community's climate resilience.

Local communities seeking guidance on pathways to resilience can also take a look at Collaboratory for Adaptation to Climate Change¹¹ co-hosted by Notre Dame University and the National Science Foundation.

The question of how best to communicate about resilience—and whom to target for maximum impact—is regularly updated at The Yale Project on Climate Change Communications².

1 <http://cpo.noaa.gov/OutreachandEducation/ClimateLiteracy.aspx>

2 <https://toolkit.climate.gov/>

3 see *Coastal Flood* subtopic

4 see *Water Resources in a Changing Climate* subtopic

5 see *Ecosystem Vulnerability* subtopic

6 see *Food Resilience* subtopic

7 <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/natural-resources-environment/climate-change.aspx#.U7RrHfldXso>

8 see *Human Health* subtopic

9 <https://toolkit.climate.gov/topics/human-health/building-climate-resilience-health-sector>

10 <https://toolkit.climate.gov/training-courses>

11 adapt.nd.edu

12 <http://environment.yale.edu/climate-communication/>



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