

The Delray Democrat

A Looming Disaster¹

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Children swept away, five people dead, when more than four inches of rain fell in two hours causing a flash flood to inundate a road in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

In Ludlow, Vermont, widespread, heavy rainfall totaling 7 to 9 inches caused catastrophic flash flooding, wiping out the town's Main Street sending rocks and rivers of mud across roads and through buildings.

Georgia lost more than 90% of this year's peach crop after a February heat wave followed by two late-spring frosts, resulting in job losses and higher prices across the country.

In Utah, the Great Salt Lake has lost more than 70 percent of its water, and recent reports warn that the lake could disappear within five years, along with billions of dollars of economic activity and thousands of jobs that rely on it.

Wildfires in California just prompted the state's largest insurer, State Farm, to stop issuing new policies there, amid its "rapidly growing catastrophe exposure".

States along the Colorado River agreed to leave a major portion of their water supply in the river in order to keep Lake Powell and Lake Mead from falling so low that they could no longer produce hydropower. Without the hydropower, millions of people would see much higher energy costs. Farmers will have less water and that means fewer crops, higher food prices, job losses, and tax dollars to reimburse those farmers for forgoing water.

Florida had the lowest orange harvest since 1936. According to UF/IFAS, Hurricane Ian's path touched roughly 375,000 acres of citrus groves across the Sunshine State. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services estimates Hurricane Ian inflicted up to \$675 million in damages to Florida's citrus growers.

Surface water temperatures along Florida's coast have reached some of the highest levels on record, which could lead to a severe coral bleaching event, which in turn could cost the local economy billions of dollars over time.

Last month was also the hottest June on record, according to several weather agencies. Scientists say there is a decent chance that 2023 will go down as the hottest year on record, with measurements going back to the middle of the 19th century.

Phoenix hit 110 degrees for a record number of consecutive days. There have been 12 confirmed heat-related deaths recorded in Maricopa County so far this year as of the

¹ [The Delray Democrat](#), August 2023, page 8.

first week of July, and 55 are under investigation as suspected heat-related deaths, according to data from the Maricopa County Department of Public Health. The dangerously hot temperatures are also taxing hospitals and the electric grid.

Heatwaves are not as dramatic as other natural disasters, but experts say they are more deadly. A heatwave in parts of the south and midwest killed more than a dozen people last month.

So, when will the Republicans stop focusing on “wokeness” and start focusing on the climate crisis?

The right-wing radicals that dominate the Republican party deflect from problems they don't have a clue how to solve and whip up the lunatic fringe they call their base, but it's time for the voters to turn off Fox News and shut down Truth Social and look out their own windows.

It's time for the voters to think about what really affects their children and grandchildren. It's not some imaginary drag queen reading Toni Morrison to a kindergartner. It's not a woman making a choice about her pregnancy and her body. It's not a gay couple that want a wedding cake. It is how we continue to ignore, and actually flout, the disaster we are making of our land, our air, and our water.

One day, if we don't take real action, food and water and clean air will be scarce; we will be in the midst of a climate refugee crisis unlike anything we have ever seen; the price of a gallon of water will be out of reach for most people. All the banned books, prevented abortions, and bigotry that the Republican's spew will be cold comfort to the children we leave to inherit this planet.

If Republicans really care about life and care about children, they would focus their frenzied energy on the climate.