

2010 MiaGreen Speaking Proposal

Speaker: Kevin Foster O'Donnell, founder & fundamentalist @ thread collaborative

Contact Information: speaking@threadcollaborative.com

Bio & Photo: *supplied separately*

Session Title: **Water Wars: Rising Demand vs. Diminishing Supply**

Program Description: Water is an essential ingredient of life on Earth, but we are running out of the fresh water that we rely on every day. Across the globe, watersheds are damaged, aquifers are drying, snowpacks are shrinking, and lake shores are growing, all the result of direct human overuse and increased global climate change, and proof that our supplies are dwindling at a rate faster than natural cycles can possibly replenish them.

In the United States alone, droughts over the past four years are the strongest seen by our generation, and emergency calls for conservation have been issued from coast to coast. The government itself has reported that 36 states expect to face water shortages within the next five years. The consumption of water can be categorized in three groups: personal, agricultural, and industrial. Each of these groups has a different water footprint but is intrinsically tied to the others. Surprisingly, few people who live in drought-stricken areas realize the full extent of the problem, but we are all still in a position to address the problem so that we may avoid worsening conditions and the ensuing conflicts over water use that could become commonplace. The state of Florida is the third largest water consumer in the country, with a per capita usage higher than the national average. Despite the fact that it is virtually surrounded by water, everyone in the state needs to take immediate steps to mitigate the damaging consequences of uncontrolled fresh water usage.

In this session, attendees will learn the fine interconnectedness between all water consumers. They will walk away knowing how to identify the three main categories of water consumers and what steps they can personally take to mitigate their usage and prevent loss. Earth is the only planet in our solar system, and the only known planet to have liquid H₂O on it. We must therefore learn to protect the current supply available to us.

Learning Objectives:

1. Gain an understanding of the interconnectedness of water consumption, seeing how individual actions may have potentially global impacts.
2. Identify three classifications of water consumers, detailing how each group consumes and sources its water.
3. Review steps that can be immediately taken to reduce personal water consumption.

