Michael Foster

Solastalgia, the psychological devastation on witnessing the destruction or loss forever of one's place in the world, home.

You have earned my congratulations on a really well-conceived design for a plan to alter business-as-usual, reducing emissions fast enough... if this began in 1992. It definitely would have changed the trajectory of history and our collective march into doom. However, it is neither sufficient, nor legal, to manage your responsibility to protect Washington residents given what you know in 2022. Now it is criminal and fatal. If only you could be held to account legally, financially, like our Dept. of Transportation, which faces million-dollar lawsuits for roads and signages that kill people, then your Cap-and-Invest plan would go into effect today and cut emissions to zero before 2030, wouldn't it?

My family sued the Dept of Ecology resulting in the Clean Air Rule being hastily proposed. Remember that? Do kids have rights to live here in Washington, and if so, does Washington government have responsibility to end the wholesale foreclosure on their lives before we pollute too much for them? The judge said Yes, three times. Take emergency action now (2015) to reduce emissions by the amount scientists determine is necessary to get Earth back below the red line, 350ppm (the max level under which governable societies and living things evolved in the Holocene), or risk destroying the "essential resources - air land and water - which these children will require to grow to adulthood safely." The draft Clean Air Rule gave Inslee and Ecology a win, no court oversight of a climate champion on the job. Washington residents under 18 have no right to vote, but will now lose everything in their lifetime - civilization, habitable lands, food, trees, governable society - due to the government's willful refusal to restrict destruction in time. Willful ignorance to betray the entire generation of our young and all living things that might come.

Back then, to act in time would have required 6 - 10% emission cuts (or caps) each year going forward statewide. Impossible? Or the minimum necessary to govern a living Washington state into 2100?

7 years later...

Your cap needs to drop each year 25% or faster, or else we all go bust. But we can't you say, too expensive! Costs, inflation! Green economics on a dead planet. You won't listen to me, or to the science. There will be no living planet. All the research is plain: no new anything, drop what you're doing, or else we fly past the point of no return for all time. Centuries of chaos, war, murder, starvation, and finally death, so that we can visit Yellowstone, fly to Hawaii or cruise to Alaska with grandma and the kids, one more time. Then the gas-fueled wheels come off for real, whether we act now or not. Very soon yes, but not soon enough to keep life going. Today only you can do that. Today.

Life in the last half of this century will appear unrecognizable to people today.

By 2100, what's left of Life will get better only if you deliver unprecedented mandates -- mandates like lockdowns in March 2020 -- to stop everything "non-essential" immediately. Then we convince

others to follow suit or bust. That's scientific reality meets political impossibility. We living things suffer forever if you delay longer using proposed pollution permits.

Climate wonks say Washington state can't save the world, our emissions are too small to matter. Look at Denmark. If we want to live, we do what we know massive polluters refuse to do. We cut off everything today if we mean to influence regulatory action in time. What else can we do in 2022, when there is zero carbon budget left? We already burned up the bridge to life below 1.5C didn't we? And 350ppm in a century. But that's the red line. Below 350ppm most life might live.

You pretend you make a difference. Doing only half what is required, years too late, and being a "leader" sets an "example" for others to emulate and greenwash our date with oblivion. Knowing what needs to be done to survive, and refusing to tell people, is worse, billions of times worse, than being an active shooter in an elementary school. Ecology is pulling the trigger against all life in Washington state today.

I know you will not do it. I know.

2 of every 3 living creatures on the planet are now gone, since I started grade school in 1970, the dawn of environmental action.

You will not cap it in time. Voters, consumers, job-creators, the people, won't accept it.

Globally, 95% of endemic species now face extinction this century. You ignore the alarm.

Doug fir babies will not be able to grow to maturity in 50 years. You cut trees much faster than CO2.
1 in 6 deaths worldwide is from air pollution. You give out polluter permits.

1 billion refugees forced from their homelands, flooding northward into places like Washington, in the next 50 years. You refuse to plug the gap in time.

The Dept. of Ecology offices will sink under the ocean long before anyone there takes responsibility for any of this.

It's not your job, am I right?

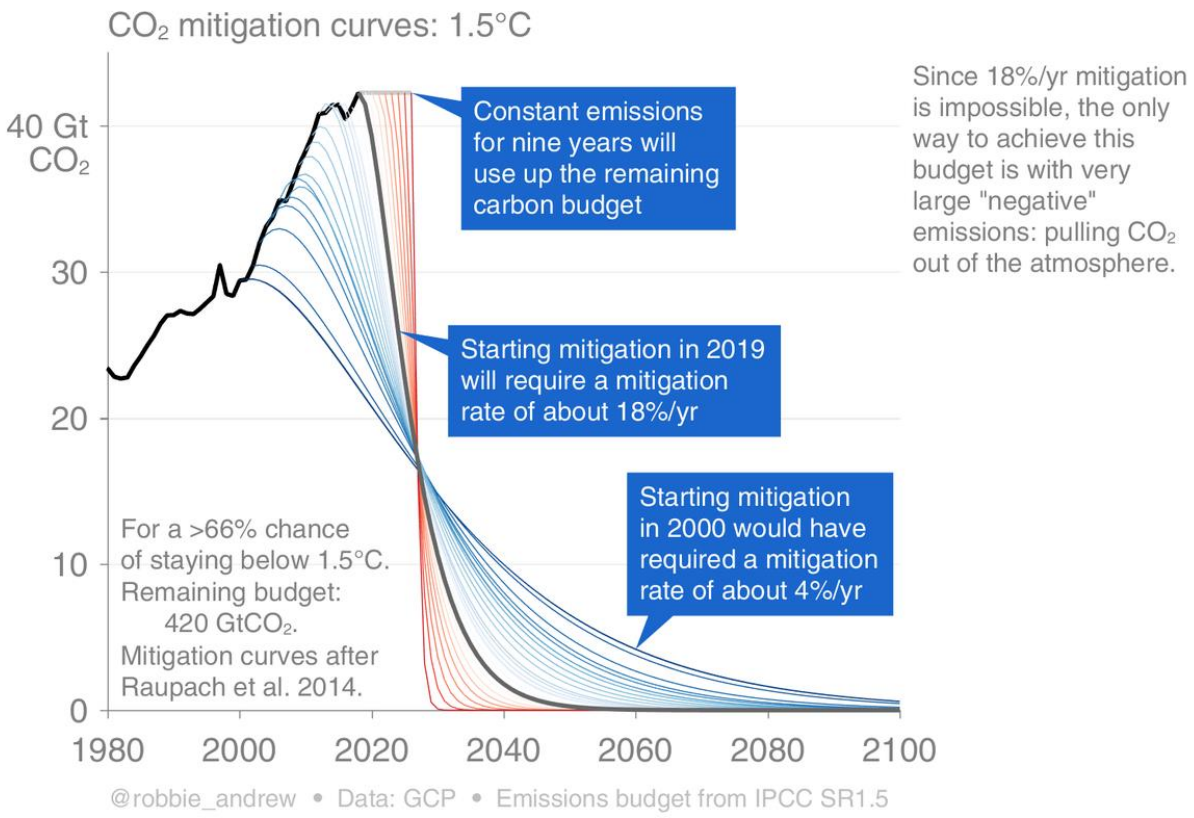
But if not yours, whose job is telling us the true emergency so we can protect ourselves, as during COVID-19? To point the way to life from death? To say how quickly people must drop everything and go, to stay alive? Look at wildfires approaching people's homes. People won't go until they know it's do or die time.

Your cap-and-invest plan creates a plausible diversion so that people can keep going to work at Boeing, sleeping easy at night, growing the business, flying around the world for selfies, wondering if the government is going to do anything in time or not.

I'm sorry our lawsuit didn't inspire leaders to act in earnest, in collaboration with courts, to do what is both scientifically required and politically lethal: cap emissions fast enough for residents to survive in Washington. Stop us.

The attached chart shows more graphically there is no other time, no chance to get it right, later, in another year or two. Only suffering, the loss of home. For all.

Do the impossible. Make the courts shoot you down. Give other governments the chance to follow your example. You have no choice. Shrug and all the rest is darkness.



The redline paths assumed we kept emissions constant, which we did not and do not plan to do.

FYI, none of these paths depict the steeper cuts needed to return to 350ppm CO2 in this century, our best chance for survival. That ship sailed.

As we advance beyond the year 2019 (in Black, 18% a year), the bottom of the red line hitting Zero emissions advances towards us, demonstrating how we must hit our Zero targets sooner for each year we didn't cut enough.

Given that many other USA states do everything possible to limit action, like creating fees for connecting solar on a rooftop, meaning the country as a whole is very unlikely to cut pollution 18% a year even if Washington state does, do you imagine Washington's planned contribution to cutting emissions in the next five years should be greater sooner than later? Or should we let the Red states end life on Earth and say, 'WA did our part, suckers! This apocalypse belongs on the Republicans!'

Told ya so, is no way to win.

If Ecology was Transportation: Would Dept. of Transportation accept a 66% chance of the West Seattle bridge NOT collapsing, killing dozens of motorists in the next decade? DO you think we should aim to cut faster or slower based on a 66% chance of NOT ending life on Earth? Is 66% a reasonable risk when extinction of most species including ours is the guaranteed result of losing.

Maybe 25% cuts a year is too slow.

How much extra time do you think we have to adjust our plan of attack? Do you think we have a year or a month to spare at this point? How many more extra innings do you think will we earn?

Please.

Take all necessary action out of an abundance of caution, knowing that the courts will support you when push comes to shove, because rights to life come first. The rights of polluters, drivers, businesses, homeowners, all of us, pale against the universal rights to life in a habitable state. Emergency action, not gradual incremental death. If you think I'm wrong, force our courts to rule for commerce over life. If you don't take the fight to them, nobody can. The data proves you are in the right ONLY if you act on the science to stop pollution now, not mincing words, not wasting time.

We ran out of time.