

Time to declare a climate emergency

May 21, 2019

To the Editor,

Did you know that the council climate emergency campaign has spread from Australia to the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and Switzerland? Over 400 city councils have passed motions recognizing we are in a climate emergency to say we need strong action by all levels of government immediately. Most recently Ottawa and Huntsville have declared states of emergency due to recent flooding. Bancroft and Maynooth can expect floods, ice storms, droughts and forest fires with increasing severity and frequency in the near future, jeopardizing our wildlife, ecology population and economy.

The term climate emergency recognizes Earth is at a tipping point of global warming where gradual reduction of CO2 emissions is not sufficient to guarantee a future for our children and way of life. A viable future requires negative emissions immediately across all sectors and yes this means stopping new mines in our area. Drawing down excess greenhouse gases on an industrial scale is needed to create climate cooling quickly. Since both provincial and federal governments have failed to act, municipal government can break the paralyzing bystander effect where no one takes action while waiting for others to make the first move. Town councils can build pressure on higher governments to act by declaring a climate emergency and doing public education on the issue.

We are in the midst of a sixth massive extinction which humanity narrowly survived before. The Earth will survive in a vastly degraded form, but we may not. I asked you urgently to declare a climate emergency now, implementing actions and public education as outlined in www.drawdown.org ? a comprehensive plan of 100 solutions to reverse global warming.

Karen Richardson,
Maynooth