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Slightly edited from a verbatim transcript of Dr. King's presentation at the Water Advocates 3rd Thursday evening workshop held January 18, 2024. The video recording is available at nmwateradvocates.org

"We are confronted by an insurmountable opportunity." – Walt Kelly (attributed)

"We have been keenly aware of the detrimental anthropocentric influence since the industrial revolution for at least 40 years. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has been issuing scientifically backed dire reports for 34 years now. We actually had IPCC scientists threatening to go and strike because their work was being so roundly ignored by policy makers and governments around the world. So, it's not like we didn't know. Our response has been abysmal and continues to be abysmal."

"If you've got an asteroid headed for the Earth and you intercept it out at Neptune's orbit, if you just breathe on it hard, it'll miss the earth by tens of thousands of kilometers. If you intercept it inside Mars's orbit, you've got to set off a nuclear bomb. If you intercept it inside the moon's orbit, you're done. We're probably somewhere in the asteroid belt about now, but action is critical. The earlier we act, the greater the effect will be. We need to do this with proper scientific foundations in parallel with this principled regional water planning. In fact, the scientific investigations can very much support and interact with the regional planning process. And we've got to develop consensus on shared community vision."

"What we are looking at now is not cyclical. There will still be a cycle, but the climate change we're talking about is a downward trend. Our upward trend is our temperature, while a downward trend persists in our water supply. Since we have failed as a species at mitigation, this is already a full-blown crisis. Adaptation is the best we can do."

"However, even in the most optimistic scenario, there is catastrophic climate change that calls for immediate mitigation. That 1% increase of Evapotranspiration (ET) is not at all out of the question. 1% increase in ET leads to a 29% reduction in runoff and recharge. If you crank that ET increase up to 3.5% the percent decrease is 100%. We may find the way we come out of this drought is not by getting more water into the system. It's bringing our average and our median down. Basically, lowering our standards for what constitutes a usable water supply."

"We're such a diverse state, there is no such thing as one size fits all. Not by a long shot. We're going to have to develop local, administrative schemes in this more permanently arid environment. State water planning must integrate local planning into some sort of a coherent whole. But the real priority is finding what works at the local level."