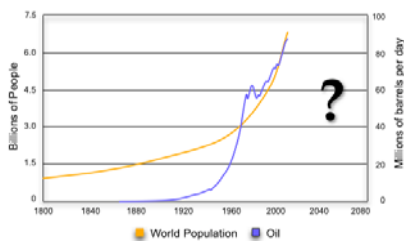




## Your Future -- Challenges, Opportunities, and Transition

History offers many examples of prosperous societies and civilizations. Unfortunately, the record also shows that all of them eventually failed, whether slowly or catastrophically, because they did not recognize danger signs and make necessary adjustments. Most often, the keystone characteristic in past declines has been depletion of a critical resource or severe damage to their environment.

Today's modern global civilization, with its amazing technologies, high levels of advanced education, and seemingly limitless ability to solve emerging problems, would seem to be immune to such a fate. But we are not immune. The keystone resource at the heart of our multiple converging crises is oil. Climate disruption also looms as an environmental crisis with a high level of destructive potential. Combined, oil and climate are a massive "twin challenge" to our current pattern of exponential growth in economic activity and population. The ongoing financial crisis is a wildcard that promises to make dealing with other problems even more difficult.



**The 20th century saw an ever-expanding supply of oil; the 21st century will see a reversal of that trend, with predictably troublesome consequences.**

Like the rest of the United States and the world, your town or city faces significant challenges to continued prosperity. The seriousness of the economic crisis is clear enough from the daily headlines. That peak oil and climate disruption are major threats probably seems much less obvious. Consider, though, the following

statements from some national and international heavy hitters:

*"The end-of-the-fossil-hydrocarbons scenario is not therefore a doom-and-gloom picture painted by pessimistic end-of-the world prophets, but a view of scarcity in the coming years and decades that must be taken seriously."*

-- Deutsche Bank

*"We are not good at recognizing distant threats even if their probability is 100%. Society ignoring [peak oil] is like the people of Pompeii ignoring the rumblings below Vesuvius."*

-- James Schlesinger, former US Secretary of Defense and US Secretary of Energy

*"...More warming is already 'in the pipeline,' delayed only by the great inertia of the world ocean. And climate is nearing dangerous tipping points. Elements of a 'perfect storm,' a global cataclysm, are assembled."*

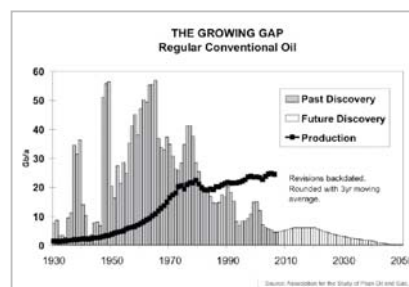
-- Dr. James E. Hansen, physicist, director of the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies

*"Climate change is and will be a significant threat to our national security and in a larger sense to life on earth as we know it to be."*

-- Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, retired, former US Army chief of staff

After a century of production increases, the amount of oil produced worldwide each year has now reached a plateau. In spite of record high prices, additional production growth has not happened. We are now using 6 barrels of "reserve oil" for each new barrel discovered.

In the relevant timeframe, no combination of additional drilling, technological advances, and green energy sources will be able to compensate for the coming decline of oil. This will also mean an overall decline in total energy



**Global discoveries of new oil reservoirs peaked in the 1960s.**

availability, which will necessarily mean a shrinking economy. To ensure continued prosperity, communities must transition to a lower-energy future.

Climate disruption will have serious negative effects on most areas, including decreased agricultural yields; local temperature increases and more severe storms; human health effects, including heat stress, more air pollution, changes in infectious disease patterns, nutritional declines due to worsening food yields.

The coming era will see our lives change radically, whether we want them to or not. However, people have the option to take action at a community level to shape a more desirable future.

Worldwide, hundreds of citizen groups are taking their future in their hands, developing a vision for their towns and a plan for how to achieve their vision. The plans lay out steps to ensure adequate food, shelter, transportation, energy, manufactured goods, and jobs despite threats from peak oil, global economic downturns, and climate disruption.

It's essential that we drive this dramatic transition from the ground up. Those at the top aren't going to do it for us. Your next step is to bone up on what's really going on. *See suggestions on reverse.*



## FOR FURTHER LEARNING ABOUT PEAK OIL AND LOCALIZATION ...

### BOOKS

#### **The Transition Handbook**

*From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience*  
by Rob Hopkins, 2008

#### **Plan C**

*Community Survival Strategies for Peak Oil and Climate Change*  
by Pat Murphy, 2008



#### **Post Carbon Cities**

*Planning for Energy & Climate Uncertainty*  
by Daniel Lerch, 2007

#### **Small is Possible**

*Life in a Local Economy*  
by Lyle Estill, 2008

#### **Peak Everything**

*Waking Up to the Century of Declines*  
by Richard Heinberg, 2007

#### **The Upside of Down**

*Catastrophe, Creativity, and the Renewal of Civilization*  
by Thomas Homer-Dixon, 2006

#### **Basics of Energy Efficient Living**

*A Beginner's Guide to Alternative Energy and Home Energy Savings*  
by Lonnie Wibberding, 2006

#### **Solar Living Sourcebook**

*Complete Guide to Renewable Energy Technologies and Sustainable Living*  
by John Schaeffer, 2007

#### **Design for Water: Rainwater**

*Harvesting Stormwater Catchment, and Alternate Water Reuse*  
by Heather Kinkade-Levario, 2007

#### **When Technology Fails**

*A Manual for Self-Reliance and Planetary Survival*  
by Matthew Stein, 2007

#### **Depletion and Abundance**

*Life on the New Home Front*  
by Sharon Astyk, 2008.

#### **Food Not Lawns**

*Turn Your Yard into a Garden And Your Neighborhood into a Community*  
by Heather C. Flores, 2006

#### **The Ball Blue Book of Preserving**

by Ball, 2004

### DVDs

#### **The End of Suburbia**

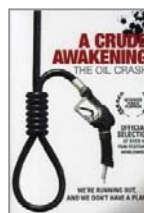
(2004) One of the original Peak Oil movies, but still relevant and an excellent overview of the problems facing suburbanites in the coming years.

#### **Escape From Suburbia**

(2007) This sequel to *The End of Suburbia* extends the reach of the first film. It emphasizes the questions that each of us should be asking ourselves: "When the full force of Peak Oil and related disruptions hits, will I be able to weather the storm doing what I'm doing now? If not, what do I do about it?"

#### **A Crude Awakening—The Oil Crash**

(2007) An excellent introduction to the subject of Peak oil and all of the related topics—the huge rise in human population, living standards, and geographic spread; the economic risk related to high oil prices and fuel shortages; the problems inherent in both non-renewable and alternative energy sources; the ultimate likely impact of "energy descent" on our modern way of life; and the politics of petroleum, including war for oil.



#### **The Power of Community**

*How Cuba Survived Peak Oil*  
(2005) Cuba lost over half its oil imports after the fall of the USSR in 1990. This spelled disaster for its oil-dependent economy and society. But by completely reorganizing its agricultural system and implementing many other changes in day-to-day affairs, Cuba survived. This movie does a good job of showing us how they did it—and how WE might have to do it as Peak Oil kicks in.

#### **What a Way to Go**

*Life at the End of Empire*  
(2007) This is a different sort of "Peak Oil movie." Rather than just focusing on the approaching decline in oil production and its likely effects on our petroleum-powered modern lifestyles, it presents that issue merely as a symptom of a larger problem—modern society as empire.

### WEB SITES/OTHER RESOURCES

#### **Grinning Planet**

*Grinning Planet maintains full lists of books, DVDs, and resources related to peak oil and its coming impact. We also feature articles, online videos, and other cool stuff on energy and environment issues; democracy and the economic meltdown; and where this galactic circus is headed.*

[www.grinningplanet.com](http://www.grinningplanet.com)

#### **Global Public Media**

*Videos, audio interviews, and essays about peak oil and sustainable living*  
<http://globalpublicmedia.com/>

#### **Energy Bulletin**

*Clearinghouse for current information regarding energy supply, related issues*  
<http://www.energybulletin.net/>

#### **Life After The Oil Crash (LATOC)**

*Breaking news related to societal turmoil—peak oil, the financial crisis, ecological limits, and democracy*  
<http://www.lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/BreakingNews.html>

#### **Carolyn Baker**

*Alternative reporting of U.S. and international news*  
<http://carolynbaker.net/>

#### **Sharon Astyk / Casaubon's Book**

*Explorations of a future that will be shaped by peak oil, climate change and economic instability*  
<http://sharonastyk.com/>

#### **You Bet Your Garden**

*Weekly radio shows on organic gardening*  
<http://www.whyy.org/91FM/ybyg/archive.html>

#### **Gardening by the Yard**

*Online video segments and full 1/2-hour shows on (mostly) organic gardening*  
[http://www.hgtv.com/hgtv/shows\\_gby](http://www.hgtv.com/hgtv/shows_gby)

#### **BALLE (Business Alliance for Local Living Economies)**

*Businesspeople dedicated to building local living economies*  
<http://livingeconomies.org/>

#### **Post Carbon Institute**

*Working to prepare society for the coming lower-energy, climate-changed, localized world*  
<http://www.postcarbon.org/>