

Electric bikes in a place with big carbon footprint

VAIL, Colo. – Kim Langmaid was born in Vail and is now on the Vail Town Council. She has a Ph.D. in environmental studies and now uses an electric bike in lieu of a car when driving to work. “By riding my bike to work most days,” she writes in the Vail Daily, “I have reduced my carbon footprint by a half-ton, about the size of half of a hot-air balloon, and I get to be outside enjoying our beautiful summer and having fun while I’m at it.” Langmaid disclosed her change while making the case for the new climate action plan being stitched together in Eagle County. “No political speeches or guilt tripping is allowed. Innovation and fun are referred over doom and gloom,” she writes. But she does report some gloom on the horizon if greenhouse gas emissions are not curbed. Since the 1970s, she says, Eagle County has gained 23 frost-free days, with another 30 projected by 2060. “That has big implications for our ski and snowboarding conditions, our river runoff, the health of our forest and wildlife, and here are increasing threats from extreme wildfires, droughts and floods.” But there’s also this: on a per capita basis, people in Vail and Eagle County use 30 percent more energy than the U.S. average.

