In recent decades the economic costs associated with extreme weather events around the world have increased dramatically. This talk will discuss trends in extreme weather events. I will assess the relative contributions of increasing wealth and population versus possible changes in the frequency and intensity of weather extremes as contributors to the increasing costs of weather-related disasters. I will draw upon the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which has assessed evidence on extreme weather events across multiple reports. The issue of climate change has been the focus of considerable political debate, and extreme weather has at times been caught in that debate as a political symbol. I've had a front row seat to those dynamics for more than two decades. In the talk I will also share a bit on my own experiences where science and policy meet, in an environment characterized by heavy politics. There are important lessons here not just for the climate issue, but also scientific integrity more broadly.
Roger Pielke, Jr. has been on the faculty of the University of Colorado since 2001, where he teaches and writes on a range of policy and governance issues, with a focus at the intersection of science and policy. Roger holds degrees in mathematics, public policy and political science, all from the University of Colorado. In 2012 Roger was awarded an honorary doctorate from Linköping University in Sweden and was also awarded the Public Service Award of the Geological Society of America. Roger also received the Eduard Brückner Prize in Munich, Germany in 2006 for outstanding achievement in interdisciplinary climate research. Before joining the faculty of the University of Colorado, from 1993-2001 Roger was a Scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. He is also author, co-author or co-editor of seven books, including The Honest Broker: Making Sense of Science in Policy and Politics published by Cambridge University Press (2007), The Climate Fix: What Scientists and Politicians Won't Tell you About Global Warming (2010, Basic Books) and The Rightful Place of Science: Disasters and Climate Change (2014, Consortium for Science, Policy & Outcomes). His most recent book is The Edge: The War Against Cheating and Corruption in the Cutthroat World of Elite Sports (Roaring Forties Press, 2016).