

# 49TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

## OCTOBER 20 - 21, 2025



**Day 1: October 20**

**07:30 AM - 04:00 PM**

### **07:30 AM** Registration and Exhibits Open

Breakfast Sponsored by **EDP Renewables North America LLC**

### **08:30 AM** Welcome

Tentative, **KY Governor Andy Beshear**

### **08:45 AM** EEC Update: Kentucky's Energy and Environment Programs In a Changing Landscape

Moderator: **Kari Johnson**, Environmental Scientist Consultant II, EEC, Dept for Environmental Protection

**Tony Hatton**, Commissioner, EEC Dept for Environmental Protection

**Angie Hatton**, Chair & Commissioner, EEC, KY Public Service Commission

**Sarah Noble**, Executive Director, EEC, Office of Legal Services

How have changes at the state and federal levels impacted programs across EEC?

This session will give an overview of policy and program shifts and the path EEC programs are taking in navigating new rules and regulations.

### **09:30 AM** From Derailments to Drums: Inside Kentucky's Environmental Emergency Response

**Mac Cann**, Environmental Scientist Consultant, EEC, Emergency Response Branch

The Energy and Environment Cabinet's Emergency Response Team is a vital force in responding to environmental emergencies.

From train derailments to houses with unidentified chemicals, this session will highlight the work done by the agency's first responders and how they work with local officials and regulated entities to protect communities.

### **10:00 AM** Break

Sponsored by **Touchstone Energy Cooperatives**

**10:30 AM Concrete Solutions: 3D Printing Homes for Resilient Futures**

**Dr. Eric Wooldridge**, Professor, Somerset Community College

If moving out of a storm's path is not an option, the next best option is to build better. This session will highlight the innovative floodbuster project led by Somerset Community College (SCC).

Floodbuster 1 is a first-of-its-kind housing innovation initiative that brings together applied research, advanced construction technology, and regional partnerships to address Appalachia's most urgent housing challenges.

Leveraging a decade of leadership in additive manufacturing, SCC has designed a 3D-printed concrete structure with enhanced resilience to natural disasters—marking a significant step toward rethinking how homes are built in the face of workforce shortages, material inflation, and extreme weather.

**11:00 AM MI2 Metals Innovation and Recycling**

**Coming soon**

The Metals Innovation Initiative (MI2) is a Kentucky-based nonprofit that provides collaborative, industry-led executive leadership to attract and promote advanced research, sustainability, commercialization, and talent development in Kentucky's metals industry — and ultimately, to position Kentucky as the preeminent destination for metals innovation.

The Commonwealth's metals industry includes more than 250 facilities, employing over 36,000 people statewide. This session will examine how the organization is advancing the metals industry.

**12:00 PM Networking Lunch**

Sponsored by **Nucor Corporation**

**01:00 PM The Envirome**

**Dr. Aruni Bhatnagar**, Director, Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute

The work being done by the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute at the University of Louisville is garnering international attention. As we begin an afternoon dedicated to some of the groundbreaking research being done in our own backyard, we will hear from the leadership of the Envirome Institute about their future direction.



**01:30 PM Building a Next Generation Data Center**

Moderator: **Dr. Ted Smith**, Director of the Center for Healthy Air, Water and Soil, UofL

**Dr. Mahendra Sunkara**, Professor- Speed School of Engineering, UofL

**Dr. Natasha DeJarnett**, Assistant Professor of Medicine, UofL

**Byron Gary**, Program Attorney, KY Resources Council

Kentucky was propelled to the forefront of the national data center conversation as the U.S. Department of Energy selected the former Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Kentucky as one of four sites for potential AI-focused data centers and supporting clean energy infrastructure.

This session will highlight how traditional energy and nuclear assets are converging with next-generation digital infrastructure. Data centers are the backbone of our digital world—and with the exponential rise in AI, cloud computing, and edge technologies, the next generation of data centers must be faster, greener, smarter, and more secure. Topics will include sustainability, scalability, cooling technologies, and the role of AI and automation in infrastructure management.

**02:30 PM Break****03:00 PM The Ohio River Basin Restoration Plan**

Moderator: **Dr. Chris Lorentz**, Professor of Biological Sciences & Director of Biology Field Station, Thomas More University

**Jordan Lubetkin**, Senior Director, National Wildlife Federation

**Forest Clevenger**, Executive Director, Ohio River Way

**Nick Hart**, Water Policy Director, KY Waterways Alliance

This panel focuses on the Ohio Riverway Plan, a regional initiative designed to revitalize the Ohio River corridor through environmental restoration, active transportation, equitable development, and community health improvements.

The discussion will explore how multi-jurisdictional partnerships are shaping a future in which the river is not only a natural asset but a driver of sustainable economic opportunity, recreation, and resilience.

Experts from planning, public health, environmental justice, and civic engagement will highlight case studies, lessons learned, and emerging strategies to strengthen the social, ecological, and economic fabric of communities along the Ohio River.

**04:00 PM Close of Day 1**

Everyone is invited to join faculty and staff from the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute for drinks, light snacks, and networking in the Lower Atrium. In addition to chatting with the event host about the Envirome Institute and its groundbreaking work, conference attendees can check out posters created by students from Kentucky's universities highlighting research and collaborations with the cabinet.



# 49TH ANNUAL GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

## OCTOBER 20 - 21, 2025



**Day 2: October 21**

**07:30 AM - 04:00 PM**

**07:30 AM** Registration and Exhibits Open

**09:00 AM** Welcome

EEC Secretary, Rebecca Goodman

**09:10 AM** Reviving Mine Lands with Renewable Energy

**Sandy Slayton**, Vice President, Environmental, Rye Development

**Brianne Wilson**, Vice President Development, Rye Development

Rye Development is one of five organizations awarded a share of \$81 million through the U.S. Department of Energy's Clean Energy Demonstration Program on Current and Former Mine Lands.

The Lewis Ridge project, located in Bell County, Kentucky, will be the first pumped storage hydropower facility built in the U.S. in over 30 years. Sited on former coal mining land, the facility will provide up to 287 MW of power with eight hours of energy storage capacity. This session will give an overview of the project and the plan to be operational by 2031.

**09:40 AM** From Waste to Wealth: Unlocking Energy & Opportunity from KY's Organic Byproducts

Moderator: **Hailey Mattingly**, EEC, Federal Program Specialist

**Eduardo Santillan-Jimenez**, Associate Director, University of Kentucky, Center for Applied Energy Research

**Derek Smith**, Environmental Superintendent for the Hawesville Operations, Domtar

**Matt Yarger**, US General Manager, Grissan Renewable Energy

**Auden Kaehler**, Senior Vice President, WSP

This panel will explore how Kentucky is finding new value in organic byproducts by turning materials once considered waste into useful energy. From distilling to agriculture, biofuel technologies like renewable natural gas, sustainable aviation fuel, and combined heat and power are opening the door to new business models, infrastructure investment, and job creation.

**10:40 AM** Break

Sponsored by **Deloitte Consulting LLP**

**11:00 AM Partnerships to Build Stronger Communities**

Moderator: **Dr. Brian Storz**, Environmental Scientist Advisor, EEC, Division of Water

**Debra Cotterill**, Mayor of Maysville, KY

**Kristie Dodge**, Buffalo Trace Area Development District

**Curtis Rosser**, Local Champion

**Ken Woodard**, USACE

**Kiersten O’Leary**, Federal Program Coordinator, EEC, Brownfield Program

Local leaders frequently face complex environmental challenges. This session will highlight the challenging circumstances and innovative solutions that Maysville, Kentucky has implemented to address flooding, brownfields, and community revitalization.

**12:00 PM Finding Our Lenses: Catalyzing Human Experience Innovation**

**Dr. Serenity Wright**, Senior Executive Director for Innovation, Community Health, and Social Impact, UK Innovate

**12:30 PM Networking Lunch**

**01:30 PM Permits, Plans, and Protection: GIS for Mapping a Sustainable Future**

**Sunny Fleming**, Director of Environment, Conservation, and Natural Resources Solutions, ESRI

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools are increasingly empowering communities and stakeholders to make smarter decisions across planning, permitting, and disaster response.

This session explores how mapping, visualization, and GIS are being used to forecast flood risks, streamline permitting, respond to disasters, and strengthen resilience strategies.

**02:00 PM Break**

**02:30 PM Nuclear Panel Update**

Moderator: **Kenya Stump**, Executive Director, EEC, Office of Energy Policy

**Chad Eaton**, Director of Government Affairs, Nucor Corporation

**Joshua Ball**, Chief Operations Officer, SOAR

**Nima Ashkeboussi**, Vice President, Government Relations and Communications, Global Laser Enrichment

**Benjamin Reinke**, Senior Vice President, Global Business Development, X-Energy

**Mercedes Trent**, Manager, Government and International Affairs, Westinghouse

Nuclear energy is a growing part of the energy conversation with technological advancements. This session will cover perspectives from fuel to reactor siting, and discuss the opportunities around supply chain and workforce development.

**04:00 PM Conference Concluded**

