



Kentucky Environmental Education Council (KEEC)
Interagency Subcommittee on Environmental Education Meeting Minutes
February 12, 2026

Meeting Location: My Old Kentucky Home State Park Ballroom Meeting Room, Bardstown, KY

Meeting Time: 1:00 p.m. Eastern

Committee Members in Attendance: Claire Oyler, Division for Air Quality; Carey Ruff, Kentucky State Parks; Nikita Nunez, Division of Waste Management, USTB; Shana Weber, Department for Environmental Protection

Committee Members in Attendance via Teams: Amanda Prewitt, Kentucky Department of Education; Kendall McDonald, Office of Nature Preserves; Kirsten Delamarter, Office of the Secretary, EEC; Amber Hawkins, Division of Water; Hilary Witt, Department for Libraries and Archives; Billie Hardin, Office of Energy Policy

Staff in Attendance: Wesley Bullock, KEEC; Ashley Mike, KEEC; Risa Yost, KEEC; Willa Dawn Bayne, KEEC

A. Introduction

1. Call to Order. R. Yost called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.
2. Quorum. Per KEEC operating policies, the members of the committee present at any meeting of that committee shall constitute a quorum for transaction of business.
3. Approval of January and November, 2025 minutes. Approved by common consent at 1:01p.m.

B. Agency Updates

1. C. Oyler is representing DAQ in Roberta Burnes' place while she is out of town. Agency time has been dominated by digital ADA compliance updates, but they are looking ahead to Earth Day.
2. N. Nunez is working to establish standards of action and is collaborating with other partnerships to revitalize brownfields.
3. C. Ruff is hosting a one-day professional development training course at General Butler State Resort Park in partnership with the Louisville Coalition on the history of enslavement designed to explore methods and strategies for developing comprehensive interpretation at former sites of enslavement. There are currently two open interim historian positions.
4. S. Weber is also working on digital ADA compliance requirements and hosting student interns across departments to support work related to their fields of study.
5. K. McDonald is leading several programs for the OKNP 50th anniversary including native plant posters for educators and refining of the volunteer program to include collection of insects to send to their bee biologist to help create Kentucky's first ever bee list. They are also working on ADA digital accessibility compliance and partnering with ADA agencies to provide hikes for Deaf and hard of hearing participants. They have begun restoration efforts on properties impacted by the tornado in Pulaski and surrounding counties, focusing on native plant restoration. As

President of the Kentucky Native Plant Society, Kendall is helping plan April programming for the organization's 40th annual Wildflower Weekend and is seeking volunteers.

6. K. Delamarter is also working on ADA compliance and requested help identifying resources for the cabinet. With a focus on high-ground initiatives, she is pushing social media engagement and is also open to collaborating with others on social media efforts to promote clean energy initiatives.
7. H. Writt conducts ADA compliance training courses for public libraries and offered support. She will be meeting with archaeology staff to provide additional training and would like to collaborate with the Office of Nature Preserves on programming for Deaf and hard of hearing audiences.
8. A. Hawkins has been updating a multi-topic resource website to be made accessible in the next few months. In partnership with C. Ruff, plans continue for the upcoming festival at Barren River focusing on water education. Tabling opportunities will be made available and there are water activities such as kayaking and rafting planned. Registration is underway. The new DOW director is prioritizing water education in K-12 schools and has proposed a Water Education Month in April. They are planning a five-day event focused on outdoor activities and food-based learning.
9. B. Hardin is partnering with Bluegrass Greensource to host community-wide forums focused on improving home energy efficiency. They are also offering Pre-K teacher workshops on teaching young children about energy conservation and will be reaching out to schools about energy education. Community energy education workshops will run from February 15 to June 30. Additional workshops will focus on equipping teachers with the tools to teach energy concepts. They have funded a UK program on electric vehicles, including battery storage science and racing battery-powered cars. "Solar for All" is scheduled for November, and they will share flyers for the racecar event. Details provided include:
 - i) **KY EEC-OEP NEED Project Energy Ed Teacher Workshops:** FREE 6-hour professional development opportunity that aligns with Kentucky Academic Standards. Program includes certification of professional development recertification hours. Substitute reimbursement. Attendees will receive NEED Curriculum Packet, NEED Resources for the classroom, NEED Science of Energy Kit, support for classroom activities. Workshop dates:
 - March 17 - Louisville at the Hilton Garden Inn
 - March 19 - Harrodsburg at the Mercer County Extension Office
 - March 25 - Murray at the Springhill Suites by MarriottCurriculum simplifies energy's complexity, increases knowledge of energy and energy efficiency, and allows students to see energy in action with hands-on, fun student activities. General topics include energy forms, sources, transformations, electricity, energy efficiency, and conservation.
 - ii) **UK Center for Applied Energy Research/Energy Environment Cabinet Office of Energy Policy Gen E.V. Race** is May 2 at the UK's Orange Lot. Races start at 9 a.m. (ET) Teams from elementary to high school work together to fund, construct, brand, and decorate an electric-powered racecar. They then compete against other schools for all the glory and fun! The GEN-EV program is run in partnership with [Greenpower USA](#), the company that makes the car kits and curriculum, and supported by the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.
10. A. Prewitt promoted [All in for Ag Education Week](#) (March 16-20 and September 21-25). KDE continues to support science education statewide through providing instructional materials that reflect local Kentucky phenomenon and encouraged further contributions. They are open to

connecting with others to provide science lessons structured around the [5E model](#) and partnering with teachers to create an experience for nonformal educators. She introduced the [KY Learning Hub](#) a [free professional learning platform](#) available to all Kentucky educators.

11. R. Yost reported on behalf of Amanda Skidmore regarding several [Train the Trainer Style Days](#) across the state covering basic updates on beekeeping with a goal to raise awareness of invasive species impacting honey bees. State fair tabling sign-ups are also available, for which she is looking for Bee Healthy Kentucky participants.
12. A. Mike shared that the Environmental Education Leadership Corps 2025–2026 service term has filled all available AmeriCorps member slots, and they are now recruiting sites for the 2026–2027 term. Organizations with staff who can serve as mentors but need additional capacity are encouraged to [apply](#).
13. R. Yost updated on the progress of the agency’s Freshwater Experiences project involving stream snorkeling, now in beginning stages.

C. Collaborations

1. New ideas

- i) C. Oyler asked about opportunities for staff to participate in Earth Day activities. A. Prewitt offered information on the Fayette County [Science Fair](#). Additional open discussion was had about possible Earth Day events and volunteer opportunities as well as ADA compliance and best practices. K. McDonald offered guidance such as to avoid using alt text for maps but provide companion descriptive text outside of the map instead.

D. Next Meeting

1. The next meeting is tentatively planned for Tuesday, May 19, 2026 with a location to be determined.

E. Adjournment: At 2:13PM, meeting adjourned.