



WEST VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

2026 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

CLEAN WATER & AIR

Eliminate PFAS from our Water Systems

Implement PFAS Protection Act to protect West Virginia's drinking water and work toward eliminating PFAS ("forever chemicals") in consumer products and industrial use.

Community Air Monitoring

Protect and expand access to public air quality data across communities and government agencies.

Water Quality Standard Updates

Ensure Water Quality Standards that are based on sound science and protective of public health for all water bodies.

Orphaned Gas Well Prevention

Require drillers of new gas wells to set aside money in the beginning into private interest-bearing accounts that will fully cover the cost of plugging wells once drilling is complete.

DEP Gas Inspectors

Support funding to increase the number of DEP gas inspectors; current levels of funding support approximately 24 gas inspectors, too few to monitor nearly 100,000 active wells and tanks.

Support Science

Continue to permit regulators to use the best available science.

Healthy Water & Air Amendment

Implement state constitutional guarantee to clean air and water

Above Ground Storage Tanks

Prevent further rollback of legislation passed after the 2014 chemical spill in Charleston, which made water undrinkable for hundreds of thousands of West Virginians. Recently defeated bills would have relaxed inspection requirements on oil and gas tanks located within zones of critical concern.

FLOODING

Disaster Prevention & Preparedness

Adequately fund the Flood Resiliency Trust Fund, as determined by flood and resiliency experts. West Virginia's flood protection plan has never been funded since its creation in 2004. It is estimated that hundreds of millions of dollars of flood recovery and resiliency projects are needed in West Virginia.

DATA CENTERS

Development Guidelines

Repeal restrictions on local zoning, encourage location on brownfield sites, authorize local referenda, incentivize renewable energy microgrids, and redirect significant tax revenue from state to ALL counties.



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CONSERVATION OF PUBLIC & PRIVATE LANDS

Off-Road Vehicle Restrictions

Keep public lands free of Off-Road Vehicles (ORV) and keep trails non-motorized.

Timbering & "Economic Development" on State Lands

Keep public lands free of timbering, undefined "economic development" projects, and other incompatible uses.

The Rail to Trails Bill

Support updates and corrections to the WV Rail Trails Program to address railroad liability and safety risk concerns.

The River Access from Bridges Bill

Support the Public Waterways Access Act, which would provide public access to bridge crossings and fencing.

Private Landowner Conservation Easements

Protect the property rights of all West Virginia landowners by 1) ensuring their rights to enter into permanent conservation easements with any qualified entity of their choosing; by 2) honoring the wishes of local farmland protection board and landowners to enter into agricultural easements free of time limits and other burdens and 3) keeping carbon offset conservation easements free of unwarranted tax burdens, time limits, and other burdens.

Forest Carbon Sequestration

Prevent efforts to restrict forest carbon sequestration.

ENERGY

Net Metering

Protect and preserve long-standing net metering rules to ensure all solar users are entitled to the existing fair market retail rate.

Ratepayers' Bill of Rights

Protect ratepayers from large or sudden price increases, mandate transparency, and guarantee access to energy of choice.

Community Solar

Encourage local solar cooperation and keep solar power purchase agreements legal.

Renewables

Incorporate into the state's energy portfolio.

CONTACT

Lucia Valentine
lucivalentine10@gmail.com
304-579-0434

Kasey Russell
Russell.kasey@gmail.com
304-542-1994