



# TREEDC Newsletter October 2021



## TREEDC Starts Partnership with Flood Ready Tennessee



*From left to right: Ben Buckner, Fred Polacek CMTA, Logan Matthews, Cooley Public Strategies and Dr. Herb Byrd, UT Vice President*

The Tennessee Renewable Energy and Economic Development Council (TREEDC) recently announced a partnership with Flood Ready Tennessee. This partnership is a coalition of county and city mayors, local elected officials, city administrators, business owners, homeowners, faith leaders, and concerned citizens dedicated to making our state more resilient against the impacts of frequent flooding. The 108 Mayors of TREEDC and Cooley Public Strategies are committed to facilitating the development of green stormwater infrastructure across the state to mitigate floods. You can join the coalition by clicking: [Plan. Prepare. Protect. \(floodreadytn.com\)](https://www.floodreadytn.com) .

Flooding affects every corner of the state costing Tennesseans \$243million annually. Flood Ready Tennessee is urging the state to take a leadership role in coordinating regional flood planning, providing technical and financial resources, and supporting communities in their flood mitigation efforts. TREEDC and Flood Ready Tennessee is asking mayors to join the coalition to tell the stories of their communities and advocate for solutions. For additional questions, reach out to TREEDC President Dwain Land ([mayorland@gmail.com](mailto:mayorland@gmail.com)) at 423-718-3435 or Logan Matthews ([lmattews@cooleyps.com](mailto:lmattews@cooleyps.com)) at 615-968-1800.

## John Schneider “Bo Duke” and Cody McCarver to Attend TREEDC Reception on December 9<sup>th</sup> in Cookeville



*Cody McCarver and John Schneider performs “These Hands”*

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TREEDC President Dwain Land is proud to announce that TREEDC will have a meet and greet with John Schneider and Cody McCarver at the TREEDC reception on December 9<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm at 37 Cedar Restaurant in Cookeville, TN. The reception will kick off the TREEDC Annual Conference on December 9-10<sup>th</sup> at Tennessee Tech University.

Actor/Singer John Schneider is best known for his portrayal of **Bo Duke** in the American television action/comedy series *The Dukes of Hazzard*, **Jonathan Kent** in the TV series *Smallville*, and James "Jim" Cryer on the television series *The Haves and the Have Nots*, created by Tyler Perry.

Cody McCarver was born and raised in Dunlap, Tennessee, home of TREEDC President Dwain Land. He has been entertaining for 35 years. He was a band member for the Confederate Railroad. Cody and John Schneider reached the number one spot on the Country/ Christian charts, with the song "These Hands". Click here: [Tennessee Tech Marketplace \(tntech.edu\)](https://www.tntech.edu) : for more information about the TREEDC Reception and Annual Conference.

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## TREEDC Member Chattanooga Wins 2021 TML Green Leadership Award

During the 2021 Tennessee Municipal League Conference (TML) Conference, the City of Chattanooga received the Annual Excellence in Green Leadership Award. Building on the past success of establishing the City of Chattanooga's first community solar installation, the City has not remained idle in its efforts to bring clean, reliable energy, as well as energy efficiency measures, to better serve the citizens of Chattanooga.



*From left to right West Tennessee Coordinator/Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic, Chattanooga Sustainability Director Erik Schmidt and University of Tennessee MTAS Management Consultant Warren Nevad*

In April of 2021, the City of Chattanooga was awarded a \$950,000 grant from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) from the Volkswagen (VW) Diesel Mitigation Fund. With the City matching over \$300,000 in funds for vehicles, in addition to over \$100,000 for modular compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling infrastructure, the new funds will help to replace 7 medium- and heavy-duty diesel vehicles with 4 propane, 2 CNG and 1 all-electric vehicle equivalents. This project will be the first of its kind for the City to begin exploring alternate fuel and all-electric in this class size, beginning the process of reducing critical greenhouse gas emissions, and providing the necessary knowledge to expand these efforts to the remainder of the City's fleet.

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## TREEDC Member Kingston Wins 2021 TML Small City Progress Award

During the 2021 Tennessee Municipal League Conference (TML) Conference, the City of Kingston received the 2021 TML Small City Progress Award. As has been the case for cities across the country, this past year presented challenges that Tennessee communities couldn't have possibly envisioned. COVID-19 affected us all in so many different ways, both personally and professionally. That said, through it all, the City of Kingston never stopped moving forward. Below are just some of the things that Kingston accomplished during the past year:

- Partnering with Roane County to be named a pilot community of the Tennessee Riverline. This effort, funded by the University of Tennessee, TVA and others, is working toward the creation of a 652 mile continuous, multimodal system of trail experiences along the Tennessee River from its formation in Knoxville, TN, to its confluence with the Ohio River in Paducah, KY. ;
- Construction of a new amphitheater at historic Fort Southwest Point, nestled at the confluence of the Tennessee and Clinch Rivers, with a capacity of over 1,000, to host concerts, weddings, plays and other community events; and
- Made significant improvements to historic downtown, including new sidewalks, decorative lighting and the construction of much needed parking on land that was acquired in partnership with Roane County.



*From left to right City Manager David Boling, Council Member Jeff Griffis, Council Member Tony Brown, Mayor Tim Neal, Council Member Randy Childs and Council Member Stephanie Wright*

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## TREEDC Hosts Roundtable Workshop at Tennessee Municipal League (TML) Annual Conference



*From left to right: Tullahoma Alderman Robin Dunn, UT-MTAS Executive Director Margaret Norris, Niota Mayor Lois Preece, McMinnville Alderman Everett Brock and Billy Whittaker, Bronco Billy.*

During the annual TML Conference, TREEDC Member Billy Whittaker of Bronco Power Boost( [The Bronco Power Boost is an Indoor Battery Operated Generator](#)) conducted an educational session on municipal emergency operations regarding the use of backup power during natural disasters and power outages. Municipal officials from Alcoa, Livingston, Memphis, McMinnville, Niota, Red Bank, Tullahoma and Woodland Mills, attended the roundtable discussion and discussed the potential need for solar battery operated generators to ensure public safety during municipal emergencies.

UT – MTAS Management Consultant/TREEDC Director Warren Nevad also presented an alternative fuels workshop during the conference. Alternative fuels discussed included electric vehicles, compressed natural gas, ethanol, biodiesel and propane. TREEDC also provided an educational booth and introduced Tennessee Energy Services Coalition/TREEDC Member NORESKO and Perfection Group to speak at workshop titled:” Maximizing Your Stimulus Dollars through Utility and Operational Savings” at the conference. Special thanks to TML Executive Director Anthony Haynes and staff for partnering with TREEDC during the annual conference.

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## Franklin Mayor/ TREEDC Middle Tennessee Coordinator Ken Moore Elected as Tennessee Municipal League President

The Tennessee Municipal League elected its 2021-2022 board of directors during its annual conference in Chattanooga. Franklin Mayor Ken Moore was elected president. As president of the TML board of directors, Mayor Moore will help advocate for needed legislative action by the TN General Assembly, represents municipal interests before state departments and agencies, and working through the National League of Cities in Washington will seek to influence federal and local legislation.



*From left to right: McKenzie Mayor Jill Holland, TREEDC Middle TN Coordinator /Franklin Mayor Ken Moore, and Former Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke at a recent conference*

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## TREEDC Member Stanton Lands Nearby Ford Electric Truck and Battery Manufacturing Plant



### Ford Motor Company

Ford Motor Company and battery maker SKI Innovation plan to pump billions of dollars into the West Tennessee economy and bring thousands of jobs with its plans for a new electric vehicle manufacturing plant.

That's going to mean big changes in the small town of Stanton, Tennessee, home to a little over 400 people, and the closest municipality to the Memphis Regional Megasite. Since 2009, Stanton has been the site of the University of Tennessee 5 megawatt solar farm and exhibition center. TREEDC Member Stanton's Mayor, Dr. Allan Sterbinsky, says the town has been positioning itself to prosper from the development for the past decade. The mayor said Stanton is close enough you could ride a bike — or a horse — to work at the Ford plant. "We're hoping to reap all the benefits we can, not just for Stanton, but for all of West Tennessee. The flow will go not just to Stanton but to Jackson and Memphis and Covington and Brownsville and all the other places as well. And we're delighted," he said.

The challenge will be balancing the town's "small-town vibe," which could be attractive to many buyers, with tremendous growth. TREEDC West Coordinator/Bolivar Mayor Julian McTizic stated that this project will be a wonderful opportunity to keep our area youth in our communities for years to come given the fact that this development will create many jobs and opportunities in West Tennessee. TREEDC President Dwain Land added that TREEDC is eager to work with state officials and West Tennessee cities to ensure a successful development of this manufacturing plant.

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## TREEDC Member UT-Chattanooga Receives Funding for New Smart Corridor Project

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's Center for Urban Informatics and Progress (CUIP) was recently awarded a \$1.37 million grant from the National Science Foundation to create Smart Corridor+, a 1.2-mile stretch in downtown Chattanooga that will be used to study traffic flow, public safety and transportation, environmental impacts, and other quality-of-life concerns. Through an online portal, researchers around the world will be able to study Smart Corridor+ with video, computer analysis, performance-measuring tools, continuously updated data, and other technologies to reduce pedestrian injuries and coordinate autonomous and connected vehicles. These funds will also allow for an expansion of the existing MLK Smart Corridor. [Click here](#) to learn more about CUIP and Smart Corridor+.



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## TREEDC Member Knoxville Introduces All-Electric Buses



*KAT Electric Bus*

TREEDC Mayor Indya Kincannon joined Knoxville Area Transit (KAT), elected officials, and others on September 16, 2021 to introduce and celebrate the first all-electric buses to join the KAT fleet. This order of the first 12 vehicles represents a step toward Knoxville’s clean and resilient future – and progress toward the City’s goal of reducing carbon emissions 80% by 2050. Five of the 12 have arrived to-date, the rest are due before the end of the year. An additional 6 vehicles are expected to arrive next year, bringing the total to 18. When the last electric bus arrives, this all-electric group will represent 26% of the total fleet, along with another 41% being hybrid-electrics. A key partner in the electric bus program is Knoxville Utilities Board (KUB). KUB worked with KAT at the outset to ensure that KAT would have enough power to charge as many as 25 all-electric buses in coming years. The charging stations for the first 12 buses are currently being installed.

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## U.S. DOE Announces New Communities LEAP Opportunity

On September 15, U.S. DOE Secretary Jennifer Granholm introduced the Communities Local Energy Action Program (LEAP), a new pilot to facilitate sustained, community-wide economic and environmental benefits. This opportunity is specifically open to low-income, energy-burdened communities that are also experiencing either direct environmental justice impacts or economic impacts caused by a shift away from historical reliance on fossil fuels.



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This initiative is designed to provide communities a single application to access technical assistance from many different U.S. DOE programs. Communities can identify multiple pathways of interest for clean energy-related economic development, including Renewable Energy Planning and Development, Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification Planning and Investment, Clean Transportation Planning and Investment, Carbon Capture and Storage, Energy Site Reclamation and Critical Minerals Processing, Community Resilience Microgrids, and New or Enhanced Manufacturing. Once the communities have been selected for technical assistance, U.S. DOE will match the communities with appropriate technical assistance providers and provide funding. Details on technical assistance (what it is, how to access support, etc.) can be found in the [Opportunity Announcement \(page 2 and Appendix A\)](#). More information on Communities LEAP can be found here: <https://www.energy.gov/communitiesLEAP>. **LEAP applications are due December 17.**

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## TAEBC Releases 2021 Advanced Economic Impact Report



The Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council (TAEBC) recently released an Advanced Energy Economic Impact Report. Advanced energy refers to any technology that makes energy cleaner, safer, more secure, and more efficient. It includes manufacturers and companies that use advanced energy technologies, as well as professional service providers, researchers, and entrepreneurs.

Tennessee's average advanced energy sector salary is much higher than the state's overall average salary (\$63,586 compared to \$47,688). With nearly 394,000 employees at 20,340 advanced energy establishments statewide, total payroll spending amounts to \$25.0 billion. Other findings include:

- By 2019, the advanced energy sector experienced employment growth at a pace higher than overall employment growth (10% compared to 5.1%). Total advanced energy establishments in Tennessee have risen by 11.9%, annual payroll expenditures have increased by 9.9%, and state GDP is up 8.2% since 2016.
- The advanced energy sector is vitally important to the Tennessee economy, accounting for \$45.8 billion in state GDP in 2019—12.2% of total state GDP for that year.
- The more than 16,000 electric vehicles produced in Tennessee each year accounts for nearly 40% of the Southeast's EV manufacturing jobs. In fact, Tennessee ranks number one in the Southeast for EV manufacturing. To date, TNECD reports there has been over \$6.2 billion in capital investment from EV projects, over 19,700 Tennesseans employed by companies with EV operations, and over 4,200 new job commitments.

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## Report: Retained Transportation Spending in the Southeast

The Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE) has released a new report titled, “Retained Transportation Fuel Spending in the Southeast: Electric vs. Internal Combustion Vehicles,” which analyzes how much consumers spend on gas and diesel, how much of that transportation fuel spending remains in a given Southeast state, and how much spending ultimately leaves the jurisdiction. The report examines the fuel spending impact of replacing all on-road gas and diesel-powered cars, trucks, and buses with vehicles that drive entirely on electricity. According to SACE, transportation electrification could provide an economic boon for Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee, with unrealized annual economic benefits of up to \$47 billion, including over \$6 billion in Tennessee alone. Given that electricity is cheaper than gas and diesel fuel, EVs are more efficient than internal combustion vehicles, and electricity is generated, transmitted, and distributed at a local level, the report concludes that electrification of the transportation sector would retain more transportation fuel spending within the region’s economy.



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## TVA Announces Fleet EV Plan



TVA recently announced that it is accelerating plans to incorporate EVs into its fleet, with a goal of electrifying 100% of its light-duty vehicles and 50% of its medium-duty vehicles by 2030. To achieve its goal, TVA intends to add nearly 1,200 light- and medium-duty EVs to its fleet and more than 300 additional charging stations at key TVA locations. TVA has also expanded existing programs to encourage EV usage by employees. The ValleyRide program, which allows employees to rent a vehicle from TVA for travel to other TVA sites, is currently available at the Chattanooga Office Complex and Muscle Shoals. More EVs and locations will be added to the ValleyRide program in the coming years, giving employees an easy option to choose a carbon-free EV for work travel. To learn more about TVA’s commitment to EVs, visit <https://www.tva.com/energy-system-of-the-future/electric-vehicles>.



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## Tennessee State Parks, Rivian Partner on Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

TDEC announced it is partnering with electric vehicle (EV) automaker and automotive technology company Rivian to install Rivian Waypoint EV charging stations at Tennessee State Parks. The goal is to have charging stations available at all 56 state parks system wide, depending on the availability of electricity and planned future park upgrades.



Rivian will oversee the design and installation of the Level 2 chargers, which are compatible with all EV models currently on the road. The open-network chargers can provide up to 11.5 kilowatts of power, enabling EV drivers to top up on miles while enjoying a day trip or an overnight campout. In addition to providing the equipment and overseeing design and installation, Rivian will provide any necessary utility upgrades associated with the charger installation at no cost to the state or taxpayers. Rivian will also cover all network access fees, equipment service, and maintenance for 10 years. Under the estimated timeline, Rivian will begin site surveys and engineering over the summer, with installation beginning as early as Fall 2021 and stretching into March 2022.

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## Southeast States Launch Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Planning Tool

The Southeast Regional Electric Vehicle Information Exchange (SE REVI) is a collaboration of State and Territory Energy Offices from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, and the Virgin Islands focused on sharing information and best practices and collaborating on EV infrastructure planning, policy development, and program implementation. Through SE REVI, the State and Territory Energy Offices are:

- Exploring ways to promote electric transportation solutions in communities that are rural, low-income, or facing disproportionate air quality burdens;
- Examining the role of EV infrastructure during evacuations; and
- Evaluating the use of EVs to build resiliency into power supply delivery

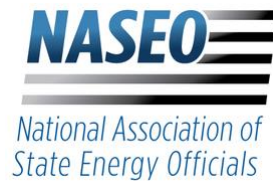
States and territories participating in SE REVI have launched a multi-state map to enable coordination across the region on EV infrastructure investments. The interactive map utilizes various data, including locations of current and planned Level 2 and DC fast chargers, state and national parks, Federal Highway Administration-designated Alternative Fuel Corridors, the location of state information and welcome centers, hurricane evacuation routes, social equity data, and electric service provider territories. Developed with input from each SE REVI participant, the map can be used to inform EV infrastructure investment decisions and to conduct education and outreach on EV infrastructure gaps and opportunities along priority corridors.

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## Energy Sector Workforce Diversity, Access, Inclusion, and Policy Case for Investment

The National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO) has released a new report titled, “Energy Workforce Diversity, Access, Inclusion, and the Policy Case for Investment: Recommendations for State Energy Office Action”. The report details how state energy offices, academia, and the private sector can work together to bolster a qualified and diverse energy workforce and to reach state energy, economic development, and climate goals. Such collaboration could aid competition, innovation, and help traditionally underserved communities to address clean energy and climate needs.

To achieve this, NASEO reports that state energy offices and other leading energy agencies could begin to implement measures such as prioritizing training of underrepresented populations, launching education programs, supporting job placement for disadvantaged workers, putting more public spending toward diverse-owned businesses and workers, and developing partnerships with Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) to tap for advice on policymaking, planning, and workforce development. The report also determines that partners could utilize foundations such as more inclusive procurement practices, paid internships, and workforce surveys to gain a more diverse footing at the state level and begin making long-term inroads. [Click here](#) to access the full report.



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## E-Mobility Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Virtual Conference

The E-Mobility Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Virtual Conference will take place on **November 17-18**. The two-day conference, presented by EVNoire and Forth, will explore and facilitate conversations about strategies and best practices for engaging diverse communities often hit worst and first by air pollution with new EV programs, policies, and outreach strategies. Attendees include e-mobility, transportation, environmental, and social justice professionals as well as advocates from government, utilities, mobility companies, nonprofits, and other organizations. Interactive sessions will explore best practices and lessons learned, highlight case studies, explore tools, build new relationships, and tackle difficult conversations in the e-mobility space. Visit <http://emobilityequityconference.com/> to learn more.



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## Tuscaloosa Rolls Out Robotic Mowers at Annette M. Shelby Park for Cleaner Emissions

The Tuscaloosa City Council's public projects committee approved a three-year, \$32,000 contract with Nashville-based [My Goat Inc.](#), which offers use of the robot mowers and software that controls them. Tuscaloosa officials said these devices can help cut costs on fuel and equipment and allow employees more time to handle other tasks.

Essentially, the city is purchasing the software that will control the mowers while My Goat Inc. will retain ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the devices. The robots will be set up by "shepherds," the name of My Goat Inc.'s marketing team, and controlled by underground wires that serve as barriers for their "pens." Four pens and, initially, two goats, are planned for the park at the corner of University Boulevard and Queen City Avenue.

The robots are meant for turf-level grass — they won't be deployed to tackle overgrown areas, but, once in use, the electric-powered mowers will operate around the clock to maintain the grass level desired by City Hall.

To combat theft, the robots are equipped with global positioning systems that will alert the city to their locations. Additionally, they're designed to shut down if removed from their designated pen. No city worker is slated to lose their jobs over the goats. Rather, city crews will be brought in regularly to handle edging, landscaping and other duties the robotic mowers can't perform.

TREEDC is a firm believer in the devices and predicts that, once deployed over the next month or so, the robotic mowers could mean reduced expenses for taxpayers in the form of lowered fuel costs, equipment maintenance and manpower. For more information, contact Neil Amrhein at [neil@mygoat.co](mailto:neil@mygoat.co) or Meg Musselwhite at [meg@mygoat.co](mailto:meg@mygoat.co).