



TREEDC Newsletter

January 2022



Woodland Mills Adopts TREEDC/MTAS Model Resiliency Resolution



From left to right: Warren Nevad, MTAS, Woodland Mills Mayor Joseph Lewis and Billy Whittaker, Bronco Power Boost

On January 10, 2022, the Woodland Mills, Tennessee Board of Mayor and Alderman became the first local government in Tennessee to adopt by resolution a TREEDC/MTAS Community Resiliency Program. This innovative pilot program consists of a three-tier approach for the city to prepare for natural disasters. The resolution calls for 100 percent of electricity is derived from renewable energy sources by the year 2035, calls for preparation of a climate action plan and sets a goal to equip all municipal, commercial and residential structures with a Bronco Power Boost Eco battery generation that does not emit emissions and works automatically during power outages. The city will apply for grants to procure the eco generators. MTAS and TREEDC will prepare the climate action resiliency plan which includes involvement in the TREEDC TN Flood Ready Coalition. Congratulations, Woodland Mills! For more information contact Warren Nevad at warren.nevad@tennessee.edu

TREEDC- TN Flood Ready Coalition Update



From left to right: Zach Bartscherer, Pew Charitable Trusts, TREEDC President Dwain Land, Red Bank Mayor Hollie Berry and Amanda Maples, Waverly

On January 13, 2022, TREEDC President Dwain Land and Zach Bartscherer of Pew Charitable Trusts, met with key committee leadership in the Tennessee General Assembly. Leaders in both the House and the Senate agreed flooding is a significant problem across our state and are excited to work with the coalition to find solutions.

On Friday, Zach Bartscherer, Dwain Land, Red Bank Mayor Hollie Berry, and Waverly Flood Survivor Amanda Maples met with Brandon Gibson, COO for Governor Lee and Grant Minchew, Legislative Liaison for Governor Lee. The coalition members expressed the difficulty small towns have in accessing resources to address flooding and recommended the Governor look to what other states have done to support communities. With the positive reception, TREEDC expects conversations about solutions with legislators and the Governor's office to continue. A total of 15 counties and 20 cities joined the coalition. Click: ([Plan. Prepare. Protect. \(floodreadytn.com\)](#)). Click: [Group asks Tennessee legislature for statewide flood plan \(newschannel5.com\)](#) to watch a Nashville newscast and comments by TREEDC President Land.

TREEDC Middle Tennessee Coordinator/ Franklin Mayor Ken Moore Joins TN Flood Ready Coalition

Flood Ready Tennessee, a group of Tennessee mayors, emergency managers, homeowners and business leaders advocating for a statewide flood preparedness plan, announced Franklin Mayor /Tennessee Municipal League President Ken Moore has joined the coalition.



Franklin Mayor Ken Moore

“I am honored to join the coalition Flood Ready Tennessee is building among our state’s leaders, responders and citizens,” Moore said. “Flooding threatens Franklin’s homes, businesses and historic buildings. I look forward to working with state leaders to increase flood resilience in Franklin and across the state.”

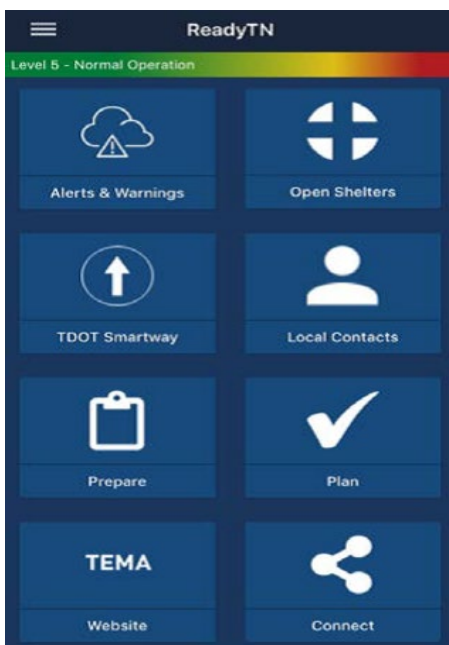
Floods cost Tennessee on average \$243 million every year, according to a 2020 TACIR report. It is far less expensive to prevent damage than it is to recover from it. Every dollar invested in resilience results in up to \$12 in savings.

From 2000-2020, there have been 2,825 flood events in Tennessee, according to the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency’s website. This means a flood happens more than once every three days across the state.

“We welcome Mayor Moore and his wealth of knowledge and experience to the coalition,” said Dwain Land, Tennessee Renewable Energy & Economic Development Council President and former Dunlap, Tennessee mayor. “The devastating floods we’ve seen in just the last year demonstrates the pressing need to not only help communities recover and rebuild, but also prepare for flooding before it happens.”

Mayor Moore has served as TREEDC Middle Tennessee Coordinator since 2009. Following the lead of other southern states like Florida, Texas and South Carolina, Gov. Bill Lee and the Tennessee General Assembly can make thoughtful infrastructure investments and demonstrate smart stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Flood Ready Tennessee is calling for a statewide resilience plan, a state revolving loan fund and infrastructure investment to mitigate flood damage.

Personal Preparedness: Ready TN App



ReadyTN is a mobile device application from TEMA that provides emergency preparedness, response, and recovery information to Tennesseans. The app displays real time weather and emergency alert messages, as well as maps of open Red Cross Shelters, Smartway maps of real time traffic conditions from the Tennessee Department of Transportation, and local emergency management contact information. ReadyTN has resources to help individuals build emergency kits, create emergency plans for themselves and their families, and learn about the emergency hazards Tennesseans face. Download ReadyTN for your mobile device at either the [Apple Store](#) (iPhone) or [Google Play Store](#) (Android).

TREEDC Hosts Awards Reception



*TREEDC President Land Presents State Representative Ron Travis with
TREEDC Legislator of the Year Award*

On December 9, 2021, TREEDC hosted an annual awards reception in Cookeville, Tennessee. TREEDC muddled through the impacts of COVID and TREEDC worked hard to keep our members informed with newsletters, announcements, site visits and phone calls. We also assisted several energy startups with marketing and outreach of their products. Although it was very challenging to organize events, we were able to leverage our resources with the University of Tennessee and the Tennessee Flood Ready Coalition to assist our members with their needs during this pandemic. The following individuals received awards for their hard work in 2021 and support of TREEDC during 2021:

- 1) TREEDC Community Champion: Cookeville Mayor Ricky Shelton.
- 2) TREEDC Legislator of the Year: State Representative Ron Travis
- 3) TREEDC Business Champion: Jeremy Kelly/Ben Buckner, CMTA
- 4) TREEDC Innovator Champion: Billy Whittaker, Bronco Power Boost
- 5) TREEDC Champion: Logan Matthews, Cooley Public Strategies
- 6) TREEDC Environmental Legacy: Randy Johnson, Johnson Energy Solutions

See page 10 for more photos.

TREEDC Launches 2022 Membership Campaign



TREEDC President/Mayor Dwain Land and TREEDC Chairman/UT-Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver

TREEDC Chairman/University of Tennessee at Martin Chancellor Dr. Keith Carver and TREEDC President/Dunlap Mayor Dwain Land have officially launched our 2022 membership campaign. The TREEDC board has kept the 2022 membership dues levels unchanged from prior years. Memberships help pay for expenses related to TREEDC’s outreach, educational and project facilitation for our member local governments. Being a TREEDC member, affords networking and developmental opportunities, sponsorships of various events and participation in our international exchange program.

TREEDC is a 501 C 3 charitable organization. For more information regarding 2022 membership opportunities click <http://treedc.us/membership/index.html>

TREEDC Member County Solar Nears Completion

One of the largest solar farms in the Tennessee is nearing completion in the unincorporated town of Elora, just off U.S. Highway 64. The project was spearheaded by NextEra Energy Resources, the largest solar and wind energy developer in the nation.

NextEra spokesperson Bryan Garner said the solar farm of more than 500 thousand panels spans over a thousand acres, making it one of the Tennessee Valley’s largest renewable energy projects.

The primary customer is Facebook’s [datacenter hub](#) in northwest Huntsville, making the Elora facility a logical location, according to Garner. “First we look for a really good solar resource in this case,” Garner said. “Secondly we look for access to transmission



From left to right: Nancy Harris, Lincoln County Planning Director, UT-MTAS Management Consultant Warren Nevad and Lincoln County Building Inspector Charles Hunter

lines to be able to inject the power into the grid to be able to serve thousands of people. And then finally we look for willing landowners who are willing to partner with us, who are willing to lease their land for a project like this. And then the last element is the customer. We had TVA, who is obviously expanding its renewable energy offerings, and wants to continue to invest in clean energy projects like this one.”

Garner said tax revenue for Lincoln County alone will exceed millions of dollars after the first couple decades in operation. The Lincoln County solar farm is expected to go online within the first quarter of 2022 after the completion of various energy testing. Garner said.

EPB, TVA, Chattanooga to Invest Another \$1.2 Million Home Uplift Program

Building on the successful completion of the 400th Home Uplift energy renovation earlier this year, local power company EPB, the City of Chattanooga, and TVA have announced the investment of another \$1.2 million into the program that provides assistance in reducing energy burden for low-income households. EPB and the City have committed a combined \$600,000 toward the investment—a total which is matched by TVA—with a goal of completing more than 200 home energy upgrades over the next year. Additionally, the program will now allow renters to seek assistance with consent from their landlord.

After successful pilots in Chattanooga and other communities, TVA has invested nearly \$15.4 million to replicate the Home Uplift program in partnership with other local power companies across the Tennessee Valley, resulting in an average of 30% energy savings annually per home. In Chattanooga, program participants have seen on average a reduction of \$400 in energy costs each year. To learn more about Home Uplift, see EPB’s site [here](#) or TVA’s site [here](#).



Metro Nashville Opens its First Net-Zero Energy Building

Metro Nashville's new Central Administration Building is the municipality's first net-zero energy building, which generates more energy that it can use daily. Located near the Cumberland River, the Central Administration Building uses smart lighting, low-flow faucets, and automation systems that raise and lower the temperature in the building based on demand. The building's roof is also outfitted with 500 solar panels that generate power for the building onsite. Excess power from this solar array will be used by the Central Water Reclamation Facility located next door. The Central Administration Building opened two years after the Metro Council passed green building standards to reduce energy and water usage in Nashville's government buildings, including plans for net-zero energy retrofits across 12.5% of metro government-owned buildings by 2032.



Appalachian Voices Launch Solar Finance Fund



The [Appalachian Solar Finance Fund](#) (SFF) is a new program to jump-start commercial and institutional solar projects in coal-impacted communities throughout Central Appalachia. The SFF is using a recent \$1.5 million ARC POWER Initiative award to deploy select subgrant awards for solar projects on nonprofit and public buildings. The SFF also facilitates competitive technical assistance contracts for solar installations on commercial enterprises and develops additional investment and credit enhancement strategies to unlock more solar deployment in the region.

The SFF's service area encompasses 147 coal-impacted counties in six Central Appalachian states, including 18 counties in East Tennessee. Those counties are Anderson, Campbell, Cannon, Claiborne, Coffee, Greene, Hamilton, Knox, Loudon, McMinn, Marion, Monroe, Pickett, Scott, Sequatchie, Unicoi, Van Buren and Warren. A full list of SFF-eligible counties is available [here](#).

The SFF is a project of Appalachian Voices, the Central Appalachian Network, Partner Community Capital, Invest Appalachia and New Resource Solutions that aims to accelerate solar development and economic growth in Central Appalachia. Support for the SFF is provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission's POWER Initiative, the Appalachian Investment Ecosystem Initiative, the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation, New York Community Trust, the Educational Foundation of America, the Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority and other pending sources. The resulting solar projects will produce a powerful convergence of employment opportunities, business creation, new investments and wealth retention in Central Appalachian communities directly impacted by the decline in the coal economy.

Find out more about the SFF and how to apply at solarfinancefund.org, or contact SFF Project Manager Autumn Long at autumn.long@appvoices.org

Spark Cleantech Accelerator Announces Open Applications

The Spark Cleantech Accelerator at the University of Tennessee Research Park's Spark Innovation Center is recruiting early-stage high-growth potential companies that aid the development of decarbonization and other technology solutions targeting the climate crisis while simultaneously supporting Tennessee's advanced energy and circular economies.



The accelerator will provide co-working space at the UT Research Park, a stipend, and access to prototyping facilities at UT to accelerate the participants' progress during a three-month period. Additionally, entrepreneurs will have access to investor and mentor networks with cleantech industry expertise and the opportunity to participate in events held by Spark's regional partners. This comprehensive set of services will assist in participants' commercialization of their technologies in Tennessee and throughout the Southeast.

Recent reports from the Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council show that Tennessee's advanced energy and cleantech industries are thriving, making it the ideal location for early-stage companies to launch solutions that will accelerate the state's transition to a new, clean energy economy. Nearly 394,000 Tennesseans are employed in the sector at more than 20,000 businesses that contribute approximately \$46 billion to the state gross domestic product.

Applications are open for the program through **March 11, 2022**, and the first cohort of the accelerator will begin in June.

TDEC Launches the Environmental Project Idea Compendium (EPIC)

TDEC recently announced the launch of a new tool called the Environmental Project Idea Compendium (EPIC), which allows local governments, colleges and universities, non-profits, and other entities to submit environmental project ideas in various stages of development. TDEC will catalog these project ideas and maintain them in an internal database to promote collaboration, align potential projects with funding and/or financing sources, and proactively prepare for future, potentially time-sensitive funding opportunities.

TDEC's Office of Policy and Sustainable Practices (OPSP) will oversee and administer the program by maintaining the site and database of projects. OPSP will also handle communications. Questions about EPIC should be directed to Jenn Tribble at Jennifer.Tribble@tn.gov or Bryan Davidson at Bryan.Davidson@tn.gov.



U.S. DOE Better Buildings Tools and Resources

U.S. DOE Better Buildings has created a number of useful toolkits for its [Better Buildings Solution Center](#) to assist building owners and managers, government agencies, and businesses and corporations in becoming leaders in energy innovation. These toolkits provide best practices for making the nation's homes, commercial buildings, and industrial plants more energy-efficient:

[Low Carbon Technology Strategies](#) – This new toolkit offers guidance to building owners and operators on how to achieve deep carbon reductions in existing buildings with a primary focus on retrofits and operational strategies.

[Clean Energy for Low-Income Communities \(CELICA\)](#) – This toolkit features lessons learned from the Better Buildings Accelerator's \$335 million commitment to assist low-income, energy-burdened households in accessing energy efficiency and renewable energy benefits and includes a guide to program development and replicable program models for single-family and multifamily housing.

[Energy Savings Performance Contracting \(ESPC\)](#) – This collection of resources enables state and local communities to benefit from the experience of partners who have successfully established and implemented performance contracting. It includes best practices and innovative approaches that states, cities, and K-12 schools have used. Users can easily find the information they need at each stage of their ESPC decision-making process.

[Click here](#) to visit the Better Buildings Solution Center and discover more resources.

American-Made Challenges Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize

Through the [Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize](#), U.S. DOE aims to fund organizations for ongoing and/or proposed activities related to climate and clean energy that build trust, support relationships, and strengthen and partnerships with disadvantaged communities. Specifically, this prize seeks to enable business and technology incubation, acceleration, and other community- and university-based entrepreneurship and innovation in climate and clean energy technologies. Through this prize, a total prize pool of up to \$2.5 million across two phases will be shared by organizations that:



- Are community-centric and have experience in successfully engaging with disadvantaged communities.
- Promote environmental, climate, and energy justice.
- Demonstrate strong community ties.
- Can use their experience to serve as bridges between U.S. DOE and disadvantaged communities; and
- Support clean energy grassroots innovation related to technology advancement in climate and clean energy with a focused impact on disadvantaged communities.

Applications for this prize are due on **February 25 at 5:00 PM Eastern**. [Click here](#) to access the prize rules. [Click here](#) to apply.

2021
TREEDC
Awards



Logan Matthews, Cooley Public Strategies



Cookeville Mayor Ricky Shelton



Billy Whittaker, Bronco Power Boost



Jeremy Kelly/ Ben Buckner, CMTA

In Memorium: Don Darden, Former UT-MTAS Management Consultant



Don Darden, Former MTAS Consultant

This TREEDC Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of Don Darden. Don passed away on December 30, 2021. Don served in the United States Army, most notably during the Vietnam war, and along with other awards received a Joint Service Commendation Medal as well as an honorable discharge.

Don received a Bachelor of Science from Middle Tennessee State University and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Tennessee.

His professional career included becoming the first Executive Director and organizer of the South-Central Tennessee Development District; he wrote the charter forming the South-Central Agency and served as its chairman while County Executive of Coffee County. He also served as City Manager of Jefferson City; City Administrator of LaFollette; and Municipal Management Consultant for the University of Tennessee {MTAS}, from which he retired in 2010. He provided technical assistance to Tennessee cities and taught courses in municipal management, health insurance, and economic development for the university. Don received the highest award given by the Institute of Public Service of the University of Tennessee. Thank you, Don, for your guidance and thoughtfulness to everyone who had the pleasure of working with you. Rest in Peace, Don.