



Full Strategy Summit Details:

When: Tuesday, January 14th and Wednesday, January 15th from 11-2:30pm via Zoom.

Register: At this [link](#).

How to join: All sessions and panels will begin from the main zoom link above. Our team will move you into your breakout room once you are there.

Full Agenda: [At this link](#).

Sponsor the Summit: If you are interested in sponsoring the summit, [please see this form](#).

Facilitation Notes:

It will take about five minutes to move people into breakout rooms. Please plan on about 50 minutes for content and discussion. Our current estimate is 15-45 people per breakout room, though it's impossible to guess. Facilitators will be automatically moved into breakout rooms when sessions begin.

[See all breakout session planning and agenda documents](#)

[Tips for Zoom Here](#), [Tips for Mentimeter Here](#).

Questions?: Please reach out to Molly at molly.updegrove@reimagineappalachia.org

Breakout Session Agenda and Details:

Please be in touch asap if you see errors, typos, or other suggested changes for this description.

This session will be: Wednesday, January 15th at 1:30 pm ET

Title: Session 3A: Building an Appalachian Manufacturing Action Plan

Description:

How can we encourage growth in manufacturing across Appalachia that builds on existing, and re-uses former, assets? Appalachia has enormous potential to become a manufacturing leader in the new clean economy, but how do we get from here to there while ensuring this development is good for workers, communities, and the planet? We'll share high-level results on recent and forthcoming research on the potential for manufacturing in the region while engaging participants in a discussion around the idea of creating a collective and strategic action plan for transforming Appalachia into a hub for sustainable manufacturing.

Facilitator: Amanda Woodrum, Co-Director, ReImagine Appalachia

Notetaker: Kate Rudek, ReImagine Appalachia

Expert in the room:

Bikash Gupta, Sustainable Manufacturing Research Analyst

- Stephanie Gagnon Rodriguez, Senior Manager for Regional Programs, Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES), Key takeaways from the Kentucky manufacturing roundtable

Goals:

- Host a facilitated discussion, informed by research underway, around what is the work we need to do to make Appalachia a global hub for sustainable manufacturing.



Topics to include (brainstorm from partners to this point):

- Open-ended questions: What is the work we need to do to transform Appalachia into a hub for sustainable/modern manufacturing?
- Facilitated discussion:
 - Amanda walks through the graphic - framework to discuss

- Bikash shares a [draft story map](#) of work done to date around where specific opportunities lie.
- Mentimeter polling questions
 - **Word cloud:** What does sustainable manufacturing mean to you?
 - **Open-ended question:** What work do we need to do to make Appalachia a hub for sustainable manufacturing?
 - How do we get from where we are to where we need to go?
- Seeding conversation:
 - Stephanie Gagnon and/or Peter Trousdale , C2ES - Key takeaways from Kentucky roundtable
- Open up to everyone
- **Manufacturing Plan Question for January Summit:**
 - How do we create and drive an Appalachian Manufacturing Action Plan?
 - What should be included?
 - What does this work of growing clean and efficient manufacturing in the region look like in 2025? What is a more long-term strategy and/or goal?
 - Existing assets? New assets needed to build a solid foundation for transforming Appalachia into a manufacturing hub?
 - Hemp, biomaterials, green building into one conversation - we have this preliminary research, how do we build on making Appalachia a hub with new leadership? Do we need to adapt our strategy? Focus on local level? Go on defense?
 - Clean tech: Research being done on wind tech, identifying pieces and parts and existing strengths that work well with needs of the wind supply chain? Do we have similar strengths / assets related to other clean technologies? What should we dig into next?
 - What's the work the region needs?
 - What's the research the region needs?
 - Are there state, local and federal policy asks?

Draft Agenda:

Wednesday, January 15th at 1:30 pm ET

1:30 pm – 1:40 pm – Folks moving into the room, ask them to introduce themselves in the chat. Amanda walks through the goal for the session, shares graphics, and walks the audience through it.

1:30 pm – 1:40 pm – Bikash walks through the story map and key research findings. He will pose two Mentimeter questions.

1:57ish–2:30 pm – Guided discussion and reaction to polling - on what folks would prioritize looking forward to this work?

Stephanie Gagnon Rodriguez, Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) - key takeaways from Kentucky roundtable discussion. Open up the conversation.

Summary of Notes

This session set out to establish the basis of a manufacturing action plan for Appalachia by asking participants *what Appalachia's place in the new clean/green economy should be. Participants discussed the need to look towards opportunities for both establishing new industries and building on existing expertise, the potential to take advantage of the high-demand rare earth minerals found in the region's coal ash, and the state and local policy and environmental goals that can continue to have an impact regardless of national policy.*

Notes

- *What should be in the manufacturing plan?*
- *What is Appalachia's place in the new clean/green economy?*

Amanda shared a framework of principles around transforming Appalachia into a hub for sustainable manufacturing

Make it in Appalachia and Buy Appalachia strategy



Amanda shared some context of the session:

- circular manufacturing
- reuse corridor
- redeveloping shuttered coal plants into eco-industrial parks

Who is our audience?

- advocates for sustainability, good jobs, green manufacturing

Bikash presented on manufacturing strengths work with mapping

Strategy: Path Dependence- develop a plan for where we want to head next

- Phase 1 working to identify competitive strengths (working with NAICS codes and Location Quotient)

- Phase 2 proximal green industrials
- Phase 3 engages with the community to receive feedback

Findings: His study found that the four-state Appalachian region ((PA, KY, WV, OH) has a higher share of manufacturing employment. In other words, they had a high location quotient in various manufacturing sectors, showing the competitive advantage of the region.

- Some top competitive industries: primary metal, wood products, and plastic manufacturing→ the region could build on these sectors.

The story map also has a compilation of findings by county in a visual format, a snapshot of what is happening in the region.

Mapping is also being used in ReImagine Appalachia's other industry-specific reports.

Visit the story map here:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/2304f92c7ae146b0be5877e8902d2c24>

Feedback on the story map is welcome!

Mentimeter poll

Stephanie Gagnon Rodriguez (C2ES), a representative of the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, presented her thoughts.

- Work on policy solutions
- Shared takeaways from the regional roundtable program
(<https://www.c2es.org/lexington-kentucky-advanced-energy/>)- take the federal conversation to the local level
 - Investing in federal solutions will still be important in the administration
 - Electric vehicles, steels for offshore wind, etc made possible by federal policies and incentives
 - Energy community incentives are very important in KY

- Need to make clear that these incentives are benefiting people and the U.S. industry
- Roundtable brought together a wide range of stakeholders
 - Capitalizing on the momentum of green energy investment
 - How can opportunities continue to grow
 - How could state and federal governments support growth in KY

Takeaways

- Skilled former coal plant workers, infrastructure, transportation
- Automotive shift to electric vehicles and batteries
- KY central location for export
- Emerging opportunities in new tech- sustainable aviation fuel, mineral processing, etc.
- Global pressures encouraging decarbonization, growing demand for low carbon products- independent of US politics
- Many companies set emission reduction targets- when looking for facilities, looking for places with cheap, clean power
- Need to invest in green energy to remain competitive
- Community economic development, funding, and technical assistance
- Investments in supportive infrastructure (housing, transportation, childcare)
- Workforce development
 - Skilled workforce moving into advanced energy
 - Need education and messaging around the opportunities available and identifying skill gaps for new training programs

Discussions

1. Is this the right goal: turning Appalachia into a hub for sustainable manufacturing?
2. How do we get there? Now vs long term

Discussion Summary

- Need to plan and move toward new opportunities and industries by spreading the message and creating new training programs to address skill gaps
- Critical materials/ rare earth minerals are essential and domestic demand will be growing- this is important to understand because there will be money here
- Policies can make an impact at all levels, local, state, and federal
- Local environmental goals can be essential for driving change even if national goals change

Discussion in more detail:

William Paolillo:

- The story map looks great. Keep it at the center.
- Don't be afraid of dirty industries like magnesium.
- Everything new will have sustainability built into its 30-year plan.
- Make sites available and get the word out about existing assets.

Amanda's follow-up thoughts:

- Bikash has been working on identifying existing strengths (like cement).
- Coal ash can be put into cement, and rare earth minerals can be extracted from coal ash.
- Continue to look at how liabilities can turn into assets and market it as a win-win for everyone.

Doug Gamble:

- There is a tension between looking backward and trying to figure out what we have and the future needs.
- Be careful not to assume that we have to build on what we already have.
- Need to be prepared for new industries and new skills as well.

William Paolillo:

- Critical minerals will be funded

- These are important to understand
- Will create markets
- Understand these and put them into storymap

Hailey Yang

- Posed two questions: #1 Appalachian region's industries with a competitive advantage and #2 What new businesses are willing to invest?
- How to bring these together? What efforts can be made (by gov or local development) to attract businesses they want to attract?
- Best practices for attraction efforts

Amanda:

- Also thinking about what role existing businesses can play in the new energy economy
- For ex. wind turbine supply chains made in Appalachia
- Inform and educate existing businesses that they can be part of this new supply chain

Mike Shields

- Looking into what makes Appalachia competitive
- Coal ash (rare earth) and waterways for transport

Amanda

- Shutter coal plant sites are regional assets that could be used for redevelopment
- Could be a place for eco-industrial parks

Doug Gamble:

- Who is "we" in these conversations
- Need to make sure people want these ideas
- Who gets to make these calls?
- How do you build capacity for non-capitalists to drive these decisions?

Steve

- How do we leverage money that exists and some policy work
 - Whose policies are you trying to change? Federal, state, business people?
- Who should we try to influence and how?

Stephanie

- Levels of policy need to happen simultaneously
- Think about coordinating between states- remove competition- race to the top
 - Shovel-ready programs can involve state investment- the federal government could provide funding to states or energy communities to create programs
- All policy at all levels is important
- Identify opportunities to reach people who are ready to make change

Rebecca Kiernan

- Local government procurement policies to bolster specific industries
- Waste diversion is an opportunity - a circular waste stream for manufacturing
- State incentives for manufacturing- how do we get state money to go to green manufacturing instead of the Ethane Cracker plant etc?

Steve

- Discussion about that in BlueGreen

Stephanie

- Set climate goals at the local level and corporations setting climate goals is impactful (doesn't just have to be national level)

Steve

- Jan 1, 2026, renewable energy tax credits- new requirements

Amanda

- Create a list of reasons why people should invest in Appalachia
- Special tax credits, domestic production