

NCEL 2026 National Forum Agenda

Thursday, July 23 - Saturday, July 25, 2026

Thursday, July 23
Session and Time
8:00 - 9:30 AM Breakfast
9:00 - 10:30 AM Special Session for New Legislators <i>Session is dedicated for early career legislators (in their 1st or 2nd terms) or new to the NCEL Network</i>
11:00 AM - 2:00 PM Learning Tracks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nature-Based Solutions 101 ● One Health for People and Nature 101 ● Utilities and the Grid 101
2:30 - 5:00 PM Outdoor Activity: Routes to Resilience: Connecting Nature, Health, & Opportunity Through Active Transit
6:00 - 9:00 PM Opening Reception
Friday, July 24
Session and Time
8:00 - 9:00 AM Registration table opens. Breakfast starts serving at 8:00.
9:00 - 10:00 AM Welcome and 2026 Legislative Highlights
10:00 - 11:00 AM Plenary Session: Biodiversity: Bending the Curve of Nature Loss with State Action
11:00 - 11:30 AM Networking Break
11:30 AM - 12:45 PM Concurrent Breakout Sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pesticides, Parkinson's, Pollinators, and Public Health: Policy Approaches for Addressing Toxic Chemical Use ● The Microplastic Reality Check: Impacts and Upstream Interventions

- Energy and Nature Unite: Siting and Permitting, Co-Location, Agrivoltaics, and Other Strategies for Conserving Nature while Deploying Renewable Energy
- Insurance Rates are Rising: How to Ensure Accountability Does Too

12:45 - 2:00 PM

Lunch

2:00 - 2:15 PM

Energy Transition and Electrification with Chair David Hochschild, California Energy Commission

2:15 - 3:30 PM

Plenary Session: States Leading on Energy Affordability & Clean Energy: Lessons Learned from New Jersey & Virginia

3:30 - 3:45 PM

Networking Break with snacks

3:45 - 5:00 PM

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

- ENERGY: Protecting Ratepayers, Utility Reform, and Ensuring Data Centers Pay Their Fair Share
- Cheaper, Faster, and Closer to Home: Unlocking Renewables and Efficiency for a Domestic Energy System
- Beyond Energy: State Solutions for Addressing Data Center Impacts on Land, Water, and Wildlife
- The Physical Toll of the Digital World: Data Centers and Justice-Centered Approaches

7:00 - 10:00 PM

Evening Reception

Saturday, July 25

Session and Time

8:00 - 9:00 AM

Breakfast

9:00 - 9:45 AM

Day 2 Welcome and Upcoming NCEL Events

9:45 - 10:30 AM

Lightning Round

10:30 - 11:00 AM

Networking Break

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Tracks and Tracts: Reimagining Housing, Transit, and Emissions in Montana & Illinois

12:00 - 1:30 PM

Lunch and Awards

1:30 - 2:45 PM

Concurrent Breakouts

- Developing Your State Blue Economy: Bayous, Coasts, and Beyond
- Nature as Preventive Care: Outdoor Engagement and the Future of Public Health
- Strategies for Strengthening State Wildlife Agencies
- Cutting through the Noise: Digging Deep on New & Revived Energy Technologies

2:45 - 3:15 PM

Break and Snack

3:15 - 4:15 PM

Plenary Session: Rising Risks, Retreating Systems: Rethinking Disaster Resilience in a Changing Climate

4:15 - 5:00 PM

2027 Preview and NCSL Prep