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## 41st Annual Ohio Environment, Energy and Resources Law Institute

Thursday, Mar. 19, 2026 | 8:00 AM – 5:45 PM

Friday, Mar. 20, 2026 | 8:15 AM – 4:45 PM

13.75 total CLE hrs. | 2.5 hrs. Professional Conduct

Register for [In-Person](#): **The Ohioan Hotel & Event Center** | 100 Green Meadows Drive South, Lewis Center, OH 43035

*Discounted overnight accommodations are available, see online registration page for details.*

Register for [Webcast Day 1](#) | [Webcast Day 2](#)

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The 41st Annual Ohio Environmental, Energy and Resources Law Institute will feature expert discussions on hot topics in environmental law – both in Ohio and nationally. Sessions will explore data centers' resource requirements, detail different remediation projects and dive into evolving energy needs through discussions on generation and development, as well as coal's legacy, among other compelling topics. This year's conference offers valuable insights for practitioners in energy, natural resources and traditional environmental law.

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## PROGRAM AGENDA

### Thursday, March 19, 2026 | Day 1

7.25 total CLE hours, including 1.25 Professional Conduct Hour

**7:30 In-Person Registration/Breakfast**

**8:00 Welcome and Announcements**

*Megan E. Goedeker, Esq.; McMahon DeGulis LLP; Cleveland*

*Nathaniel B. Morse, Esq.; Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP; Columbus*

**8:15 Nutrients! Regulate? Incentivize? Innovate?**

"[L]ife can multiply until all the phosphorus is gone and then there is an inexorable halt which nothing can prevent." – Issac Asimov, *Life's Bottleneck*. All life – whether tree, corn, soybean or harmful algal bloom – requires phosphorus. To feed our population, farmers must apply nutrients to fields, yet excessive nutrients in our waterways allow harmful algal blooms (HABs) to thrive. Therefore, the goal is to keep nutrients on the field and out of the water: to that all agree. But how best to effectuate that in practice: regulation, incentives or innovation? This panel will discuss the intersection of these strategies in Ohio and how the state continues to lead in both agriculture and clean water.

*Brian Baldridge; Director, Ohio Department of Agriculture; Columbus*

*David E. Emerman, Esq.; Chief Community Officer, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Twinsburg*

*Terry Mescher, P.E.; H2Ohio Program Director; Ohio Department of Agriculture; Maria Stein*  
*Kris Swartz; Farmer and Supervisor, Wood County Soil and Water Conservation District Board; Bowling Green*

**9:30 Break**

**9:45 Break-Out Sessions**

**Option 1 (In-Person and Webcast)**

**Optimizing Insurance for Today's Environmental Challenges**

This session will explore the state of current environmental insurance coverage from current coverage options to strategies for locating and leveraging historic policies to address emerging pollutants.

**Speakers:**

*Meagan R. Cyrus, Esq.; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP; Columbus*  
*Rob Snyder, B.S., M.E.; Vice President, Environmental Risk Management; The Fedeli Group; Independence*  
*Lori L. Siwik, Esq.; SandRun Risk; Cleveland*  
*Michael Crossman; Underwriter – Environmental; Beazley; Philadelphia, Pa.*

**Option 2 (In-Person Only)**

**Restoring and Reviving Ohio's Land and Natural Resources Through ODNR's Abandoned Mine Land Program**

This session will provide the legal and regulatory structure of Ohio's Abandoned Mine Land (AML) Program and examples and discussions of actual AML projects. Topics will include state and federal laws and funding sources, project development and processes, including contracting and other legal issues and examples of both current and completed AML projects in Ohio.

**Speakers:**

*Molly S. Corey, Esq.; Deputy Legal Counsel, Ohio Department of Natural Resources; Columbus*  
*Marissa Geib-Lautzenheiser; Program Manager, Ohio Abandoned Mine Land Program, Ohio Department of Natural Resources; New Philadelphia*

**10:45 Break**

**11:00 Break-Out Sessions**

**Option 1 (In-Person and Webcast)**

**What's in the Air – 2026**

This session will include an air update picking up where we left off last year. Topics will include:

1. What developments have come out of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/Trump.
2. What is new and/or important in air at Ohio EPA.

**Option 2 (In-Person Only)**

**Winds of Change AND Wells of Opportunity: Offshore Energy Choices From Ohio's Past and for Ohio's Future**

This panel will provide an overview of offshore oil drilling and offshore wind energy development in Ohio. The state and local challenges facing wind energy, as well as the growing demand for wind energy and potential for development in Ohio will

**Speakers:**

*Robert Hodanbosi, M.S. ChE; Chief, Division of Air Pollution Control, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Columbus*  
*Kirk P. Lowery; Managing Director, East Region, Trinity Consultants; Columbus*  
*Michael A. Snyder, Esq.; Environmental and Energy Service Line Leader; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP; Columbus*

be discussed. The panel will also discuss the first-ever offshore oil drilling sites in the U.S. on Grand Lake St. Mary's and how these historical sites impact the modern-day oil industry in Ohio and beyond.

**Speakers:**

*Kraig E. Noble, Esq.; Noble, Montague & Moul; St. Mary's*  
*Evelyn R. Robinson, Esq.; Director, PJM Affairs, MAREC Action; Silver Spring, Md.*

**12:00 Lunch**

**1:00 Plugged In: Balancing Data Demand and Environmental Stewardship in Ohio**

This panel will explore the potential benefits and impacts of data center development in Ohio, focusing on how rapid growth and AI-driven demand intersect with power and utility constraints, natural resource usage and environmental siting considerations.

*Douglas W. Babcock, Esq.; Managing Director of Water Policy, Ohio Environmental Council; Columbus*

*Joshua R. Eckert, Esq.; Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP; Columbus*

*Ryan Shrout; Esq.; Federal Solutions Counsel, Parsons Corporation; Stafford, Va.*

**2:00 Break**

**2:15 Break-Out Sessions**

**Option 1 (In-Person and Webcast)**

**Are You Smarter Than a Fifth Year: A Law Student and Young Attorney Breakout Session**

This panel will introduce various practice areas within environmental law through a game-show format, showcasing the panelists' experiences as young attorneys, sharing details on career paths, sub-disciplines, day-to-day tasks, skill-building priorities and early career growth.

**Speakers:**

*Lila M. Appaya, Esq.; Bricker Graydon Wyatt LLP; Columbus*

*Amy Geocaris, Esq.; Assistant Section Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section, Office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost; Columbus*

**Option 2 (In-Person Only)**

**Beyond Retirement: Managing Coal's Legal Legacy**

Explore the emerging federal and state rules and how they extend beyond CCR management and disposal and create legacy liabilities for past and present owners and operators.

**Speakers:**

*Michael E. Born, Esq.; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP; Columbus*

*Jacob Elder, M.S.; Cox-Colvin & Associates, Inc.; Columbus*

*Desiree Loveless, J.D.; Director, Environmental Compliance and Policy; Vistra Corporate Services; Cincinnati*

*Jennifer M. Tharp, Esq.; Squire Patton Boggs  
(US) LLP; Cleveland*

*Janine M. Maney, Esq.; Supervising Attorney,  
Ohio Environmental Protection Agency;  
Columbus*

**3:00 Break  
Presentation of Student Essay Awards**

**3:15 Break-Out Sessions**

**Option 1 (In-Person and Webcast)**

**Ohio's New Fleet of Generation: Demand, Development and Deployment**

This session will provide an overview of future growing demand for electricity within Ohio, regulatory changes that have or could impact construction of different types of power generation and sector-specific considerations for the construction of different types of power generation, including renewables, nuclear and fossil fuel sources. The panel will also discuss important influences that have impacted the existing mix of electricity generation, what external drivers will influence the construction and operation of power generation over the coming years and other factors that will impact power supplies in the coming decades.

**Moderator:**

*Sean Hollowell; Project Manager, Environmental Design & Research; Columbus*

**Panelists:**

*Dylan F. Borchers, Esq.; Bricker Graydon Wyatt LLP; Columbus*

*Rashay Khripunova; Founder and Principal; Sown Strategies; Columbus*

*Anna Sanyal, Esq.; Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP; Columbus*

**Option 2 (In-Person Only)**

**Changing Tides in Environmental Hearts and Minds**

“Unless someone like you care a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.” – Dr. Seuss, “The Lorax”.

Was that your call to action? Is that why you dedicated your career to environmental law? Whether it was a particular issue, an influential law professor or a nursery book, our varying paths to environmental law have shaped our practice. As new associates join our ranks each year, their incoming motivations shift. This panel will examine the changing trends in the numbers, passions and focus of students destined for environmental law.

**Speakers:**

*Mark Bank, J.D. Candidate; Cleveland State University College of Law; Cleveland*

*Nicholas Bryner, J.D., LL.M.; Associate Professor, Louisiana State University, Paul M. Hebert Law Center; Baton Rouge, La.*

*Heidi Gorovitz Robertson, J.D., J.S.D.; Professor, Cleveland State University College of Law; Cleveland*

**4:15 Break**

**4:30 Practical Procedures, Considerations and Ethics of Expert Engagement (Professional Conduct)**

This session will offer a comprehensive overview of the process and practical application of Ohio’s Rules of Professional Conduct regarding confidentiality and client information protection when engaging consulting or testifying experts – from initial hiring through courtroom testimony. The discussion will focus on Rules 1.6 and 2.3.

*Craig A. Cox, CPG; Cox-Colvin & Associates, Inc.; Columbus*

*David M. Edelstein, Esq.; Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP; Cincinnati  
Krystina E. Garabis, Esq.; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP; Columbus*

**5:45 Day 1 Concludes**

**5:45 Social Reception – Sponsored by Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.**  
Enjoy heavy hors d'oeuvres and explore native Ohio wildlife with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources onsite

**8:00- Join your colleagues at the Pub on The Ohioan's Campus and enjoy a late-night  
11:00 snack – Sponsored by T&M Associates**

**Friday, March 20, 2026 | Day 2**

6.5 total CLE hours, including 1.25 Professional Conduct hour

**7:45 In-Person Registration/Breakfast**

**8:15 U.S. EPA's Great American Comeback Initiative and 2026 Enforcement Priorities**  
 Regional Administrator, Anne Vogel, will discuss how U.S. EPA's Region 5 office is implementing Administrator Zeldin's 5-Pillars, and have been especially focused on cooperative federalism and cross-agency partnerships. This session will cover everything from reviewing state primacy packages for coal combustion residuals and upcoming underground injection controls to finding ways to partner with states better on RCRA and CERCLA oversight – all while ensuring environmental protection can occur while incentivizing investment in our economy and creating jobs. Carolyn Persoon, ECAD Director, will also discuss Region 5's implementation of the "compliance first" approach to compliance assurance and civil enforcement and effectively working with Region 5 state partners through cooperative federalism.  
*Carolyn L. Persoon, Ph.D.; Acting Director, Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5; Chicago, Ill.*  
*Anne M. Vogel, Esq.; Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5; Chicago, Ill.*

**9:30 Break**
**9:45 Break-Out Sessions**
**Option 1 (In-Person and Webcast)**
**Landbank Magic: Strategy To Utilize Landbanks To Support Brownfield Acquisitions and Rehabilitations**

Take a look behind the curtain on how landbanks can facilitate and support a brownfield acquisition and rehabilitation from funding and strategic forfeitures through cleanup and development.

**Speakers:**

*Douglas J. Sawyer, Esq.; McMahon DeGulis LLP; Cleveland*  
*Lee A. Stone, Esq.; McMahon DeGulis, LLP; Columbus*  
*Brent R. Smith; Principal, Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc.; Columbus*  
*Steven Tholl; Special Projects Manager, Summit County Land Bank; Akron*

**Option 2 (In-Person Only)**
**The Gorge Dam Remediation Project: How the Implausible Became Possible**

Since 2005, a coalition of community, state and federal partners have removed five dams on the Cuyahoga River to restore water quality, improve wildlife habitat, address contaminated sediment and significantly enhance local quality of life. The culmination of these efforts is the removal of the Gorge Dam, the largest remaining unresolved water quality impediment to the restoration of the Cuyahoga River. The panel will provide an overview of the ongoing remediation and removal project, including permitting, logistical and funding challenges and the partnerships that have moved the project and its many benefits into implementation.

**Speakers:**

*Ann M. Fischbein, Esq.; Assistant Chief Legal Counsel; Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Columbus*

*Elaine Marsh; Watershed Specialist, Summit Metro Parks; Akron*  
*William J. Zawiski, M.S.; Environmental Supervisor, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency – Division of Surface Water; Stow*

**10:45 Break**

**11:00 Attorney General's Office Case Updates**

This panel will explore some recent cases that are relevant to the seminar attendees.  
*Matthew L. Kline, Esq.; Assistant Attorney General, Solid Waste Unit Section, Office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost; Columbus*  
*Nihal Olgun Cevik, Esq.; Assistant Attorney General, Air Unit Section, Office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost; Columbus*

**12:00 Lunch**

**1:00 Directors' Panel**

The directors' panel will provide the conference an opportunity to hear from the directors of the state agencies regarding regulatory and policy updates and considerations, providing the conference an understanding of the administration's priorities and focuses on the state's regulations and upcoming actions.  
*Mike Fraizer; Executive Director, Ohio Water Development Authority; Columbus*  
*Mary C. Mertz, Esq.; Director, Ohio Department of Natural Resources; Columbus*

**2:00 Break**

**2:15 Break-Out Sessions**

**Option 1 (In-Person and Webcast)**

**Return to Nature: Environmentally-Friendly Funeral Options**

This panel will look at some alternatives to the traditional burial that have an environmentally friendly approach. The panelists will include a manager of a natural burial preserve, a captain that runs charters to spread ashes in Lake Erie and the co-founder of a company that does human composting. The panelists will discuss the specifics related to each of their specialties, various special considerations about each and some unique regulatory factors that apply.

**Speakers:**

**Option 2 (In-Person Only)**

**ESG vs. ISO 14001: Room for Two?**

This panel will examine the similarities, differences and points of intersection between ESG reporting and ISO 14001 environmental management systems. The discussion will address how each approaches risk, measurement, documentation and continuous improvement. The panel will explore legal, operational and strategic considerations for organizations. Attendees will gain practical insight into compliance obligations, implementation challenges and emerging expectations relevant to regulated entities.

**Speakers:**

*Richard Benton, C.P.A.; Co-Founder and Chief Financial Officer, Earth Funeral; Orlando, Fla.*

*Jeff Geisinger; Captain, Verktadue Charters; Cleveland*

*Barbara Yoder; Cemetery Manager, Foxfield Preserve; Wooster*

*Audrey Avila, Esq.; Thompson Hine LLP; Chicago, Ill.*

*Julianne Kurdila, Esq.; Environmental, Cleveland-Cliffs Inc.; Cleveland*

*Derek Shadoan; Senior EHS Project Manager/Associate Principal, EnSafe Inc.; Grand Rapids, Mich.*

**3:15**            **Break**

**3:30**            **Lawyering vs. Lobbying: Practical and Ethical Considerations (Professional Conduct)**

This panel will discuss both the practicalities of effectively working with a lobbyist and the ethical requirements that lawyers must consider when lobbying themselves or working with lobbyists. With a specific focus on lawyers engaged in lobbying, this session will cover the ethical regulations of public officers in ORC Chapter 102 and the Joint Legislative Code of Ethics, rules of lobbying and the Ohio Lobbying Handbook, ethical obligations of a lobbyist and how lobbying requirements intersect with the Rules of Professional Conduct for lawyers, specifically confidentiality (R. 1.6), conflicts of interest (R. 1.7-1.10), candor (R. 3.3) and advocacy in non-adjudicative proceedings (R. 3.9). The session will also provide lawyers with practical tips about what a lobbyist can reasonably be expected to accomplish, how a lawyer can support the work the lobbyist is doing and other considerations to best represent a shared client.

*Michael Guastella, B.A.; Director of Public Affairs, Governmental Policy Group, Inc.; Columbus*

*Nathanael J. Jonhenry, Esq.; Cosgrove Jonhenry LLC; Columbus*

*Marisa Myers, M.A.; Director of Government Affairs and Bar Services; Ohio State Bar Association; Columbus*

**4:45**            **Institute Concludes**

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**THANK YOU TO OUR 2026 COURSE PLANNERS!**

Thank you to the Co-Chairs of this year's Planning Committee, Nat Morse and Megan Goedeker, and to the entire Planning Committee, for assembling a timely and interesting agenda with a slate of world class thought leaders. It is because of our dedicated volunteer planners and speakers that the Ohio Environment, Energy and Resources Law Institute is in its 41<sup>st</sup> iteration and is seemingly stronger each year. Please join me in registering for this year's conference!

*Rees Alexander, Esq.; Ohio Bar Environmental Law Section Chair*

**PLANNING COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS**

*Megan E. Goedeker, Esq.; McMahon DeGulis LLP; Cleveland*  
*Nathaniel B. Morse, Esq.; Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP; Columbus*

**PLANNING COMMITTEE**

*Sara S. Blair, Esq.; Legal Counsel, U.S. Operations, Cenovus Energy; Dublin*  
*David E. Emerman, Esq.; Chief Community Officer, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency; Twinsburg*  
*Amanda M. Ferguson, Esq.; Roetzel & Andress; Columbus*  
*Krystina E. Garabis, Esq.; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP; Columbus*  
*Matthew L. Kline, Esq.; Assistant Attorney General, Solid Waste Unit Section, Office of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost; Columbus*  
*Lindsay Rich Steinmetz, Esq.; Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick LLP; Toledo*

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