



2025 Iowa Environmental Council Annual Conference: Schedule at a Glance

All Sessions Take Place at the Upper Gallery (Second Level) of the Olmsted Center at Drake University.

POLICY

ADVOCACY

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

8:30-9:00 a.m.

Registration, Coffee, and Pastries
(Upper Gallery Lobby)

9:00-9:15 a.m.

Welcome — Sarah Green (Parents Hall North)

9:15-10:15 a.m.

OPENING KEYNOTE: Your Brain on Nature: Why Being Outside Makes Us Feel Happier, Healthier, and More Creative
— Florence Williams (Parents Hall North)

10:15-10:30 a.m.

Break and Exhibitor Exploration, Meet the Author/Book Signing with Florence Williams (Upper Gallery Lobby)

10:30-11:30 a.m.

Floods, Droughts, and Extreme Weather: Managing Water Quantity and Quality in Iowa — Keith Schilling, Mary Skopec, Amy Kahler, Colleen Fowle (Parents Hall North)

Defending Environmental Work in a Shifting Federal Landscape — Rayan Makarem, Heather Navarro, Brady Watson, Cody Smith (Parents Hall South)

The Role of Mutual Aid and Community Support During Climate Disasters — Trisha Rivers, Zakariyah Hill, Shakira Meyer, Tyler Henderson, Irene DeMaris (Room 310-311)

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Lunch, Networking, Exhibitor Exploration (Upper Gallery Lobby)

12:30-1:30 p.m.

Listening to Iowans: Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors — Colleen Fowle, Adam Shriver, Tommy Hexter (Parents Hall North)

How We Fight Pollution in Iowa Communities — Terry Langan, Lexi McKee-Hemenway, Corey Dion Lewis (Parents Hall South)

1:30-1:45 p.m.

Break and Exhibitor Exploration (Upper Gallery Lobby)

1:45-2:45 p.m.

Hot Topics in Energy — Joshua Byrnes (Room 310-311)

They Poisoned the World: Life and Death in the Age of Forever Chemicals — Mariah Blake (Parents Hall North)

Restoring Natural Systems in Iowa's Changing Landscape — Heather Jobst, Brian Ritter, Megan Schneider, Cynthia Farmer (Parents Hall South)

2:45-3:15 p.m.

Pop-Up Programming

Hands-On Water Quality and Nitrate Testing Demonstration
(Room 312)

"Iowa's Dirty Secret: The True Cost of Burning Coal" Documentary Screening (Room 313)

The Groundbreaking Polk County Water Quality Report: Key Takeaways (Room 310-311)

"They Poisoned the World" Book Signing with Mariah Blake (Beaverdale Books Table, Lobby)

3:15-4:15 p.m.

CLOSING KEYNOTE: The Climate-Health-Weather Nexus: A Call to Action for Iowa's Future — Chris Gloninger (Parents Hall North)

2025 Iowa Environmental Council Annual Conference Speaker Information

Your Brain on Nature: Why Being Outside Makes Us Feel Happier, Healthier, and More Creative

- Florence Williams, author and journalist

Floods, Droughts, and Extreme Weather:

Managing Water Quantity and Quality in Iowa

- Dr. Keith Schilling, State Geologist of Iowa and Director, Iowa Geological Survey
- Dr. Mary Skopec, Executive Director, Iowa Lakeside Laboratory
- Amy Kahler, Chief Executive Officer, Des Moines Water Works
- Moderator Colleen Fowle, Water Program Director, Iowa Environmental Council

Defending Environmental Work in a Shifting Federal Landscape

- Rayan Makarem, Community Outreach Associate, Environmental Protection Network
- Heather Navarro, Director, Midwest Climate Collaborative
- Brady Watson, Campaign Officer, Climate & Energy Program, Union of Concerned Scientists
- Cody Smith, Director of Climate Initiatives, Iowa Environmental Council

The Role of Mutual Aid and Community Support During Climate Disasters

- Trisha Rivers, Executive Director, Red Sky Nation
- Zakariyah Hill, Executive Director, The Supply Hive
- Tyler Henderson, Fiscal Director, Upper Des Moines Opportunity
- Shakira Meyer, Director of Program Development, Compliance and Reporting, Upper Des Moines Opportunity
- Moderator Deaconess Irene DeMaris, Executive Director, Iowa Faith and Climate Network

Listening to Iowans: Cancer and Environmental Risk Factors

- Colleen Fowle, Water Program Director, Iowa Environmental Council
- Adam Shriver, Director of Wellness and Nutrition Policy, The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement
- Tommy Hexter, Policy Director, Iowa Farmers Union

How We Fight Pollution in Iowa Communities

- Terry Langan, Co-President, Nishnabotna Water Defenders
- Lexi McKee-Hemenway, Campaign Organizer, Iowa Environmental Council
- Moderator Corey Dion Lewis, Founder, My City My Health

Hot Topics in Energy

- Josh Byrnes, Commissioner, Iowa Utilities Commission

They Poisoned the World: Life and Death in the Age of Forever Chemicals

- Mariah Blake, investigative journalist and author

Restoring Natural Systems in Iowa's Changing Landscape

- Heather Jobst, Senior Land Protection Facilitator, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Brian Ritter, Executive Director, Nahant Marsh
- Megan Schneider, Director of Programs Des Moines Metro, Trees Forever
- Moderator Cynthia Farmer, Policy Manager, Center for Rural Affairs

The Climate-Health-Weather Nexus: A Call to Action for Iowa's Future

- Chris Gloninger, Senior Climate Scientist, Woods Hole Group, and meteorologist

POP-UP PROGRAMMING AND MINI-SESSIONS

All day: Pop-Up Book Store Featuring Environmental and Nature-Themed Books: Courtesy of Beaverdale Books

The Groundbreaking Polk County Water Quality Report: Key Takeaways from CISWRA

- Jennifer Terry, Project Lead, Central Iowa Source Water Research Assessment, Polk County
- Dr. Elliot Anderson, Assistant Research Scientist, IIHR-Hydrosience and Engineering, University of Iowa
- Dr. Claire Hruby, Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Sustainability

"Iowa's Dirty Secret: The True Cost of Burning Coal" Documentary Screening

- Jordan Oster, Energy Program Director, Iowa Environmental Council

Hands-On Water Quality and Nitrate Testing Demonstration

- Ginny Malcomson, Water Quality Coordinator, Polk County Conservation
- Christine Curry, Outreach Coordinator, Iowa Division, Izaak Walton League

"They Poisoned the World" Book Signing

- Mariah Blake and Beaverdale Books

Scan to read more
about each
speaker.

