

Valley Pathways Study:

Building a Competitive, Clean Economy

Read what business and community leaders are saying about this landmark economy-wide study for parts of seven Southeast states which quantifies sources of greenhouse gas emissions by economic sectors and addresses the question - What would it take to reach net-zero emissions by 2050?

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“The TVA's significant investments in Kentucky spans electricity generation to natural resource management, economic development to connecting communities. The Valley Pathways Study builds on the foundation of reliable, resilient, low-cost power to meet the increasing energy demands of the future. The study ultimately will help inform activities outlined in Governor Beshear's energy strategy where energy, economic development and the environment intersect to bring resilience community based, energy economic development opportunities that are affordable and sustainable.”

Evan Moser, Data Scientist, Office of Energy Policy Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet



“Valley Pathways study is an unprecedented effort to develop decarbonization pathways across an entire region, and it should be a model for other regions in the United States looking to reduce carbon emissions across all sectors. By taking a holistic view of carbon reduction opportunities, this study provides a pathway for Valley-wide collaboration to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050.”

Dr. William Bryan, Director of Research, Southeast Energy Efficiency Alliance



“The Valley Pathways Study should give folks that live in the Valley hope that with innovation there comes change – positive change – and that innovation can be found in the Valley. You don't have to look at the coasts. We can look right here in the southeast, we can look right here in Appalachia, we can look right here in the Tennessee Valley for some of the solutions that not only will help bring us a cleaner environment, but also new economic opportunities for our state and our country.”

Cortney Piper, Executive Director, Tennessee Advanced Energy Business Council



“We must look at all the economic activities across the region because people are involved in different things that consume energy. Showing that carbon reduction is beneficial to them from the economic perspective, by adopting these strategies, they can help the environment and still improve their bottom line.”

Dr. Ignatius Fomunung professor of civil engineering at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga College of Engineering and Computer Science

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“The Valley Pathways Study has been a big step forward in identifying both the challenges and potential solutions for the Tennessee Valley as we shift towards carbon-free energy. Being among this diverse group of stakeholders as we freely communicated our ideas, questions, and concerns, I have a much better view of the ‘big picture’, and how my role can positively impact it.”

Don Henderson, Energy Manager, USAG Redstone



“Agriculture in the Valley is positioned to lead climate smart solutions through continued research and implementation of science based, economically sound practices. Farmers in the Tennessee Valley have a deep and abiding interest in the protection of the environment and are leaders in conservation practices which benefit the soil, water, and air. Modern agriculture is environmentally sustainable, and farmers strive to constantly improve the environmental resources in their care while playing a significant role in climate solutions.”

Kevin Hensley, Director of Public Policy, Tennessee Farm Bureau



“This study will help address crucial gaps in access and affordability in communities where improvements are needed most. Low- and middle-income communities need help overcoming barriers to things like home energy efficiency upgrades, EVs and charging infrastructure, and the education and workforce development to support implementation of these technologies in the coming years. I look forward to continuing to work with the UT Baker School and TVA as we begin to reach out to local communities and congregations to take the results of this study and use them to find and implement efficient and environmental-justice-minded solutions for those who need them most.”

Daniel Joranko, Coordinator, Tennessee Interfaith Power and Light



The Nature Conservancy applauds TVA and the University of Tennessee for acknowledging the important role clean energy and nature will play in addressing climate change. Today forests in the Valley sequester about 17 Million Metric Tonnes of CO₂e. While this is not enough to offset emissions in the Valley and must be combined with a rapid transition to clean energy, the study shows that forests have an important role to play as a natural climate solution. This is a great case for doing more to protect forests and other natural areas for carbon sequestration, as well as the additional benefits of wildlife habitat, flood protection, recreation, and the timber economy. The Nature Conservancy looks forward to continuing to work to pair natural climate solutions with carbon reductions across energy and other sectors to achieve a net zero future for the Tennessee Valley.

Lindsay Hanna, Director of Government Relations & Climate Policy, The Nature Conservancy in Tennessee

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“It can’t be overstated how important this study is, even if it’s just the first step. By recognizing that this conversation about climate is a priority and seeing it as an opportunity for all sectors of the economy, TVA creates a space for this conversation to occur. There’s a huge economic opportunity that the Tennessee Valley region is already seeing because of decarbonization efforts and commitments from TVA. This study is broadening that conversation, widening the tent, and highlighting how these efforts and opportunities impact everything from new manufacturing to community resilience.”

Erik Schmidt, Director of Sustainability, City of Chattanooga