



**2024 ECOS Spring Meeting**  
**Draft Agenda**  
***Impactful Partnerships: Bigger & Better Together***  
**March 24-27**  
**Austin Marriott Downtown**  
**Austin, Texas**  
**#ECOSpring24**

*As any Texan knows, it takes two for the Texas two-step, with both partners moving in the same direction. In the spirit of the dance, ECOS will explore Texas-sized innovative and diverse partnerships that are delivering enduring environmental progress. Collaboration with federal, NGO, and industry leaders will take center stage in dialogues, interactive workshops, a joint problem-solving session, a special site visit, and a technology fair.*

- 1) *Except where highlighted in green, all sessions are open to all registrants, including press.*
- 2) *The Waterloo Ballroom & Foyer and Meeting Room 502 are located on the fifth floor. Meeting rooms 603 and 604 are located on the sixth floor.*
- 3) *Dress is business casual.*

**Sunday, March 24**

6:00 – 9:00 p.m.	<b>Optional Bat-Watching Private Charter aboard Lone Star Riverboat</b> <i>Check the checkbox when registering to participate in this individually paid, two-hour excursion (open to all attendees and their guests, participation capped at 100). Meet in the hotel lobby at 6 p.m. to walk together to the Lone Star Riverboat Cruises location by 6:30 p.m. for a 6:45-8:45 p.m. charter. The Lone Star dock is West of the Hyatt Hotel by approximately 100 yards, next to the South First Street bridge, and on the south shore of Lady Bird Lake. Light dinner and beverages will be provided by Brightwater Strategies.</i>	208 Barton Springs Rd., Austin, TX 78704
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**Monday, March 25**  
**Land, Water, & PFAS**

7:30 a.m.	<p><b>Registration Desk Open</b> <i>Please stop by the registration desk to receive a name badge to be worn throughout the meeting, including by attendees and their guests.</i></p>	Waterloo Foyer
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.	<p><b>Breakfast</b></p>	Waterloo Salons 1-2
8:15 – 9:15 a.m.	<p><b>Breakout Option #1: ECOS Oil &amp; Gas Caucus (O&amp;GC) – Partnerships to Leverage Hydrogen &amp; Optimize Hydrogen Hubs</b> <i>In an effort to accelerate the deployment of low-cost, clean hydrogen, the federal government is investing billions in the launch of seven Regional Clean Hydrogen Hubs across the country. Hear the perspectives of hydrogen advocate New Mexico, Heartland Hydrogen Hub partner state North Dakota, and members of the Heartland and Pacific Northwest Hubs, as well as an NGO working to ensure that hubs operate responsibly and equitably.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Secretary-Treasurer and O&amp;GC Co-Chair Jim Kenney, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department (moderator)</li> <li>❖ ECOS O&amp;GC Co-Chair Dave Glatt, Director, North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality</li> <li>❖ Nichole Saunders, Director &amp; Senior Attorney, Energy Transition, Environmental Defense Fund</li> <li>❖ Kyle Schaper, Business Development Lead, Williams New Energy Ventures</li> <li>❖ Steve Schueneman, Hydrogen Development Manager, Puget Sound Energy</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
8:15 – 9:15 a.m.	<p><b>Breakout Option #2: ECOS Digital Business Workgroup (DBWG) – Joint Problem Solving on Government Technological Preparedness in the Digital Age (open to states and U.S. EPA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS DBWG Chair Victoria Phillips, Assistant Commissioner for Enterprise Management, Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (moderator)</li> <li>❖ ECOS DBWG Vice Chair Miriam Patrocino, Chief Data Officer, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (facilitator), introduced by ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality</li> </ul>	Meeting Room 603

8:15 – 9:15 a.m.	<p><b>Breakout Option #3: Environmental Research Institute of the States (ERIS) Board Meeting</b> (open to ERIS members, states, and invitees)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ERIS President Scott Thompson, Executive Director, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (moderator)</li> </ul>	Meeting Room 604
9:30 – 10:15 a.m.	<p><b>Opening Plenary Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Call to Order &amp; ECOS Welcome</b>, ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality {5}</li> <li>❖ <b>Self-Introductions by ECOS Members</b> {10}</li> <li>❖ <b>Host State Welcome</b>, ECOS Vice President Jon &amp; Meeting Host Niermann, Chairman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality {5}</li> <li>❖ <b>ECOS Priorities &amp; Agenda Preview</b>, Elizabeth Biser {5}</li> <li>❖ <b>Executive Director's Report</b>, ECOS Executive Director Ben Grumbles {5}</li> <li>❖ <b>Remarks followed by Q&amp;A on Creative Collaboration to Feed Austin</b>, Lisa Barden, Executive Director, Keep Austin Fed, and Vice Chair, Austin-Travis County Food Policy Board, introduced by ECOS Vice President Jon Niermann of Texas {15}</li> </ul> <p><i>In the spirit of partnership, ECOS is working with Keep Austin Fed and the Austin Marriott Downtown to direct excess food from our Spring Meeting to the community organization.</i></p>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
10:15 – 11:05 a.m.	<p><b>Roundtable &amp; Open Discussion: Fresh Takes on Preventing Food Waste</b></p> <p><i>A staggering 30 to 40% of food in the United States goes wasted. In this kick-off dialogue, panelists will highlight state, federal, and community partnerships to better manage organic waste to not only feed those in need but also curb landfill methane emissions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (moderator)</li> <li>❖ Laura Watson, Director, Washington State Department of Ecology</li> <li>❖ Cliff Villa, Deputy Assistant Administrator, U.S. EPA Office of Land &amp; Emergency Management</li> <li>❖ Kori Recalde, Senior Director, Environmental, Social, &amp; Governance, Carrier Corporation</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
11:05 – 11:30 a.m.	<b>Break with Refreshments &amp; Technology Fair</b>	Waterloo Foyer

11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	<p><b>Roundtable &amp; Open Discussion: Regionalization &amp; Consolidation toward an Affordable &amp; Sustainable Water Supply</b></p> <p><i>The need for smart consolidation, regionalization, and shared service arrangements in the water sector isn't new, but the urgency is growing. With a forthcoming U.S. rule requiring water utilities to consider regionalization, this roundtable will address how states can facilitate local decisions to consolidate the nearly 50,000 water systems nationally in ways that improve compliance with the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act and support economic development and environmental justice. Panelists will explore state and federal government roles, potential legal barriers, and best practices in right-sizing utilities to sustainably protect water resources and provide clean and safe drinking water to every neighborhood.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Community Healthy Air Monitoring Partnership Co-Chair Trisha Oeth, Director for Environmental Health &amp; Protection, Colorado Department of Public Health &amp; Environment (moderator)</li> <li>❖ KC Becker, Regional Administrator, U.S. EPA Region 8</li> <li>❖ Jeff McIntyre, President, Texas Utilities for SouthWest Water Company</li> <li>❖ Susan Burke, Principal, Stantec</li> <li>❖ Andrew Kricun, Managing Director, Moonshot Missions</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
12:30 – 1:40 p.m.	<p><b>Lunch with Keynote Address followed by Q&amp;A: The Honorable Charles Perry, Chairman, Texas State Senate Committee on Water, Agriculture, &amp; Rural Affairs, on Trailblazing Legislation on Water Projects, Infrastructure, &amp; Produced Water</b>, introduced by ECOS Vice President &amp; Meeting Host Jon Niermann, Chairman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</p>	Waterloo Salons 1-2
1:45 – 2:35 p.m.	<p><b>Open Problem-Solving Session: Working across Organizations to Strengthen PFAS Risk Communications</b></p> <p><i>Like a "glitter bomb," PFAS gets everywhere – and accurately communicating threat levels to the public can be equally messy business. With ECOS members often identifying PFAS risk communication as a key challenge, a state environmental agency leader and a practitioner will lead an open discussion of best practices and areas of need.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Cross-Media Committee Chair Katrina Kessler, Commissioner, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (moderator)</li> <li>❖ ECOS Alumni Member Mary Gade, Principal, Environmental Stakeholder Strategies (facilitator)</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6

2:35 – 2:40 p.m.	<b>Announcements &amp; Day 1 Wrap-Up</b> , ECOS President Elizabeth Biser of North Carolina	Waterloo Salons 4-6
2:40 – 3:00 p.m.	<b>Break with Refreshments &amp; Technology Fair</b>	Waterloo Foyer
3:00 – 4:10 p.m.	<b>State-U.S. EPA Interactive Session on PFAS Maximum Contaminant Level Implementation, &amp; Cybersecurity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (PFAS moderator)</li> <li>❖ Bob Scott, Commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, and Governor's Cybersecurity Advisor (cybersecurity moderator)</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
4:30 – 8:30 p.m.	<b>Guided Tour &amp; Dinner at Texas Disposal Systems Exotic Wildlife Game Ranch</b> <i>All attendees and their pre-registered guests may board a bus promptly at 4:30 p.m. on Trinity St. in between W. Cesar Chavez St. and E. 2nd St., or drive to the invitation-only Exotic Wildlife Game Ranch. Home to more than 2,000 animals from six continents, the preserve offers a glimpse of around a hundred species and dozens of endangered breeds, some of which can only thrive in captivity. Attendees who arrive by bus will have tour leaders board at the venue. Those who drive should board a bus at the venue. Buses depart the venue to return to the hotel at 8 p.m.</i>	11508 Carl Rd. Buda, TX 78610

## Tuesday, March 26

### Recruitment, Cybersecurity, Air, & Environmental Justice

7:30 a.m.	<b>Registration Desk Open</b> <i>Please stop by the registration desk to receive a name badge to be worn throughout the meeting.</i>	Waterloo Foyer
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.	<b>Breakfast</b>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.	<b>Breakout Option #1: ECOS Federal Facilities Forum on State Priorities in the Cleanup of U.S. DOE Environmental Management Sites &amp; Partnering with DOE's Office of Legacy Management</b> (open to states and invited guests) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Federal Facilities Forum Chair Greg Young, Deputy Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Environment &amp; Conservation (moderator)</li> </ul>	Meeting Room 603

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	<p><b>Breakout Option #2: ECOS Infrastructure Workgroup on Climate Resiliency</b></p> <p><i>To better deploy your water infrastructure investments, come hear how states can benefit from readily available data on potential impacts of extreme precipitation, flooding, sea-level rise, salt-water intrusion, and other events. In addition, participants will share how they are working to provide and protect drinking water, make vulnerable pumping stations more resilient to flooding, and enhance stormwater management.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Infrastructure Workgroup Chair Shawn La Tourette, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (moderator)</li> <li>❖ ECOS Land &amp; Materials Committee Chair Terry Gray, Director, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management</li> <li>❖ Sunny Fleming, Industry Specialist-Environment &amp; Conservation, Esri</li> <li>❖ Kabir Thatte, Vice President of Policy &amp; External Relations, Dig Deep</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	<p><b>Breakout Option #3: Comparison Values &amp; Action Levels for Use in Mobile Air Monitoring</b></p> <p><i>Several states are considering expansion of their mobile air monitoring networks. To help inform your decisions, join the Chief Toxicologist at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality for insight on the use of mobile monitoring reference values to make action decisions on air toxics concentrations during facility incidents, investigations, and extreme weather events.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Dr. Sabine Lange, Chief Toxicologist, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (facilitator), introduced by ECOS Vice President Jon Niermann, Chairman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</li> </ul>	Meeting Room 502
9:15 – 9:40 a.m.	<p><b>Second Plenary Session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ <b>Call to Order &amp; ECOS Announcements</b>, ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality {5}</li> <li>❖ <b>Remarks followed by Q&amp;A</b>, Melinda Chow, Co-Executive Director, and Alondra Fleming-Parra, Program Specialist, Austin Youth River Watch, introduced by ECOS Vice President Jon Niermann, Chairman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality {20}</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6

<p>9:40 – 10:40 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Dialogue &amp; Open Discussion: Cross-Agency Efforts on Workforce Capacity Building</b></p> <p><i>In our ongoing effort to share innovative ideas for recruiting and retaining a talented, engaged, and diverse workforce, ECOS will hear from an array of panelists who are working to inspire youth and develop the next generation of environmental professionals. Hear about the ECOS award-winning Texas Mickey Leland Environmental Internship Program and a recruitment partnership between states and EPA. We'll then open the floor to hear from all attendees about other efforts that are bearing fruit.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Secretary-Treasurer Jim Kenney, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department (moderator)</li> <li>❖ Juanita Baldwin, Education &amp; Outreach Coordinator, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality</li> <li>❖ ECOS Water Committee Chair Dru Buntin, Director, Missouri Department of Natural Resources</li> <li>❖ Meg McCollister, Region 7 Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency</li> <li>❖ Melinda Chow, Co-Executive Director, Austin Youth River Watch</li> </ul>	<p>Waterloo Salons 4-6</p>
<p>10:40 – 11:10 a.m.</p>	<p><b>Break with Refreshments &amp; Technology Fair</b></p>	<p>Waterloo Foyer</p>
<p>11:10 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Roundtable &amp; Open Discussion: Networking across Government to Strengthen Cybersecurity</b></p> <p><i>State environmental agencies are increasingly looking to build resiliency against cybersecurity vulnerabilities that may interrupt business activities or worse. Similarly, states are under increasing pressure to ensure that the critical infrastructure that they regulate is protected. Partnerships among state agencies and with the federal government, as well as through the <a href="#">E-Enterprise for the Environment Digital Strategy framework</a>, can help environmental agencies shore up their digital operations and those of our regulated community.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Bob Scott, Commissioner, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, and Governor's Cybersecurity Advisor (moderator)</li> <li>❖ Jessica Shirley, Interim Acting Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection</li> <li>❖ Tony Sauerhoff, Deputy CISO and State Cybersecurity Coordinator, Texas Department of Information Resources</li> <li>❖ Bridget Bean, Assistant Director, Integrated Operations Division, Cybersecurity &amp; Infrastructure Security Agency</li> <li>❖ Andrew Hildick-Smith, Advisor &amp; Operational Technology Security Lead, WaterISAC</li> </ul>	<p>Waterloo Salons 4-6</p>

12:15 – 1:45 p.m.	<b>Lunch with Keynote Address followed by Q&amp;A on New Directions in the State-U.S. EPA Partnership: The Honorable Janet McCabe, Deputy Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,</b> introduced by ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality	Waterloo Salons 1-2
2:00 – 2:35 p.m.	<b>Keynote Remarks followed by Q&amp;A: The Energy/Environment Conundrum,</b> Dr. Scott Tinker, Director, Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas at Austin, introduced by ECOS Vice President Jon Niermann, Chairman, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	Waterloo Salons 4-6
2:35 – 3:25 p.m.	<b>Roundtable &amp; Open Discussion: Diverse Pathways toward Decarbonization</b> <i>States are joining forces with partners from federal agencies, the private sector, and the NGO community to decarbonize their economies and reach net-zero emissions goals. Hear from leaders in government and the energy and environment sectors about successful strategies – from regulatory and technological approaches to the all-important clean energy permitting upon which decarbonization relies.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Karen Peters, Cabinet Executive Officer &amp; Deputy Executive Director, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (moderator and speaker)</li> <li>❖ ECOS Climate &amp; Energy Workgroup Co-Chair Todd Parfitt, Director, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality</li> <li>❖ Basil Seggos, Commissioner, New York Department of Environmental Conservation</li> <li>❖ Ken McQueen, Secretary, Oklahoma Office of the Secretary of Energy &amp; Environment</li> <li>❖ Kelsey Erickson, Team Lead, Commercial Quality, Chevron Renewable Energy Group</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
3:25 – 3:35 p.m.	<b>Remarks followed by Q&amp;A on the Energy Permitting Improvement Landscape on Capitol Hill,</b> Cheryl Lombard, Senior Program Director - Power, Infrastructure, & Minerals, ClearPath	Waterloo Salons 4-6
3:35 – 4:00 p.m.	<b>Break with Refreshments &amp; Technology Fair</b>	Waterloo Foyer



4:00 – 4:50 p.m.	<p><b>Roundtable &amp; Open Discussion: State Strides in Partnering with Communities on Equity</b></p> <p><i>Increasingly, state environmental agencies are infusing equity and environmental justice into their rules and activities. Join a panel of state environmental justice (EJ) thought leaders as they recount successful approaches on protecting the environment in communities across the country and reflect on lessons learned.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ ECOS Air Committee Chair Leah Feldon, Director, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (moderator)</li> <li>❖ ECOS EJ Workgroup &amp; Steering Committee Co-Chair Serena McIlwain, Secretary, Maryland Department of the Environment</li> <li>❖ ECOS Past President and EJ Workgroup &amp; Steering Committee Co-Chair Myra Reece, Director of Environmental Affairs, South Carolina Department of Health &amp; Environmental Control</li> <li>❖ ECOS Land &amp; Materials Committee Chair Terry Gray, Director, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management</li> <li>❖ John Kim, Director, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency</li> </ul>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
4:50 – 5:00 p.m.	<b>Day 2 Wrap-Up &amp; Call to Adjourn</b> , ECOS President Elizabeth Biser of North Carolina	Waterloo Salons 4-6

**Wednesday, March 27**  
**States-Only Business**

7:00 – 7:30 a.m.	<p><b>Moment of Lone Star Zen</b>, led by Vinyasa yoga instructor Jim Kenney, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Environment Department</p> <p><i>Please bring a mat and/or towel.</i></p>	Meeting Room 603
7:30 – 8:45 a.m.	<b>Breakfast</b>	Waterloo Salons 1-2
8:00 a.m.	<b>Registration Desk Open</b>	Waterloo Foyer
8:45 – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>States-Only Session on Vice Chair Elections, Resolutions, Bylaws Process, &amp; 2026 Spring Meeting Host State Selection</b> (open to ECOS members and staff), led by ECOS President Elizabeth Biser, Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality</p>	Waterloo Salons 4-6
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	<b>Break with Refreshments</b>	Waterloo Foyer
10:45 – 11:45 a.m.	<b>ECOS Executive Committee Meeting</b> (open to ECOS members and staff), led by ECOS President Elizabeth Biser of North Carolina	Waterloo Salons 4-6

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	<p><b>ECOS Site Tour at the Cutting-Edge Balcones Resources Recycling Facility</b></p> <p><i>Before you head home, take a short trip with ECOS to see a state-of-the-art materials recovery facility in action and meet with the General Manager. To attend this free tour, check the checkbox when registering for the meeting. Reach out to Adam Elkins (aelkins@ecos.org) with any questions. Parking at the facility is limited, so please let Adam know if you plan to drive and are able to bring other passengers. ECOS will coordinate any additional ride-sharing to the facility, departing at 12:30 p.m. from the lobby. Wear slacks and closed-toe shoes; vests, hard hats, and safety goggles will be provided onsite. Participants must be 18 or older.</i></p>	9301 Johnny Morris Rd., Austin, TX 78724
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