

2026 Napa Climate Summit Speaker Bios



James (Jim) Reeves currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent/ Vice President for Administrative Services at Napa Valley College where he has served as the Chief Business Officer since February 2022.

Jim's career in higher education spans more than 30 years at several institutions, as a faculty member, department chair, dean of students, vice president, CFO/COO and interim president. In his time at NVC he led the \$114 M student housing project, River Trail Village. In addition, Jim worked with a gifted group of professionals in business services, Facilities, and College Police to identify and refine services and practices to better meet the needs of students and colleagues across the campus.



Amber Manfree, Napa County Supervisor, District 4, Chair of the Board

A fifth-generation Napan, rural resident, and scientist, Amber brings a unique skillset to local governance. Since the 2010s, she has been a strong advocate for sustainable natural resource management in Napa County, serving on the Groundwater Sustainability Plan Advisory Committee and as Board Secretary for Protect Rural Napa, a local nonprofit. Amber's professional background includes work in natural resources management and sustainable transportation.

Amber earned her doctorate in Geography from UC Davis in 2014, specializing in land use change, mapping, and plant ecology. Her postdoctoral research at the UC Davis Center for Watershed Sciences focused on floodplain management and California state agency responses to the 2012–2016 drought. When she's not making maps or reading, Amber enjoys hiking, biking, and spending time with her family.



Rainer Hoenicke

Rainer spent his career at the intersection between environmental management and science. He worked on providing relevant information that enabled the regulation of power plants to avoid the effects of acid rain on lakes and forest environments, and the restoration of urban estuaries in Southern California, San Francisco Bay and Delta. He served for more than 20 years on the Board of Directors of the Napa County Resource Conservation District, became a Master Gardener just before the COVID epidemic, and stays active in contributing to climate adaptation and helping his granddaughter to attract lady-beetles to keep the aphids off the vegetable beds.



Joe Nordlinger

Joseph Nordlinger is the CEO of Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFF), where he leads strategic wildfire resilience initiatives across Napa County. A longtime Napa resident, landowner, volunteer firefighter, and Chairman of the Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council, Joe brings firsthand experience with the growing risks wildfire poses to rural communities and agricultural assets. With more than 25 years of executive leadership experience, he has doubled NCFF’s organizational capacity and secured over \$65 million in grant funding to advance scalable, community-driven mitigation strategies. Joe’s master resilience planning model bridges private sector discipline with nonprofit and public agency collaboration—building durable solutions to protect landscapes, livelihoods, and communities.



Aaron Fairbrook is the Forest Health and Restoration Project Manager for the Napa County Resource Conservation District. Aaron is passionate about forest and stream health and enjoys developing projects that strengthen natural ecosystems and local communities. He has led restoration efforts across Sonoma and Marin counties, from improving stream habitat to advancing wildfire resilience. He is especially motivated by work that helps landowners steward their landscapes. Now working in Napa County, Aaron continues to build partnerships and projects that make a lasting difference.



Lucas Patzek, Ph.D., Executive Director, [Napa County Resource Conservation District](#). Since 2018, Lucas Patzek has served as Executive Director of the Napa County Resource Conservation District, where he champions community-based conservation and integrated, non-regulatory solutions for natural resource management. He has been instrumental in strengthening regional initiatives like the North Coast Soil Hub while actively scaling salmon recovery efforts and major stream and wetland restoration projects across the Napa River watershed. Lucas holds a Ph.D. in Crop Science and draws on a diverse background in sustainable agriculture, public-private partnerships, and

international natural resource consultancy.



Beth Painter

Beth Painter has served District 2 on the Napa City Council since 2020. In her 30+ years in Napa, she has served on various Boards, including the Napa Resource Conservation District, Napa County General Plan Steering Committee, Napa Valley Economic Development Corporation, Leadership Napa Valley, and the City of Napa Planning Commission. She has a Bachelor of Science (Tufts University) and a Master’s Degree (UC Santa Cruz) in Earth Sciences and began a career in Land Use and Planning in 1984. She has over 40 years of work experience in both County Government and in the private sector.



Dave Canny serves as North Coast Regional Vice President at Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E). He is responsible for ensuring the safety, reliability, and quality of service for customers from Marin County to Humboldt. Living and working in the North Coast Region, he has built strong relationships with local communities, using his deep understanding of their needs to develop effective solutions. Previously, Dave was the Senior Director of Wildfire Mitigation at PG&E, overseeing key programs like

Enhanced Powerline Safety Settings (EPSS) and Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS). He has been with PG&E since 2006, leading various teams focused on innovation, emergency response, and customer programs.

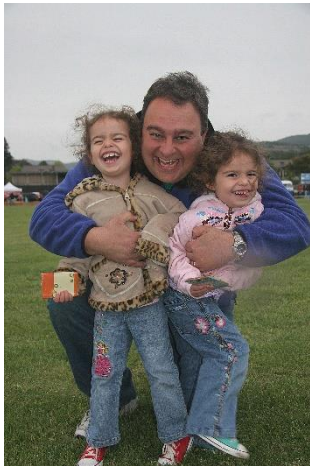


Peter Wittenberg

Peter Wittenberg serves as Director of Intel & Implementation at Energy Vault, responsible for developing and implementing advanced energy solutions incorporating novel energy storage technologies in projects.

With over 10 years of industry engineering experience, Peter has worked with energy storage technology providers, utilities, IPPs, and large energy users across the globe. Prior to joining Energy Vault, Peter served in engineering leadership positions at industry-leading organizations such as Lightsource bp and Renewable Energy Systems Americas (RES). Peter holds Bachelor of

Science degrees in Electrical Engineering and Mathematics from Southern Methodist University.



Kevin Miller, Material Diversion Administrator (Recycling Manager) for the City of Napa since 2005. In this position, he manages the City's Solid Waste and Recycling Division and administers the nationally-awarded City-owned Napa Materials Diversion Facility. Kevin's early interest in reducing waste earned him a B.A. with high honors in Environmental Studies with an Environmental Law Concentration from UC Santa Barbara. He went on to manage the "Buy Recycled" campaign for the Californians Against Waste Foundation and work as the Recycling Coordinator for the City of Folsom. He came to work for the City of Napa in 1997 and has built an effective partnership with Napa Recycling, which continues to invest in innovative technologies to reduce emissions from organic waste.



Linda Brown co-founded SCS Global Services, an international pioneer and leader in third-party certification and standards development for environmental and sustainability claims. Over four decades, she worked to advance SCS' mission to apply the tools of analytical science and third-party auditing in support of sustainable development, helping to develop and implements programs in the fields of sustainable agriculture, green building, responsible forestry and resource management, and much more. For the past two decades, she supported company innovation in the field of climate services, including development of new climate accounting tools under the groundbreaking Global Heat Reduction Initiative.



Javier Montalbo, MCE - Customer Programs Manager for Workforce Development

Javier is the Customer Programs Manager for Workforce Development at MCE, California's first Community Choice Aggregation program providing renewable electricity service to residents and businesses in Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, and Solano Counties. He previously led workforce education and training on energy efficiency and electrification at the PG&E Energy Center, and has supported residential energy programs through roles with Build It Green and Franklin Energy, including contractor support and field inspections of home energy upgrades.



Dr. Sherry Tennyson oversees Career Advising, Employer Partnerships, and Program Development at Napa Valley College's Career Center. With extensive experience in workforce development and community engagement across the Bay Area, she has led culturally responsive programs that expand access to education and employment opportunities and serving diverse communities in (San Francisco and Napa counties). She brings extensive knowledge of local and regional workforce initiatives and a demonstrated record of developing and sustaining impactful programs and strategic partnerships. Her work bridges education, employers, and community organizations to expand equitable access to career pathways.