

Jay Bassett is a systems connector, coalition builder, and regenerative leader dedicated to rethinking humanity's relationship with waste, resources, and community. With nearly four decades of public service as a U.S. Naval Officer and program leader and advisor with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Jay has championed a paradigm shift—from linear systems of extraction and disposal toward circular, equitable, and life-centered approaches that mirror nature's principles.

A recognized expert in sustainable materials management and a pioneer in lifecycle-based policy design, Jay helped guide the transformation of EPA's national waste and materials strategy into one rooted in regeneration, community empowerment, and environmental justice.

He served as EPA's Southeast regional program manager and later as national advisor for Sustainable Materials Management (SMM), where he fostered collaborations that bridged federal goals with grassroots solutions.

Deeply embedded in the Southeast, Jay now works across national, state, and local levels to build capacity in disproportionately impacted communities, empowering them to access federal climate, decarbonization, and circular economy funding. His work with Breaking Barriers and RebuildATL, recipient of a DOE Community Clean Energy prize, exemplifies his commitment to place-based innovation and building community wealth through material reuse and climate resiliency.

Jay's philosophy reflects NRC's values of developing and sharing best practices and policies that support sustainable materials management and the transformation to a circular and economy by enabling regenerative cycles that uplift people and planet together.

Why are you nominating yourself or a colleague for the NRC board of directors?

Former NRC Board member and board chair who stepped down in late 2023 to accept a position with special advisor position with EPA that included embedding and integrating regenerative and circularity principles within EPA in support of climate resilience and community centered revitalization and development as part of its Environmental Justice vision and strategies underserved communities.

Please indicate any experience or skills you plan to bring to the NRC in order to benefit the organization.

Convening, relationship building and connector. Strategic thought leader well versed in policy and advocacy. Government relationships and deep understanding of policy levers. Understand SE US issues and opportunities. Well versed in NGO board and capacity development. Institutional and historic knowledge and expertise on national solid waste, recycling and materials management programs and policies.