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MEDIA ADVISORY

**Roundtable: Powering a sustainable future through lithium extraction
from unconventional sources**

Batteries are critical to powering America’s clean energy future. However, 100% of the lithium that goes into batteries in the U.S. currently comes from foreign sources. The need to develop a domestic supply is urgent in the face of unprecedented demand for lithium to power electric vehicles (EV) and other clean-energy technology. Exponential growth in the EV market means that importation of foreign sources of lithium will be insufficient to meet demand in as little as four years.

Fortunately, the United States has vast reserves of lithium and other energy-critical elements, but accessing those elements and getting them to a usable state will require some work. Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, a Department of Energy national lab, has just launched LiRRIC, the Lithium Resource Research and Innovation Center, to accelerate innovation in [lithium extraction from unconventional sources](#). LiRRIC is bringing together experts from industry, academia, and the national labs to catalyze research needed to improve the economics and sustainability of the lithium cycle and develop new technologies to enable domestic lithium production by 2024.

LiRRIC was founded with the principle that with the correct understanding of resources and technology, the U.S. will be able to produce lithium affordably at scale. Berkeley Lab researchers will discuss how the U.S. can reach that goal with [scientific breakthroughs](#) – in energy-efficient, environmentally sustainable lithium extraction and purification – and leadership, to guide technology development for the greatest economic and environmental benefits.

WHAT: Four Berkeley Lab scientists will briefly describe their work at this [AGU media roundtable](#) and answer any questions.

WHO:

- Michael Whittaker, LiRRIC director and geomaterials chemist in Berkeley Lab’s Earth & Environmental Sciences Area
- Hanna Breunig, research scientist in Berkeley Lab’s Energy Analysis and Environmental Impacts Division and expert in techno-economic analyses
- Peter Fiske, director of DOE’s National Alliance for Water Innovation and desalination expert
- Will Stringfellow, environmental engineer in Berkeley Lab’s Earth & Environmental Sciences Area and expert in industrial waste management

WHEN: Thursday, December 17, 10 – 11 a.m. PST / 1 – 2 p.m. EST

WHERE: AGU’s virtual press room (media can register for the conference [here](#)).

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