



Working towards a sustainable environment and economy since 1995

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



What is WEI?

In January 1996, a diverse group of leaders came together to launch a new organization. With the idea to bring together business, government, and nonprofit organizations to improve Wisconsin’s environment, economy and quality of life, the Wisconsin Environmental Initiative was born.

The founders recognized that state and local governments, businesses and environmental advocates often have more in common than in conflict. By bringing these groups together in programs, policy forums, and learning events, WEI focuses on common values and ways to improve Wisconsin’s environment and economy.

Led by an energetic board and dedicated staff, the organization has held many forums over the years, covering diverse topics such as Doing Well by Doing Good, Green & Growing Strategies, Green Tier Advantage, WI Bioindustry, Quality Urban Development, Animal Agriculture, Energy and Environmental Policy, Shoreland Development, Green Building and Profit-Driven Environmental Management.

World-class speakers including renowned architect Bill McDonough, Ray Anderson, CEO of Interface and green business guru Joel Makower have keynoted WEI’s events, bringing national and global perspectives to state concerns.

In addition, WEI’s nationally recognized Green Built Home program, Main Street Green, and other work to develop stewardship initiatives demonstrate that market-based, affordable programs can help stakeholders evaluate their operations, set goals, and take specific actions towards environmental, social and economic sustainability.

WEI Board of Directors

Richard A. Heinemann, Chair Boardman + Clark
 Jeff Simon, Vice Chair J. Simon Design Build
 Gregory Armstrong, Treasurer Director Emeritus,
 UW-Madison Arboretum
 Joann Kelly, Secretary Madison Gas & Electric
 Tom Boldt The Boldt Company
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
 1000 Friends of Wisconsin
 John Imes, Executive Director WEI

New WEI Website and Effective Social Media Outreach

WEI’s website at www.weigogreener.org features newly updated content and responsive design for ease of navigation. Thanks to Big Rose web design and Hoot Communications for donating the website design and production.

WEI social media posts reached over 260,000 people with 41 posts resulting in over 22,000 link clicks or post engagements. Check out WEI’s Facebook page.

WEI MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN 2019

Wisconsin Green Growth



Today, it’s even more important for stakeholders across Wisconsin to collaborate and establish a solid new direction — one that integrates a green growth strategy to create more prosperous, secure and sustainable communities, address climate change and respect our heritage and tradition of environmental stewardship. WEI works with stakeholders to craft innovative strategies and develop stewardship tools that deliver credible market distinction and better environmental results. Here is a recap and highlights of WEI making a difference in 2019:.

“By investing in clean energy, clean manufacturing, water stewardship, and regenerative agriculture while we “green” our infrastructure and electrify our transportation, we can address climate change and create a more resilient, vibrant and thriving Wisconsin.” — John Imes

WEI Executive Director John Imes wrote a guest column on the Green New Deal: Wisconsin’s Call to Action that appeared in the Sunday Janesville Gazette, the Cap Times and WisPolitics/WisBusiness news sources. The Green New Deal calls for a massive U.S. mobilization over 10 years to achieve the goal of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions while creating millions of high-wage jobs and sustainable economic growth. The column shows how Wisconsin is well positioned to make headway on many of the goals and objectives as outlined in the Green New Deal.

WEI attended GreenBiz 19, the premier annual event for sustainable business leaders with more than 1,200 influential professionals from the world’s largest companies, government, and NGOs — to connect and explore successful new directions, technologies, systems and policies to accelerate more sustainable economic development. WisPolitics/WisBusiness highlighted John’s blog about the event for readers statewide.

WEI sponsored the Summit on Powering Local Leadership in Appleton featuring opening remarks by Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes who reiterated Governor Tony Evers commitment to meeting the Paris Climate Agreement and 100% renewable energy in WI by 2050. The two-day Summit featured sessions on clean energy, equity, and workforce development; preparing for electric vehicles, and ways to get to 100% renewable energy — plus a behind-the-scenes tour of the Bubolz Nature Preserve Microgrid.

The Green New Deal: Idealism or inevitable? Executive Director John Imes spoke at a Wisconsin Technology Council luncheon that included speakers from the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center and the Wisconsin Conservative Energy Forum. WisBusiness.com also covered the event with a feature article and podcast.

Executive Director John Imes had the honor of presenting the at the United Church of Christ (UCC) Synod in Milwaukee, the national body that helps direct evangelical and justice initiatives. After the presentation, the UCC deliberated and then passed the GND resolution by a stunning vote of 662-30 becoming the first U.S. Christian body to endorse the Green New Deal! "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

Business as usual and politics as usual must change if Wisconsin is going to get serious about addressing climate change, attracting workers, and achieving more sustainable economic development. So, WEI welcomed the opportunity to attend the first major Circular Economy event in North America bringing together over 850 thought leaders from leading companies, government, and NGOs on ways to accelerate more sustainable commerce. Executive Director John Imes also attended the WMC Policy Day featuring a keynote address by Governor Tony Evers and sessions on policy and the political landscape. See John's recap.

WEI signed on to the American Sustainable Business Council joint statement to demonstrate our concern for the gravity of climate change and stood with young activists at the Capitol demanding bold action on global climate policy.

"If you believe in climate change and you believe in science, well then it's reasonable to expect that we can accelerate the solutions that are in front of us and create a green economy for the state." "The science demands that we be bold. So, let us be bold." John Imes

Executive Director John Imes attended VERGE 19 with over 3,000 leaders from companies, governments, policymakers, NGOs and start-ups at the cutting-edge of technology and sustainability. See our blog recap <<https://www.weigogreener.org/blog.php>> that features inspirational examples of climate leadership, decarbonizing our cities, circularity in the built environment, scaling electric transit, the enormous potential of the Green New Deal, plus regenerative agriculture, energy resilience and how data and technology are advancing sustainability and more...

WEI and the Badger Volunteers attended the official opening of the historic Garver Feed Mill <<http://www.garverfeedmill.com/>> with a ribbon-cutting and remarks by Governor Tony Evers and Deb Archer, President of Destination Madison, plus other state and local leaders.

"The landmark Garver Feed Mill shows the potential of retrofitting and repurposing existing buildings and infrastructure to reduce social/economic disparities and provide well-paying, accessible jobs," said WEI Executive Director, John Imes. "By creating more jobs in green industries, we can connect the dots between the climate crisis and the need for more sustainable economic development."

WEI was a proud sponsor of The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters Climate Fast Forward event in Madison that brought together over 300 leading stakeholders on ways to "fast forward" climate action including recommendations for how Wisconsin can become a clean energy leader.

For more, please visit the resource page:

<<https://www.wisconsinacademy.org/node/8374>>

Wisconsin has the goods to be a leader in the clean economy, but business as usual, and politics, as usual, must change. Hear Executive Director John Imes discuss the Green New Deal with Helena White on "Wisconsin Getting Hotter" on WORT FM 89.9 FM.



It's not all bad in Washington D.C.

- Executive Director John Imes attended the two-day American Sustainable Business & Advocacy Summit - Making Capitalism Work for All. The National Summit brings together a unique cross-section of thinkers and doers, including business leaders, activists, economists, and elected officials

for conversations on national, state and local policy issues, socioeconomic challenges, and trends, plus networking events and meetings on Capitol Hill about ways we can achieve a clean economy that works for everyone.

Thanks to Madison Essentials magazine for a feature article about WEI: Wisconsin Environmental Initiative in the September/October issue: Wisconsin Green Growth: A Call to Action

<<https://madisonessentials.com/Article/2019-09/WI-GreenGrowth>>

Main Street Green



WEI's work with the Morgridge Center for Public Service Badger Volunteers <https://morgridge.wisc.edu/students/badger-volunteers/> to support Main Street Green initiatives and help the 100 locally-owned independent businesses on Monroe Street "Survive and Thrive included initiatives

around green urbanism and stormwater management practices, zero waste stations, plus community gardening at Prospect Gardens located along the Southwest Commuter path in the Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood. Volunteers also helped at the 42nd Monroe Street Festival and the first annual Good Neighbor Gathering in Brittingham Park featuring six participating Madison west and south side neighborhoods.

Green Built Home



Green Built Home is a national award-winning building initiative that reviews and certifies new homes and multifamily projects that meet sustainable building and energy standards. Certified projects in 2019 included almost 2,500 homes and WHEDA low-income housing units built or remodeled to WEI's Green Built standards.

Executive Director John Imes toured many Green Built certified projects statewide and joined Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) Executive Director Joaquin Altoro and other community leaders to celebrate the grand opening of Seven04 Place, a high-quality affordable housing project located on National Avenue in Milwaukee's Walker's Point neighborhood. The newly built project located on a former brownfield features 46 units of affordable housing for working individuals and families and 14 units for adults struggling with barriers to housing stability. Since 1999, WEI has worked with stakeholders to Green Built Home certify more than 20,000 homes and multi-family units throughout the state.

Clean Clear Waters



A key challenge to protecting and enhancing our Madison area chain of lakes is better management of stormwater runoff. Run-off causes soil erosion and can contain contaminants like motor oils and grease, pesticides, fertilizers, and deicing salt that is harmful to waterways. Each of us can play an

important role in improving our lakes' quality and become better environmental stewards by implementing best practices in our landscaping, lawn care and related efforts to reduce run-off.

In 2019, WEI and the Badger Volunteers spent time on local lakes to view waterfront property use, flooding impacts and opportunities to deploy Clean Clear Waters strategies, including: rain gardens and drainage swales, green infrastructure and porous pavement, native plantings and buffer zones, and the importance of avoiding fertilizers and pesticide application while preserving trees and stream banks to provide protection for fish and aquatic life.

Past Program Successes

Over the years, WEI has developed programs and forums that give stakeholders the opportunity to learn more about sustainable strategies. Wisconsin can gain a competitive market advantage while protecting the state's resources and environment. Some examples of WEI's past programs and events include:

Doing Well by Doing Good: What happens in Wisconsin if we get this right?

- Germany-Wisconsin Green Jobs in the New Europe
- Green Tier Advantage
- Travel Green Wisconsin
- Green & Growing Bio-industry Tour
- Wisconsin Green & Growing
- New Directions in Environmental Governance
- Energy Fact-Finding Trip to Germany
- Energy Policy Forum
- Environmental Policy Forum
- Profit-Driven Environmental Management
- Agriculture and Land Use
- Shoreland Development
- Quality Urban Development

Source of Funds

Memberships and Grants	\$9,730
Program/Other	\$181,896
Total Income	\$191,626

Uses of Funds

Programs	\$121,493
Fundraising	\$5,870
Administration	\$23,706
Total Expenses	\$151,069

2019 Support and Partners

Madison Gas & Electric, Boldt, WisPolitics.com, Tim O'Brien Homes, Veridian Homes, Commonwealth Development, Cardinal Capital Management, Boardman & Clark, Bielinski Homes, Loos Homes, General Capital, JT Klein Company, Horizon Development., Stone House Development.

Dear Friends,

Since 1996, WEI has brought together leading stakeholders representing state and local government, businesses, and environmental organizations to focus on common values and finding ways to improve Wisconsin's environment and economy.

With the help of generous donations, sponsorships and effective partnerships, WEI has become a driving force in support of a green and growing strategy - one that respects our heritage and tradition of environmental stewardship while embracing a more collaborative, practical and effective way forward.

WEI cannot do this important work without your help. As a non-profit environmental organization, we rely on membership donations to drive our mission.

Today I ask you to become a member and make a fully tax-deductible contribution to WEI as an individual donor. With your donation, WEI can continue its innovative programs, partnerships and learning events to revitalize the state and move Wisconsin in a solid, new direction.

Thank you very much for your consideration and support of WEI.

Sincerely,

John Imes, Executive Director

**WEI's Annual Report is available to the public on our website at www.weigogreener.org*



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