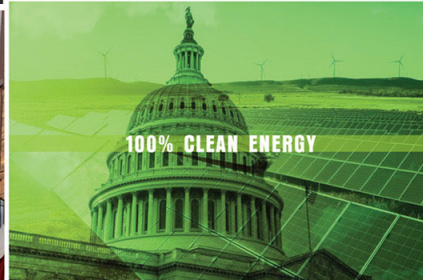




Working towards a sustainable
environment and economy since 1995

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



WHAT HAPPENS IN WISCONSIN IF WE GET THIS RIGHT?



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
 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 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 220,000 people in 2020 with 26 posts resulting in over 20,000 link clicks or post engagements. Check out [WEI's Facebook](#) page and be sure to "Like" and leave comments on our social media to let us know how we're doing.

WEI Staying Resilient in 2020

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 2020:



"We can recover from these challenging times, but only if we bridge the divide in our politics and work together to lay a foundation of high-road progressive policies and practices that take better care of our local businesses, workers, families and communities. Indeed, isn't that what making the economy work for all is all about?" — John Imes

Executive Director John Imes guest column: [Making the Economy Work for All](#) highlighted WEI's work with the American Sustainable Business Council national working group to address COVID-19 and lay the groundwork for a stronger, more sustainable and resilient recovery. *See the group's report: [From Crisis to Opportunity: Recommendations for State & Local Governments](#).

WEI sponsored and helped organize the WisPolitics.com "Earth Day: The Next 50 Years" virtual event that featured remarks by Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, chair of the [Governor's Task Force on Climate Change](#), and state Rep. Mike Kuglitsch, R-New Berlin, chair of the Assembly Committee on Energy and Utilities, and a member of the task force. Executive Director John Imes joined the panel discussion focused on environmental, conservation, transportation, and business trends over the next 50 years. [Watch the event](#).

WEI attended Green Biz 20, the premier annual event for sustainability leaders with 1,500 professionals representing leading companies, government, and NGOs to explore new directions, make connections, share successes, and find more effective ways to advance policymaking and climate solutions. WisPolitics/WisBusiness highlighted [John's blog](#) about the event for readers statewide.

"These are extraordinary times, the defining decade where we finally show a sense of urgency that "business as usual" is no longer an option. The world is demanding solutions to the climate crisis; our young people are demanding bold action... what will our answer be? Each of us has a role to play and a responsibility to act. What will your role be?" — John Imes

Executive Director John Imes spoke with students from the [UW-Madison Ethical and Responsible Business Network – ERBN](#) about Triple Bottom Line strategies and the need for a sense of urgency to change "business as usual" and "politics as usual."

John is also a member of the American Sustainable Business Council (ASBC) Climate & Energy Working Group and attended the ASBC– Social Venture Circle Virtual Conference "Remaking & Revitalizing the Economy." ASBC led a year-long effort to outline the major crises the nation now faces, from racism to climate meltdown, and prepared a 100-page blueprint ([Creating an Economic System That Works For All](#)) for business leaders and elected officials at all levels to learn from and implement.

"As we look to build back better in the wake of COVID-19, our racial reckoning and the need for solutions to address climate change, we have the opportunity and responsibility to advance public policies and find better ways to work together to create a more just, equitable, sustainable, inclusive and resilient future that works for all". — John Imes

WEI Is Still All In: In the 5 years since the Paris Agreement was adopted, over 4,000 U.S. cities, states, tribal nations, businesses, and others have stepped up to keep our country advancing towards "[Americas Pledge on Climate](#)." Now, it's time to go all in.

As we continue to deal with a public health crisis, a struggling economy and racial injustice, we must also look to the looming threat of the climate crisis," said John Imes, Executive Director of WEI. "In our commitment to addressing climate, WEI is Still All In and we look forward to doing our part to push for bold action that includes supporting the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change Report and working to create an economy that works for all."

WEI served on the planning committee for [Wisconsin Business Leadership Roundtable 2020](#) — A visionary virtual conference to kickstart a dialogue about business leading on climate change in today's transformative times. The event featured keynotes by Tom Boldt, CEO of the Boldt Company and Jeff Thompson, CEO Emeritus of Gundersen Health Systems, plus panel experts on navigating the way forward.



The Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA) new scoring criteria for multifamily projects will increase the Green Built Home standard score from 150 to 200 points or more, increasing the positive economic, social, and environmental impact of affordable housing projects statewide.

Certified projects in 2020 totaled over 2,500 homes and WHEDA low-income housing units built or remodeled to WEI's [Green Built Home standards](#). Since 1999, WEI has worked with stakeholders to Green Built Home certify more than 22,500 homes and multi-family units throughout the state.



Our work with the UW Madison Morgridge Center for Public Service Badger Volunteers was limited in 2020 due to COVID-19, but we still managed to get out and volunteer for [Monroe Street Green](#) initiatives including the holiday decoration of over three dozen lamp posts along Monroe Street with evergreens, bows and festive solar light strings donated by WEI. Executive Director John Imes also serves on the Monroe Street Merchants Association Board.

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. [Clean Clear Waters](#) strategies include 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 Bioindustry 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

Contribution	\$5,444
Program Revenue	\$203,898
Total Income	\$209,342

Uses of Funds

Programs	\$146,459
Fundraising	\$6,653
Administration	\$31,137
Total Expenses	\$184,249

2020 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, MSP Development, 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 economy - 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



Working towards a sustainable environment and economy since 1995

16 N. Carroll St. Suite 840
Madison, WI 53703
608-280-0360
Fax: 608-280-0361
www.weigogreener.com

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

For more on WEI, please visit our [website](http://www.weigogreener.org).
Thanks to all our partners and sponsors for another great year!