A CLEAN ENERGY VICTORY

Minnesota has a successful history of investing in energy efficiency through the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP). The program allows utilities to work with their customers to reduce energy use by investing in weather stripping, efficient appliances, lighting upgrades, and more. Reducing energy waste results in building fewer power plants, which saves consumers money and reduces carbon emissions by about 1 million tons per year.

For several years clean energy advocates have worked on the Energy Conservation & Optimization Act (ECO Act) to permanently secure, update, and expand CIP. During the last two years, ECO has been an important piece in Governor Walz’s path to 100% clean energy proposal.

The ECO Act expands CIP to allow utilities to transition to cleaner fuel sources. It will also dedicate up to $12 million in new spending for efficiency measures for low-income customers, including renters.

During this year’s legislative session both the House and the Senate passed the ECO Act. The bill had bipartisan support and is the first major piece of clean energy legislation signed into law by Governor Walz.

To see how individual legislators voted on this bill and other important conservation bills, visit: conservationminnesota.org/voting-records
WHAT “BUILD BACK BETTER” MEANS FOR MINNESOTA

In April, President Biden proposed the American Jobs Plan, an economic recovery package that puts people back to work while tackling climate change.

Conservation Minnesota is part of a national coalition working to ensure the following are included in all recovery investments: tackling the climate crisis by transitioning to a 100% clean energy economy, finding equitable solutions for communities that have been most harmed by toxic pollution, and prioritizing high-quality union jobs.

What does that mean for Minnesota? While the legislation is still in the beginning stages, Minnesota could receive nearly $60 billion in federal funding through the American Jobs Plan. State leaders have identified many projects that would re-shape our infrastructure in a climate-friendly and equitable way, including the long overdue land bridge over Interstate 94 to reconnect the Rondo neighborhood, electrifying a full rapid bus fleet across the Twin Cities, and replacing aging wastewater infrastructure and lead pipes that will deliver cleaner water for all Minnesotans.

There will be many opportunities for Conservation Minnesota members to engage on this potentially historic investment, and we’ll be sure to update you as the campaign continues.

GREEN LIGHT FOR CLEAN CARS

Minnesota is on track to become the 15th state—and first in the Midwest—to adopt stricter tailpipe emission standards after an Administrative Law Judge approved the Clean Cars rule and recommended it for adoption last month.

In the fall of 2019, Governor Walz announced the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) would use the rulemaking authority granted by the Legislature to adopt stricter standards. Since then, our staff have worked to increase support and combat misinformation related to the rule and electric vehicles.

We leveraged relationships and digital organizing expertise to elevate the importance of reducing climate pollution in our transportation sector. Our field team worked with city councils and environment commissions to pass resolutions in support of the rule and generate local public media attention. Conservation Minnesota used the recording to amplify the threat. Local media then picked up the story, turning it into headline news.

Ingebrigsten’s ultimatum continued for the rest of the regular session and into the special session. We will watch this debate closely and keep our members informed as it unfolds.

Your support means we can continue to build our capacity to serve you better. Working together we can protect our Great Outdoors.

Itasca State Park, Mississippi River Headwaters