



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2025–26

Manitoba Eco-Network
Year ended March 31, 2026

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Land Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the land on which the Manitoba Eco-Network operates. The Manitoba Eco-Network office is located in Treaty One Territory, the lands of the Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe), Ininewuk (Swampy Cree), Nehethowuk (Woodland Cree) and Dakota Oyate, and the National Homeland of the Red River Métis. Our drinking water comes from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation in Treaty Three Territory. Our hydroelectricity is sourced from First Nation communities along Winnipeg River in Treaty One Territory and the Nelson River in Treaty Five Territory. Our work encompasses all of Manitoba, which we recognize includes the treaty territories and ancestral lands of the Anishinaabe, Anishinewuk, Dakota Oyate, Denesuline, Nehethowuk Woodland Cree, Ininewuk Swampy Cree and Inuit peoples. We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on this land. We acknowledge the Indigenous Peoples of Manitoba as the original stewards of these lands and environment, the knowledge they have developed over millennia of living in harmony with nature.

Message from the Chair

Over the past year the Manitoba Eco-Network organization tree has experienced a lot of vigorous new growth as we added Projects Manager Sorsha Moore-Peters, Communications Coordinator Alex Hadeon and Office Assistant Hannah Sinclair-Huberdeau. The passion, hard work, and commitment of our staff has provided much needed stability to our organization, empowering our small but mighty team to amplify the essential role the Manitoba Eco-Network plays in bringing the environmental community together. Under the leadership of Executive Director James Beddome and Policy Director Heather Fast, this addition of people power has bolstered our capacity to conduct meaningful research, engage in advocacy and boost engagement with the environmental community.



The deft leadership of Executive Director James Beddome and Policy Advocacy Director Heather Fast has enabled the Eco-Network to advance a number of important projects in the aforementioned areas of climate resilience, impact assessment, industrial contamination and environmental rights. Collaboration and relationship building are paramount to the organization's operations and success. We are so grateful for the opportunity to work alongside so many wonderful community champions and organizations. I would like to thank our project partners at the University of Winnipeg, the Public Interest Law Centre, Spence Neighbourhood Association, West Broadway Community Organization, West End Resource Centre and Canadian Red Cross just to name a few.

It also goes without saying that we are also immensely grateful to our donors and project funders, which allow this organization to pursue these important issues. Every donation, both big and small, is greatly appreciated and helps to sustain the Manitoba Eco-Network, now and into the future.

In addition to our wonderful staff, project partners, donors, and project funders, I would like to acknowledge our amazing Board of Directors. In particular, I would also like to thank outgoing board members, Zach Rempel and Karen Fletcher for their contributions to the board, as well as Kathryn Dompierre, who completed nine years of board service, including a term as Chair, and will be stepping down after the AGM. Lastly, I would like to thank my predecessor, Lindsay Robinson, not only for his countless contributions to the Eco-Network, but also for the insights, support and mentorship he shared with me as I transitioned into the Chair role in February, 2026.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harrison Briand".

Harrison Briand

Message from the Executive Director

Collaboration is the core of everything we do at the Manitoba Eco-Network. I cannot think of a single project or activity that is not a collaboration of some sort. By bringing together organizations and individuals we create opportunities for new ideas and expanded capacity.

This year's highlights include our collaboration with Dr. Patricia Fitzpatrick at the University of Winnipeg and the Public Interest Law centre on impact assessment law reform which culminated in the release of our final [Putting People and the Planet First: What Manitobans Expect from Impact Assessment](#) report. We have also continued our collaborations with our community partners through our [Climate Safe, Green City](#) project.



Part of our collaborative work is building coalitions. Coalitions for more investments in environmental initiatives in the provincial budget. Coalitions responding to cross-border threats on our shared watershed. Coalitions to ensure Manitoba enacted strong anti SLAPP (strategic legal actions against public participation) legislation. Coalitions intervening in Public Utility Board hearings to push for better investments and planning towards reaching net-zero by 2050.

We also work to create opportunities. Opportunities to meet and greet each month at [Eco-Drinks](#). Opportunities to find meaningful work with our [green jobs board](#), and opportunities to share and find-out about [eco-themed community events](#) taking place right across Manitoba.

It is truly humbling to work with such an inspiring and passionate group of individuals. Our board is highly engaged and brings unique perspectives, knowledge, backgrounds, and skills to our strategic decision making. Staff are exceptional. They are dedicated, brilliant, and hard working. It is a pleasure to be a part of the staff team and to work beside them each day.

Thank you donors, funders, board members, staff members, network members, volunteers, partners, vendors, and anyone I forget (including you for reading this report). Each of you in your own way are a part of our collaborative network work, and the Eco-Network thanks you for that. Hopefully through strength in solidarity we can work towards truly creating environmental justice in Manitoba.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "James Beddome". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Beddome

About the Eco-Network

The Manitoba Eco-Network (MbEN) is a non-profit registered charity which seeks to strengthen Manitoba's environmental community with the goal of protecting our environment for the benefit of current and future generations. The Eco-Network facilitates connections, engages in advocacy opportunities, and undertakes community-based research that promotes meaningful public participation in environmental governance processes.

We serve as an umbrella for environmental non-governmental organizations across the province. We build capacity and support grassroots organization's participation in the environmental community, we celebrate positive environmental actions that happen within Manitoba, and work to elevate the voices of all those within our community.



(The Eco-Network Team gathers for lunch at Feast Bistro & Cafe on December 23rd before the holiday break. Pictured L to R: Office Assistant Hannah Sinclair-Huberdeau, Labour Studies Intern Simran Kaur, Executive Director James Beddome, Policy Advocacy Director Heather Fast, Previous Board Chair Lindsay Robinson, Accounts Derek Bassey, and Projects Manager Sorsha Moore Peters.)

Our Mission, Vision, and Values

A strong environmental community in Manitoba, bolstered by good governance processes, working together to protect our environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

To promote good environmental governance, support and build the capacity of the environmental community, advocate for environmental justice, and act as a bridge between environmental organizations, the public, and all levels of government.

MbEN is proud of the contributions and achievements in its storied past and is committed to expanding its influence on environmental governance in Manitoba as society faces increasing environmental challenges including the climate crisis. Although we draw essential lessons from the past, our focus is on the future of our province and the planet as a whole.

These vision, mission and value statements were updated as a result of the work conducted by the organization in developing our 2024-28 Strategic Plan.

Values

In doing our work, we are committed to the following.

Improve Environmental Justice — The planet, flora, fauna and humans are all interconnected. When one suffers, we all suffer. As well, too often some humans thrive at the expense of others. Working towards a better world means leaving no one behind, especially those most vulnerable and those who do not have the opportunity to speak for themselves with an expectation of being heard.

Amplify Indigenous Voices — MbEN's interests are frequently consistent with those of Indigenous communities and governments. We seek to ensure Indigenous voices are heard, understood and that they guide our work.

Promote Evidence-based Solutions — there are many considerations that contribute to good decision-making. MbEN stresses solutions which are strongly supported by western science and Indigenous knowledge.

Collaboration and Inclusivity — Knowing that collaboration is much more powerful than competition, strength comes from diversity, and that in the best of all worlds, yesterday's foe can be convinced to be tomorrow's friend. We encourage local voices and invest in community capacity.

Holistic Thinking — we believe in an all-embracing approach that views every aspect of our environment as a cohesive whole rather than a collection of isolated elements. We focus on the big picture, and resist getting too caught up in the details.

Excellence — of the work we do. We take great pride in the quality of our work. We are reliable partners and always work towards mutual empowerment with our partners and the community.

Accessibility — to the information we develop and share and for opportunities to work with us. One of our greatest strengths is our ability to simplify complexity as a means of broadening understanding.

Projects

Empowering the Community: Impact Assessment Reform in Manitoba

Established with a grant from the Manitoba Law Foundation and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) (Grant no. 892-2024-1048), the Manitoba Eco-Network continued our partnership with Dr. Patricia Fitzpatrick from University of Winnipeg and Katrine Dilay from the Public Interest Law Centre on an impact assessment (IA) reform project; [*Empowering the Community: Impact Assessment Reform in Manitoba*](#).

Our work included a very successful public survey launched in March 2025. Around 400 participants provided their feedback on IA reform in Manitoba, with respondents from nearly every postal code in the province.

We hosted three public workshops in April 2025 in Brandon, The Pas, and Winnipeg (see pictures below).



Heather Fast and Katrine Dilay presented at the community workshops in Brandon (above left), The Pas (above right), and Winnipeg (below center). Photo credit James Beddome and Michayla Carlson.



Project team members Heather and Patricia presented preliminary results at an international impact assessment conference (IAIA 2025) in Bologna, Italy in early May 2025 (see picture below). Although Manitoba is a small jurisdiction populationally, the international community was very interested in our study and what is happening in Manitoba at the grassroots level.



We hosted an Expert workshop in June 2025 in Winnipeg and received some excellent suggestions for updating *The Environment Act*.

We released [11 research memorandums published on our website](#) between May and August, as well as nine plain-language fact sheets [published in both English and French on our website](#), which garnered excellent public feedback.

Our final report for this project, [“Putting People and the Planet First: What Manitobans Expect from Impact Assessment”](#), was released on October 30, 2025. Our study highlighted that Manitobans expect governments to prioritize the protection of people and the environment through a robust provincial IA process, which incorporates meaningful public engagement and fosters trust. We also heard that Indigenous knowledge and Indigenous-led assessments must be enabled, recognized and respected when assessing the impacts of proposed projects.

We have continued with advocacy work following the release of our report, including engagement with government staff, publishing an op-ed *Manitoba not ready for nation-building projects* in the [Winnipeg Free Press](#) and [Brandon Sun](#), and a [Radio Canada interview](#) on our research.

We know much broader changes are needed, but positive engagement with government officials, and some of the changes being made, such as a new requirement for information about appeals of *Environment Act* licensing decisions to be included in public registry files, gives us hope that our research is making a difference.

Meeting the Critical Minerals Moment: Modernizing Mining Law in Manitoba

Our impact assessment reform work also led the development of our next law reform project, *Meeting the Critical Minerals Moment: Modernizing Mining Law in Manitoba*.

At our public workshop in The Pas, we were inspired by participants who suggested we hold similar workshops on mining law reform, due to a lack of public information about mining approval processes and the significant social and environmental impacts caused by mining developments.

This led us to submit two successful grant applications to the Manitoba Law Foundation and SSHRC that will allow us to take on this important topic. This project will be a major part of our work in the coming year. We look forward to continuing our ongoing collaboration with Dr. Patricia Fitzpatrick at the University of Winnipeg Geography Department, and Katrine Dilay at the Public Interest Law Centre. We are also excited that Scott McCullough (University of Winnipeg) and Joëlle Pastora Sala (Public Interest Law Centre) will be joining the team, along with Jason Unger from the Environmental Law Centre in Alberta.

Creating a Climate Safe, Green City



(Pictured above: Manitoba Eco-Network staff James Beddome (pictured third from left) & Sorsha Moore-Peters (pictured sixth from left) join the Trees Winnipeg arborist team as they facilitate a tree-planting session with the West End Resource Center. Photo Credit: Trees Winnipeg)

The *Climate Safe, Green City* project continued in a collaboration between the Manitoba Eco-Network and Spence Neighborhood Association (SNA), the West End Resource Center (WERC), and the West Broadway Community Organization (WBCO) to support the development and delivery of local climate resilience projects and initiatives, with funding for the project provided by the Government of Manitoba.

Project highlights include:

- ❖ Public release of the results of the [Hot Weather, Cold Weather, and Your Hydro Bills](#) community energy poverty survey analysis report on August 7th, 2025. The Manitoba Eco-Network would like to offer special thanks to Alexandra Caporale for the development of the survey during her time as MbEN's Resource Manager.
- ❖ Hosting the CSGC project's second round of emergency preparedness workshops in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross. The Be Ready workshop series focuses on teaching the community how to identify and prepare for local environmental hazards in the event of a climate-driven disaster.
- ❖ Relaunching the Manitoba Eco-Network's volunteer team (read more below).
- ❖ Facilitating two community seedling workshops with the West Broadway Community Organization (WBCO) and the West End Resource Center (WERC).



(Pictured above left : Students from General Wolfe school attend the WERC seedling workshop on the morning of March 16th, 2026. Pictured above right: Adults from the community participate in a second round of the same workshop later that evening. Photo Credit: Jeremy Poortoliet, WERC)

Teaching The Next Generation To Advocate For Environmental Justice

- While doing a presentation last summer about the ways we can put law reform ideas into action, Policy Advocacy Director Heather Fast met Jessica Laus, a PhD Candidate in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba. Jessica has previously operated youth empowerment projects in New Jersey and wanted to do something similar in Manitoba.
- The Eco-Network worked with Jessica to submit two grant applications to the Winnipeg Foundation and was successful on one for \$50,000 through their community grants program. A further \$500 was received from the Youth in Philanthropy (YIP) committee at Maples Collegiate, which is also funded by the The Winnipeg Foundation.
- The team is currently working on developing the curriculum for the Eco-Network's new *Youth Advocate Program* (YAP) with plans to launch in the 2026-27 school year. The YAP application and interview process will occur in summer 2026, so stay tuned for more information!

Building A Tool to Better Inform People About Home Energy Use

The Manitoba Eco-Network has been partnering with Sustainable Building Manitoba on the Manitoba's Home Energy Use Map project, thanks to funding provided by Manitoba to Sustainable Building Manitoba through the Climate Action Fund.

This project seeks to create a community-powered tool to understand, compare, and improve how Manitobans use energy at home and to serve as a catalyst for change to help Manitobans reduce their home energy use. By making household energy

performance visible at both the home and neighborhood level, the Map would transform data into action — inspiring homeowners to retrofit, empowering communities to advocate for change, and showcasing retrofit leaders as visible catalysts for others to follow.

Through this project we were able to provide mentorship opportunities for junior energy modellers to attend learning workshops, and gain hands-on experience developing energy modelling prototypes and using Natural Resource Canada's HOT2000 software. The mentorship program was led by Melanie Chatfield (Energy Modelers Group), with specific workshop contents developed in collaboration with the other mentors, Jeremy Langer (Mechanical Systems Engineer - Efficiency Manitoba), Lindsay Robinson P.Eng., BEMP (Technical Lead // Strategic Initiatives - Efficiency Manitoba), and Stephen Gaunt (Technical Advisor // Building Enclosure - Efficiency Manitoba). Melanie Chatfield and all other mentors generously contributed their professional services at no costs.

Working with the village of St. Pierre-Jolys and website development company Tactica Interactive, we have developed a prototype website that is nearly ready to launch, but it needs a few additional features, and most importantly, additional funding. We anticipated the need for further funding, which is why we submitted four additional grant applications to support this project. Unfortunately, all applications to grant revenue sources outside Manitoba's Climate Action Fund have been unsuccessful. The lack of future funds jeopardize the successful public launch of the map tool and the regular completion of essential updates and online maintenance. It is for these reasons that the Manitoba Eco-Network and Sustainable Building Manitoba have made the tough decision to put the project on hold until we can find the further funding needed to launch and maintain it properly.

Understanding Policy Tools to Finance Deep Energy Retrofits

Manitoba Eco-Network has also been partnering with Sustainable Building Manitoba on a Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) Deep Retrofit Accelerator Initiative (DRAI) funded research project that aims to identify and assess financing mechanisms that could enable deep retrofits for commercial and residential buildings in Manitoba at scale, and to identify the policy, legal, financial, institutional, and equity conditions required for successful adoption. Other project partners include [BizforClimate](#) and the [Environmental Law Centre](#) out of Alberta.

Advocacy Work

The Manitoba Eco-Network undertakes a variety of policy and law reform actions based on the needs of the environmental community. Led by the Policy Advocacy Director, Heather Fast, and the Policy Committee, this work includes written submissions, oral presentations, correspondence with elected officials, campaign coordination (e.g., producing collaborative submissions), and training the public/ENGOS to participate in governance processes (e.g. presenting at public hearings or standing committee meetings at the Legislature). Much of this work is funded by public donations or undertaken by volunteers from the Policy Committee. We have updated our website so you can better see both the advocacy being [led by others that we have endorsed](#), and [advocacy led by MbEN](#): in fiscal year 2025-26, we submitted 17 different advocacy letters or submissions. This section highlights some of our major advocacy efforts in the past year.

Anti-SLAPP Success: *The Public Interest Expression Defence Act*

Our [advocacy efforts](#), including [speaking to the Standing Committee on Justice](#) and meeting with the Minister of Justice, Matt Wiebe, also recently ensured that *The Public Interest Expression Defence Act* (Bill 23) passed with amendments suggested by the Manitoba Eco-Network in November 2025.

Although led by the Eco-Network, our advocacy efforts would not have been as successful without the background research on this topic we had built from past projects and collaborations with law students and the contributions of the colleagues and other individuals who shared their insights with us and the standing committee to support our suggested reforms.

The success of our efforts, including unanimous support for our proposed amendment from the Standing Committee and developing relationships with other organizations seeking similar reforms in their jurisdictions, resulted in a number of invitations to speak about our campaign and overall contributions to environmental justice to law students at the University of Manitoba (for example, see the picture below).



Photo above: picture Executive Director, James, and Policy Advocacy Director, Heather, presenting to the Access to Justice class at Robson Hall, Faculty of Law in March 2026. Photo credit Natasha Brown.

The need to protect the public from Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP suits) was a recommendation from our past work including the 2023 Final Report of the [Healthy Environment, Healthy Neighbourhood \(HEHN\) project](#), environmental rights advocacy (2022-present), and our 2024 [State of Environmental Governance Report](#), so we are proud to have had an impact on this important and needed piece of legislation. We are also thankful for our fellow collaborators in this campaign such as the [Centre for Free Expression](#) and the [Robson Hall Rights Clinic](#).

Protecting aquifers in Manitoba

Over the past five years, the Manitoba Eco-Network has been working to support concerned community members from the RM of Springfield and the surrounding area who are concerned about the potentially irreversible impacts to the environment and human health that Sio Silica's proposed silica sand extraction activities could cause. We continue our ongoing collaboration with community members and organizations such as [Our Line in the Sand](#) to oppose the revived Sio Silica sand mining project.

This project was previously [rejected by the Manitoba Government in February 2024](#), which followed a [CEC hearing and report](#). The Manitoba Eco-Network and Our Line in the Sand participated in the hearings together in 2023. These concerns were validated

by the CEC in their final report and the government's ultimate decision to not grant a licence.

Despite already being rejected, Sio Silica once again submitted an application on October 28, 2025 for an Environment Act licence for essentially the same project, but with a new name: the Simba Sand Extraction Project. This means that the Director of the Environmental Approvals Branch will once again be considering the approval of this problematic project.



Photo above: picture of a sign made by local residents potentially impacted by the Sio Silica project showcased on the steps of Manitoba's Legislature on Earth Day 2025. Photo credit James Beddome.

We worked with Our Line in the Sand and other environmental organizations, such as the Wilderness Committee, to encourage the public to submit comments on the proposed project before the December 1, 2025 deadline for public comments. [MbEN also submitted our own comments](#), where we called for the proposed Simba project to be rejected. However, if an impact assessment must proceed, we emphasized the need for cumulative effects assessment, a public hearing held by the Clean Environment Commission with full participant funding, and more details from Sio Silica about their proposed mitigation, monitoring, and follow-up plans, among other missing information. A record number of Manitobans spoke up. Our Line in the Sand has counted 2273 comments on the public registry, with nearly unanimous opposition to the project.

In March Manitoba's Environmental Assessment and Licensing Branch [sent Sio Silica a letter requesting further information on or before September 30th in response to comments filed](#).

The Manitoba Eco-Network worked with Our Line in the Sand to send [follow-up correspondence to the Minister on April 14, 2026](#), and we continue to communicate with local residents and monitor the situation as best as we can.

Cross-Border Fight Against Mega Dairy Operations

The Eco-Network has been doing what it can to collaborate with organizations in North Dakota and across Manitoba to raise awareness about new mega dairy operations being proposed in North Dakota that could threaten Lake Winnipeg.

On June 11, 2025, the Manitoba Eco-Network held a [press conference](#) in collaboration with the Dakota Resource Council, Save Lake Winnipeg Project, the Coalition to Save Lake Winnipeg and Animal Justice.



Pictured, left to right: Kaitlyn Mitchell, Animal Justice, Fred Veldink, Coalition to Save Lake Winnipeg, Vicki Burns, Save Lake Winnipeg Project, James Beddome, Manitoba Eco-Network, Madeline Luke, Dakota Resources Council, Dave Curry, Coalition to Save Lake Winnipeg

The Eco-Network supported a submission to the North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ); the full [comments are available on our website](#). Other advocacy on this project included an opinion piece published in the [Winnipeg Free Press](#), a submission to the [International Joint Commission](#), a meeting with Manitoba Minister of Environment and Climate Change Mike Moyes, and participation in a rally in August at the Manitoba Legislature organized by Animal Save.



Organizational representatives on the steps of the Legislature for the Mega Dairy is Scary Rally organized by Animal Save on August 21, 2025. Photo credit: Alex Hadeon.

The meeting with Minister Moyes helped lead to the International Joint Commission's International Red River Watershed Board (IRRWB) announcing it will review permits and conduct a cumulative effects assessment for the projects.

In Nov 2025, representatives from the Dakota Resource Council, West Central Minnesotans for Clean Water and the Manitoba Eco-Network [spoke during the Red River Basin Commission board meeting in Grand Forks](#).

In Jan 2026, representatives from our American allies such as the Dakota Resource Council and Abercrombie Citizens for Responsible Growth attended the IRRWB meeting in Winnipeg.

The Manitoba Eco-Network will continue to advocate on this issue in the coming year. This will include further media interviews, letters, and involvement in an ongoing drainage appeal case in the North Dakotan Administrative Court and engaging with Pro Bono Students of Canada to do research on the issue.

Budgeting for Ecosystems and People

The Manitoba Eco-Network put additional effort into advocacy around the provincial budget this year, given the important role the provincial budget process plays in determining the priorities of the Government of Manitoba for the subsequent year.

We engaged directly with network members through a survey to get their perspectives on budget priorities. It was important to learn more about how the network understands and engages with the budget process, and find ways to encourage participation.



Pictured above L to R: Policy Advocacy Director Heather Fast, Labour Studies student intern Simran Kaur, Labour Studies Associate Professor Dr. Julia Smith, and Executive Director at the Labour Studies Open-House reception in February.

The survey and the subsequent report was completed by student Simran Kaur as part of the Labour Studies Field Placement program at the University of Manitoba. [The full report is published on our website](#), but the highlights were:

- Taxing polluters, environmental monitoring and compliance of industry, transitioning to more sustainable energy, Indigenous conservation, and mass public transportation were top priorities for future budgets.

- Respondents want increased revenues from corporate taxes, corporate income tax, fuel taxes, minerals and petroleum royalties, tobacco tax, and fines to increase. Respondents want to decrease tuition fees as a source of revenue. Respondents were divided on whether individual income tax should increase, decrease, or stay the same.
- All respondents want to see an increase in funding for the Department of Environment and Climate Change.

The majority of respondents were interested in advocacy work for Budget 2026–27 and beyond and our survey data indicates that budget coalition-building is the most favoured method of budget advocacy. We see this project as a good start in our collective efforts to have more influence on future budgets. Before the survey was even complete, we were already on the job.

Along with the Climate Action Team, we worked to build a coalition of over 25 groups to highlight priorities and attend the budget lockup in March 2026. The coalition (representing thousands of workers, businesses, and community members) called for investment in three key areas to reduce emissions and protect a healthy environment.

1. Increased investment in energy efficiency to reduce energy use, lower household bills, and create thousands of green jobs.
2. Investment in transit and low-carbon transportation, to improve affordability, mobility, and health.
3. Investment in initiatives to protect 30% of lands and waters by 2030, in partnership with Indigenous communities to slow climate change and secure ecosystems for people and wildlife.



Budget Coalition Gathered in the Legislature for the release of the open Budget Letter in January 2026.

On Budget Day in March we reviewed the budget and the coalition's [Climate Report Card awarded an overall D grade to Manitoba for Budget 2026](#). Despite modest increases in several environmental budget lines, Budget 2026 sorely lacked the funding needed to meet Manitoba's climate and conservation commitments:

- Overall climate & environment investment: D
- Energy efficiency: D
- Transit & transportation: C
- Nature protection (30×30): C-



Pictured above L to R: Laura Cameron and Meghan Mast from Climate Action Team Manitoba, Molly McCracken from Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and James Beddome at the Legislature on Budget Day.

Public Utilities Board Engagement

We have also been trying to push for de-carbonization through our ongoing collaboration with Environmental Defence, and retained Elson Advocacy to represent us in Public Utility Board (PUB) hearings. We are using these regulatory processes to demonstrate that Manitoba does not need more fossil fuel-powered energy.

The Eco-Network [presented to the PUB on the 2025 Centra Gas rate hearing](#). In addition, we were granted intervener status in the [Manitoba Hydro 2026-28 rate hearing](#) and the ongoing proceedings regarding Manitoba Hydro's [Integrated Resource Plan \(IRP\) and Major New Facilities \(MNF\)](#).

The best thing for consumers and the planet is to make smart plans that move Manitobans toward de-carbonization. This means more wind and solar, more energy storage, and using our energy more wisely through activities such as better insulating our homes and workplaces — not more fossil fuels! We aim to use the regulatory proceedings as a way to prove this point.

And there is so much more that we do...

We also undertake and assist advocacy efforts focused on environmental justice through activities such as:

- Responding to numerous calls and emails from the public, and providing direction or assistance as best as we are able on regulatory issues.
- Attending and being present at community events.
- Presentations to groups and classes.
- Mobilization of the community through activities such as making accessible documents that summarize new laws and public engagement opportunities so the public is better informed and consequently able to respond.

Activities

Building Up the Volunteer Team

This year, largely due to the work of Projects Manager Sorsha Moore-Peters, the Manitoba Eco-Network re-launched our volunteer team. The Eco-Network would like to thank our amazing volunteers: Syed Suhaib Ullahari Kldri, Sydney Van-Aert, and Anastasiia Sturza for their dedication and commitment to our organization this year.

Volunteer events/opportunities included:

- ❖ The *Good Food Club* farmers markets hosted by the West Broadway Community Organization (WBCO) on September 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th, 2025.
- ❖ Attending the Eco-Canada webinar: *Introducing the EP(GHG) Designation – Addressing Critical Gaps in the GHG Management Workforce*, on October 9th, 2025.
- ❖ MbEN's public release of the *Impact Assessment Memos* on October 30th, 2025.
- ❖ The first *Be-Ready workshop* held in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross as part of the Climate Safe, Green City project on November 4th, 2025.
- ❖ Attending the International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD)'s webinar: *Nature-Based Water Storage & Flood Mitigation*, on November 18th, 2025.
- ❖ The Manitoba Environmental Industries Association (MEIA) *student chapter's Discovery Night*, on February 26th, 2026.
- ❖ The second *Be-Ready workshop* held in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross as part of the Climate Safe, Green City project on March 5th, 2026.
- ❖ *Seedy Saturday* on March 7th, 2026.
- ❖ The West End Resource Centre (WERC)'s *spring seedling workshop* held as part of the Climate Safe, Green City project on March 16th, 2026.
- ❖ *World Water Day*, hosted by Fort Whyte Alive on March 22nd, 2026.



(Pictured above: Anastasiia Sturza tabling at World Water Day at Fort Whyte Alive. Photo Credit: James Beddome).



(Pictured above: Sorsha Moore-Peters tabling at the West Broadway Community Organization (WBCO)'s 'Good Food Club Farmers Market' in September 2025. Photo Credit: James Beddome)



(Pictured above: Workshop facilitators from the Canadian Red Cross (led by Manager James Wright, pictured far left) lead the second community preparedness workshop at the Cornish Library on March 5th, 2026. Photo Credit: Sorsha Moore-Peters.)

Growing Grant Applications

The work of the Manitoba Eco-Network would not be possible without the assistance of grants, for which we thank our granting agencies. Over the last year, we have reviewed approximately 30 different grant opportunities. About half of these opportunities were not the right fit for our organization, so no application was submitted. We submitted 16 grant applications in total, requesting more than \$2.1 million in funding. We were ultimately successful with 9 of the grant applications, with \$189,595.98 in total grant funding awarded as follows:

- **Government of Manitoba, Climate Action Fund**, Funding for Climate Safe Green City, \$120,000 total (with \$60,000 for this fiscal year and \$60,000 for next year).
- **Blennerhassett Family Foundation**, \$5,000 grant to support our communications efforts such as the Eco-Bulletin, Green Jobs Board, and Eco-Events Calendar.
- **Impact Assessment Agency of Canada**, \$1,999.98 to review Impact Assessment Cooperation agreements.
- **Assiniboine Credit Union**, \$5,000 to help us upgrade our computer equipment.
- **Winnipeg Foundation, Youth In Philanthropy Seven Oaks Met School Committee**, \$2,000 towards translating some of our Impact Assessment Fact Sheets into Cree.
- **Winnipeg Foundation, Youth In Philanthropy Maples Collegiate Committee**, \$500 towards our Youth Advocacy Program.
- **Winnipeg Foundation, Community Grants Fund**, \$50,000,000 towards our Youth Advocacy Program.
- **Government of Canada, Canada Summer Jobs**, \$5,096 for a youth summer employment opportunity.
- **Manitoba Law Foundation**, \$50,000 towards *Meeting the Critical Minerals Moment: Modernizing Mining Law in Manitoba*
 - We are also a part of a successful partnership engagement grant through SSHRC. This grant will be held by Dr. Patricia Fitzpatrick at the University of Winnipeg, but will be put towards our *Meeting the Critical Minerals Moment: Modernizing Mining Law in Manitoba* project.

We cannot thank our funders enough! Extra credit also belongs to Sorsha Moore-Peters who has done a great job improving our organization and tracking with respect to grant applications.

Boosting Bilingual Communications

Thanks to the translation work of our Office Assistant Hannah Huberdeau-Sinclair, with assistance from volunteer editor Guy Jourdain, we have been able to start putting out a limited amount of bilingual work, particularly on impact assessment. We look forward to further bilingual materials in the future.

Stronger Social, Stronger Relationships

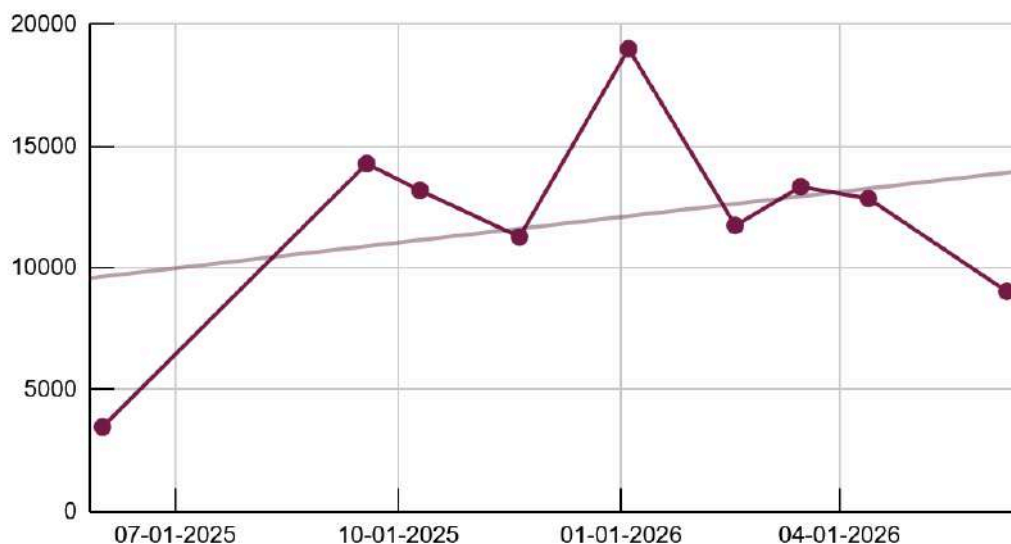
Maintaining contact with members and sharing the Manitoba Eco-Network's activities with the public are key components of increasing the reach of our projects and advocacy.

Beginning in July 2025, the Eco-Bulletin went from sporadic monthly publication to being published on a consistent twice-a-month basis. More frequent publication allowed for the Eco-Bulletin to contain more timely events and ultimately generated more engagement. Connecting with the hosts and community members organizing these environmental events became part of the routine maintenance, along with [developing an archive of past Eco-Bulletin issues](#) on the website. Maintaining this schedule and growing the consistency of the Eco-Bulletin was possible thanks to the hard work of Communications Coordinator Alex Hadeon who was added to the team in June 2025.

Social media continues to be a key tool to engage with the community. Consistent work on social media has allowed followers and interactions to increase across several sites, including Meta Platforms ([Instagram](#) & [Facebook](#)), [LinkedIn](#), [Mastodon](#), [BlueSky](#), and [YouTube](#).

This work has allowed the Eco-Network to attain a consistently engaged audience, reaching an average of 12,000 monthly views on Instagram this past year, and a combined audience size of 7500 across all platforms. We've worked to expand our online strategy to BlueSky and Mastodon in an effort to expand outside of the Meta-centric social media ecosystem, and connect with grassroots organizations.

Instagram Views (June 2025 - June 2026)



On mbeconetwork.org, a wealth of information is available — including an archive of past [Eco-Journals from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s](#). The [Green Jobs Board](#) is an ongoing project that helps environmentally oriented individuals and organizations connect. Last fiscal year, 119 jobs were posted.

In July 2025, the Eco-Network introduced an [events calendar](#) that covers environmental events across the province. We encourage all Manitobans to use this tool to promote relevant happenings in their communities. This tool also helps organizations planning events to cross-reference open dates. Since the calendar launched, a total of 420 events have been advertised during 2025 and 2026.

Connecting Monthly at Eco-Drinks

Every Month the Manitoba Eco-Network hosts Eco-Drinks. We invite Manitobans who work in the environmental field, and those who care about environmental issues, to come and discuss issues in a social setting. Eco-Drinks has been a longstanding tradition of the Manitoba Eco-Network. Attendance at these events has consistently improved since moving to a regular schedule: the first Wednesday of every month, from 5-7 PM, at the Devil May Care taproom in downtown Winnipeg.

Each month we try to do something different. A few highlights:

- In **May**, the Wilderness Committee previewed its Nature Rules report at Eco-Drinks. The weather co-operated and participants were able to enjoy the patio. (*Pictured below: group shot of the crowd on the patio at Eco-Drinks in May 2025*).



- In **July**, Eco-Drinks allowed the Eco-Network to respond urgently and fundraise for the LeMay Forest Land Defenders. (Pictured below: Group shot of the crowd at Eco-Drinks in July 2025).



- In **January**, participants used the new year's energy to envision environmental objectives for the year.
- In **March**, participants had the opportunity to discuss the Manitoba Water Hub in its preliminary stages, with the support of Our Living Waters and Oceans North.

Manitoba Water Hub Gets Flowing

Our Living Waters, a network organization from MakeWay, is working to help establish a Water Hub in Manitoba. Thanks to Natalija Vojno of Our Living Waters for helping to spearhead this important initiative.

In the past, the Manitoba Eco-Network hosted a Water Caucus, but was no longer able to undertake this work due to funding cuts and staff changes. But today, Manitoba's waterways need our help more now than ever. A water hub will encourage collaboration and coordination of efforts between communities, Indigenous governments, researchers and individuals.



Water Hub Discussion at Eco-Drinks in March 2026

The development of the Water Hub is still in the early stages and being designed and led by the community. In May, future plans were discussed at a meeting graciously organized by Joe Wasylycia-Leis of Oceans North. Meetings are planned for the summer and fall to determine organizational structure and determine next steps. The Eco-Network will continue to participate as this initiative moves along.

Fundraising Reaches Record High

A new fundraising record was set this past fiscal year, with \$65,000 raised. This surpasses previous 2023 highs by \$10,000.

The Eco-Network's September fundraising drive alone raised \$11,600, exceeding our lofty goal of \$10,000. It was capped off by Executive Director James Beddome's birthday fundraiser at Eco-Drinks in October.

At the end of 2025, we set our sights even higher with a goal of \$20,000 for end-of-year fundraising. In collaboration with [1882 Fruit Based Hot Sauce](#), we offered donors a bottle of our own locally made, small-batch hot sauce: The Tipping Point. The sour cherries and super hot peppers (Carolina Reapers and Dragon's Breath) for The Tipping Point were grown by Executive Director James Beddome. Donors also brought the heat, contributing \$20,067 to once again put fundraising efforts over the top.

This year we want to set new heights with a fundraising goal of \$100,000. A trivia night fundraiser for 2026 is currently in the works.

Financial Statement Summary

REVENUE

	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2026	March 31, 2027 (budget)
Donations	35,203	65,130	60,000
Memberships	484	878	1,500
Grants (Total)	126,936	185,505	1672,596
<i>Manitoba</i>	<i>60,000</i>	<i>60,000.00</i>	<i>60,000</i>
<i>Canada</i>	<i>13,189</i>	<i>10,695</i>	<i>5,096</i>
<i>Other</i>	<i>53,747</i>	<i>114,810</i>	<i>107,500</i>
Other Income	2,312	17,610	28,950
Endowment Fund	4,364	4,332	4,200
Interest	3,412	1,456	500
TOTAL	\$175,211	\$274,911	\$267,746

EXPENDITURES

	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2026	March 31, 2027 (budget)
Accounting fees	3,520	3,542	3,700
Advertising	1,533	1,015	-
Amortization	173	120	200
Bank charges and interest	2,076	2,894	2,900
Board expenses (insurance)	910	1,127	1,200
Contract fees	7,000	2,150	15,400
Fundraising	2,624	484	2,000
Office Expenses	2,710	3,440	3,500
Misc.		4,465	7,000
Project costs	30,867	83,368	12,000
Professional fees	9,629	6,734	6,800
Rent	5,340	5,446	5,976
Travel	-	2,405	-
Wages & Benefits	141,813	157,870	200,000
Website & Tech.	5,860	4,323	5,000
TOTAL	\$214,055	\$279,383	\$265,676

SURPLUS (DEFICIT)

	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2026	March 31, 2027 (budget)
TOTAL	\$(38,844)	\$(4,472)	\$2,070

FINANCIAL POSITION

	March 31, 2025	March 31, 2026 (unaudited)	March 31, 2027 (budget)
Assets Total	107,381	87,217,	56,525
Liabilities Total	46,384	30,692	-2,070
Net Assets Total	\$60,997	\$56,525	\$58,595

Manitoba Eco-Network Staff & Support

As of March 31, 2025



James Beddome - Executive Director

James (he/him) joined MbEN in August 2024. He also previously served as a board member from 2014-2018. Before joining MbEN James spent 10 years practicing as a lawyer. His practice focused primarily on serving Indigenous governments, organizations and individuals in a broad variety of areas. This includes experience assisting First Nations to draft their own environmental laws under the First Nations Lands Management Act and representation of tribal organizations at Clean Environment Commission and National Energy Board

hearings. James has two degrees, both from the University of Manitoba, a Bachelor of Laws (2013) and Bachelor of Arts with Honours in political studies and economics (2006).



Heather Fast - Policy Advocacy Director

Heather (she/her) transitioned from Board Member to Policy Advocacy Director in July 2021. She is a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Manitoba's Natural Resources Institute and teaches the Environmental Law 3600 course in the Faculty of Law. Heather has three prior degrees from the University of Manitoba from the Faculty of Arts (Global Political Economy) and the Faculty of Law (J.D. and LL.M.). She was called to the Bar in 2014 and undertook legal and policy work for several organizations including the Manitoba Law Reform Commission, the Public Interest Law Centre and The Great-West Life Assurance Company (now Canada Life) before returning to her graduate studies.



Sorsha Moore-Peters - Projects Manager

Sorsha (she/her) joined MbEN as a Projects Manager in June 2025. She credits her interests in grassroots advocacy and environmental justice as her initial motivation for joining the Manitoba Eco-Network.

Sorsha came to the Eco-Network from the U of M's Environmental Conservation Lab, a qualitative research lab that serves as a hub for students working on issues related to Indigenous-led environmental justice. As an environmentalist of Irish-settler descent living on Treaty 1 Territory, Sorsha tries to ground her professional ethics within the responsibilities of working to protect the land as someone who is a guest upon it.

Sorsha earned her Bachelor's degree from the University of Manitoba from the Faculty of Environment, Earth, and Resources (Env. Studies). She has a Minor in Geography and a Major in Sustainable Development. During her undergraduate studies she partnered with the University of Manitoba's International Center and the student-run campus bike shop UMCycle on her 'Cyclist Road Safety' project.

In her spare time she has also completed the Faculty of Agriculture and Food Science 'Beekeeping for the Hobbyist' Short Course (LOA) and the Manitoba Accessibility Office's 'Accessible Employment Standard' certification.



Alex Hadeon (they/them) - Communications Coordinator

Alex Hadeon joined the MbEN team as Communications Assistant during June 2025, before being promoted to Communications Coordinator in February 2026. They have a bachelor's degree from the University of Winnipeg (BSc in Environmental Science, Global Environmental Systems stream), and prior to joining the Eco-Network, spent the last two and a half years working for the U of W's Prairie Climate Centre as their Senior Research Assistant.

During their time at the Prairie Climate Centre, they led the overhaul and redesign of the PCC's website, implemented citation guidelines for articles and film on the Climate Atlas of Canada, and collaborated on the Climate Data Visualizations data portal project alongside Co-Director Dr. Danny Blair.

Their interests are public science communication, the intersection of climate change with storytelling, and all forms of statistical analysis.



Hannah Sinclair-Huberdeau - Office Assistant

Hannah (she/her) started as a Manitoba Eco-Network volunteer in April 2025, before joining our team on a part-time basis in June 2025.

Hannah assists the Manitoba Eco-Network with office administration tasks such as data entry and office organization on a part-time basis. She is bilingual, fluent in French and English. Additionally, she routinely performs English to French translation for the MbEN.

In her spare time Hannah enjoys participating in online webcam wildlife survey counts.



Derek Bassey (he/him) - Accounts (A3 OfficeWorks)

Derek and A3 OfficeWorks have been longstanding bookkeepers for the Manitoba Eco-Network, providing crucial services for the organization's operations. Derek is also Finance and Office Coordinator for the Fireweed Food Co-op and on the Board of Directors for the Canadian Community Economic Development Network

Board of Directors

As of March 31, 2026

Harrison Briand, Chair and representative for Green Action Centre

Josh Brandon, Vice-Chair and representative for Cosmetic Pesticide Ban Manitoba

Omer Shiekh, Treasurer

Stacey Chaboyer, Secretary

Kathryn Dompierre, representative for the Lake Winnipeg Foundation

Laura Tyler, representative for the Manitoba Energy Justice Coalition

Aaron McKay, representative for Riding Mountain Ventures Inc.

James Wilt, representative for Climate Action Team Manitoba

Michael Cann

Asha Nelson

Thersea Mackey

Acknowledgements

- Dr. Patricia Fitzpatrick and Scott McCullough from the University of Winnipeg
- Katrine Dilay and the rest of the team at the Public Interest Law Centre
- Our Climate Safe, Green City project partners Spence Neighborhood Association's (SNA), the West End Resource Center (WERC), and the West Broadway Community Organization (WBCO)
- Michael Bagamery for Research Assistance
- Jason Unger from the Environmental Law Centre in Alberta.
- Jessica Laus Youth Advocate Program
- Melanie Chatfield (Energy Modelers Group), with specific workshop contents developed in collaboration with the other mentors, Jeremy Langer (Mechanical Systems Engineer - Efficiency Manitoba), Lindsay Robinson P.Eng., BEMP (Technical Lead // Strategic Initiatives - Efficiency Manitoba), and Stephen Gaunt (Technical Advisor // Building Enclosurement - Efficiency Manitoba). Melanie Chatfield and all other mentors generously contributed their professional services at no costs.
- UM Labour studies & student-intern Simran Kaur.
- all the board, with special thanks to outgoing board members, Zach Rempel and Karen Fletcher, and previous chair Lindsay Robinson for their contributions.
- all the staff
- Volunteers: Syed Suhaib Ullahari Kldri, Sydney Van-Aert, and Anastasiia Sturza for their dedication and commitment to our organization this year.
- Guy Jourdain, for volunteer editing of french translations.
- Madeline Luke and the rest of the folks at Dakota Resource Council.
- James Turk at the Center for Free Expression
- Canada Red Cross
- Winnipeg Office of Emergency Management
- Sustainable Building Manitoba
- Tactica Interactive

Project Funders

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The Government of Manitoba

The Government of Canada

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

Canada Summer Jobs program.

The Kelvin High School Youth in Philanthropy (YiP) Committee a youth program funded by The Winnipeg Foundation

Assiniboine Credit Union

The Manitoba Law Foundation