



Transportation & Fuels

“The world has changed a lot since GPI was created 20 years ago and in many ways we need what GPI does now more than ever. GPI can build consensus in a world that feels politically fractured. It can create solutions when it seems all anyone is doing is yelling about the problems. I’m really excited about the trajectory GPI is on to do even more of this going forward.”

– Amy Skoczlas Cole, GPI Board of Directors and Managing Director of American Public Media’s *The Water Main*

OUR GOAL:

Decarbonization of the transportation system through electrification and development of zero- or negative-carbon, biobased fuels, synthetic fuels, low-carbon oil, and renewable chemicals.

OUR IMPACTS:

Advancing electric vehicle adoption and charging infrastructure. GPI leads efforts at the state and local levels to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs), support infrastructure, and help shape utility EV programs in multiple jurisdictions. Initiatives include Drive Electric Minnesota and the Midcontinent Transportation Electrification Collaborative.

Facilitating a multi-stakeholder initiative devoted to transportation electrification in the Midcontinent. The Midcontinent Transportation Electrification Collaborative brings together automakers, state government, electric utilities and cooperatives, charging companies, and environmental organizations. The group works to influence policy that increases EV use and infrastructure, decarbonizes the transportation sector, improves air quality, and increases electric system efficiency.

Developing the road map to decarbonization in the Midcontinent’s transportation sector. As part of the Midcontinent Transportation Electrification Collaborative’s thought leadership work, the group created a comprehensive and integrated decarbonization strategy for the region. This “road map” shows pathways to significant decarbonization of the sector, using existing technology, in order to inform good decision-making on the part of public and private entities.

Positioning Minnesota as a world-leader in the bioeconomy. As part of a national priority to commercialize advanced biofuels, GPI formed the Bioeconomy Coalition of Minnesota to advocate for the creation of the Bioincentive Program, one of the most significant state-level biofuel commercialization incentives in the country. Areas of focus include oilseed cover crops to produce aviation biofuels, buoying the declining forest products industry, new value-adding technologies from municipal solid waste, and innovative new products from ethanol.

Collaborating with the Kansas Geological Survey as part of a national CarbonSAFE project. With its partners, GPI models the potential for CO₂ pipelines to capture carbon from Midwestern ethanol, industrial, and power plants and transport it to permanent storage reservoirs.

Advocating successfully for increased EV adoption and infrastructure. Through Drive Electric Minnesota, we successfully helped secure 30 percent of funds from Minnesota’s Volkswagen Settlement for EV charging stations and deployment of EV trucks and buses.



Electricity & Efficiency

“One big benefit of participating in a process facilitated by GPI is the opportunity to have a massive impact on some of the driving energy issues of our time.”

– Mike Bull, Director of Policy and External Affairs, Center for Energy and Environment

OUR GOAL:

Decarbonize the electricity sector by midcentury through transformative system change to energy markets and infrastructure, utility regulation, and by aligning utility financial incentives with this goal.

OUR IMPACTS:

Preparing states and utilities for a 21st century electricity system. GPI works with multiple utilities on aligning regulation and business models with achieving a low-carbon energy system. This includes the e21 Initiative in Minnesota, which is co-convened by GPI and the Center for Energy and Environment and aims to enable the state’s continued leadership in transforming the electricity system. GPI facilitates and participates in similar work in other states, including Illinois, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wisconsin.

Assisting in the development of a time of use (TOU) rate pilot. GPI co-convened the stakeholder group that led to the advanced rate design of Xcel Energy’s TOU pilot. It was unanimously approved by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission and will go into effect in 2020 for about 10,000 customers. More accurate price signals made possible by TOU rates are essential to a low-carbon energy system by helping to shave peak demand and utilize more renewable energy.

Advancing regional deployment of distributed generation. With a focus on increased industrial energy efficiency, GPI works with regulatory commissions in several Midwestern states to advance and increase deployment of distributed generation resources that deliver power reliably and resiliently.

Establishing the Midwest’s system for tracking renewable energy certificates. GPI led the creation of the Midwest Renewable Energy Tracking System that states and provinces use to verify compliance with renewable energy standards and objectives.

Fostering international dialogue and partnerships on key energy policies and technologies. GPI has led several successful international delegations, learning the best ideas, adapting them to the US context, and building ongoing bilateral partnerships that speed adoption of best-in-class policy and technology.

Influencing planning assumptions for the Midcontinent Independent System Operator’s (MISO’s) transmission grid. GPI’s Advanced Electric Grid Project illustrates the pathway to 30 percent decarbonization through 2033 and improved market rules for emerging technologies such as energy storage.

Great Plains Institute Our Impact

Transforming the energy system to benefit the economy and environment.





Carbon Management

“I have long admired the Great Plains Institute (GPI) for its unique approach toward consensus-building and problem-solving, and its ability to attract innovative thought partners across the industry. This is an exciting time for GPI as it presses forward on a multitude of critical energy issues.”

— Priti Patel, GPI Board of Directors and Vice President and Chief Transmission Officer, Great River Energy

OUR GOAL:

Accelerate commercial deployment of carbon capture from power plants and industrial facilities to take full economic advantage of our nation’s domestic energy resources, protect and create industrial and manufacturing jobs, and meet midcentury goals for reducing US and global carbon emissions.

OUR IMPACTS:

Advancing bipartisan federal legislation and ensuring momentum on carbon capture and storage. The Carbon Capture Coalition, co-convened by GPI, is an unprecedented coalition of industry, labor, and environmental interests working to help realize the full potential of carbon capture as a national energy, economic, and environmental strategy. In 2018, the coalition achieved its top federal legislative priority with the passage of landmark legislation to extend, reform, and expand the tax credit for CO₂ storage. The FUTURE Act represents one of the most significant energy and environmental achievements by Congress in recent memory.

Catalyzing support for carbon capture, storage, and utilization. The Carbon Capture Leadership Council is the newest national effort to build support for carbon capture and elevate it as a national policy priority. The council is facilitated by the Carbon Capture Coalition and includes private sector CEOs; labor, NGO, and philanthropic leaders; and former state and federal officials.

Developing the Road Map to Decarbonization in the Midcontinent. GPI convenes the Midcontinent Power Sector Collaborative which develops comprehensive and integrated decarbonization strategies for the region. These “road maps” aim to inform good decisions on emissions reductions on the part of public and private entities. The inaugural chapter illustrated opportunities for the electricity sector to achieve decarbonization at 80-to-95 percent below 2005 levels. Subsequent road maps focus on the same opportunities in transportation and fuels (with the Midcontinent Transportation Electrification Collaborative), and buildings.

Coordinating engagement of national and regional leaders on carbon capture projects. GPI coordinated the first-ever national conference on carbon capture that brought together leaders from industry, NGOs, labor, state and federal government, philanthropy, finance and investment, research, and the media to build momentum and drive investment in commercial deployment of carbon capture technologies following the passage of a key federal tax credit (FUTURE Act).



Communities

“The people at GPI are clearly working hard every single day with an unstoppable sense of urgency, and smart, viable strategies needed to upgrade and transform our energy system. While the challenges of climate change can feel overwhelming, GPI reminds us that together we have never been better equipped to solve the world’s toughest problems.”

— June Mathiowetz, Senior Planner for Washington County, MN

OUR GOAL:

Make equitable and inclusive action on clean energy, resilience, and climate mitigation the norm for all Minnesota and Midwestern cities and communities.

OUR IMPACTS:

Growing state and national networks to enable cities to achieve energy and other sustainability goals. GPI helped to design, launch, and now co-directs GreenStep Cities, assisting more than 120 Minnesota cities and three tribal nations—more than 44 percent of the state’s population—achieve sustainability goals. This work informed efforts to launch a national network of statewide sustainability programs in 12 states, engaging a collective 1,650 cities.

Developing strategic and ambitious climate action plans. GPI helped develop a plan for the City of St. Louis Park to achieve 100 percent renewable electricity by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2040. This represents the most ambitious climate action plan in Minnesota. GPI works with dozens of cities to integrate energy into their comprehensive plans, providing existing energy conditions reports and technical assistance.

Increasing readiness for solar investment and development in the Midwest. GPI works with local governments in Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin to become “shovel-ready” for solar investment and development, which has earned communities national SolSmart recognition. The certification acknowledges readiness for solar development.

Harnessing local networks to build toward electric vehicle (EV) readiness. GPI launched the Cities Charging Ahead! cohort of 28 metro and greater Minnesota cities working on EV readiness by upgrading fleets, adding charging infrastructure, and ensuring development guidelines support EVs.

Designing and implementing strategies for market deployment of solar + EV charging. GPI was selected as one of only nine teams in the US to be part of the Solar Energy Innovation Network, a collaborative research effort operated by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory with funding from the US Department of Energy. As part of this effort, GPI’s “smart charging” project will model how EVs and solar energy can work together to benefit both customers and the grid.

Developing a Utility Energy Registry to make reliable energy data readily available to Minnesota cities. GPI helped develop the framework for this voluntary, online platform to provide public access to community-scale utility energy data. The consistent, up-to-date data would inform communities’ clean energy, climate, and resilience planning and implementation. At the same time, it would streamline the process of responding to multiple data requests for utilities.

Join Us!

These are just some examples of how GPI is transforming the energy system to benefit the economy and environment. **With your help we could do even more!**

Now is the time to make the world better with better energy. Become a part of the global energy transition by investing in our work at **BETTERENERGY.ORG** today.



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