

## Speaker Bios for August 27, 2020

### Electrification Stakeholder Event: Non-utility Stakeholder Perspectives

#### Winona LaDuke – Executive Director, Honor the Earth

Winona LaDuke is a rural development economist working on issues of economic, food, and energy sovereignty. She lives and works on the White Earth reservation in northern Minnesota, and leads several organizations including Honor the Earth, Anishinaabe Agriculture Institute, Akiing, and Winona's Hemp. These organizations develop and model cultural-based sustainable development strategies utilizing renewable energy and sustainable food systems. She is an international thought leader in the areas of climate justice, renewable energy, and environmental justice. She is also a leader in the work of protecting Indigenous plants and heritage foods from patenting and genetic engineering. She has authored six books including; *Recovering the Sacred*, *All our Relations*, *Last Standing Woman*, and her newest work *The Winona LaDuke Chronicles*.

#### Ben Benoit – Environmental Director, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Born in Hartford Conn, Ben likes to jokingly tell people that he has lived the Ojibwe migration story. Starting on the East coast and ultimately making his way to Minnesota, Ben went to high school in Anoka, began college at St Cloud State and finished with a Bachelor's of Science degree from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in Biochemistry. After college, Ben worked for a few years in industry, as a microbiologist and chemist and when he began looking for a house but decided that city life wasn't for him and it was time to rejoin his family in the North. The best parts of Minnesota are found in this area. Some of the most pristine lakes and watersheds in the county and he is committed to protecting them for future generations to rely on as his family does today. He was taught that if we care for the manoomin, land and waters, they will care for us. That is the mission Ben works towards as Leech Lake Environmental Director and as an anishinaabe man. He hopes that through his work he can further develop relationships between local governments, help push projects that benefit all parties and share the core values that bring people together to care about the water.

#### Jenny Edwards – Director of Planning and Engagement, Center for Energy and Environment

Jenny Edwards is the Director of Planning and Engagement at the Center for Energy and Environment in Minneapolis. Some primary areas of work for her team include community energy planning, local government program and policy design, commercial building benchmarking policies, "non-wires" distribution planning, electric vehicle integration, and energy districts. She has been focused more and more on the growing area of advanced grid integration, which includes research and policy advising on advanced metering, beneficial electrification, and geo-targeting of energy services. Jenny's previous work in the energy field includes positions with Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, UC Berkeley, MIT, and the University of Minnesota. She is also currently an Adjunct Faculty member at the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

### **Andrew Moratzka – Partner, Stoel Rives**

Andrew P. Moratzka focuses on litigation of various utility- and energy-related issues. Drew represents iron mines, paper companies, refineries, steel manufacturers and other large industrial customers in electric and gas rate cases, resource plans, and various regulatory matters at the state and federal level, including those related to climate change and application of the federal social cost of carbon to resource planning and acquisition proceedings in Minnesota. He also represents independent power producers. In these roles, Drew regularly appears before state public utilities commissions and administrative law judges. Drew also has experience arguing energy-related and bankruptcy-related issues at the appellate level. Given his background, clients also retain Drew for utility contract negotiations and to consult on various legislative matters. Drew is the managing partner for Stoel Rives' Minneapolis office. He previously served as chair of the firm's Energy Development practice group.

### **Kevin Lawless – Board Chair, Hourcar; Principal, The Forward Curve**

Kevin Lawless is Board Chair at Hourcar, a Twin Cities-based car sharing organization, and Principal at The Forward Curve LLC, an energy efficiency consulting firm. He has helped transition Hourcar to an independent entity, with a plan to build an all-electric fleet serving core areas of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The majority of his work life has been spent either in or consulting to the electric and gas utility industry. Previously, he held a variety of roles at Xcel Energy from forecast analyst to Vice President, where he led the transformation of energy efficiency from a small department to a full-fledged business unit. He has degrees in Economics from the University of MN and an MBA from the University of St. Thomas.

### **Carmen Carruthers – Outreach Director, Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota**

As the Outreach Director for the Citizens Utility Board of Minnesota, Carmen develops and delivers educational materials to help Minnesota consumers reduce their energy use and understand their energy options. She is passionate about helping people reduce their energy costs and environmental impact. Carmen came to CUB in 2016 with a variety of experiences including work in financial services, sales, education, and urban planning. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Local and Urban Affairs from St. Cloud State University and a Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Iowa.

### **Ben Passer - Director of Energy Access and Equity, Fresh Energy**

As Director of Energy Access and Equity, Ben directs Fresh Energy's work to advance equitable outcomes across Minnesota's energy system, and also supports the organization's diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. He joined Fresh Energy as a Policy Associate in May 2015. Ben holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Minnesota and a Juris Doctor from William Mitchell College of Law. He is a member of the Minnesota Bar.