

Twenty years of promoting business practices that demonstrate environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social responsibility.



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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

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David Rinard Steelcase

Susan Paauwe Environmental Resources Management

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Paul Murray Herman Miller

Bill Stough Sustainable Research Group

Kelley Losey Cascade Engineering Dear Friends,

Over 20 years ago, the environmentally conscience business community founded the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum to promote business practices that demonstrate environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social responsibility. These core values have been the backbone to the forum's success and continue to influence the direction and activities of the organization to this day.

Over the past year, we have had the pleasure of building on the success of previous initiatives as well as engaging in some exciting new opportunities. These include further development of the West Michigan Climate Resiliency Framework Initiative, participating in the Michigan Green Labs Workshop, and completion of the Michigan Waste Characterization and Valuation Study. We also had the opportunity to celebrate with each other through the launch of the annual Triple Bottom Line Bash, the signature event for local sustainable business professionals. Together, we have continued to keep West Michigan on the map as the nation's unofficial capital of sustainable business.

Looking forward to the next year, I would encourage each of you to make small steps toward reaching your sustainability goals. Take advantage of the opportunities the forum presents by becoming more engaged with your peers and develop a problem-solving mentality.

Finally, I'd like to thank the board of directors for their continued guidance, to Daniel Schoonmaker for his leadership, and to the member organizations that make it all possible and worthwhile. I look forward to another year of collaborative success with each one of you.

Steve Teitsma President

Atm Time



2015 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Sue Paauwe Environmental Resources Management

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# 21 YEARS OF WMSBF

With the rise of the modern environmental movement in the second half of the last century, the nation began to take notice of the negative impact of certain business practices on the natural environment and human health. Adjustments in practices, systems, and equipment to comply with new regulations could be a large financial cost. Aiming beyond compliance toward more sustainable business practices could limit the risk of future regulations, and in many instances provide economic value back to the organization.

In West Michigan, a select group was taking it even further, experiencing personal revelations about the role of business in environmental and social concerns. Emboldened by a culture that prioritizes natural resources and the well-being of employees and the community, pockets of forward thinking emerged locally, including a small group of businesses that formed the charter membership of West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum.

There was no literature for sustainable industry, and no best practices, so they created their own. They put competitive differences aside to pursue common goals. Informal knowledge sharing quietly produced countless environmental and social outcomes for the region, while a cross-functional team produced the seminal Concise Guide to Sustainable Commerce. It also played a key role in facilitating the office furniture industry's adoption of sustainability.

The region's sustainability claims and green bona fides are well known, especially in the fields of sustainable design and green building. The forum helped make it acceptable, even mainstream, for local businesses and government to pursue such efforts. Through it all there was a common thread: Members would focus on environmental concerns, but also on the impact their businesses and their efforts were having on their communities and society. Efforts had to be financially feasible as well, preferably increasing the profitability of an organization. This forum should help organizations balance its impacts on people, planet and profit, the Triple Bottom Line.



West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum provided a platform for business, government and environmental activists to collaborate on key issues.

## WMSBF TODAY

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum is today a regional network of business, government, non-profits and academia dedicated to promoting business practices that demonstrate environmental stewardship, economic vitality, and social responsibility.

It has grown to become the leading organization for practitioners of beyond-compliance sustainability practices in the state, promoting positive community change and operational improvements through education and collaboration. It serves as:

- · A marketplace of ideas, discussion and problem-solving around sustainable business for diverse and often competing interests.
- · A mechanism for professional development, networking and tribe-building for practitioners and organizations.
- · A platform for investments in shared capacity to address organizational, industry and community sustainability concerns.
- · A "boundary organization" providing linkages between industries, governments, non-profit interests, and academia.

WMSBF boasts consistent involvement from a majority of the region's most recognizable brands, largest employers and most innovative entrepreneurs, advocates and educators. Now in its third decade, the forum is continuously challenged to meet emerging needs while leveraging the efforts of an increasingly robust community of vendors and educational initiatives working toward similar goals.

#### **EDUCATION AND NETWORKING**

The flagship forum program has always been its monthly meetings and annual conferences. It has offered approximately 270 professional development events in its history, educating thousands on best practices, emerging issues, and innovative thinking, playing host to a who's who of national scale experts.

#### **SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE**

An effort to mobilize the regional business community to improve local recycling rates and promote the development of a circular West Michigan economy. Launched in late 2013, it is a collaboration of member organizations and other partners that provide recycling and composting services or education to local businesses, citizens and other stakeholders. It is interdisciplinary in nature, and has proven unique in its ability to facilitate collaboration and shared capacity among natural enemies and conflicting interests.

The forum was one of three grantees from the 2014 Community Pollution Prevention Grant program for recycling data collection, the first phase of the Governor's Recycling Initiative led by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on behalf of the Snyder Administration. Through this, the task force created the Michigan Municipal Solid Waste Characterization and Valuation Study, a research project that determined the potential economic and environmental impacts of municipal solid waste recycling and composting statewide and locally. The level of collaboration between private and public stakeholders necessary to complete the project was unprecedented, most notable for the contribution of facility access, staff, materials and proprietary data from landfill operators. Over the next two years we hope to leverage this success and the lessons of our valuation research to forward a larger regional conversation about the role of local business in creating a circular economy.

Moving forward, the task force is developing resource guides for local businesses, facilitating problem-solving strategies through partnership with the design community, and other strategies to improve recycling as funding and capacity permits.

#### 2015 FEATURED SPEAKERS

John Allen Office of the Great Lakes

**Dave Bell GR Bikes** 

Hillary Bisnett **Ecology Center** 

**Gary Bond** Barfly

**Clinton Bovd** Steelcase

**Liesl Clark** 5 Lakes Energy

**Jamie Cross** Alliance for the Great Lakes

Liese Dallbauman PepsiCo

Dan Doyle International Institute for Sustainable Labs

Matt Flechter Michigan Department of **Environmental Quality** 

Steve Heacock Spectrum Health

**Matthew Heun** Calvin College

Rob Kaplan Closed Loop Fund

Janelle Kearsley Walmart Stores, Inc.

Andy Levin Lean & Green Michigan

Walker Modic Bell's Brewing

Jim Patchett Conservation Design Forum

**Dale Phenicie** Council of Great Lakes Industries

**Sudhakar Reddy** University of Michigan

Ryan Reynolds Metro Health Hospital

Rachel Schneider Harley-Davidson Motor Company

Dan Scripps Michigan Energy Innovation **Business Council** 

Maureen Sertich Whirlpool

Bill Stough Sustainable Research Group

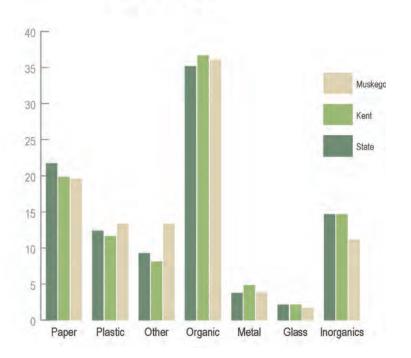
Kris Spaulding Brewery Vivant

**David Titley** Penn State University

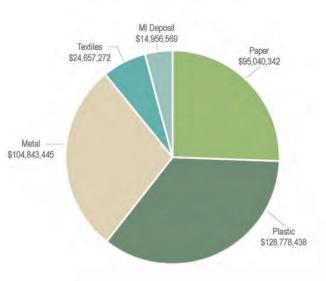
Seth Yon **Greener Grads** 

Kirby Watson Direct Trade Coffee Club

# Characterization Comparison by Category



### **Market Value by Category**



TRASH RESEARCH PROJECT: A coalition led by West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum sampled municipal solid waste at eight sites throughout Michigan as part of an effort to characterize economic opportunities available through recycling, composting and other waste diversion strategies.

### SOLID WASTE TASK FORCE

Sara Damm Muskegon County

Tony Gleason Padnos

Jason Kehr Valley City Electronic Recycling

Aaron Lowen
Grand Valley State University

Tom Mahoney Republic Services

Josh Miller Rapid Group

Rich Post Padnos

**Brian Smith** 

Lynn Spurr FTCH

**Justin Swan** 

Kristen Wieland Kent County Department of Public Works

Katie Venechuk Michigan Department of Environmental Quality



WMSBF hosted a Green Labs Workshop for 130 laboratory professionals and other stakeholders.

#### **2015 INTERNS**

Blake Bensman Aquinas College

Joanne Hulst Calvin College

Austin Jackson Aquinas College

Michael Meyers Calvin College

Grant Pell
Grand Valley State University

Kamia Woodard Grand Valley State University

Leslie Yarhouse Kendall College of Art & Design

#### WEST MICHIGAN CLIMATE RESILIENCY FRAMEWORK INITIATIVE

West Michigan Climate Resiliency Conference hosted

165 local professionals in October 2014.

Originally launched as a partnership of the forum, Michigan State University, Penn State University and other collaborators designed to help interests in the region better respond to extreme weather events and other impacts commonly associated with climate change, the initial effort gathered data on perceived risk and vulnerabilities from business sector representatives and important stakeholder groups, helping to develop a model to facilitate understanding of complex issues as part of a larger project with the National Research Network for Sustainable Climate Risk Management.

The initiative continues through partnership with the Great Lakes Integrated Sciences + Assessments Center, a collaboration between the University of Michigan and MSU. Over the next year we will conclude the framework development through a pilot project that will develop customized resiliency resources for four organizations that together represent the West Michigan economy: Spectrum Health, Perrigo, Grand Rapids Public Schools and Barfly.

#### **GREEN LABS**

Launched as an effort to introduce best practices to local laboratory operators and generate interest among lab facilities in sustainability, the West Michigan Green Labs Pilot Project was supported through funding by the DEQ and technical support from the International Institute for Sustainable Laboratories. Labs have been identified as a major opportunity for environmental improvement, consuming four to six times as much energy as typical office buildings.

The pilot, now complete, included an operational assessment, customized resource development, and opportunity to earn a third-party performance claim. The initiative continues with the support of I2SL and a local organizing committee, which organizes a yearly workshop and facilitates access to other regional and national resources for green labs.

#### THANK YOU TO THE VOLUNTEERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS THAT HAVE HELPED MOVE THE FORUM FORWARD IN 2015

**Zach Bartell** 

**Dave Bell** 

Tera Fowler

George Heartwell

Sarah Herbst

Renae Hesselink

**Chris Huntoon** 

**Curt Monhart** 

**Tom Newhouse** 

Nicholas Occhipinti

Julie Ringlever

Su Paauwe

Rob Schoonmaker

**Kate Shockey** 

Bill Stough

Lynn Sutter

Jennifer Wammack

Gabe Wing

**Brian Wolters** 

Garrett Ziegler

Local professionals could access more than 30 hours of education and networking through WMSBF events in 2015, the equivalent of a national conference...for just \$125.



#### TALENT DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRAM SEEDING

The forum plays a key role in introducing professionals to the local sustainable business community, a one-stop shop for peer-to-peer learning, networking, vendors and job seekers. We've also worked hard to invest in the growth of the practitioner network, providing unique opportunities for local students and graduates through our various projects and fellowships. Approximately 20 percent of our 2015 budget was earmarked for this purpose, some \$29,000.

In the coming year, the forum will launch the Sustainable Business Leadership Academy in partnership with Sustainable Research Group, an effort to seed new sustainability departments at Michigan companies. We're also facilitating an exploratory committee that will examine the feasibility of a Michigan Sustainable Business Forum, reigniting a vision that was nearly realized before the Great Recession shuttered collaborative efforts with our sister interests throughout the state. As well as other emerging opportunities to help promote sustainable business practices in West Michigan.

#### SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

For the better part of two years, we have been tracking member companies' interests in local food production. This has articulated in a number of different ways, ranging from strategic purchasing initiatives and employee participation in community supported agriculture to on-site community gardens and partnerships with commercial farming start-ups.

Last year we published a white paper detailing a new LEED credit for onsite food production, and in the coming year will be further developing opportunities to facilitate relationships between local organizations and a sustainable food system.

	2015 (est.)	2014	2013	
Revenue	\$140,000	\$96,388	\$59,344	
Expenses	\$135,000	\$92,231	\$58,431	5.7

## **WEST MICHIGAN** SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



#### **AQUINAS COLLEGE**

Since Peter Wege launched the first West Michigan College Presidents' meeting on Economicology in 1999, Aquinas College has been a leader in the integration of sustainability into campus life and academic coursework. Sustainable practices are a part of all of our operations and programming; we are especially proud of our pioneering accomplishment of offering a Sustainable Business undergraduate degree in 2003. This program has placed dozens of dynamic change agents in leading companies across the region. As a signatory of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment, Aguinas is committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2040. In 2014, Aguinas launched a green revolving fund to provide funding for campus energy efficiency.



#### **BIFMA**

JSINESS + INSTITUTIONAL FURNITURE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

BIFMA launched work on a sixth version of the ANSI/BIFMA Furniture Sustainability Standard this year by hiring a materials expert to assist stakeholders and announcing its intent to more closely align credit language in the standard with the LEED Rating System and other leading programs. The standard has already been a success with 63 manufacturers certifying more than 7,000 product lines through the level® Certification Program. The alignment will connect more manufacturers and products with more project teams and specifiers to make the sustainability performance achieved through the standard more transparent and an easier "fit" with requirements of those programs.



#### **BREWERY VIVANT**

Brewery Vivant is a neighborhood brewery and restaurant founded on being a small, but influential, sustainable business. We measure and report on 15 sustainability goals annually in our "Beer the change..." report. A few highlights of our progress in 2014 include sending less than 1% of our waste to the incinerator, donating 11% of our profits and 233 volunteer hours to local charitable organizations, and reducing our energy intensity by 17%, mostly due to purchasing 100% renewably generated electricity. We are Grand Rapids' 4th Certified B Corporation which is a company structure that uses the power of business to solve social and environmental problems. This certification is like our building's LEED Certification, but instead of focusing on one aspect of our business, it focuses on our entire operation.



#### **BUSY BEA'S**

Busy Bea's was the first janitorial company in West Michigan to embrace the microfiber flat mop system brought here by its supplier from Italy. This system significantly reduces water usage. The microfiber flat mop system also results in an 85% reduction in chemical usage, provides a more germ-free environment and eliminates dust mopping. Busy Bea's also uses Pro Team back pack vacuums that enhance indoor air quality with its quadruple filtration system. Pro Team has partnered with the American Lung Association to educate the public about indoor air quality. These vacuums are also designed for a seven-year life expectancy which reduces equipment disposal into the landfills.





#### **CLOTHING MATTERS**

2016 marks two decades of Clothing Matters' commitment to prevent pollution, conserve natural resources and support social justice, by providing education to individuals and organizations with an incomparable world-class collection of sustainably manufactured apparel serving five generations. Clothing Matters has proudly partnered with over 100 local, regional, domestic and international design teams, supporting their investments in practices that improve personal, social and ecological well-being.



#### **DIRECT TRADE COFFEE CLUB**

The Direct Trade Coffee Club was created to create sustainable economies for all parties in the coffee value chain. Today we are one of the only coffee companies in the world that sources coffee 100% through farmers we have a direct relationship with. We offer several programs that enhance our sustainability. Dirt to Dirt is a program that provides transparency to the coffee supply chain on an level unique in coffee industry. Our new product 7 Cold Brew utilizes Cascara (the fruit of the coffee cherry), which has historically been a waste product in coffee processing. Re-purposing the Cascara provides a great Hibiscus flavor profile to 7 Cold Brew and gives our farmers another revenue stream from what has historically been a waste product.



#### **GOODWILL OF GREATER GRAND RAPIDS**

2016 marks the 50th year that Goodwill Industries of Greater Grand Rapids, Inc. has been repurposing stuff and lives in the Grand Rapids area! It is our goal to extract the most value from all the materials we have been entrusted with. To do that we funnel all donations through our unique valuation process. All the money earned from our stores, export sales and recycling program funds our workforce development activities here in the greater Grand Rapids area. "Recycling" has become an intrinsic part of who we are. That means office organics collection, recycling tours for the community, labor programs with the Kent County's single stream recycling center, engagement with the DEQ and the Michigan Recycling Coalition as well as managing over 25 million lbs of materials annually. The money we earn from your donated material helps fund job training, placement and retention services in your community!



#### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF KENT COUNTY

The sustainability of our community development program is three-fold. First the home itself, which is built to be healthy, comfortable, durable, and affordable. Each new home is built to obtain a certification with LEED, Energy Star, and Indoor Air Quality. Second, the preparedness of the homebuyers for a successful lifetime of home ownership. At HFHKC we have a success rate of over 94% of our homebuyers - which we have more than 350 at this time. Thirdly, we address critical repairs, weatherization needs, and exterior home and yard clean up within the neighborhoods where we are building.



#### **HERMAN MILLER**

We believe the environment is a cause every corporation should put high on its agenda. Renewing our commitment to the environment led us to a new ten-year strategy called "Earthright" launched in 2013. We had learned a great deal since our Perfect Vision goals back in 2004, and this new vantage point allowed us to sharpen our focus. Our revised policy and goals are based upon—and driven by—the Earthright principles and themes. The guiding principles include, positively transparent: we will share an unprecedented amount of information about the impacts for which we are responsible and what we are doing about them; living things: we will create better products and processes to protect everyone's health and well-being, restore the ecosystem, and give back more than we extract; greener together: we cannot solve these problems by ourselves, but must engage our entire community.



#### **STEELCASE**

For more than a century, Steelcase has believed in the power of people. Every day, in locations around the globe we work to unlock the human promise and create meaningful lasting change. As we see it, sustainability is about creating and supporting economic, social, and environmental conditions that help people, organizations, and communities thrive. We've expanded our renewable energy investments to represent 100% of our global electricity consumption. At the same time, we continue to reduce our direct reliance on fossil fuels for our operations and our products, decreasing our global energy use by 60% since 2001.



## WEST MICHIGAN SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

This lifetime achievement award honors individual practitioners that have made the greatest contribution to sustainable business in West Michigan during their careers. Finalists are nominated by a committee comprised of past recipients and former presidents, then selected by a vote of the full forum membership. One additional honoree is selected by the nominating committee.



Renae is a founding member of the U.S. Green Building Council West Michigan chapter, past Chair of the Board of Directors and currently board member and the Chapter's Green School Advocacy Committee Chair. Her roots with the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum go back approximately 18 years. She has been with Nichols (a distributor of custodial and packaging supplies) for 22 years in various positions and eight years ago moved into a new role within the company as Vice President of Sustainability. In 2010 Nichols achieved LEED-EB O & M (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings Operations and Maintenance) and applied for recertification in June 2015 under LEED O+M Version 4.0. Nichols and was recognized as a 2011 Michigan Green Leader by the Detroit Free Press, and in 2013 and 2014 as 101 Best and Brightest Sustainable Companies. They are also part of the Michigan Pollution Prevention program and a winner in the 2014 USGBC West Michigan Battle of the Buildings competition. Renae has been involved in the successful implementation of more than 40 Green Cleaning programs. Other roles include: Goodwill of West Michigan Board of Directors, leadership team of the Muskegon Sustainability Coalition; leadership team for the Grand Rapids Community Sustainable Partnership, Kent County Lodging Association Green Team and Chair of TEDxMuskegon.



2015 Future Hall of Fame Award **Brock Rodgers** Perrigo

### THE OTHER FINALISTS WERE

**Deb Steketee** Aquinas College

Norm Christopher Grand Valley State University

Guy Bazzani Bazzani Associates

**Keith Winn** Catalyst Partners

Gayle DeBruyn Kendall College of Art & Design

#### PAST INDUCTEES

George Heartwell City of Grand Rapids

Fred Keller Cascade Engineering

Bill Stough Sustainable Research Group

**Paul Murray** Herman Miller For more than 35 years Tom Newhouse has been designing furniture, lighting, major appliances, and other products as the owner/principal of an industrial design firm in western Michigan, Thomas J. Newhouse Design. Prior to 1978 he was a member of the corporate design staff at Herman Miller Inc. He holds a degree in industrial design from the University of Michigan.

Tom currently works primarily in the areas of office furniture and LED lighting, with an emphasis on environmentally sustainable design practice and the development of "Cradle to Cradle" industrial design techniques, where the concept of waste is eliminated in a Circular Economic model. He currently holds over 90 design and utility patents. He has been a member of the West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum since 1996, and is a past-president.



TOM NEWHOUSE

David A. Rinard is director of Global Environmental Performance for Steelcase Inc., the global leader in the office furniture industry. Dave, promoted to his current position in November 1994, leads the department that is responsible for overseeing the company's environmental initiatives and performance, and implementing its corporate environmental strategy, including regulatory compliance, sustainability, environmental outreach and responsible conduct programs.

Dave is on the board of directors for West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum. He is a member of the external advisory board of the University of Michigan's Center for Sustainable Systems, the external advisory board of the Aquinas College sustainable business program, and the Kettering University Environmental Advisory Board. He is also a member representative for the U.S. Green Building Council, a board member of the West Michigan USGBC Chapter, and a participant in the BIFMA (Business and Institutional Furniture Manufacturers Association) Government Affairs Committee.



DAVID RINARD

Rich Vander Veen is President of Mackinaw Power. Vander Veen led the Bay Windpower team which successfully initiated, financed and constructed the Great Lakes' first privately developed commercial wind power project. The Mackinaw City Wind Power Plant is generating new, zero-emissions power today, serving "Green Power" customers across Michigan. Vander Veen has twenty-five years of experience with innovative environmental and energy projects. Described as "the Godfather of Michigan wind power," he is the developer behind both the state's first commercial wind farm-the two turbines in Mackinac City near the south end of the Mackinac Bridge-and the state's largest wind farm, the 133 turbine development in Gratiot County. He also pioneered a new communitybased approach to developing wind projects, leading Gratiot County Commission to unanimously adopt countywide wind zoning.



RICH VANDER VEEN

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

West Michigan Sustainable Business Forum is funded through a combination of membership donations, grants, program fees and sponsorships. We provide three regular opportunities for members and other local organizations to sponsor our activities each year. Thank you to our sponsors.

TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE BASH FEATURING THE SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



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#### **HOLE**

Amway

Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr and Huber

Padnos

Rehau

SpartanNash

#### **SUPPORTING**

Direct Trade Coffee Club

**Environmental Resources Management** 

Integrated Architecture

Pilgrim Manor

Republic Services

Thomas J. Newhouse Design











#### 2014-2015 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

#### **PRESENTING**

5 Lakes Energy

Amway

Consumers Energy

Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr and Huber

Intertek

Spectrum Health

#### **CO-PRESENTING**

Barfly

**Brewery Vivant** 

Calvin College

**Davenport University** 

Grand Valley State University

**Greener Grads** 

Metro Health Hospital

Michigan State University

New Soil

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# MEETING MICHIGAN'S FUTURE ENERGY NEEDS



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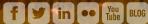
RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR MICHIGAN. THAT'S OUR PROMISE.





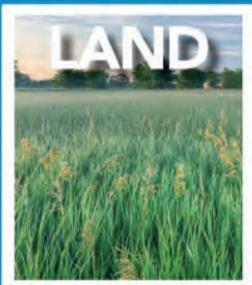


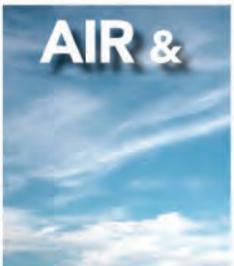


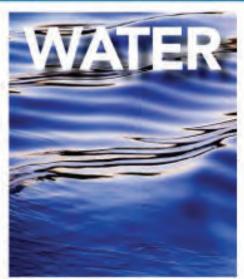




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WE. Community. There is beauty in this place we live. It stems from the natural wonders of lakeshore dunes and streams running through our cities. But this beauty reveals it's truest form in the people who come together in a shared love, to protect and preserve West Michigan.



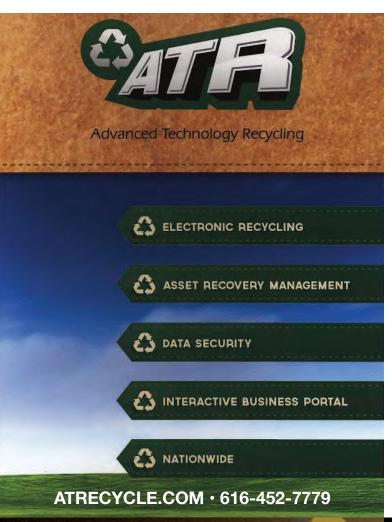
ME. Commitment. There is a power in the individual resolve. It is a source of energy and a guide to keep us true. And the seeds of this energy lie in each of us, waiting to emerge. Ready to change minds. And to change the world.



**ACT.** Action. We must preserve this special place for all generations. By gathering our collective hopes and intentions we create a beginning. Our next step is to act; placing our intentions in policy commits our communities to sustaining what is best for today and tomorrow.







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My Green Michigan mygreenmichigan.com

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