Since 1974, the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy has used law and science to protect our water, air, land and people. MCEA works with government agencies, the legislature, and the courts to set sound environmental policy, ensure good laws are enacted, and enforce the law when needed.

Real environmental progress takes time and dedication. MCEA is in it for the long haul. Our policy and legal experts use the facts to drive change and to ensure positive outcomes. MCEA is committed to working across all sectors—private and public, profit and nonprofit, political and academic—to form the partnerships needed to succeed. MCEA is equally committed to watching over the process to make sure policies are enacted and laws enforced.

As MCEA looks ahead to the next 10 years, we see continuing challenges, as well as new opportunities. While much is uncertain, you may be sure of one thing—MCEA will be there to work for meaningful improvements in Minnesota’s environment and health of its people.

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The forecast: windy & sunny.

For decades, renewables have been minor players in the energy landscape, with a breakthrough always just over the horizon. Now, with coal plants retiring across the state, and pressure on agencies to take into account the true environmental and health costs of burning fossil fuels—the patterns are shifting. Renewables are rising. The forecast: windy and sunny.
Minnesota’s energy economy represents a key opportunity to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions while promoting economic growth. While fossil fuels have been slow to phase out, a vision for a different energy landscape has persevered. Now, thanks in part to MCEA’s hard work, that vision is quickly becoming a reality. MCEA and its partners are integral players in promoting a rapid and successful transition from older, dirtier resources like coal to clean, renewable energy sources like solar and wind.

**RECORD HIGHS FOR RENEWABLES**

- MCEA and its partners fought hard for Minnesota Power to eliminate 150 MegaWatts (MW) of coal-fired electricity generation at its Taconite Harbor Plant by 2020, and to retire 130 MW of coal-fired generation at its Boswell Energy Center by 2022. MCEA also successfully lobbied the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to require this northern Minnesota utility to evaluate replacing its coal-burning units with renewable energy sources combined with energy savings programs.
- On behalf of clean energy groups, MCEA has continued to urge the PUC to approve the retirement of more than 1,400 MW of Xcel Energy’s coal-fired power generation, eliminating millions of tons of carbon dioxide and other pollutants each year that contribute to climate change and are harmful to our health. We are pushing the PUC to plan for and support a clean energy future. This transformation is already happening: in 2010, Xcel had 1 MW of solar energy on its system; in 2016, Xcel proposes to add almost 2,000 MW of solar over the next 15 years!
- MCEA was instrumental in securing a judge’s ground-breaking order for Xcel Energy to change climate change and air pollution regulations. MCEA and its partners successfully lobbied the PUC to require this order to take effect.

MCEA has a vision for a clean-energy electricity sector—and economy—of the future. Bringing our expertise to electricity planning at the PUC, to stakeholder discussions around reforming the utility business model, and to ways Minnesota can take bold action on the heels of the historic Paris Climate Agreement will hasten the transition to a healthy and prosperous energy economy.

**THE FORECAST:** Bright skies are ahead as we work to secure the regulatory approvals we need to continue the transition to clean energy!
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MCEA was instrumental in securing a judge’s ground-breaking “Cost of Carbon” guidelines for use in PUC proceedings. These guidelines will help show the Commission the true costs of electricity generated by fossil fuels and hold utilities accountable for the harmful emissions they produce.

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2016 HIGHLIGHTS: A YEAR OF BRIGHT SPOTS ACROSS THE BOARD

WATER QUALITY

• MCEA led a major effort to examine phosphorus and nitrogen pollution control programs in states bordering the Mississippi River. Among the disturbing findings: 20% of water cleanup plans prepared by states and approved by the EPA do not track or verify implementation of needed agricultural reductions.
• We began work to develop a robust state accounting system for tracking agricultural sector progress toward established water quality goals.
• We challenged MPCA’s practice of relying on massive, voluntary public reduction in agricultural nitrogen, failing to set discharge limits for Minnesota’s largest sewage plants. Unfortunately, this suit was not successful.

THE PICTURE: MCEA’s Water Quality team will seek to make all polluters, including agricultural sources, accountable for protecting Minnesota’s water.

EVENTS: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Throughout the year, MCEA hosts events to engage supporters, friends, and newcomers to the organization. Join us in 2017 to:

ALAN R. THOMETZ
Chair

KATHRYN HOFFMAN
Interim Executive Director

ANDREW BONTRAGER
President • Legal Director

DOUG HEMER
President • Legal Director

JANICE KRENTZ
Director of Program Evaluation & Research

Catherine & Kim Jackson

KATHRYN HOFFMAN
President • Legal Director

NATURAL RESOURCES

• MCEA stopped the Sandpiper Pipeline in its tracks. It won an important victory when the Minnesota Court of Appeals directed that the pipeline be subjected to thorough environmental review. Afterwards, investor pipeline companies withdrew their proposal.
• We were instrumental in developing plans to improve wetlands replacement projects.
• We defended the Great Lakes Compact by opposing the governor’s proposal to backload the compact’s implementation.

The staff of MCEA carries the day-to-day load of keeping Minnesota green and protecting the state’s environment.

MINING

• MCEA helped educate Minnesotans about the risks of sulfide mining. Minnesotans have learned that sulfide mining operations create pollution that lasts for at least 50 years.
• We are building a strong legal case against the proposed PolyMet Mine. Without MCEA, PolyMet would have opened its mine at least 5 years ago, shortly after the release of its flawed Environmental Impact Statement.
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THE PICTURE: Over the next 2-3 years, MCEA is ready to bring credible legal challenges to federal and state permits for the PolyMet mine, which as proposed does not meet environmental protections.

2016 BY THE NUMBERS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Assets</td>
<td>$2,599,067</td>
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<tr>
<td>Liabilities and Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporarily and Permanently Restricted Net Assets</td>
<td>$1,312,100</td>
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<td>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</td>
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STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

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<td>Special Event Revenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment</td>
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<td>Total Supports</td>
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<td>Total Expenses</td>
<td>$1,668,092</td>
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<td>Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets</td>
<td>$(54,649)</td>
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OUTGOING EXPENSES

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Outgoing Expenses</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net Assets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Outgoing Expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MCEA’s Board of Directors guides the organization’s strategic direction and is made up of some of Minnesota’s leading lawyers, policymakers, scientists and business professionals.

TIME CAPSULE: In June we hosted a networking social and mini-mixing presentation by MCEA’s Kathryn Hoffman at Surly Brewing company.

MCEA hosted its 15th annual Women’s Breakfast at St. Thomas on April 26th. This year’s theme was “Shades of the Future,” a chance to see the women taking our industry in the future. This forum celebrates the women of our industry.

The Legally Green gala, “It’s Not Just Your Environment,” was held at Lakes & Legends Brewery in Minneapolis.

In June we hosted a networking social and mini-mixing presentation by MCEA’s Kathryn Hoffman at Surly Brewing company.

In 2016, we held two events designed to reach out to Minnesota’s next generation of environmental leaders. In March, our “Minnesota Watering” gathering included history-making teens fighting for clean water and youth in training followed by a climate change Q & A with Rep. Melissa Horten and Sen. Paul Gazelka at Laken & Legends Brewery in Minneapolis.

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**THE FORECAST:** Over the next 2-3 years, MCEA is ready to bring credible legal challenges to federal and state permits for the PolyMet mine, which as proposed does not meet environmental protections.

**LEGISLATIVE**

- MCEA educated legislators about the water quality benefits of the 2015 buffer law, and worked to tighten the 2016 proposal to fund local government's buffer enforcement.
- We helped to hold off pro-mining amendments that would have limited the ability of citizens to appeal mining permit decisions.
- We alerted legislators to the state's need for a climate action plan. The House passed a DC law which has represented important progress.
- We held candidate education events in Rochester, Cottage Grove, and Minneapolis to inform them about MCEA's environmental law and policy efforts.

**THE FORECAST:** MCEA will work with the 2017 Legislature to target Clean Water Fund expenditures, fund needed water infrastructure, and avoid setting back fundamental environmental protections.

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**LEADERSHIP**

**THE FORECAST:** In 2017, MCEA will challenge new pipeline investments that put our waters at risk, advocate for natural resource protections, and work with its partners to monitor natural resource issues.

### **SOURCES OF SUPPORT**

- **Contributions** 29%
- **Special Event Revenue** 7%
- **Investment and Other** 4%
- **Workplace Giving** 2%
- **Earned Income** 17%
- **Foundation Support** 41%

### **OUTGOING EXPENSES**

- **Program Expenses** 82%
- **Management and Administration** 18%
- **Fundraising** 9%

**THE FOCUS:** In 2017, MCEA will continue to strengthen its infrastructure and programs. We will also focus on advocacy, research, and outreach to ensure that Minnesota's environmental, natural resources, and the health of its people are protected.

### **DONORS**

MCEA’s success is dependent on the contributions of its donors. We thank them for supporting our work to keep Minnesota’s environment, its natural resources, and the health of its people. Our grateful individuals and foundations whose contributions range from June 1, 2016 to Dec 31, 2016 totaled $142 million or more, as well as White Plains Circle members. We apologize for anyone we might have inadvertently missed.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES**

- MCEA stopped the Sandpiper Pipeline in its tracks. It won an important victory when the Minnesota Court of Appeals decided that the Pipeline Company did not have the needed environmental review. Afterwards, investor pipeline companies withdrew their proposal.
- We were instrumental in developing plans to improve wetlands replacement projects.
- We defended the Great Lakes Compact by opposing the Minnesota Attorney General’s effort to invalidate the compact. We advocated for substantial new funding for all forms of transportation to achieve the goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions set forth in the Next Generation Energy Act.

**THE FOCUS:** MCEA will advocate with its transit partners for necessary transportation improvements and increased funding in 2017.

**THE FOCUS:** Events such as Lake Superior Day, the 2017 Legislative Capitol Walk for the Great Lakes, and the 2017 Legislative Capitol Walk for the Great Lakes will be held to raise awareness about the importance of protecting Minnesota’s Great Lakes.

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We began to develop a robust state accounting system for tracking agricultural sector progress toward established water quality goals.

We challenged MPCA’s policy of relying on massive, voluntary pollution reductions by agriculture in setting discharge limits for Minnesota’s largest sewerage plants. Unfortunately, this suit was not successful.

THE BOARD: 2016 was a year of bright spots across the board.

In June, we hosted a networking social and mini-mingle for MCEA’s Board of Directors to encourage connections and strategic direction and a special event in Rochester in October where we highlighted the work done by volunteers and staff who also served.

In 2017, MCEA will challenge new pipeline proposals that would threaten Minnesota’s environment, its natural resources, and the health of its people. We recognize individuals and foundations whose contributions from June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017 included $640 or more, as well as the White Pine Legacy Circle members. We apologize for anyone we might have inadvertently missed.

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EVENTS: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Throughout 2016, MCEA hosted events to engage supporters, friends, and newcomers to the organization. To plan with us in 2017.

MINING

MCEA helped educate Minnesotans about the risks of sulfide mining. Minnesotans have learned that sulfide mining operations create pollution that lasts for at least 50 years.

We are building a strong legal case against the proposed PolyMet Mine. Without MCEA, PolyMet would have opened its mine at least 5 years ago, shortly after the making of its flawed Environmental Impact Statement.

We supported Governor Dayton as he limited access to sulfide mining companies near the Boundary Waters.

MCEA worked with federal agencies as they deny mineral leases to sulfide mining companies near the Boundary Waters.

THE BOARD: Over the next 2-3 years, MCEA is ready to bring credible legal challenges to federal and state permits for the PolyMet mine, which as proposed does not meet environmental protections.

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LEGISLATIVE

MCEA educated legislators about the water quality benefits of the 2015 buffer law, and worked to tighten a 2016 proposal to fund local government’s buffer enforcement.

We helped to hold off pro-mining amendments that would have limited the ability of citizens to appeal mining permit decisions.

We alerted legislators to the state’s decision to hire a Washington DC law firm which has represented the mining industry.

We held candidate education events in Rochester, Cottage Grove, and Minneapolis to inform those running for office of MCEA’s environmental law and policy efforts.

THE BOARD: MCEA will work with the 2017 Legislature to target Clean Water Fund expenditures, fund needed wastewater infrastructure, and avoid cutting fundamental environmental protections.

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

MCEA played a major role in Transportation Forward which advocated for substantial new funding for all forms of transportation in Minnesota. Although politics precluded a solution again, Transportation Forward rallied the state for the 2017 legislative session.

We supported social and economic policies and programs that will enable certain communities adjacent to the resulting special funding to benefit from the substantial investment the region is making in transit.

We strengthened the climate planning process of the Environmental Quality Board. We achieved the goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions set forth in the Next Generation Energy Act.

THE BOARD: MCEA will advocate with its transit partners for necessary transportation improvements and increased funding in 2017.

NATURAL RESOURCES

MCEA stopped the Sandpiper Pipeline in its tracks. It won an important victory when the Minnesota Court of Appeals directed the DOI to conduct a thorough environmental review. Afterwards, investor pipeline companies withdrew their proposal.

We were instrumental in developing plans to improve wetlands replacement projects.

We defended the Great Lakes Compact by opposing the amendment proposal from the US House and Senate, and pushed Minnesota to monitor compliance.

THE BOARD: In 2017, MCEA will challenge new pipeline proposals that will put our water at risk, advocate for natural resource protection, and work with our partners to monitor natural resource issues.

THE BOARD: In 2017, MCEA will challenge new pipeline

PROSPERITY & INNOVATION

The staff of MCEA carries the day-to-day load of keeping Minnesota green and protecting the state’s environment.

MCEA’s Board of Directors wishes to recognize the organization’s strategic direction and is made up of some of Minnesota’s leading lawyers, policymakers, scientists and business professionals.

KATHRYN HOFFMAN

Interim Executive Director

ANDRA BONTEGRAD

GSG Specialist

CASSY TAYLOR

Director of Finance

KEVIN LEWIS

Attorney and Land Use and Transportation Program Director

THOMAS LADUKE

Executive Director

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Executive Director Emeritus

JOHNNY HAAS

Former President of the Mid-Mississippi River Basin

JOHN VESTLUND

History writer, Retired Legislature

MICHAEL E. KONIN-STEINBERG

Associate Dean for Faculty, University of Minnesota, College of Environmental Science and Forestry

JIM HABER

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MINING

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We are building a strong legal case against the proposed PolyMet Mine. Without MCEA, PolyMet would have opened its mine at least 5 years ago, shortly after the discharge of its first acid mine drainage leak.

We supported Governor Dayton as he limited access to sulfide mining companies near the Boundary Waters.

Our work on sulfide mining led to legislation in the legislature.

The FORECAST: MCEA will continue to educate Minnesotans about the risks of sulfide mining and help prevent the opening of new sulfide mines.

LEGISLATIVE

MCEA educated legislators about the water quality benefits of the 2016 buffer law, and worked to tighten a 2016 proposal to fund local governments’ buffer enforcement.

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The FORECAST: MCEA will work with the 2017 Legislature to target Clean Water Fund expenditures, fund needed wastewater infrastructure, and avoid backfill funding of environmental protections.

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

MCEA played a major role in Transportation Forward which advocated for substantial new funding for all forms of transportation. Minnesota has limited public transportation infrastructure.

We supported social and economic policies and programs that will enable certain communities adjacent to the state’s transportation corridors to benefit from the substantial investment the region is making in transit.

We strengthened the climate planning process of the Environmental Quality Board to achieve the goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions set forth in the Next Generation Energy Act.

The FORECAST: MCEA will advocate with its transit partners for necessary transportation improvements and increased funding in 2017.

NATURAL RESOURCES

MCEA stopped the Sandpiper Pipeline in its tracks. It won an important victory when the Minnesota Court of Appeals directed the PUC to conduct a thorough environmental review. Afterwards, investor pipeline companies withdrew their proposal.

We were instrumental in developing plans to improve wetlands restoration projects.

We defended the Great Lakes Compact by opposing the state’s approval proposal from Wisconsin and, pushed Minnesota to monitor compliance.

The FORECAST: In 2017 MCEA will challenge new pipeline investments that put our waters at risk, advocate for natural resource protection, and work with partners to monitor natural resource issues. 

EVENTS: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Throughout the year, MCEA hosts events to engage supporters, friends, and newcomers to the organization. Please join us in 2017.

In 2016, we held two events designed to reach out to Minnesota’s next generation of environmental leaders. In March, our “Minnesota Warming” gathering included hundreds of high school students, followed by a climate change Q & A with Rep. Melissa Hortman and Sen. John Marty.

In June we hosted a networking social and mining presentation by MCEA’s Kathryn Huffman at Surly Brewing company.

MCEA hosted its 15th annual Women’s Breakfast at St. Thomas on April 26th. This year, we focused on climate change and forests and highlighted the Paris Climate Agreement will shape the future of our state’s energy policy.

The Legally Green Gala, “It’s Not Just Your Tap: What We’re Learning from the Flint Water Crisis and Beyond” was held in May. These funds are crucial for ensuring that MCEA can continue to fund our work to protect Minnesota’s environmental law and policy efforts.

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- MCEA helped educate Minnesotans about the risks of sulfide mining. Minnesotans have learned that sulfide mining projects create pollution that lasts for at least 500 years.
- We are building a strong legal case against the proposed PolyMet mine. Without MCEA, PolyMet would have abandoned its mine at least 5 years ago, shortly after the collapse of its failed slashed environmental impact statement.
- We supported Governor Dayton as he limited access to sulfide mining companies near the Boundary Waters.
- We challenged federal agencies as they consider denying mineral leases to sulfide mining companies near the Boundary Waters.

THE FORECAST: Over the next 3-5 years, MCEA is ready to build credible legal challenges to federal and state permits for the PolyMet mine, which as proposed does not meet environmental standards.

LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION

- MCEA played a major role in Transportation Forward which advocated for substantial new funding for all forms of transportation in Minnesota. Although politics precluded a solution again, Transportation Forward stalled for the same reason and released a 10-year package of $10 billion.
- We supported social and economic policies and programs that will enable communities adjacent to the proposed pipeline to benefit from the substantial investment the region is making in transport.
- We strengthened the climate planning process of the Environmental Quality Board so that Minnesota will achieve the goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions set forth in the Next Generation Energy Act.

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EVE NT S: A B R E A T H O F B R E A S H AIR

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- In 2016, we held 2 events designed to reach out to Minnesota’s next generation of environmental leaders. In March, our “Minnesota Warming” gathering included 300+ young people and zero tourists. The event was followed by a climate change Q & A with Rep. Matt Austen and Sen. Ann Morahan at Lakes & Legends Brewery in Minneapolis.

MCEA hosted its 15th Annual Women’s Breakfast at St. Thomas on April 26th. This year, MCEA hosted a Fireside Chat with former Minnesota Attorney General, Beth Smith, as well as backgrounds for a panel discussion about climate change and women. The event also featured the release of the Para Climate Agreement will shape the future of our state’s energy policy.

The Legally Green Gala, "It’s Not Just Your Day: What We’re Learning from the Flint Water Crisis and What We Can Do". These funds are crucial for ensuring that MCEA’s efforts to protect Minnesota’s environmental law and policy efforts.

2016 HIGHLIGHTS: A YEAR OF BRIGHT SPOTS ACROSS THE BOARD

- MCEA led a major effort to examine phosphorus and other water quality issues in the Mississippi River. Among the striking findings: 82% of water quality indicators are not meeting federal standards.

THE FORECAST: MCEA’s Water Quality team will seek to make all polluters, including agricultural sources, accountable for protecting Minnesota’s water.

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Minnesota’s energy economy represents a key opportunity to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions while promoting economic growth. While fossil fuels have been slow to phase out, a vision for a different energy landscape has persevered. Now, thanks in part to MCEA’s hard work, that vision is quickly becoming a reality. MCEA and its partners are integral players in promoting a rapid and successful transition from older, dirtier resources like coal to clean, renewable energy sources like solar and wind.

RECORD HIGHS FOR RENEWABLES

- MCEA and its partners fought hard for Minnesota Power to eliminate 150 MegaWatts (MW) of coal-fired electricity generation at its Taconite Harbor Plant by 2020, and to retire 130 MW of coal-fired generation at its Boswell Energy Center by 2022. MCEA also successfully lobbied the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to require this northern Minnesota utility to evaluate replacing its coal-burning units with renewable energy sources combined with energy savings programs.

- On behalf of clean energy groups, MCEA has continued to urge the PUC to approve the retirement of more than 1,400 MW of Xcel Energy’s coal-fired power generation, eliminating millions of tons of carbon dioxide and other pollutants each year that contribute to climate change and are harmful to our health. We are pushing the PUC to plan for and support a clean energy future. This transformation is already happening: in 2010, Xcel had 1 MW of solar energy on its system; in 2016, Xcel proposes to add almost 2,000 MW of solar over the next 15 years!

- MCEA was instrumental in securing a judge’s ground-breaking recommendation to adopt the federal government’s “Social Cost of Carbon” guidelines for use in PUC proceedings. These guidelines will help show the Commission the true costs of electricity generated by fossil fuels and hold utilities accountable for the harmful emissions they produce.

To our Friends and Supporters,

This generation’s environmental challenges are global in scope, and while MCEA’s mission is to protect Minnesota’s environment and its people, in 2016 MCEA took inspiration and direction both locally and globally.

Last Spring, at our annual Women’s Breakfast, we heard from women who had travelled to Paris to witness the historic climate change agreement, where 190 countries committed to dramatic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. We heard from Leigh Currie, director of MCEA’s energy program, who addressed how MCEA will help Minnesota play a leading role in meeting the US’s obligations under the Paris climate agreement.

We can no longer deny all the ways that we are interconnected, from air quality in Delhi to sea level rise in coastal communities to our imperiled moose population here in Minnesota. When you support MCEA, you aren’t just protecting Minnesota’s environment; you’re literally making the world a better place.

This past year, MCEA successfully advocated for closure of four coal-burning units, including the largest ones in Minnesota, responsible for billions in costs on society in the form of climate change and public health impacts. MCEA stopped a crude oil pipeline that would have carried Bakken oil across Minnesota to refineries in the lower Midwest. We fought to protect southern Minnesota’s waters from agricultural pollution, water that travels beyond our borders all the way to the Gulf of Mexico and contributes to the hypoxic “dead zone.” We have also worked to prevent dangerous sulfide mining operations near Lake Superior and the Boundary Waters, projects with the potential to pollute waters in and outside Minnesota.

When you support MCEA’s work, you are a citizen of the world affecting change beyond our borders. You help make Minnesota a global leader on environmental issues, and we could not do it without you. Thank you!

Kathryn Hoffman
Interim Executive Director

Alan Thometz
MCEA Board Chair