

# March 2024 Climate Newsletter

*350 Wisconsin Survey, Art Collective at the Poor People's Campaign, USACE Petition Against Line 5, Bad River Documentary, West Campus Sustainability Petition, We Energies New Natural Gas Plants, City of Madison New Sustainability Incentives, Electric School Buses for MMSD*

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## Your Input is Needed!

2024 and 2025 are going to be pivotal years for climate action, justice, and democracy, and 350 Wisconsin is excited to be a part of the action! To make sure that we're being as effective as possible and mobilizing as many everyday people as we can, 350 Wisconsin volunteer leadership and staff are about to start an in-depth strategic planning process to help us identify our top priorities for the next two years... and [we need to hear from YOU!](#)

Past strategic planning sessions have led to amazing changes and improvements to our organization and community... for example, strategic planning in 2019, 2021, and 2022 are what led us to go state-wide and change our name from 350 Madison to 350 Wisconsin, guided our decision to form

350 Wisconsin Action (our sister 501c4 organization) so we could be more active in elections, and led to the decision to form a team that focuses on natural climate solutions in agriculture, forestry, and land management.

We're inviting everyone in the 350 Wisconsin community to take [this survey](#) - it should take less than ten minutes! We want your honest feedback... tell us what you think we're doing well, how we can improve, and what you'd like to see us focus on in the next two years. We'll be taking all of this feedback and using it to help us shape our strategy!

Our members and volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization and of the climate movement, so your input will be critical. There are no minimum requirements for participation; if you've ever attended a 350 Wisconsin event, signed a petition, interacted with our social media, or have been a part of climate action in Wisconsin, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

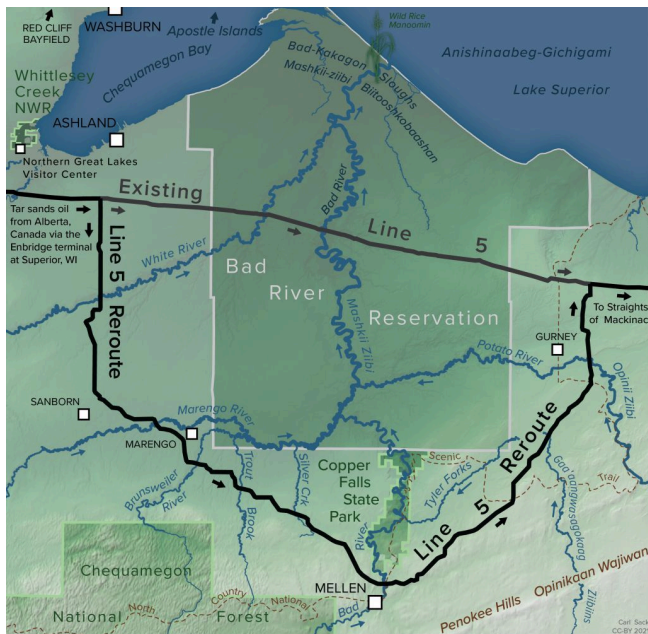
Please take a few minutes to give us your thoughts and honest feedback by March 10. Reach out to Emily at [emily.park@350wisconsin.org](mailto:emily.park@350wisconsin.org) if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you!

[Take the Survey](#)



## 350 WI Art Collective at the Poor People's Campaign

On Saturday March 2 The Poor People's Campaign held a rally and march at over 30 state capitol buildings around the country. Wisconsin was no exception. The campaign focuses on working to have our country reflect a MORAL agenda, based on fundamental rights. The key areas are: civil rights, poverty and inequality, ecological devastation, and the war economy and militarism. The 350 Wisconsin Art Collective was honored to play a part, creating the banner shown in the attached picture.



## Tell the USACE: Don't Take Shortcuts on Line 5!

As far as national treasures go, the Great Lakes rank near the very top - there's no question that these pristine freshwater lakes are a pillar in the survival of not just our region, but our planet. Every year, access to clean, fresh water diminishes due to drought, lack of rain, pollution, and more. So why would anyone ever gamble with 84% of North America's surface freshwater?

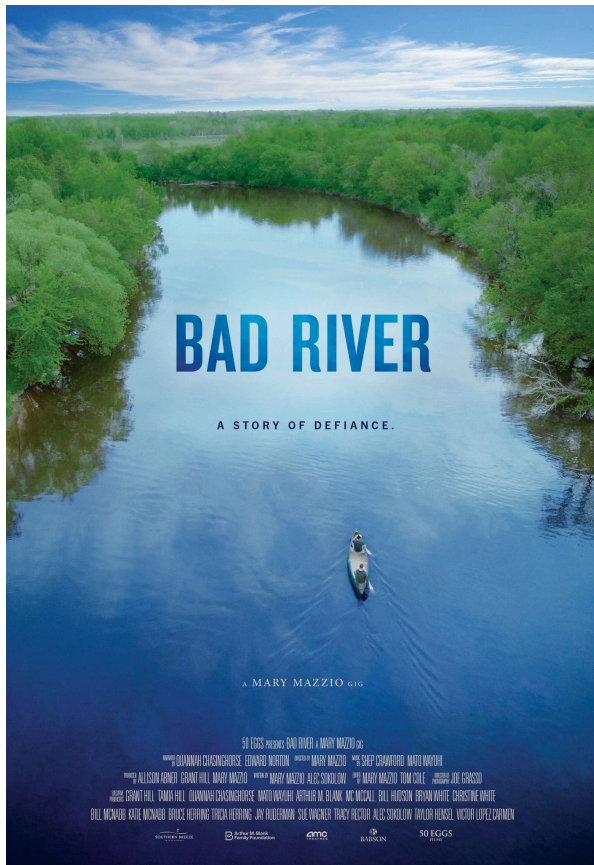
Enbridge, a Canadian multinational oil company with [a long track record of highly destructive environmental disasters](#), and operator of the deteriorating 70-year-old Line 5 pipeline, is doing just that.

As they continue to run a dangerous, outdated tar sands oil pipeline, the company is seeking permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to [reroute 41 miles of pipeline around the Bad River Band Reservation](#), where it has been operating illegally for over a decade, threatening tribal sovereignty and treaty rights.

It's more clear now than ever - if we want the planet to continue to be livable, we have to stop our reliance on fossil fuels. This expansion is not a solution and it's far past time to #ShutDownLine5.

[Tell the USACE to stop allowing Enbridge to gamble with the Great Lakes](#), and to conduct the most thorough environmental review possible.

Sign the Petition



## Good Trouble in Bad River

BAD RIVER takes us into the heart of an epic battle the Bad River Ojibwe are waging to save Lake Superior. Acclaimed The New Yorker writer Bill McKibben calls the film “a powerful chronicle... and a hopeful picture of the emerging possibilities for power”.

The documentary, by award-winning filmmaker Mary Mazzio, chronicles the Wisconsin-based Bad River Band and its ongoing fight for sovereignty, a story which unfolds in a groundbreaking way through a series of shocking revelations, devastating losses, and a powerful legacy of defiance and resilience. This inspiring project brings us through an epic sweep of history into the present, with a *David vs. Goliath* battle to save Lake Superior, the largest freshwater resource in America. As Eldred Corbine, a Bad River Tribal Elder declares: “We gotta protect it... die for it, if we have to.”

Opening in select theaters on March 15th, including [AMC Fitchburg](#) and [Ashland Bay Cinema](#).

Visit [www.badriverfilm.com](http://www.badriverfilm.com) to watch the full trailer and purchase your tickets today! [Fifty percent of all profits will be donated to the Bad River Band.](#)

Purchase Tickets



## Madison Community Working Group Sends Sustainability Petition to State and UW Officials

On February 22, the Madison Community Working Group of CCST asked State Building Commission, UW System, and UW-Madison officials to ensure that all new West Campus District infrastructure achieves or exceeds UW-Madison's recently announced goal of "procuring 100% renewable electricity on campus by 2030 and achieving net-zero emissions by 2048 or sooner." Find our request to these officials [here](#). It consists of a memo, the petition, the names of over 500 petition signers, and a selection of the 127 comments that signers provided. Sending this petition to state and local officials is just the beginning of our initiative; we will monitor plans for every new building and other infrastructure on the West Campus to help ensure these meet the highest climate standards.



## We Energies Proposes New Natural Gas Plants

WEC Energy Group, the parent company of We Energies, is [planning to build new natural gas power plants](#). These plants would total 3,000 megawatts of gas, constructing 1,300 megawatts of new power plants and converting nearly 2,000 megawatts of existing coal plants to gas. As climate activists, we know that in order to prevent the worst impacts of climate change, we need to transition away from all

fossil fuels, *including* natural gas -- also known as fossil gas.

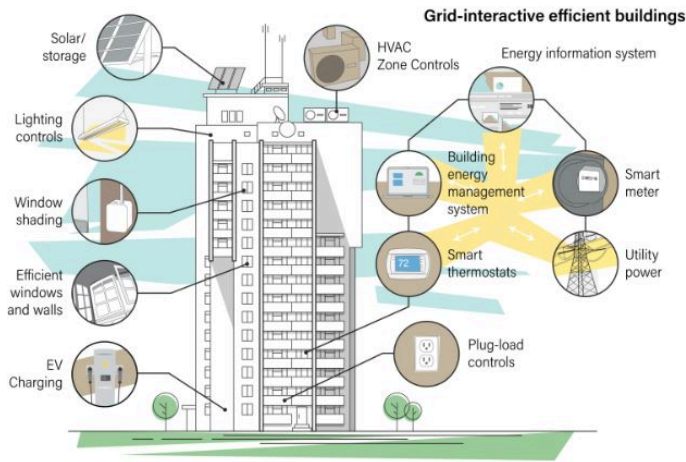
Methane, the primary component of fossil gas, is an incredibly potent greenhouse gas.

[According to NASA](#), despite the relatively small amount of methane in the atmosphere (compared to carbon dioxide), it accounts for one-sixth (around 17%) of recent global warming. Methane has more than 80 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide over two decades. In addition to its climate impacts, burning methane is bad for human health. Over [200 leading medical journals](#) and over [150 major health organizations](#) have issued joint statements about climate and the [health impacts of fossil fuels](#). **Fossil gas is not a safe alternative to burning coal.**

WEC Energy Group has stated that these gas plants will be in operation for the next 30 years, despite having a goal to be carbon-neutral by 2050. These plans will allow shareholders to continue to profit at the expense of We Energies ratepayers, who are still paying the **2.3 billion dollar price tag** for the Oak Creek coal plant completed in 2011. This is a last-ditch effort by the [most profitable utility in Wisconsin](#) to capitalize on fossil fuels while forcing its [already energy-burdened customers](#) to foot the bill. Instead of creating new fossil fuel infrastructure, utilities should be investing in clean, renewable sources of energy, and working to make clean energy affordable and accessible to ratepayers.

We will keep you updated – and notify you of opportunities to take action – as this issue unfolds

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## City of Madison Promotes Sustainability Incentives for New Construction

We are delighted to announce that building developers can now get detailed information about relevant sustainability incentives in one easy-to-use place - on the City of Madison's [Sustainability Incentives for New Construction](#) webpage. For some years now, our Madison Community Working Group has been advocating for a resource of this type. With the availability of Inflation Reduction Act incentives and other state incentives, city staff *acted*. This webpage (located on the city's Sustainability and Resilience website) will be continuously updated and will be followed by a similar resource on retrofits. City staff are also collaborating across different departments to ensure that these incentives are integrated into education and guidance related to building permit processes and economic development programs. The Sustainability Incentives for New Construction webpage will demonstrate to developers that constructing sustainable buildings can be comparable in cost to code minimum buildings with the new federal, state, and city incentives.



## Electric Buses for Madison Metropolitan School District

Aharon Shelef, a Madison Community Working Group intern, along with fellow high school climate activists, deserves much of the credit for ensuring that MMSD's transportation partner, First Student, shortly will include five

new electric school buses in its Madison fleet. A \$1.97 million grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is helping pay for these buses. Replacing just one diesel bus with an electric one can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 54,000 pounds annually. Another major benefit is that the bus riders will breathe cleaner air, and pedestrians and drivers will benefit from quieter vehicles. It's great news that the First Student school bus company is committed to transitioning its 30,000 diesel-powered school buses to electric by 2035.

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## Upcoming Meetings

**Art Collective:** TBD | Contact: Russ Bennett [bennett.russ@gmail.com](mailto:bennett.russ@gmail.com); Dianne Brakarsh [movingfromwithin@gmail.com](mailto:movingfromwithin@gmail.com)

**Climate Justice:** March 11, 7-8 pm | Contact: Marian Fredal [marian.fredal@350wisconsin.org](mailto:marian.fredal@350wisconsin.org)

**Community Climate Solutions:** March 21, 5-6 pm | Contact: Susan Millar [Susan.Millar@350wisconsin.org](mailto:Susan.Millar@350wisconsin.org), Rachel Robillard [RachelEBRobillard@gmail.com](mailto:RachelEBRobillard@gmail.com), or Maddie Loeffler [maddie.loeffler@350wisconsin.org](mailto:maddie.loeffler@350wisconsin.org) (For a complete schedule of various team meetings of CCST, click [here](#).)

**Communication Action:** March 26, 7:00-8:30 pm | Contact: Emily Park [Emily.Park@350wisconsin.org](mailto:Emily.Park@350wisconsin.org)

**Divest & Defund:** March 25, 7-8:30 pm | Contact [divest.defund@350wisconsin.org](mailto:divest.defund@350wisconsin.org)

**Fundraising:** March 20, 7-8 pm | Contact: Kristen Clark, our new Development Manager, at [kristen.clark@350wisconsin.org](mailto:kristen.clark@350wisconsin.org)

**State Policy:** March 20, 4-5 pm | Contact: Janet Niewold [janet.niewold@gmail.com](mailto:janet.niewold@gmail.com)

**Tar Sands:** March 4, 5:30- 6:30 pm | Contact: Alex Goetsch [goetschalex3@gmail.com](mailto:goetschalex3@gmail.com)

**Monthly Meeting:** March 4, 7-8 pm | Contact: Julia Isaacs [Julia.Isaacs@350wisconsin.org](mailto:Julia.Isaacs@350wisconsin.org); Kelly Kearns [Kelly.Kearns@350wisconsin.org](mailto:Kelly.Kearns@350wisconsin.org)

**Organization Calendar:** <https://350wisconsin.org/meeting-event-calendar/>

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**350 Wisconsin**

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