

*Water Politics
through the
Lens of Aki*



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ENVIRON 241

Final Presentation

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A watercolor illustration of a mountain landscape. The scene features a river flowing through a valley, with a dam structure visible in the distance. The mountains are rendered in shades of blue, green, and grey, with white highlights suggesting snow or mist. The overall style is soft and painterly.

1.0p-Ed

“In the early 1900s dozens of hydroelectric dams were constructed along the rivers in my native Upper Peninsula to power mining operations around which the local economies flourished. The dams flooded river valleys consuming thousands of acres of land, hundreds of houses, and the livelihoods of people that inhabited them. During the evenings, the floodgates were lowered to build up the reservoir and power-making potential for the next day. Over the course of the night water levels rose several feet, eroding the shorelines and depositing silt over any aquatic plant life that attempted to take root below.”



“ *What are the politics of dam building?*

Who are the relevant stakeholders?

What are the externalities of a properly managed dam and reservoir?

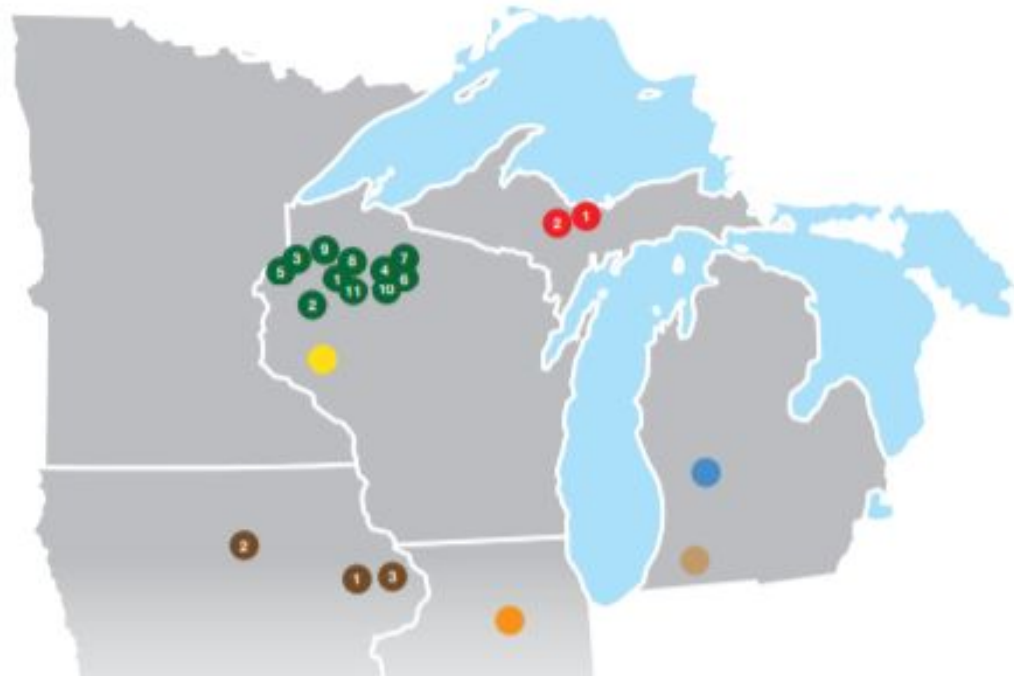
Do they outweigh the benefits of clean energy?



A Trusted Hydroelectric Energy Producer

Renewable World Energies

- 17 hydroelectric plants located throughout the Midwest
- Owns 3,000 acres with 38 miles of shoreline and several public recreational facilities
- Major supporter of the Renewable World Foundation

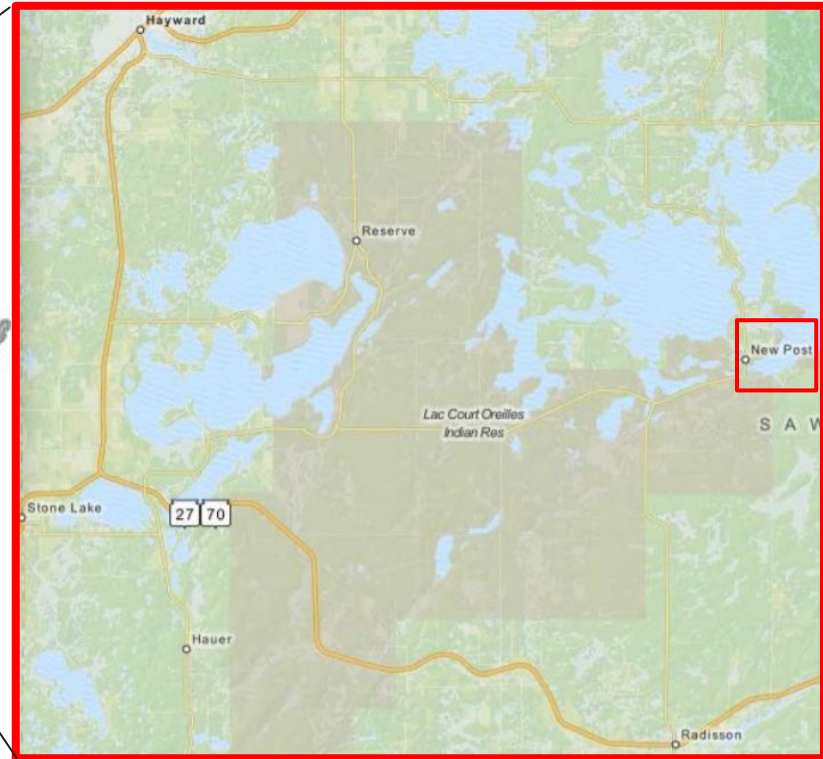
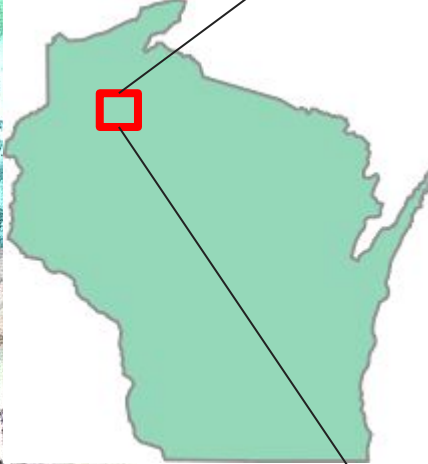




Viability of Hydropower: A Conversation with Bill Harris of RWE

- Hydroelectric power has less environmental impact than wind, solar, and geothermal power sources
- Dams have been utilized by civilizations for water storage and distribution, mechanical power, and electricity for thousands of years
- When well maintained, components will last a lifetime

*Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior
Chippewa Indians - a division of the
Ojibwe tribe*





The Flood of 1923



Chippewa Flowage Dam

Built in 1923 to control downstream flooding and produce electricity against unanimous LCO opposition

Created a 500 acre reservoir and flooded the town of Pahquahwong (a.k.a. "Post") - dislocating 150 of its Native American residents and submerging burial grounds supposedly protected by the Treaty of 1854

Fallout

The project sponsor - Wisconsin and Minnesota Power and Light Company - agreed to create the town of "New Post" and build homes, stores, a church, a school, and plant wild rice beds to replace what the Lac Courte Oreilles had lost in the flood

Sponsor reneged on their agreement to re-inter graves and replant rice beds



LCO Mission:



“We, the Anishinaabeg, the people of Odaawaa Zaagaa’iganing, the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe, will sustain our heritage by preserving our past, strengthening our present and embracing our future. We will defend our inherent sovereign rights and safeguard Mother Earth. We will provide for the educational, health, social welfare and economic stability of the present and future generations.”

Bad River Chippewa:



Wisconsin Tribe Tells Energy Giant to Remove Its Pipeline

The Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians declined to renew a rights of way easement for an aging oil and gas pipeline that passes through its reservation. The Jan. 4 unanimous vote by the tribal council called on Enbridge and federal officials to remove the 64 year old pipeline.



The Bad River Tribe Aims To Work Toward a More Progressive, Financially Stable Government, To Maintain Tribal Sovereignty; and Enable Members to Progress Individually, Towards a More Fulfilling Life Culturally, Spiritually, and Economically.



The Environment

Low Emissions vs. Natural Habitats

LCO Band

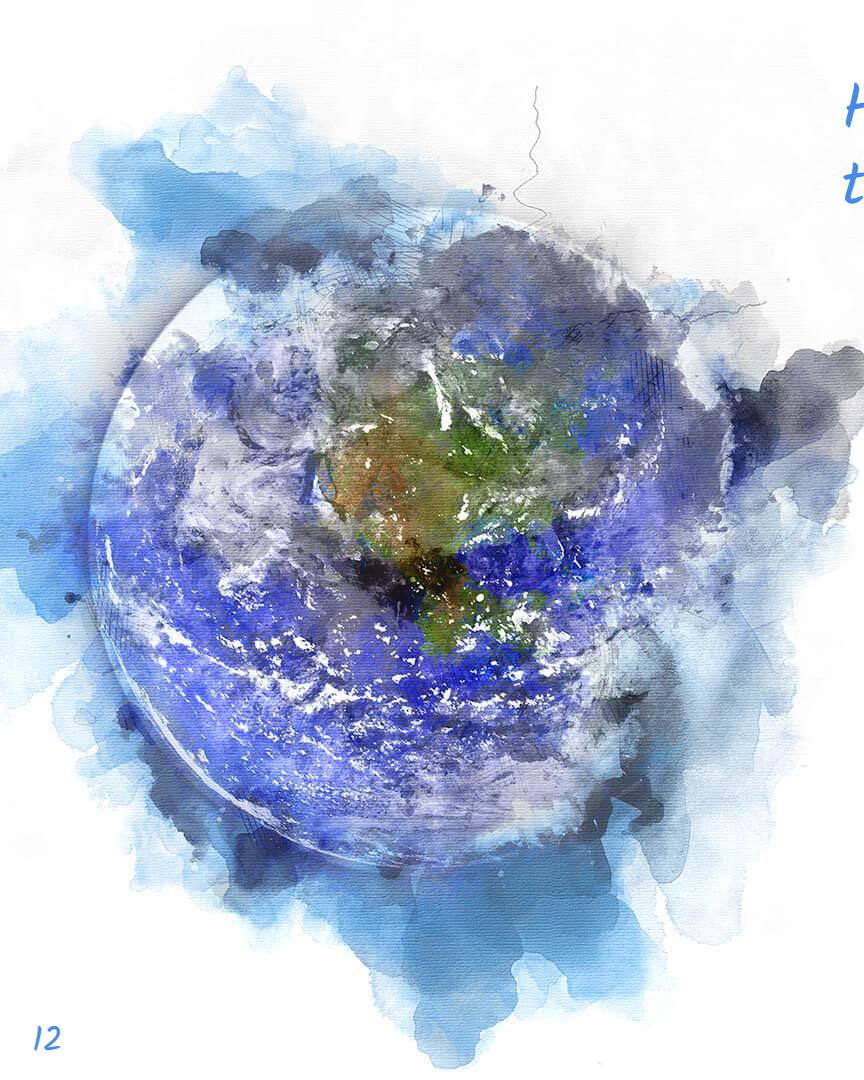
Sustainable Energy vs. Preservation of History

Community / Users

Rates vs. Emissions

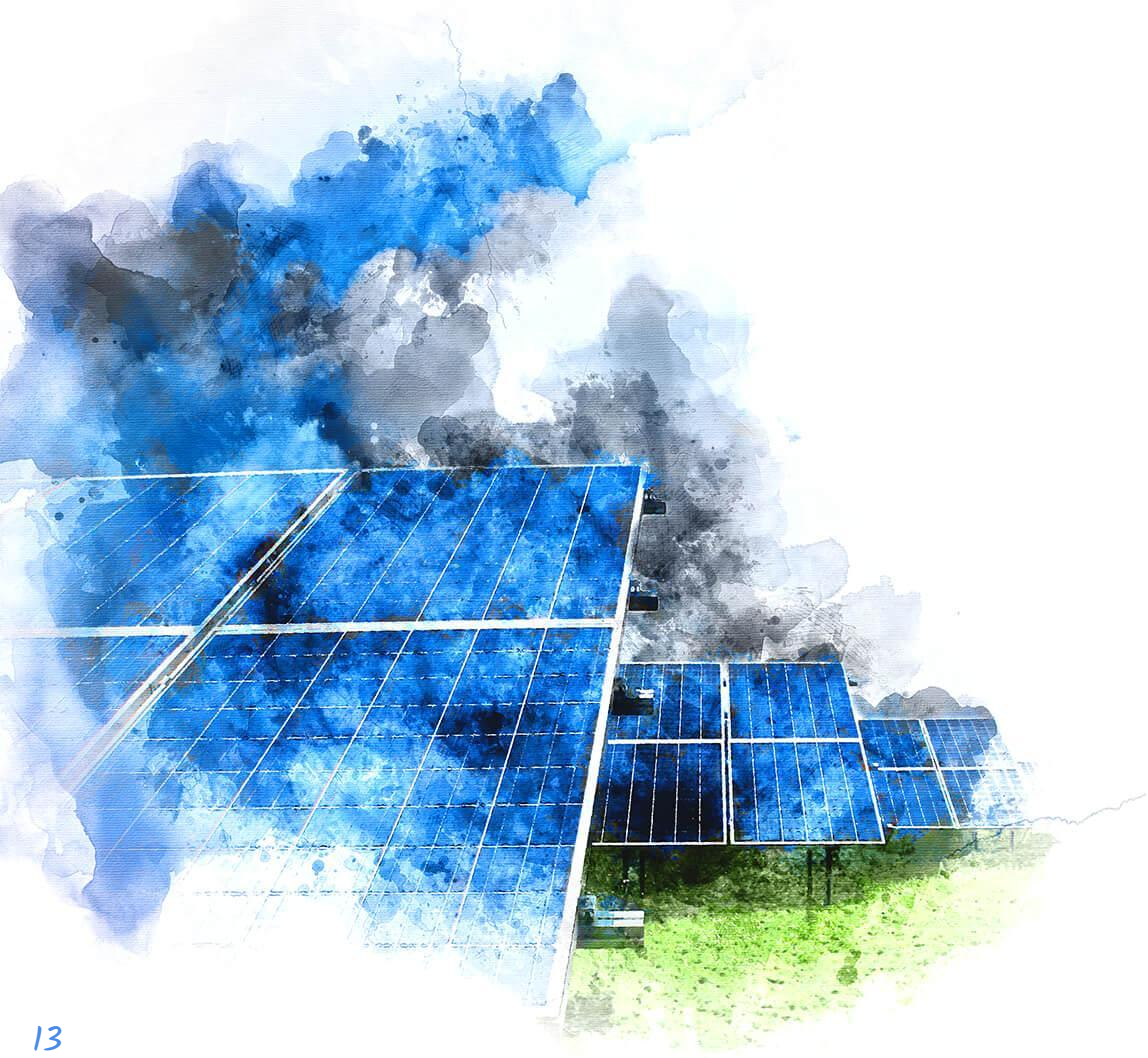
Power Companies

Maximize Value and Minimize Costs
to All Stakeholders



*How can we use the concept of “Aki”
to find an equitable solution for all?*

“Our nationhood is based on the idea that the earth gives and sustains all life, that “natural resources” are not “natural resources” at all, but gifts from Aki, the land. Our nationhood is based on the foundational concept that we should give up what we can to support the integrity of our homelands for the coming generations. We should give more than we take.” - Simpson (Author of *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*)



Thanks!

Any questions?

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GIIGAWAABAMIN?