

IAN O'LEARY

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WORK EXPERIENCE

OCT 2023 – PRESENT

ENERGY SERVICES UNIT ANALYST, MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

Renewables Ready Communities Award (RRCA): Grant author and grant manager.

- Assigned with rulemaking for a \$30 million State budget allocation to incentivize renewable siting in a context of emergent siting legislation, which prompted existing contention around renewables to gain significant momentum.
- Designing this grant demanded integration of all stakeholder interests into a win-win for Michigan's ambitious climate goals and the satisfaction of its local governments.

Renewable Energy Academy: Program designer and manager.

- Developed a community-focused technical assistance program centered around renewable energy planning and zoning by educating citizens on the how and why of hosting renewables.
- Delivered location-specific presentations on renewable energy, land use, demographics, economic development, and Michigan's complicated new siting legislation, empowering communities with an understanding of their options.
- Initiated the "Clean Energy Information Bureau," an inter-organizational collaboration of renewable expertise throughout the state.
- Authored a successful application to the Department of Energy's R-STEP grant to further fund the Academy and enable more organizations to participate.

Expertise, consultation, and analysis:

- Key contact at EGLE for utility-scale renewable energy, fielding questions from utilities, developers, municipalities and more.
- Expert subject matter communicator, including presentations for conferences, Public Service Commission hearings, instructional webinars, press releases, and more.
- Determined the scale and financial need to attain the MI Healthy Climate Plan goal of 60% clean energy by 2030 through the RRCA, leading to an EPA application for significant funding increase to the grant.
- Developed a "fair share" model which explored a minimum capacity for every municipality based on land type, transmission capacity, resource potential, and more.
- Researched policy impact by determining how many existing renewable energy zoning ordinances were restrictive, permissive, or incompatible with State siting.

APRIL 2022 – OCT 2023

RESEARCHER, GRAHAM SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE

Michigan Renewable Energy Development Initiative: Designed and piloted program for EGLE to catalyze renewable siting through community engagement, zoning, and technical assistance, in a state with local permitting and significant renewable opposition.

- Worked closely with a small team of peers to independently design project goals and methodology.
- Used input from interactive engagement (worksheets, surveys, and interviews) to craft wind and solar ordinances aligned with both community preferences and industry standards for two townships.
- Utilized mapping and modeling to highlight areas with siting potential based on setbacks, wind and solar resource potential, and other siting considerations.
- Compiled findings into a final report, including detailed advice on how to improve and iterate our methodology. Additionally, presented these findings at multiple professional conferences.
- Recipient of the Student Award for the 2024 APA Sustainable Communities Division Awards for Excellence in Sustainability.

Carbon Neutrality Acceleration Program (Decarbonization Siting): Created an annotated bibliography, factsheets, and a synthesis report on siting wind, solar, storage, modular reactors, carbon sequestration, transmission, and other decarbonization technologies, emphasizing knowledge gaps that University researchers could fill.

Carbon Neutrality Acceleration Program (Land Use Compendium): Created an annotated bibliography on land use trends and developed a methodology to explore a community's land profile, demographic trends, energy potential, and more to write a land use future plan.

Solar Parcel Ownership Research: Analyzed parcel-level data for photovoltaic projects in five Midwest states to track renewable ownership patterns and trace local financial benefits. Involved quantitative data organization and analysis with Excel and R.

Federal Funding Tracker: Designed and maintained Graham's IJIA and IRA Federal Funding tracker, which translated the White House guidebooks into organized, user-friendly spreadsheets. Involved simplifying and effectively communicating complex information.

JAN 2023 – APRIL 2023

GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Mentored peers for graduate course "Renewable Electricity and the Grid." This involved creation of course content, assignments, and exams, grading, and sufficient mastery of concepts like wind and solar resource characterization to grid-level system planning to relay these concepts to other graduate-level learners.

2019 – APRIL 2022

SALES MANAGER, BARNES & NOBLE

Leadership position at a high-traffic retail location, which involved project management, operational optimization, scheduling, customer service, sales analysis, and more.

EDUCATION

APRIL 2023

MASTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

Dual concentration in Sustainable Systems; Sustainability & Development.

GPA: 3.97

Selected coursework: Environmental Systems Analysis, Sustainable Energy Systems, Renewables and the Grid, Industrial Ecology, Energy Justice, Science of Social Change, Deep Decarbonization, Program Evaluation, and more.

APRIL 2018

BACHELOR OF BIOLOGY, EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Focus on biochemistry, molecular biology, and ecology. Dual minors in Chemistry and Criminology; 3.6 GPA.