

PROJECT TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

The following project team biography lists staff who have contributed to CPRG implementation grant development and who will support implementation of the Minnesota equitable residential decarbonization work through program development, supervision, hiring, training, and advising on equity and environmental justice. This biography includes an interagency CPRG project team that will both support proposal implementation and serve on the interagency leadership team.

Staff with asterisks (*) have resumes included as attachments to the application.

Agencies

***Minnesota Pollution Control Agency – Dr. Kate Knuth** serves as Climate Director at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. In this work she puts to work relationships and expertise developed in her previous roles as a state legislator, Minneapolis mayoral candidate, leadership program director at the University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment, Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Minneapolis, and strategy and policy consultant with climate advocates, including the 100% Campaign and Just Transition Fund Coalition in Minneapolis. As a scholar and writer, Kate studies and writes about transformative systems change and the intersections of climate and democracy.

***Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Amanda Jarrett Smith** Amanda Jarrett Smith is the Climate Unit Supervisor at the MPCA, leading and supporting staff working on climate mitigation and adaptation. She has ten years of experience working on climate mitigation and air pollution policy as well as program development and implementation. Past projects have included leading teams in the development of Minnesota's Climate Action Framework, the Clean Cars Minnesota rulemaking, MPCA's Volkswagen Settlement Beneficiary Mitigation Plan, and Minnesota's work under the Clean Power Plan. Amanda serves as an advisor to MPCA and interagency leadership, collaborating in implementation of the Framework, interagency coordination, and supporting the Climate Change Subcabinet and the Governor's Advisory Council on Climate Change.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Helen Waqui serves as the Director of Tribal Affairs, MPCA. Helen is responsible for working with Minnesota's eleven sovereign Tribal Nations and ensuring meaningful consultation through implementation of Minnesota statute 10.65. Helen works to build and support government-to-government relations, effective communication, and staff education and training to enhance agency understanding in working with Tribal Nations. Helen has a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental economics and policy from the University of California, Berkeley's College of Natural Resources. Helen is an enrolled member of Jemez Pueblo (Walatowa) in New Mexico and is a descendent of Acoma Pueblo (Haakú), also in New Mexico.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Breanna Ellison (she/they) manages the Office of Equity and Environmental Justice at MPCA. Breanna and her staff work to integrate equity and environmental justice into work across the agency through staff training, development, internal and external relationship building, meaningful community engagement and supporting policy creation and change. Breanna has a Bachelor of Applied Arts in Secondary Education and a Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Minnesota Duluth.

***Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Faith Krogstad** serves as the Climate and Energy Policy Coordinator. Faith leads climate mitigation policy work and supports the agency and the Climate Change Subcabinet in developing and implementing climate policies, programs, and rulemaking, responding to federal regulation and funding opportunities, and integrating climate mitigation into the broader work of the agency. She was one of the key architects of Minnesota's Climate Action Framework and is the project lead for the state's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant program. Faith has years of experience leading interdisciplinary and interagency teams in developing and implementing complex environmental plans and programs at the Environmental Quality Board, Department of Natural Resources, the City of Saint Paul, and community organizations. Past projects include a study on feasibility of solar development on closed landfills, the 2020 State Water Plan, the Minnesota Emerald Ash Borer Report, annual state pollinator reports, and coordinating the Governor's Advisory on Pollinator Protection. Faith has a Bachelor of Arts degree in biology from Macalester College and a Master of Arts in Education degree from the University of Minnesota.

***Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Eva Holupchinski** works as the Climate Policy Planner for the MPCA and has over 10 years of experience coordinating programs, projects, outreach, and research related to climate adaptation and mitigation, and environmental science and protection. Eva obtained a M.S. in Environmental Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Carl Stenoien is a Research Scientist at the MPCA. Carl obtained his PhD in Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior from the University of Minnesota and has expertise in greenhouse gas accounting.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - Anne Claflin is a Research Scientist with 17 years of experience working on state greenhouse gas emission inventory accounting and climate change mitigation policy analysis at the MPCA. Anne earned a Master of Science degree in science, technology, and environmental policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota, with a focus on climate and energy policy.

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - David Bael is an Economic Policy Analyst and has served at MPCA for over 11 years. He provides economic and financial analysis to all MPCA programs, whether they involve air, water, solid waste, or materials management. His primary area of focus involves modeling and estimating the health and economic impacts of air pollution and climate change. David has undergraduate degrees in Biology and Management Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a master's degree in public policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs and a nearly completed PhD in Applied Economics from the University of Minnesota.

***Minnesota Department of Housing - Katherine Teiken** is the Climate Policy Director for Minnesota Housing, where she has worked on climate policy for over 8 years. Katherine has a Master of Science in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies from St. Olaf College. Katherine is a member of the Department of Commerce's Weatherization Assistance Program Policy

Advisory Council. In her personal time, she is a volunteer serving as the Board President for Conservation Minnesota.

***Minnesota Department of Commerce - Mari Ojeda** is the Energy Policy Advisor to the Deputy Commissioner of Division of Energy Resources at the Minnesota Department of Commerce. Mari works with agency leadership to develop and promote equitable energy policy throughout the state. Prior to Commerce, Mari was a Senior Manager on the Energy Access and Equity team at Fresh Energy, a Minnesota non-profit whose mission is to shape and drive bold policy solutions to achieve equitable carbon-neutral economies. Mari focuses her policy work on energy and environmental justice efforts that prioritize historically underserved communities.

Mari has a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from Hamline University. She is currently pursuing her juris doctorate at Mitchell Hamline School of Law to complement and strengthen her policy work. Mari has also served in AmeriCorps for two years and on the Environmental Justice Advisory Group at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, where she strengthened both her community connections and her dedication to climate justice.

***Minnesota Department of Commerce – Dr. Peter Wyckoff** is the Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Energy Resources. Peter works with the Governor Walz's Office and across state agencies to maximize the amount of climate and clean energy funding coming to Minnesota from the bipartisan infrastructure bill of 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. He leads the Office of Energy Development and the Office of Energy Affordability in the Division of Energy Resources at the Minnesota Department of Commerce. Peter further helps lead Minnesota's new "Green Bank", the Minnesota Climate Innovation Finance Authority.

Additionally, Peter has worked collaboratively with several United States Senators to develop their climate, energy, and environmental portfolios. He was a lead staffer for the development of the Clean Electricity Performance Program (CEPP), the original climate centerpiece for President Biden's *Build Back Better* proposal, where he coordinated with U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and White House staff, House and Senate leadership staff, and relevant House and Senate Committee staff; managed input from electric utilities, trade groups, labor, think tanks, and environmental and environmental justice stakeholders to support President Biden's Climate Agenda.

***Minnesota Department of Commerce - Lissa Pawlisch** serves as the Energy Development Office Director at the MN Department of Commerce. Lissa's team includes the Emerging Energy Technologies, Energy Market Transformation, Clean Technology Deployment, Energy Environmental Review and Analysis, and Resource Acquisition and Development teams. Together, these teams provide programs, technical assistance, environmental review, and funding for informed clean energy decision making and development.

Lissa has worked on advancing clean energy – conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy - for over 20 years. Lissa previously led the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) partnership working to support and center community engagement clean energy project development. Pawlisch has worked with local jurisdictions, utilities, community-based organizations and more, aiming to ensure informed energy decision making, spur deployment, and further project models that increase participation and voice from communities who are often left out of energy conversations.

Pawlisch received her B.A. from Macalester College and M.S. in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

***Minnesota Department of Commerce – Tracy Smetana** serves as the Energy Affordability Office Director at the MN Department of Commerce. In her role leading this office, she oversees affordability and equity programs, leads efforts to reduce the energy burden for all Minnesotans. Tracy serves on the Community Faculty at Metropolitan State University where she teaches Foundations of Public Administration. She has previously worked at the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Tracy received her B.A. from the University of St. Thomas and M.A. in Public Administration from Metropolitan State University.

Minnesota Department of Administration - Marcus Grubbs is the Director of Office of Enterprise Sustainability (OES) with the Minnesota Department of Administration. Marcus provides oversight to ensure grant objectives are met, oversight on finance in partnership with our Financial Management and Reporting division, communicate with the larger coalition grant team, and track and report. He provides oversight and direction for a team of 5, reports and provides direction to sustainability coordinators in the 24 cabinet level agencies. He provides strategic direction on sustainability in state operations for the state—including 3,500 buildings and 12,000 on road vehicles. He also has fiscal oversight for a \$5 mill revolving loan fund and is the project owner for several current construction projects at state agencies. Marcus's previous professional experience is in fee for service environmental planning and in community-based research on the economic and environmental impacts of cropping systems. Marcus has a Master of Urban and Regional Planning, American Institute of Certified Planners.

The Office of Enterprise Sustainability assists state agencies in making progress towards 6 enterprise-wise sustainability goals. These goals and the annual report can be found at [Sustainability.mn.gov](https://sustainability.mn.gov). OES provides assistance in 4 key areas 1) tracking and reporting, 2) planning, 3) project implementation, and 4) championing sustainability in funding and sharing best practices.

Pertinent to this grant is our role in providing technical assistance, where we have in the past been project owners for the installation of EV charging equipment, retro-commissioning, and solar; and where we have provided technical assistance on a variety of energy related projects for state agencies where they have been the project owners. An additional area of leadership has been in developing contracts available for state agencies and local governments for retro-commissioning and solar design-build. OES is a standard bearer and leader amongst states in sustainable operations.

Minnesota Department of Administration – Alex Jackson is the Coordinator of Enterprise Energy. Alex provides technical assistance to state agencies to maximize GHG reduction in projects by optimizing energy investments. Alex works with agencies through RFP development, design, bid, and build. He will also schedule and coordinate Building Operators Courses annually and support agency staff in completing the courses.

Alex provides technical assistance to partner agencies by participating in the development of RFPs, reviewing proposals, and partnering in the design process. Alex manages an internal revolving loan fund used to finance energy efficiency projects at state agencies. In his previous roles he was the Energy

Manager for the City of Duluth and Air Program Coordinator for the Fon du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa. Alex has a Bachelor of Science Environmental Science.

Minnesota Department of Administration - Gregory Ewig is the Senior Director of Real Estate and Construction Services. Gregory directs a team overseeing \$300 million in annual construction projects for State of Minnesota agencies. Advocates for sustainable design and building practices, delivering energy-efficient facilities that meet rigorous statewide guidelines on time and on budget. Adeptly manages program lifecycles, fosters collaboration with stakeholders, and ensures regulatory compliance for timely and cost-effective project completion. Prior to this current role, Greg has managed real estate at the Metropolitan Council and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. Greg is also an adjunct professor at the University of Minnesota with a Master of Corporate Real Estate, Certified Educational Facilities Professional.

The Division of Real Estate and Construction Services manages over 400 construction projects and 800 property leases annually. Overall, the state has a real property footprint that includes 5,585 buildings and gross square feet and acreage equaling about 5.5% of the state.

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development - Oriane Casale is the Assistant Director of the Labor Market Information Office. Oriane has a B.A. from the New School for Social Research in New York and an M.A. in public affairs from the University of Minnesota.

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development - Molly Ingram serves as the Labor Market Information Senior Research Specialist in Workforce Planning. Molly is an economist who has worked on projects supported by the World Bank, USDA, Cornell University, among others that cover a wide range of topics including evaluation of a job creation pilot program, identifying international economy-wide trends in food production and consumption, and analyzing the long-term economic impacts of transportation infrastructure.

Local Governments

***Crookston – Karie Kirschbaum** is the community development director of Crookston. In this role she is the Executive Director of the Economic Development Authority and the Crookston Housing Authority. She is responsible for the development, direction, management, and leadership of staff who manage the City's economic development, redevelopment initiatives, housing services, business development services and neighborhood preservation strategies. This includes the coordination of innovative economic development planning activities including marketing, analysis of financial assistance resources, acting as a resource to commerce and industry developers, working with public works and other departments to identify funding for projects. Her has served as city administrator in Mahanomen, MN, chair of Norman County EDA; Norman County Planning Commission board member; Mayor of Gary, MN; and Northwest Minnesota Foundation board member.

***Duluth – Mindy Granley** is the Sustainability Officer at the City of Duluth and is responsible for improvement of City policies, programs, and initiatives in support of local environmental, economic, and social systems. In her role, she incorporates sustainability into decision making, measures and

communicates progress, and builds partnerships for change. During her first two years at the City of Duluth, Mindy led creation of the City's first Climate Action Work Plan, pushed for adoption of new performance standards for City-owned buildings, established an interdepartmental Sustainability Advisory Team, and led multiple successful grant funded projects with City and community partners.

***Minneapolis – Patrick Hanlon** is the Deputy Commissioner of Sustainability, Healthy Homes and Environment for the City of Minneapolis. Minneapolis is the largest urban center in Minnesota and has the greatest number of Low Income and Disadvantaged Communities. He has 17 years of experience managing sustainability programs including 11 years of experience with direct grant disbursement to residential, multi-family, commercial and industrial property owners for decarbonization work. He and his team bring the most experience to the CPRG cohort team in the challenges involved with implementing grant programs effectively and tracking greenhouse gas emission results annually. His teams take an equity first approach meeting and exceed White House Justice40 standards by investing 60% of their funding in environmental justice communities. His team also oversees the City of Minneapolis Healthy Homes programs and has been able to leverage decarbonization resources to also address Healthy Homes issues simultaneously creating healthier places for people to live.

***Saint Paul – Russ Stark** is the Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Saint Paul working in Mayor Melvin Carter's Office, where he leads the City's climate and sustainability work. Previously, Russ served for 10 years on the Saint Paul City Council including three years as Council President. Prior to his public service, he worked at nonprofits focused on community development, environmental advocacy, and improved transportation options, including early planning for what is now the Green Line LRT. Russ has a bachelor's in political science from Swarthmore College and a Master's of Urban Affairs and Public Policy from the University of Delaware.

***Winona – John Howard** is the City of Winona's Natural Resources and Sustainability Coordinator. He led the creation of the City's Energy Action Plan and is overseeing the creation of the City's first sustainability plan. Another career highlight is being part of a team that won CERT's 2018 Clean Energy Community Award for low-income energy audits and weatherization.

***Region 5 Deputy Director - BJ Allen** has been delivering energy efficiency and renewable energy projects since 2000, working in all aspects of the construction project management lifecycle, some of which were incredibly complex with multiple players and delivered in remote locations overseas. She has written multiple RFPs, developed supply chains, managed millions in budgets, monitored grants for compliance, and designed regional climate resilience planning and implementation. She holds a master's degree in engineering management, bachelor's in electrical engineering, and Project Management Professional Certification.

***Region 9 - Sabri Fair** is the Environment and Sustainability Planner for Region 9. Sabri has worked at the Region Nine Development Commission since August of 2021. Prior to this role he graduated from Macalester College with a degree in Environmental Studies and Geology and was a Doris Duke Conservation Scholar at Yale University and the University of Michigan. He has successfully written and received grants from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA). These grant awards have gone towards developing community climate resilience plans, increasing access to Minnesota fruits and vegetables for underserved communities, and implementing energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in rural

communities. Sabri speaks Spanish and KiSwahili fluently after studying Spanish for 10 years and having family who are first generation immigrants from Zanzibar.

***Region 9 - Samuel Sharp** is the Energy and Sustainability Planner for Region 9. Samuel brings a comprehensive background in energy planning and sustainability initiatives. Having worked in both the public and private sectors, Samuel offers a unique perspective on the processes and workflows conducive to strategic energy planning. Samuel has experience in navigating state and federal funding opportunities and has proven success in securing grants designed to support renewable energy and climate resilience.

***Metropolitan Council - LisaBeth Barajas** is the Executive Director of Community Development at the Metropolitan Council where she leads her team in regional planning, land use and housing policy, the delivery of housing services, planning for regional parks and trails, regional research, policy analysis, and the administration of the Livable Communities grant programs. Lisa has over 20 years of planning and policy analysis experience across the state of Minnesota and at a variety of scales, including regional, urban neighborhood, small town, and rural.