

Speaker's Bureau of Environmental Topics

Protecting the Environment is one of Rotary's seven areas of focus. Here is a speaker's bureau of 20 environmental presentations for District 5950 Rotary Clubs. The presentations are from Rotarians and non-Rotarians on a variety of environmental topics. These individuals have agreed to be listed in the speaker's bureau and are interested in giving presentations to Rotary clubs. They are all available for online presentations, and many would be interested in giving in-person presentations.

The first section on pages 1 and 2 gives the title of the presentation, the name of the presenter, and their Rotary or non-Rotary affiliation. Starting on page 3 you can get more details about the presentations along with contact information for the presenter. If you have questions, you can email Steve Solbrack at steve@solbrack.com.



Summary

1) Solutions to the Greatest Challenge of our Time

Bethany Esse – Past President of Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub and Mentor with Climate Reality Leadership Corp

2) Water Connects Us

Kris Meyer – Community Engagement and Education Coordinator, Freshwater Society, and member of Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub

3) Fire to Frost: A Prairie Story

Angela Grill – Wildlife Biologist, Three Rivers Park District

4) Do You Like to Eat? – Operation Pollination Framework

Chris Stein - National Park Ranger/Manager of National Heritage Area Program (Midwest) and member of Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub and ESRAG

5) Habitat for Humanity Homes Powered by Clean Rooftop Solar Energy

Will Nichols – Member of Rotaract eClub for the Environment and Solar Equity – UNC

Liz Henke – Member of East Chapel Hill, NC Rotary Club and ESRAG Renewable Energy Task Force

6) Renewable energy – Options and Impacts for Individuals

Tim Conners – Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club, District 5950 Environment Action Team, Director of the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG)

7) Urban Agriculture - Growing Food & Security on Our Own Turf

Ethan Neal – Director of Food Systems with Pillsbury United Communities and charter member of the Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub

8) Clean Energy Action that Grows Economic Opportunities Across Minnesota

J. Drake Hamilton – Fresh Energy - Senior Director, Science Policy

- 9) Our Mighty but Imperiled Mississippi and How We Can Save It
Whitney Clark, Executive Director of Friends of the Mississippi River
- 10) Planting Hope for a Sustainable Future
Jared Smith - Executive Director & CEO of Tree Trust
- 11) Your Yard Can Bee the Change
Becky Rice – Director of Blue Thumb – Planting for Clean Water Program and Past Executive Director of Metro Blooms
- 12) Electric Vehicles 101 – Welcome to the Electric Decade
Alan Wernke is Chief Business Officer for EzGoEV
- 13) One Bottle, One Straw, One Bag at a Time
Angelina Amerigo – Miss Midwest 2022, Pollution Reduction Advocate, and member of the Rotaract eClub for the Environment
- 14) Rotary's New Area of Focus Protecting the Environment and the Challenges of Climate Change
Alan Anderson – Northfield, MN Rotary Club – Rotary Climate Action Team (RCAT)
- 15) Challenges and Opportunities in Urban Watershed Management
Abby Moore - Mississippi Watershed Management Organization, Training and Community Learning Specialist
- 16) Powering Forward: Fair Chances for People, Planet, and Technology
Amanda LaGrange - CEO of Repowered (fka Tech Dump)
- 17) Climate Solutions Workshop with the En-ROADS Decision Support Model
Tim Conners – Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club, District 5950 Environment Action Team, Director of the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG)
- 18) Having Fun Creating a Climate-Friendly Future
Dawn Pape—Executive Director of the nonprofit We All Need Food and Water
- 19) The Twin Cities Boulevard: "Rethinking I-94" for Environmental Justice
Alex Burns - Transportation Policy Coordinator at Our Streets Minneapolis
- 20) Boundary Waters Protection, Preservation, and Restoration
Mike Linnemann - Development and Membership Director, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness

Details

1) Solutions to the Greatest Challenge of our Time

Bethany Esse is a Climate Reality Leader through the Climate Reality Leadership Corps. She is committed to spreading awareness of the climate crisis and to working for solutions to the greatest challenge of our time. She was trained with over 900 other citizen activists in March of 2017 in Denver and served as a mentor for the Minneapolis Climate Reality Leadership Corps training in August of 2019. Bethany's goal is to tell the story of climate change and to inspire communities everywhere to take action. She will cover the causes of climate change, the impact it is having on our world, and the solutions that are available to halt, and reverse, global warming.

Bethany Esse – Past President of [Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub](#) and Mentor with [Climate Reality Leadership Corp](#)
bethany.esse@gmail.com

2) Water Connects Us

Water connects us. It is responsible for human health as well as the health of our ecosystems and economy. No matter where you live, work or play, everyone plays a role in protecting and restoring our freshwater. Learn the facts about Minnesota's water and how you can protect and conserve it.

Kris Meyer – Community Engagement and Education Coordinator, [Freshwater Society](#) and member of the Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub - kmeyer@freshwater.org

3) Fire to Frost: A Prairie Story

The changing seasons of a prairie offer an always changing perspective from fire to frost. Discover the diverse animal and plant life that call the almost 1,000 acres of restored prairie home at Crow-Hassan Park Reserve. Management is ongoing through prescribed burns, seed collecting, invasive species control, bumblebee surveys, and much more. Not only is Angela hands on in field work but shares a passion of storytelling through co-hosting The Wandering Naturalist podcast. Enjoy this virtual nature wandering through the prairie.

Angela Grill, Wildlife Biologist, [Three Rivers Park District](#) - Angela.Grill@threeriversparks.org

4) Do You Like to Eat? – Operation Pollination Framework

Developed with Rotary in mind, you are invited to learn about the Operation Pollination framework; adopted by the Environmental Sustainability Rotary Action Group (ESRAG) in August 2020 (<https://esrag.org/pollinators>). ESRAG encourages Clubs everywhere to engage in this simple, inclusive habitat protection and education effort by collaborating with your Rotary partners. Learn about the 3-Easy Steps to get your Club on its way to implementing a 7th Area of Focus environmental project.

Chris Stein, National Park Ranger/Manager of [National Heritage Area Program \(Midwest\)](#) and member of [Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub](#) - Chris_Stein@nps.gov (402) 881-1387

5) Habitat for Humanity Homes Powered by Clean Rooftop Solar Energy

The addition of rooftop solar to [Habitat for Humanity](#) (Habitat) homes is an exciting new hands-on Rotary project which results in significant environmental benefits and cost savings for low-income families. Rotary and Habitat have formed a partnership to encourage and support service and engagement opportunities. The successful experience of Rotary and Rotaract clubs in North Carolina partnering with Habitat has led to the creation of a manual for detailing how to add rooftop solar to Habitat homes (reviewed and accepted by Rotary and Habitat International). We will discuss Habitat Solar projects, funding options and how the project may be amplified. You can get more information at <https://esrag.org/habitat-solar/>.

Will Nichols – Member of [Rotaract eClub for the Environment](#) and Solar Equity – NC nichols9@email.unc.edu
Liz Henke – Member of [East Chapel Hill, NC Rotary Club](#) and [ESRAG Renewable Energy Task Force](#) ebbwww@gmail.com

6) Renewable energy – Options and Impacts for Individuals

Moving from electrical energy generated via fossil fuels to renewables is an important step to address climate change. What can you do as an individual? Multiple options exist. This talk reviews the conversion and impact of varied approaches reducing your carbon footprint as energy innovation and transition picks up momentum. Does this engender a cost penalty for your pocketbook? In some cases, yes, and in others, it actually reduces the cost of your energy budget.

Tim Conners – [Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club](#), Member of District 5950 Environment Action Team, Director of [ESRAG](#) - timothyconners@gmail.com

7) Urban Agriculture - Growing Food & Security on Our Own Turf

Learn about the Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub District Grant Project to install solar panels and water catchment on the hydroponic Freight Farm at North Market in North Minneapolis. You will learn about hydroponic and outdoor farming in an urban environment, such as North Minneapolis. The talk will include information about the broader food system and hunger relief system. Ethan is an experienced leader and innovator in urban farming and community garden projects that not only produce fresh fruits and vegetables to fight hunger in the heart of our neighborhoods, but they also provide leading-edge education and internship opportunities to young people and build a self-sufficient food system from the soil up.

Ethan Neal - Director of Food Systems with [Pillsbury United Communities](#) and charter member of the [Twin Cities Rotary EcoClub](#) - EthanN@pillsburyunited.org

8) Clean Energy Action that Grows Economic Opportunities Across Minnesota

J. Drake Hamilton is an acclaimed national speaker on clean energy and climate action that benefits the economy. She is an expert in energy and climate policy. She does scientific analysis and policy development of clean energy solutions to global warming that maximize economic growth. She will describe Minnesota's national leadership on clean energy. Minneapolis-Saint Paul Magazine named Hamilton as one of "100 Minnesotans Who Make Things Happen." Audiences leave her talks inspired and energized.

Ms. J. Drake Hamilton is Senior Director, Science Policy at [Fresh Energy](#) - hamilton@fresh-energy.org

9) Our Mighty but Imperiled Mississippi and How We Can Save It

Thanks to dedicated advocates, our metro Mississippi has transformed from a convenient dumping ground to a central part of our metro identity. Today, trails grace its banks, eagles soar above, and fish thrive below. To protect it, however, we must face unparalleled threats: habitat loss, redevelopment that may harm rather than enhance our riverfront communities, and new pollutants (especially agricultural). Learn how Friends of the Mississippi River works with public and private partnerships and thousands of volunteers, members, and advocates (aka River Guardians) to meet these challenges head on.

Whitney Clark, Executive Director of [Friends of the Mississippi River](#) - wclark@fmr.org

10) Planting Hope for a Sustainable Future

Trees play a vital role in our communities, reducing energy costs, providing clean water and air, and making our neighborhoods more inviting. However, drought and pests such as the emerald ash borer threaten the health of our urban canopy. Tree Trust is a local non-profit working to grow a thriving urban forest and

ensure its benefits are available to all members of our community. Learn about Tree Trust's mission to transform lives and landscapes and how together we can live out the Rotarian values of service and stewardship in our community.

Jared Smith, Executive Director & CEO of [Tree Trust](https://www.treetrust.org) - jareds@treetrust.org

11) Your Yard Can Bee the Change

Blue Thumb and Metro Blooms provide resources through their lawns to legumes program to help residents convert some of their yard to flowering plants that provide habitat and forage to pollinators and other wildlife. Minnesota is home to over 450 native species of bees, and many are suffering declining populations. As a resident of your community, you can play an important role in helping the species rebound and support other pollinators, and in the process create a beautiful, blooming, buzzing landscape!

Becky Rice – Director of [Blue Thumb](https://www.bluetthumb.org) – Planting for Clean Water Program and Past Executive Director of [Metro Blooms](https://www.metroblooms.org) becky@metroblooms.org

12) Electric Vehicles 101 – Welcome to the Electric Decade

As Electric vehicles move from 1% to 50% of the cars on the road over the next 8 years, people are asking a lot of questions! In this presentation Alan Wernke will answer the top 20 questions he has been asked over the past 9 years and 150,000 miles while driving 100% electric. How far does it go? How do you charge it? How much does it cost? Is it safe? Where do you charge it? How does it handle the snow and cold? What do you drive & why? When can I buy an electric pickup? Hear all the answers to these and more in this session.

Alan Wernke is Chief Business Officer for [EzGoEV](https://www.ezgoev.com) Alan@EzGoEV.com

13) One Bottle, One Straw, One Bag at a Time

Angelina Amerigo is a pollution reduction advocate, a talented dancer, and the current Miss Midwest with the Miss America organization. Each candidate has the opportunity to speak on a platform of her choice. Her social impact initiative is to bring the topic of the over-usage of plastic alive! She believes it's time to clean up our oceans, rivers, lakes and protect our precious marine life - as plastic pollution is not only affecting the state of the earth we live in but is affecting a large list of precious marine life. In addition to her responsibilities as a Miss Minnesota local titleholder, she has started her very own Eco-friendly business called "[HighTideGoodVibe Shop](https://www.hightidegoodvibe.com)." Angelina is incredibly excited to be a member of the [Rotaract eClub for the Environment](https://www.rotaract.org). She will be introducing fresh ideas as to how we can all do our part to protect our oceans, rivers, lakes, and marine life!

Angelina Amerigo is Miss Midwest 2022 with the Miss America organization and member of the [Rotaract eClub for the Environment](https://www.rotaract.org) missmidwest2022@gmail.com www.angelinaamerigo.com

14) Rotary's New Area of Focus Protecting the Environment and the Challenges of Climate Change

Talk briefly describes the science of climate change, and then details the new focus area and how it gives clubs the green light to work on climate change issues, including projects large and small, and how this will help the most people possible and attract younger people to join Rotary. I describe how individual Rotarians and clubs can help.

Alan Anderson – [Northfield, MN Rotary Club](https://www.northfieldrotaryclub.org) - [Rotary Climate Action Team \(RCAT\)](https://www.rotaryclimateactionteam.org) - luckyduck49@gmail.com

15) Challenges and Opportunities in Urban Watershed Management

Population density, impervious surfaces and pollution in the urban environment pose significant challenges for protecting the much-loved and depended-upon, Mississippi River. Join us to learn more about the ways in which the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) partners with local governments, organizations, and communities to protect and improve water quality and habitat in the watershed. Examples

of green infrastructure projects, partnerships and community engagement will demonstrate the variety of ways that we work to address these challenges.

Abby Moore - [Mississippi Watershed Management Organization](https://www.mwmo.org/), Training and Community Learning Specialist
AMoore@mwmo.org

16) Powering Forward: Fair Chances for People, Planet, and Technology

Learn about the resources in the piles of unwanted technology in our homes/offices, as well as untapped talent that is being excluded from our employment market. Learn how one local organization proves that everyone and everything has value, combining both a business model with a positive environmental and social impact. As we as a community see the value, we can also create a positive impact.

Amanda LaGrange, CEO of [Repowered](https://getrepowered.org/) (fka Tech Dump) alagrange@getrepowered.org

17) Climate Solutions Workshop with the En-ROADS Decision Support Model

This model helps one understand how various initiatives impact the Climate challenge. During the workshop, participants identify a suite of solutions that keep global temperatures from rising more than 2oC, and preferably not more than 1.5oC, above pre-industrial levels by the year 2100. These could range from adjusting energy efficiency, carbon pricing, fossil fuel taxes, reducing deforestation, and carbon dioxide removal among many others. The solutions are tested in the En-ROADS Climate Solutions Simulator (Energy – Rapid Overview and Decision Support model, <http://enroads.org>) where their cumulative impact on global air temperature, sea level rise, ocean acidification, and air quality among other can be seen. The En-Roads simulator is a transparent, freely available policy simulation model that provides policymakers, educators, businesses, the media, and the public with the ability to explore, for themselves, the likely consequences of energy, economic growth, land use, and other policies and uncertainties, with the goal of improving their understanding. For a preview, view this 3-minute video [Link: <https://player.vimeo.com/video/359091159>].

Tim Conners – [Eden Prairie AM Rotary Club](https://www.edenprairie.org/), Member of District 5950 Environment Action Team, Director of [ESRAG](https://www.esrag.org/) - timothyconners@gmail.com

18) Having Fun Creating a Climate-Friendly Future

[We All Need Food and Water](https://weallneedfoodandwater.org/) is focusing its efforts on climate change solutions because a stable climate drives all life on Earth and every human endeavor. Our unique and creative community events, puppet shows, and screenwriting programs are changing unhelpful doom narratives to cautious optimism while building community, connecting crowds with solutions, and spreading joy. One story and event at a time, we are reshaping unhelpful, paralyzing narratives into solution-based stories and adventures rooted in equity and kindness.

Dawn Pape, Executive Director, CEO of We All Need Food and Water, dawn@weallneedfoodandwater.org

19) The Twin Cities Boulevard: "Rethinking I-94" for Environmental Justice

The construction of Interstate 94 in Minneapolis and Saint Paul demolished thousands of homes and businesses, specifically targeting communities of color. The resulting pollution and disinvestment have continued to harm neighboring communities, exacerbating disparities in income, health outcomes and transportation access. A half-century later, pavement on the freeway trench between downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul is nearing the end of its useful life and the Minnesota Department of Transportation is in the process of determining what the corridor will look like for the next half-century via the "Rethinking I-94" project. This presentation will overview the Twin Cities Boulevard, a movement to repair the freeway's harms and invest in environmental justice for adjacent residents. To learn more, visit twincitiesboulevard.org.

Alex Burns, Transportation Policy Coordinator at [Our Streets Minneapolis](https://www.ourstreetsmpls.org) - alex@ourstreetsmpls.org

20) Boundary Waters Protection, Preservation, and Restoration

[Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness](https://www.friendsbwca.org) invites you to learn more about our initiatives to protect the Boundary Waters and to introduce youth to the wonder and uniqueness of Minnesota's crown jewel. We will share with you about the current threats to the wilderness of the BWCA and the status of these threats. You will also hear about our education program, No Boundaries to the Boundary Waters which brings the BWCA to young people across Minnesota.

Mike Linnemann, Development and Membership Director, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness mike@friends-bwca.org