

OUR SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS

Thank you to the community leaders and subject matter experts who have added their voices to this conversation about how our choices impact the environment in Minnesota and around the world.



Priya Dalal-Whelan, Climate Generation

Priya Dalal-Whelan is a 17-year old climate justice activist from Minneapolis. She has worked with many groups, including Sunrise Movement Twin Cities, Minnesota Can't Wait, US Youth Climate Strikes, and mn350.



The Honorable Jacob Frey, City of Minneapolis

Since Jacob Frey's election as Mayor in 2017, he has championed an agenda centered on increasing access to affordable housing throughout the city, strengthening community-police relations, and fueling economic growth through inclusive policies. Previously, Frey was elected to represent the Third Ward on the city council in 2013. He uses his background as an employment, business litigation, and civil rights attorney to be an active community organizer.



R.T. Rybak, The Minneapolis Foundation

R.T. Rybak has served as President and CEO of The Minneapolis Foundation since 2016. As one of the oldest and largest community foundations in the country, the Foundation is shaped by a desire to create greater social, economic, and racial equity. A Minneapolis native, Rybak spent almost 30 years working in journalism, the commercial real estate business, publishing, and the Internet before being elected mayor of Minneapolis (2002-2013) in his first run for public office.





Ben Saxton, Professional Cross-Country Ski Racer

Ben Saxton is a professional cross-country ski racer born and raised in Lakeville, Minnesota. Nowadays he spends his summers living and training with his team in Vermont, his winters racing around the world, and his springs at Dartmouth College. He loves to ski, run, bike, climb, laugh, and just generally tear around the outdoors with his friends and family. If he could be an animal it would be a bison, and he's really looking forward to lunch.



Stephanie Zawistowski, Upstream

Stephanie Zawistowski has served as the Director of Upstream since April 2019. She brings a wealth of experience in environmental policy and organizing work in Minnesota. Prior to joining Upstream, she worked as the Senior Policy Advisor on energy and environment to former Governor Mark Dayton. In that role, she helped advance Governor Dayton's agenda on protecting Minnesota's water quality, enhancing our connection to the outdoors, and supporting the growth of our clean energy economy.

WATER, FOOD, AND HOW OUR CHOICES IMPACT MINNESOTA PANEL



Beth Dooley, Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture

Beth Dooley is a James Beard Award-winning food writer and a columnist for the Taste section of the Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune. She appears regularly on KARE 11 television and MPR Appetites with Tom Crann. She co-authored *The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen* with Sean Sherman, winner of the James Beard Award for Best American Cookbook, 2018. Dooley is currently researching and writing her next book, *The Perennial Kitchen*.



Peggy Ladner, The Nature Conservancy

Peggy Ladner is with The Nature Conservancy and is the state director for Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota, the only three-state chapter in The Nature Conservancy. In her role, she oversees all conservation programs across the three states. She works closely with the chapter Board of Trustees and Advisory Councils in North and South Dakota, and plays a critical role in chapter fundraising, strategic partnerships and as a senior leader in the global organization.



WATER, FOOD, AND HOW OUR CHOICES IMPACT MINNESOTA PANEL (CONTINUED)



Larkin McPhee, Moderator

Larkin McPhee is a Peabody and Emmy award-winning director, producer and writer of documentary films. McPhee's documentaries impart a deep knowledge of the subject matter and provide viewers with a blueprint for positive change. Over the years, McPhee has worked on the staff at Smithsonian World with host David McCullough, National Geographic EXPLORER, and the PBS flagship science series NOVA, where she has written, produced and directed a variety of films.



Julie Ristau, Main Street Project

Julie Ristau is the Executive Director of the Main Street Project Farm, which serves as a regional hub for beginning and established farmers to make the transition from mono-cropping to sustainable practices that protect land and water. As founding Principle of Regeneration Partnership LLC, Ristau also works with other restorative community-based demonstration farms in the Upper Midwest. Ristau also co-founded and led Homegrown Minneapolis, the city's local food initiative.



Kristian Theisz, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

As the Director of Community Support Services, Theisz works across many fields from social advocacy to emergency community needs. While tribal communities have experienced significant historic dependence on federal rationing, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe has chosen to continue towards food sovereignty and security. Using the FDPIR program as a launching point for the Mino-Mijim (Good Food project), the Band has developed opportunities for expansion into supportive agriculture.



BUSINESS VOICES OF IMPACT PANEL



Mary Jane Melendez, General Mills Foundation

Mary Jane Melendez is Chief Sustainability and Social Impact Officer for General Mills. She also serves as the President of the General Mills Foundation. Melendez is responsible for advancing collaboration to drive change by promoting environmentally and socially responsible practices across our entire value chain, from farm to fork and beyond. Her role combines accountability for taking care of our planet and nourishing our communities.



Ela Eskinazi, Bank of America

Ela Eskinazi is the head of business development in the US for ESG & Environmental Finance at Bank of America. She works with Bank of America's lines of business to help incubate new environmental product and service ideas and provide sales and strategic planning support to all its environmental business efforts. Eskinazi has worked at Bank of America since 2006 in both retail and commercial banking. Prior to joining the bank, Ela was a Global Product Manager at GE Healthcare.



Gayle Schueller, 3M

Dr. Gayle Schueller is 3M's Vice President, Sustainability and Product Stewardship and Chief Sustainability Officer. Schueller started in 3M's corporate laboratory and has over 25 years of technical and business leadership experience. Her previous assignments include Vice President of New Platforms for Growth and Commercialization, Director General for 3M Mexico, Vice President for Global Sustainability, and Vice President of Research & Development and Design.

