

# WHITE EARTH LAND RECOVERY PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2010



*"Although it may cost me my liberty, I will continue to speak and act... until the wrongs of my people shall be righted," Chief Hole in the Day – Native Patriot 1828-1868.*



Onaabani-giizis, 1, 2011

From Winona’s Desk –

I want to thank all of you who worked with us this past year, and joined us to grow out our corn varieties of old, put up our wind turbine and begin to bring our voices to the airwaves of the north country.

With your support, we were able to continue to expand our food growing (restoring climate change resistant varieties of corn to our people and land) by working with farmers, both native and non-native, throughout the region to make that happen. We erected our Lolland 75 kilowatt wind turbine, the only mid-sized wind turbine in the region. With our volunteer and contracted engineering colleagues (who have done this project out of commitment to our organization and the environment), we have a turbine which can be put up on any rural, technically challenged area in the region.

Also, we are moving ahead on our Nijii Broadcasting radio station, which will be on the air by 2011, and are very honored and excited to be the people who will bring the Ojibwe language and the stories of our reservation to the airwaves. This past year, we received a grant from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program for over \$450,000 to bring our radio on-line.

We are in the midst of this crucial work. Let me introduce you to our board members, and our growing organization. We added new board members to help us build for the next twenty years. We thank them very much for joining us. We also thank the Reverend John Lee and Christine Herman for their long service to our community and organization.

**White Earth Land Recovery Project - Board of Directors**

- Kathy Goodwin** – Chair, White Earth Tribal Member
- Dawn Kier** – White Earth Tribal Member, White Earth Natural Resource Department Agricultural Manager
- Steve Larsen** – Family are Tribal Members, Director of the Boys and Girls Thrift Store in Detroit Lakes
- Diane Roy** – Oneida and Stockbridge-Munsee Member, Retired from U.S. West Communications
- Audrey Thayer** – White Earth Tribal Member, Coordinator of the American Civil Liberties Union in Northern Minnesota
- Antonette Vizenor** – White Earth Tribal Member, White Earth Elders Council Member
- Dr. Sue Wika** – Organic Farmer and Professor at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, as a Sociology Instructor and Program Director of Sustainable Food Production



The new WELRP board and staff enjoying a meeting at Winona's newly re-built home.

Our staff has grown and changed over the past year, as well, and we are really proud of our team. Our new Chief Financial Officer, Daryl Frazier, has an MBA, and is able to work at an advanced level of financial management, as we expand our program and revenue sources. We also were able to bring on Betsy McDougall, as a senior development and program person, and new secretarial staff, including Wasey Kapashesit and Missy Hanks.

Other program staff include: Robert Shimek, our Food Sovereignty Coordinator; Germaine Riegert, our Accounting Assistant; Patrick Wichern, in Sustainable Communities; and Barb Warren, who continues to rock on our food and merchandise production. We're also incredibly thankful to our young intern staff including Aurora Conley, Amy Trauger, Margaret Campbell, Keeya Bighorse, Erika Chase and others, who have worked with us over the past year.

*Let me tell you some of our story...*

## Restoring our Ancestor's Corn

We continue to grow food. Over the past year, we've begun to focus on five varieties of corn - Manitoba White Flint, Bear Island Flint, Saskatchewan Flint, Dakota Popcorn and Pink Lady. These represent heritage corn ancestors which are resilient to the winds of the west and seem to do well with our land and weather. We grow these varieties here in our Three Sisters Gardens, in our gardens at our main offices in Callaway and with the help of our friends in the region.

### Community Foods

We feed this corn to our people - at our ceremonial feasts and at our Pine Point Elementary School. We continue our work in the Farm to School Program at Pine Point Elementary School, and are proud of our



Jonsey Miller with Bear Island Flint Corn



Seneca Pink Lady Flour Corn with Sue Wika

relationship with farmers in the area who are able to produce food for the young people in our community. Two sets of farmers are particularly prolific on the reservation. Darrell Smith is one of our most gracious and committed farmers providing produce, not only for our school, but for many families on the reservation who are now returning to more canning and fresh foods, as they become available.

Our other new farming partners are an Amish community just south of the reservation, who appreciate very much the relationship between our project and their community, as we together discuss issues of technology and culture, and what is appropriate for a self-sustaining community.



Children at Pine Point School enjoying local, organic and traditional food for school lunch. Approximately 99% of the students enrolled at Pine Point School qualify for free and reduced food programs.

This year, two more schools became interested in securing more traditional foods for our children - White Earth Circle of Life and the Naytahwaush Elementary School. We did provide some corn, squash, pumpkins and other foods to these schools, and hope to provide fresh bread, and more produce by the late spring of 2011.

We also had the first tribal farmers market on the White Earth Reservation this past year, and were happy and proud to participate in this.



Farmer Darrell Smith - one of our most treasured producers....



Pine Point School Children with Stearns Goats.

## Maanidikoshens Anokaajigan - The Goat Project

We received a grant from the USDA to explore raising goats for our community. We found some nice goats just south of the reservation, and are working on an integrated project with the goats. First, we wanted to see if we could improve some of the degraded pastures on our property, as the goats seem to like to eat Canadian Thistle and Burdock. This worked out pretty well, with probably a seventy percent reduction in these plants in the pasture. Then, we wanted to feed the goats some of the scraps from our food processing. This worked out really well, and we would like to do some

more food saving from the Pine Point School

by this spring, to use food scraps from the school, as well. We did this a couple of times, but have had trouble in getting it coordinated on an ongoing basis. Our next project was the Halal goat trade. We have a relatively new immigrant Somali community about 35 miles south-west of the reservation. They have a need for Halal goat meat. We had two goats which went to the Somalis so far, and hope to send more early in the spring.

### Our Travels

I ended the year traveling to NCAI's annual conference in Albuquerque, where Aurora Conley and I were able to present to representatives from a number of tribal governments on food economies and tribal food systems.

This year was an amazing opportunity to tell our stories and share our strategies. I traveled from Tesuque Pueblo in New Mexico to the Wikwemikong Reserve in Canada, learning from communities about their work to restore seeds and food systems, and sharing our own work on the



AFRICA: GOAT PRIDE  
Africa: Goat Pride, painting by artist Betty LaDuke

White Earth Reservation. Our Great Lakes Indigenous Farming Conference has sprouted new allies in the region. Also in March, I traveled to the Bay Mills Ojibwe Community in Michigan for their farming conference, talking about elders gardening and the oldest of seeds.



Tracey Fischer, Winona LaDuke, Tracey LeBeau at NCAI in Albuquerque

Continuing a road trip, we traveled to the Wikwemikong Reserve on Manitoulin Island and

saw the gardens there, once more passing on some of the Bear Island Flint corn to be grown by the greatest of gardeners in the community. The fall found us traveling to the Tesuque Pueblo Seed Sovereignty gathering, once again, listening to a community share its story of growing enough food for 1,000 people and the prayers and diligence to recover foods.

Kathy Goodwin, Board Chair of WELRP, and I traveled this year to Terra Madre - representing the Manoomin (Wild Rice) Presidia. For the fourth time



Kathy Goodwin and the White Earth flag at Terra Madre 2010 in Turin, Italy. We sold out of our wild rice (manoomin) at this international marketing event.

internationally, we were able to meet many other producers, ranging from the saffron growers in Afghanistan to the African merchants who sold nettles to the people who came. The White Earth flag, once again flew high at Terra Madre - the third time our flag has flown in the opening ceremony of the "World Food Olympics"...



## NIIJII Broadcasting

We've a new couple of heroes in Niiiji Broadcasting. Jeff Widner and Melissa Olson have joined us to take up the challenge of bringing this radio station on-line. With your help, we were able to actualize our radio station's funding. We have been doing a good deal of ground work to develop Niiiji Broadcasting as an on-line independent media source for our reservation. This past fall, we received a Public Telecommunications Facilities Program federal grant for our radio station - \$466,000 - to serve a very large area. This will be an amazing opportunity for the

north country, and we are very confident that we will have a striking impact on consciousness in our reservation and far beyond.

Coming soon, in Phase One of our initiative, Niiiji Radio will be launching its website including an internet-based news service for White Earth. In Phase Two of the online initiative, Niiiji Radio will start providing live streaming internet content as early as June, 2011. Phase Three will be to launch a fully operational FCC licensed community-based radio station to serve the White Earth Reservation, surrounding community and the world, via livestream capability, by August of 2011.

Most recently, you might have noted the feature on our work - 'The Promised Land', with Majora Carter on National Public Radio. It is this essential mindfulness which will help us become the people we were intended to be, and help change the consciousness in our region.



Jeff Widner and Melissa Olson, our new Niiiji staff.

## Power for the People - Wind Energy

We put up the Lolland wind turbine in June of 2010. We're really proud of this effort. The turbine was a great gift of support from many individuals and supporters.

The reality is that wind energy is the future for this region, but the bottle neck of utility control, lack of technical expertise and access to power lines is daunting.

We intend to take up this battle, and we intend to win. With your help, we have erected this wind turbine, have streamed through three state electrical inspections, negotiated an interconnect agreement and are now hoping to secure the last funding to connect this project to the grid. It will mean a huge reduction in our energy bill (i.e. our office - which houses not only our project, but a day-care, other Native non-profits and soon our KKWE Radio station) when we are powered by wind. And, we will be able to sell back to the grid.

This means, we will not only make money off the turbine, but we will challenge those who control the electrical lines to do what they are legally required to do - put our power on the grid and allow communities to address climate change and harness their own power.



A postcard used in summer 2010 to request that Ottertail Power facilitate fair and equitable interconnect agreements with us and with other mid-size energy producers in the region.



## Stop Treaty Abuse – Honor Anishinaabe Hunting & Fishing Rights



Aaron White Sr., left, and Francis Isham talk with Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Conservation Officer, Dan Malinowski, on Lake Bemidji. White and Isham had set nets, which the DNR confiscated. This was part of a demonstration of Anishinaabe fishing rights, based on the treaty of 1855.

In 1855, the Mississippi band of Ojibwe ceded 13 million acres to the United States. The representatives of the U.S. and the Ojibwe bands signing the treaty never ceded our rights to hunt, fish and gather on the land to which we belong, our Anishinaabe Akiing. As part of the 1999 Mille Lacs Supreme Court case, the Court ruled that the Anishinaabe rights in the 1855 land cession treaty were never abrogated. In spite of this, the State of Minnesota DNR has demonstrated a consistent pattern of harassing tribal members from the White Earth and Leech Lake Indian Reservations who have never stopped exercising the off-reservation treaty reserved rights. In an effort to set precedent and confront the pattern of harassment and intentional disregard for treaty rights, one of our program coordinators, Robert Shimek, helped organize the Great 2010 Fish Off.

This action is part of a long history of sovereign nations such as White Earth and



White Earth men harvesting this year's Manoomin (Wild Rice). The right to rice in the 1855 treaty area is also contested.

Leech Lake working to have state government live up to the obligations that were established in the 1855 treaty with the United States Government. Nearly 200 tribal members gathered on Lake Bemidji to net and to support the action. Minnesota DNR seized and destroyed nets, but did not make any arrests. There was no counter-protest.

Aaron White Sr.'s net was slashed by a DNR officer during the Fish Off. "When I set net on Lake Bemidji, what I was doing was for my children; and I was doing it for my children's children," White said. "We're put on this earth to harvest, to live off what was given to us as a gift." The state has not charged him or given his nets back. Protest strategists want those who's nets were slashed and confiscated to be charged, and for the case to go to the Federal level. The Attorney General has yet to address this matter of great importance - to help define the scope of rights granted by the treaties. "If the courts hold that the treaties reserved hunting and fishing rights, we need to respect those rights. If the courts hold that these rights were not reserved, we need to know that as well."

In the meantime, the White Earth Tribal Council passed a conservation code that applies to all tribal members fishing or hunting off the reservation. The code requires band members to purchase tribal permits to hunt and fish off-reservation, within the 1855 treaty territory. Tribal members without permits would be referred to the tribal court system, rather than face citations from the state. The council wants that code to supersede state regulations for tribal members. It also is asking the state to agree to prosecute any tribal members who violate the conservation code in tribal court, rather than state court.



## The Great White Earth Canoe Race

This was our seventh annual canoe race, and it's become an amazing tradition for our people and community. We are very grateful to Ottetail Power Company, as well as the White Earth Department of Natural Resources and Health

Departments for joining with us, as well as supplying tee-shirts and safety boats for the race.

The winds were calm. The sky was warm and clear for the seventh running of the Great White Earth Canoe Race held September 4th at New Horizons Resort on White Earth Lake. While the field of entrants was smaller than last year, participants provided as much excitement as at last year's event, which featured high winds, rain and capsized canoes. This year's race featured a new category for youth in the 12 to 16 year old range. Even with near

ideal canoe race conditions, contestants in the Adult Women's Category found ways to keep the day interesting. As the women lined up on the starting line, they were cautioned not to use their paddles, on each other. They did get clear of the starting line without any bloodshed, but proceeded to start ramming each other with their canoes once the race began. Fortunately, none of the canoes capsized.

It was also a perilous day for race officials for reasons best left unspoken. By day's end, participants and spectators were all enjoying the races. During the awards ceremony, two 16 foot canoes were given away for grand prizes, as well as numerous other prizes and door prizes to all who came to the races.

Miigwech to all who helped make the Great White Earth Canoe Race a success!

## What you can expect from us in 2011.

We will be on the air and on-line. Nijii Broadcasting will be a link to our community and provide an amazing opportunity to hear our voices, our language and our stories.

We will have a grid-tied wind turbine. We will produce Power for the People.

We will continue our work to oppose the poisoning of our lands by chemicals.

We will grow more food and make sure more people have access to this food.

We will be stronger.

Thank you for your support, to all of you.

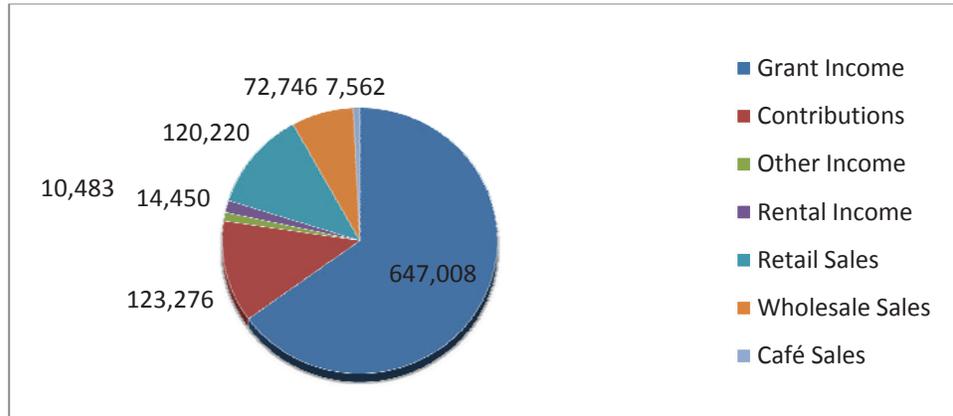


# White Earth Land Recovery Project 2010 Statement of Operations - Revenues & Expenses

## 2010 WELRP REVENUES

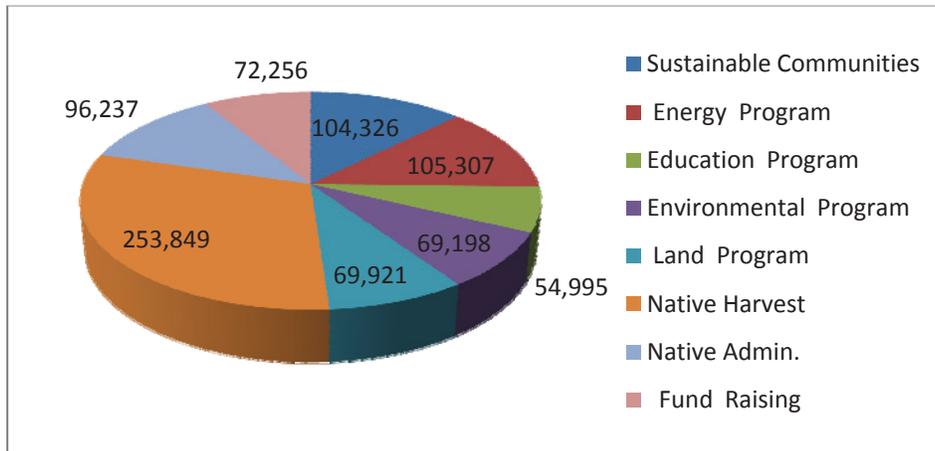
### Revenues

Grant Income	647,008	64.98%
Contributions	123,276	12.38%
Other Income	10,483	1.05%
Rental Income	14,450	1.45%
Retail Sales	120,220	12.07%
Wholesale Sales	72,746	7.31%
Café Sales	<u>7,562</u>	0.76%
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b><u>995,745</u></b>	



## 2010 WELRP EXPENSES

Sustainable Communities	Energy Program	Education Program	Environmental Program	Land Program	Native Harvest	Native Admin.	Fund Raising	Total Expenses
104,326	105,307	54,995	69,198	69,921	253,849	96,237	72,256	<b><u>\$826,089</u></b>
12.63%	12.75%	6.65%	8.38%	8.46%	30.73%	11.65%	8.75%	



## White Earth Land Recovery Project 2010 Donor Report

*We would like to thank the following families and individuals for supporting our work:*

Kathryn & Thomas Albert	Aimee Cree Dunn B. or L. Eng	Toyoko Kametani Laurie Katon
Rev. Gary Anderson	Robert Fall	William Kilbourn
Alison Antoun	Maria Faust	Kim Kilde
Doug & Katie Bade	Leslie Fowler	Paul Kivel
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Bettina T. Barrett	Sherry K. Frisch	Laree Kline
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Evelyn Black	Jill Green	Silvia Lambert
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Ann Bagley Williams

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Fund  
CITGO Petroleum and Citizens Energy  
Common Stream Foundation  
Community Shares of Minnesota  
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Sheltering Arms Foundation  
Smart Set  
Tides Foundation  
United States Department of Agriculture:  
SARE, Farmer/Rancher Grant Programs  
Vervane Foundation  
Virginia Wellington Cabot Foundation  
White Earth Tribal Council  
Winky Foundation

# WHITE EARTH LAND RECOVERY PROJECT

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[www.welrp.org](http://www.welrp.org)



## MISSION

The mission of the White Earth Land Recovery Project is to facilitate recovery of the original land base of the White Earth Indian Reservation, while preserving and restoring traditional practices of sound land stewardship, language fluency, community development and the strengthening of our spiritual and cultural heritage.

## Minwanjige Café

Minwanjige Cafe is located at 33287 County Rd. 34

Ogema, MN 56569

US Mail: 607 Main Avenue

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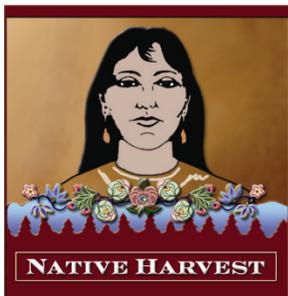
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Contemporary stereotypes and misunderstanding conceal historical processes that have created current conditions. Marv Manypenny and others recognize this as they urge all of us to remember that “history is everything.” ---**White Earth Tragedy**

«Anishaa gidabiitaan mino-aki. Gizhe-manidoo gigii-izhi-igoonaan ji-ganawendamang o>ow aki ji-ganawenimangwaa ongow, wenweni ji-ganawaabamangwaa ongow awesiinyag, miinawaa ingiw binesiwag, miinawaa giigoonyag, miinawaa zaaga>igan, mitigoog, akina sa ingiw.»

«You live on this good earth but for the grace of God. And that Kindly Spirit told us to look after this here, to take care of this earth and look after these creatures, so that we can take good care of these animals, and these birds, and the fish and the lake, the trees, all of these things.»

*Why We Take Care of the Earth*, **Melvin Eagle**. From *Living Our Language* (110-1)



**WHITE EARTH LAND RECOVERY PROJECT  
NATIVE HARVEST**

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