

A new home with solar!

Our renewed partnership with Habitat for Humanity has come to fruition in Cohasset, MN. We assisted Itasca County Habitat for Humanity in getting solar added to this net-zero, energy-efficient home. Fresh Energy provided guidance on the home design. The solar array was funded through Minnesota Power's Income-qualified solar program, donations from RREAL supporters, and in-kind donations from Wolf River Electric who installed the system. Misty, Rhys and their girls (pictured) helped with construction and are enjoying their new, cozy home. With solar, this fully electric home should have near zero energy costs over the course of a year.



Winter Accomplishments

Relieved Energy Burden by providing \$7,177.61 to the Leech Lake Energy Assistance Program (LLEAP) for the income generated by the solar array on our Backus Campus.

Presented to Pequot Lakes high school students on **energy efficiency** and **jobs in the clean energy industry**.

Give to the Max Day **raised \$2,817** for RREAL's ongoing operations.

Participated in the Minnesota STEM Showcase at the National Science Teachers Association conference in Minneapolis.

Hired a part-time intern from the UofMN Institute on the Environment to build a **master plan** for turning our campus in Backus into a **renewable energy showcase** that supports rural values of resilience, independence and sustainable land use. The plan will be completed by summer.

Habitat for Humanity Partnership for 2026

RREAL is expanding our partnership with Habitat for Humanity chapters in Central and Northern Minnesota. We have a goal of facilitating the funding and installation of solar arrays on 10 habitat homes across the region. We are raising money for these systems now! Help us reduce energy costs for deserving families by donating here: <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/solar-for-humanity-grand-rapids--2025>

Solar United Neighbors - Fields and Forests Co-Op

RREAL is partnering with Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs), and the Initiative Foundation to establish a Solar United Neighbors co-op in our area (Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, Todd, Wadena counties). Solar United Neighbors (SUN) is a national organization that helps individuals and businesses get a fair bid for adding a solar system to their home or business. By joining the co-op, you will get a competitive bid for your solar project from a vetted installer. It is your choice to move forward (or not). No cost or obligation to join. If you, or someone you know, is interested in getting a solar bid, visit this website for more information. <https://solarunitedneighbors.org/co-ops/minnesota/fields-and-forests-2026-solar-co-op/>

Join our Board

RREAL is looking for additional board members who represent the communities we serve in Central and Northern Minnesota. Bring your skills, knowledge, and interest in our work to bear in helping us rebuild RREAL. For more information, email us at board@rreal.org

Stay connected with us by following us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and watch our [website](#) for program updates as we make a difference for families and communities in our region.