

# Annual Report

## June 2023–December 2024

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Report prepared by Marjorie Steele on 6.24.25

## EDRA of MI

A 501(c)4 organization formed in June of 2023 in order to:

- fight toxic development,
- lobby on behalf of grassroots communities for economic and environmental justice,
- model community-based economic development in disinvested communities

## Where we started

Four communities:

1. Big Rapids Gotion
2. Marshall Ford BlueOval/CATL
3. Mundy Township AMD
4. Eagle Township MMIC

Four board members:



Brandi Sweet  
Advocacy Director



Marjorie Steele  
Founder & Director



Larry Finkbeiner  
Agricultural Director



Jess Sharp  
Community Director

## What we've accomplished

1. Press releases & media work
2. Legal efforts
3. Legislative lobbying & regulatory accountability
4. Advocacy for specific communities
5. Rallies & events
6. Digital footprint
7. The Regenerative Agriculture Megasite model

**Media publishing:**

**27 press releases**

**17 news & research articles**

**14 op-eds**

**We've been quoted and interviewed by:**

- Huffington Post
- Rest of World
- Fox Business
- Fox & Friends
- Michigan Public Radio
- Mlive
- Bridge Michigan
- Crains Detroit
- Michigan News Source
- Dave Bondy
- local newspapers & TV stations in Big Rapids, Marshall, and Mundy Township
- and many, many more

**Letters of demand written & sent:**

1. Jan 16 2024 - [EPA Demand Letter: Gotion Must Be Red Filed NOW](#)
2. April 3 2024 - [Flood Impact Study Shows Gotion's Serious Environmental Risks](#)
3. April 24 2024 - [Gotion's FOIAed Site Plan Application: gaps & inadequacies](#)
4. Sept 9 2024 - [Demand Letter to EGLE Re: Marshall Megasite Water Violations](#)

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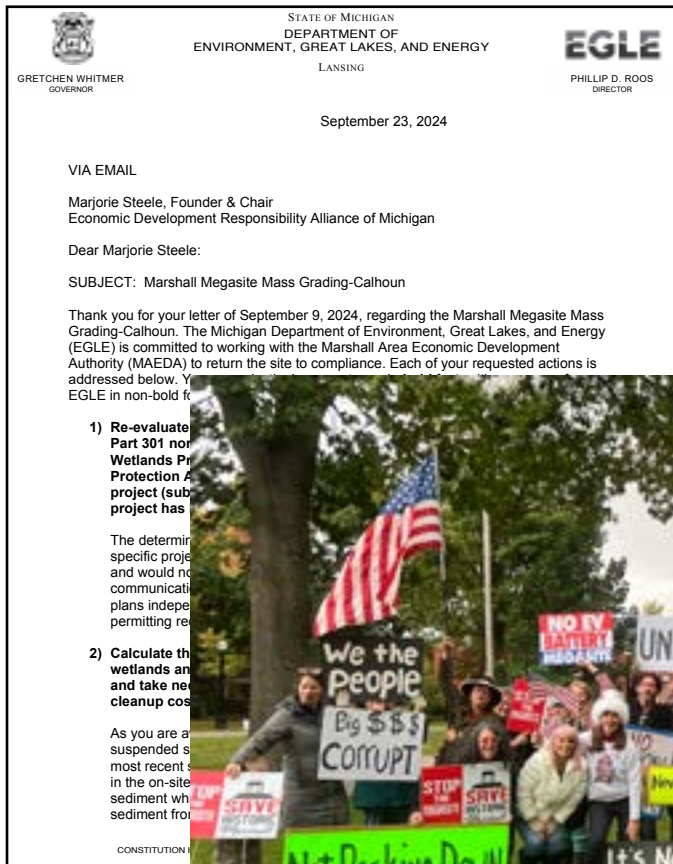


### Legislative & regulatory lobbying:

**18+ public comments to MEDC**  
**12+ EGLE & MPSC public sessions**  
**9 grassroots calls to action**  
**5 EGLE & EPA action campaigns**  
**5 days of lobbying in Lansing**  
**1 formal reply from EGLE:**

### Advocacy campaigns:

1. Big Rapids / Green Charter Township (Gotion)
2. Marshall (Ford Blue Oval / CATL)
3. Mundy Township (Advanced Manufacturing District)
4. Eagle Township (Michigan Manufacturing Innovation Campus)
5. Vernon Township (unknown megasite)
6. Plymouth Township (Northville Downs)
7. Groveland Township (BESS by Vesper Energy)
8. Columbia Township (BESS by Vesper Energy)
9. Detroit (Detroiters for Tax Justice)
10. Gogebic County, UP (Copperwood Mine)
11. Evart (MI Potash Co.)
12. utility-scale wind & solar (statewide)





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### Rallies & events:

- Statewide protest at the Capitol building June 27th 2023
- Big Rapids tractor rally against Gotion May 2023
- Paris Trunk-or-Treat October 2023
- Paris Easter Party March 2024
- Statewide grassroots meeting in Marshall August 2023
- Paris Trunk-or-Treat October 2024
- Paris Easter Party April 2025

### Digital Footprint

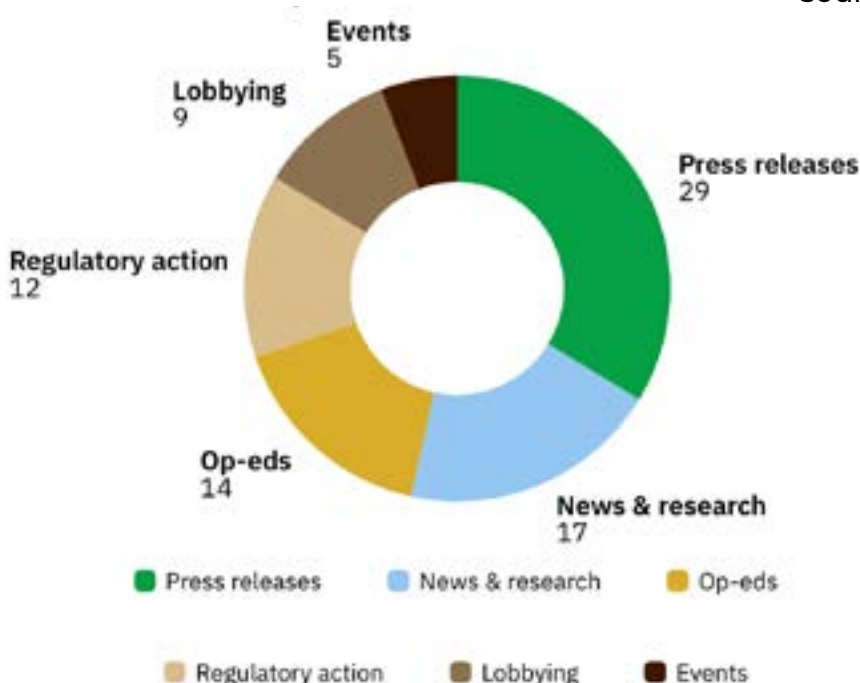
- 40,000 visitors to edraofmi.org from June 2023 to December 2024
- Monthly traffic is now averaging 7,500 views each month
- #1-4 page 1 Google rankings for main key terms (michigan megasites, mundy megasite, big rapids gotion, etc)
- edraofmi.org has collected over 53 backlinks, including many high authority domains
- 3,500+ social media following

**Total original content published: 86**



### The Regenerative Agriculture Megasite

- Giving investors and developers a project communities can say “yes” to
- Model based on our research with grassroots communities across the state
- 45 page “Case for Regenerative Agriculture Megasites in Michigan” is prepared in the form of a federal grant template, with over 80 citations including primary scientific sources
- 30 page Business Plan outlines project scope, phases, organizational structure, and initial budgets



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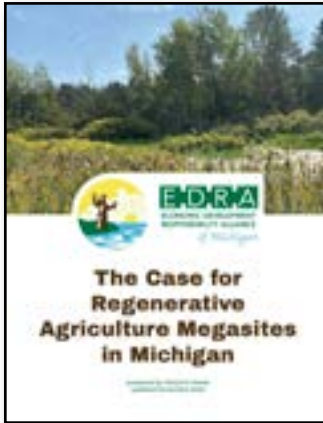
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The Regenerative Agriculture Megasite model comprises four parts:

- 1) Food & Fiber Hub
- 2) New Farm School
- 3) Native Habitat Park
- 4) Made in MI Retail Corridor



## Impact of our work

1. Direct successes
2. Indirect successes
3. Media & political landscape

### Direct successes:

- Gotion announced they're halting permitting work in March 2025. They've been in default of their \$175M SSRP grant for over six months due to inactivity.
- Mecosta County & Big Rapids leaders have formally and informally revoked support for Gotion.
- Marshall megasite developer MAEDA received formal censure and fines for environmental contamination summer of 2024.
- EGLE rejected MI Potash Co's wetlands permits, spring of 2025.
- MEDC's executive and MSF boards have been hemorrhaging members; they struggled to reach quorum multiple times fall of 2024.

### Indirect successes:

- Lansing Area Economic Partnership (LEAP) officially pulled out of the Eagle Township MMIC development in November 2024.
- Plymouth Township's board successfully rejected the Northville Down development in January 2024; judges have since dismissed the developer's lawsuit.
- State grant funding for the Copperwood Mine was rejected by state Senate Appropriations in December 2024.
- Michigan House of Representatives voted to undo PA 233 and restore local zoning for utility wind/solar/BESS in April 2025.

## Changes in the larger conversation

- Environmental concerns about these projects are finally being acknowledged, in media and political talking points
- Local township & county boards increasingly understand that these megasite and energy development projects are toxic—to them, and to communities
- Federal energy policies are giving lip service towards curbing toxic wind/solar development
- Local Michigan communities fighting toxic development are aware of each other, and support each other
- The MEDC is facing greater scrutiny from lawmakers, the public, and private partners.

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## What we want to do next

### Internal goals

- 1) Develop & sell merchandise:
  - Publish an activity book about Michigan's water and ecosystems (& plan other titles)
  - Hold an artwork contest to gather art for merchandise
  - Sell & fulfill yard signs, books, and merch
- 2) Buy equipment to facilitate EDRA of MI's outreach (laptops, phones, mics, etc)

### External goals

- 1) **Educate** residents, officials/legislators, and investors on how the Regenerative Agriculture Megasite model could solve local economic development needs
- 2) **Lobby** legislators, the MEDC, and public officials to invest in regenerative agriculture businesses, infrastructure, and policies
- 3) **Build** relationships with investors for seed and capital funding for Regenerative Agriculture Megasites, events and other community-led development projects

Visit: [edraofmi.org](https://edraofmi.org)

Email: [contact@edraofmi.org](mailto:contact@edraofmi.org)

Join the conversation on [Facebook](#)

## How can you help?

- 1) **Donate** money (for tech, travel, and merch inventory)
- 2) **Volunteer** skills:
  - graphic design
  - writing op-eds
  - investigative research
  - making lobbying calls
- 3) **Learn** about & share the model for the Regenerative Agriculture Megasite
- 4) **Organize** free local events in your community (we can help!)
- 5) **Connect** us with investors (fund managers, philanthropists, corporate funders)
- 6) **Tell your legislators** about these issues—and about your support for bringing the Regenerative Agriculture Megasite model to your community



Build a legacy that matters.  
Join us.