



WISCONSIN'S  
**greenfire**  
VOICES FOR CONSERVATION

Summer 2018

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Number 3

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## Green Fire's May Summit:

### Board Benefits from Planning Exercise, Work Groups Plan



At the WGF Summit: Darin Harris engages the WGF Board in exploring WGF's values, tasks, systems, and culture (above). Committees and work groups (e.g., Climate Change Work Group in photo below) discuss priorities and realistic goals for the next year (see pages 4-10).

By Nancy Larson

One of the key parts of Wisconsin's Green Fire (WGF) May Summit, held at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Center May 16-17, was the planning exercise for the WGF Board led by Darin Harris of Living Giving Enterprises and UW Madison. Now that our fledgling organization is a little over a year old, Darin helped the Board reflect on and examine WGF's *values, tasks, systems, and culture*. Darin works with many nonprofit organizations and gave us feedback that we are on a healthy path. The Board generated these statements for the four organizational aspects. [Link to complete set of statements.](#)

**WGF's Values:** WGF is driven by an urgency to act. Our natural resources may be lost if we don't do something. We want to bring science back into decision making. The media, legislature, and public need non-biased information. We have a responsibility to future generations.

**WGF's Tasks:** We provide information in the form of technical papers, public education,



Photos on this page credit: Terry Daulton

mentoring, and storytelling. We provide a public service to media, citizens, and public officials. Members find an opportunity for personal growth and relationships through activities in WGF.

**WGF's Systems:** We need to show successes through tangible products in the short term. We need a structure for WGF that is productive and not bureaucratic. As work groups form and become active, they will be the functional center of WGF's work. WGF can only take on issues that volunteers want to take on.

**WGF's Culture:** WGF's members love the land. We relish adventure and exploration. We have a generous spirit of public service. We are outdoor types  
*continued on page 3*

# President's Message

Photo courtesy: Terry Daulton



## Communication is Key

By Terry Daulton

Recently, someone gave me *Spirit of the North, the Quotable Sigurd F. Olson*. I love books such as this, which include eloquent statements from great thinkers. This passage jumped from the page—he wrote it in 1940:

*...solutions of the world's problems are to be found in the fields of social attitudes, human values, the spiritual fields of ideals, character, and culture, and not in the immediately practical considerations of scientific progress.*

I was struck by the timeliness of Olson's words—they resonate with the questions the WGF Board is asking as we consider our identity and how to best continue using science in advocacy. To help the WGF Board wrestle with these matters, Darin Harris (Living Giving Enterprises and UW Madison) led board members in a May planning session (see page 1).

We came away with some clear consensus. Our values focus on the need to restore Wisconsin's conservation legacy through thoughtful, proactive, science-based communication. Our methods are communication-focused—we write technical papers and engage in public education, but we also share stories, build relationships, and give our members opportunities for personal growth. The organization's culture includes a shared love of the land and a spirit of public service. Most important, we realized that, as a volunteer-driven organization, we need to focus our efforts on what we can do best—our specialty niche—rather than replicating what other groups are doing. While science and conservation are at the core of our mission, our work really is to *communicate* science findings and resource management strategies to those who can best share and multiply our messages.

We are lucky to have expertise in the sciences, but also in communications and education. Broadening our membership (e.g., reaching out to social scientists, university colleagues, people of color) and forging partnerships with agencies/organizations will help achieve our communication goals.

In September, we will host our Second Annual Meeting (see page 4). I'm sure it would not surprise Sigurd Olson, if he were around to share a new quote, that we've selected *communication* as our theme—How do we reach citizens with diverse views to find common ground around issues we all share a stake in, such as clean water and air? How do we make our membership more inclusive and expand our communications capabilities?

We also need to make sure our board, members, and volunteers follow their hearts in the work, but also don't get burned out or bogged down. To encourage a balance of work and enjoyment of outdoors adventures, I close by offering an Edward Abbey passage that I have long cherished (see page 3). Come to our annual meeting with new adventure stories—and your renewed energy for communicating the work of WGF in the year ahead!

## Wisconsin's Green Fire: Voices for Conservation

### Mission

Wisconsin's Green Fire supports the conservation legacy of Wisconsin by promoting science-based management of Wisconsin's natural resources.

### Vision

Wisconsin's citizens understand and support scientific and thoughtful long-term management of natural resources, and value the many benefits of clean water, clean air, and healthy ecosystems.

### Values

- We honor our strong and robust conservation heritage in Wisconsin.
- We believe that public policy, laws, and natural resource management should be informed by objective scientific understanding.
- We believe that robust and independent scientific research, knowledge, and education are necessary foundations for a fair and prosperous society.
- We are dedicated to the principle that all people and groups in our society have the right to clean water, clean air, healthy natural ecosystems, outdoor recreation, and land managed sustainably to produce economic benefit to everyone. We are dedicated to the principle that a sound environment and economy go hand in hand. We are dedicated to environmental justice.
- We support transparent governmental decision-making and fair and just treatment of all sides of issues.
- Our actions challenge policy makers to think beyond the short term and to act on behalf of future generations.



## Wisconsin's Green Fire: Voices for Conservation

### Board

Terry Daulton, President  
Jim Perry, Vice President  
Ron Eckstein, Secretary  
Tom Jerow, Treasurer  
Jerry Bartelt  
Fred Clark  
Thomas Hauge  
Paul La Liberte  
Bob Martini  
Michael Meyer

### Staff (part-time, contract)

Nancy Larson

### Newsletter Editor

Lucy Tyrrell

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## Your Input Needed

- More stories and photos of research and resource successes for "Profiles in Conservation" (see page 10)
- Photos of natural resources and conservation action in Wisconsin
- Ideas for name for WGF's newsletter
- Letters to the Editor

*Please send to [info@wigreenfire.org](mailto:info@wigreenfire.org)*

## Words of Encouragement

Did you listen to the Earth Day television interview with WGF's John Lyons? [Click here to read a special blog.](#)

## Sage Words from Edward Abbey

*...Do not burn yourself out. Be as I am, a reluctant enthusiast, a part-time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your lives for adventure. It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. So get out there and hunt and fish and mess around with your friends, encounter the grizz, bag the peaks, run the rivers, breathe deep that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, that lovely, mysterious and awesome space...*

—excerpt from a speech to environmentalists in Missoula, Montana, c. 1976



Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

## By the Numbers—WGF Progress to Date

- 1 employee hired** (part-time administrative coordinator, Nancy Larson)
- 2 work group summits held** (March: defining our science in advocacy approach, May: work group priorities)
- 3 newsletter issues distributed**
- 4 press releases written** (plus numerous interviews, media stories)
- 5 guidance documents written** (bylaws, organizational framework, science in advocacy, work group overview, work group guidance)
- 7 technical issue papers compiled** (e.g., wolf management, wetlands, high capacity wells)
- 9 blogs posted** (plus development of website, social media, PowerPoint)
- 390 members enlisted** (since WGF's inception, Earth Day, April 2017)
- 65,000 dollars raised** (in matching funds drive)
- many, many hours spent behind-the-scenes** (organizing membership databases, technology platforms, and much more)

*continued from page 1*

who like to meet in parks, camps, etc. WGF members, and particularly WGF's leaders, tend to be highly educated, older, white, and male. This demographic reflects the history of our professions. The Board would like to diversify WGF membership in terms of gender, race, and background.

Other Wisconsin non-profits have remarked that WGF members serve as the institutional memory for natural resources management in Wisconsin. We get feedback from the public thanking us for information and asking us to "keep it up." As WGF moves into its second year and beyond, we will continue our focus on how to develop and sustain the organization so we can be effective into the future.

# Plans for Annual Meeting—September 7-9

Photo credit: Big Top Chautauqua



By Jim Perry

Our second Annual Meeting takes place in and around the Bayfield Peninsula September 7-9, 2018. Nancy Larson sent a message to all members urging them to decide on lodging early, as this is a busy time in the region.

The family-friendly weekend features a catered dinner and performance of the Big Top Chautauqua original musical *Wild Woods and Waters* at Mt. Ashwabay on Friday evening. For those who can arrive early, we have two Friday afternoon field trips scheduled: either a trip to Frog Bay National Tribal Park (likely led by Red Cliff tribal natural resources staff member Chad Abel) or a kayak paddle on Chequamegon Bay (led by Cathy Techtmann).

Saturday's meeting from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. welcomes members and guest attendees to the Northern Great Lakes Visitors Center, located off Highway 2, just west of Ashland. The meeting's theme is "The Art of Effective Science Communication - Reaching Outside the Echo Chamber" and features a keynote by Patty Lowe (formerly of UW-

Madison, now with Northwestern University) and a panel discussion with individuals of varied backgrounds and perspectives. The business meeting that follows will include election of new board members and revision of by-laws. Once the meeting is concluded, we'll have dinner and libations in the Ashland area.

Field trips resume on Sunday morning.

Tracy Hames, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, will

lead forays into the wetlands of the Penokee Range. For those who would like to understand the gargantuan effort to restore the local landscape following the devastating 2016 floods, the Superior Rivers Watershed Association will highlight reasons for the many culvert failures and restoration work in which they are involved.

Registration, purchase of Big Top tickets, meal choices and field trip sign up will take place in July. Additional information will be emailed to members. Stay tuned!



Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, site of the 2018 WGF Annual Meeting.

Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

## Updates from Committees

### Communications

By Bruce Neeb and Jim Perry

Communications Committee (Com.com) members have been working on the WGF PowerPoint (PPT), website, Facebook (FB) page, and this newsletter. Thanks to all who have helped draft content for technical reviews, issue papers, news releases, blogs, and other outreach tools. We continue to work closely with work groups and invite members to join us to communicate about issues with a variety of tools.

Members of the Com.com. and the Education Work Group met in April by phone to initiate a "style guide" to promote a consistent look and feel for WGF communications, including the use of the WGF logo on official products.

WGF members interested in posting blogs on the WGF website or FB page should contact Nancy Larson to discuss

### 10 Step Communications Planning\*

1. What are you trying to achieve?
2. What is the environment in which you're trying to achieve it?
3. Who do you need to reach and why?
4. What do you need to tell them?
5. How do you tell them?
6. When do you tell them?
7. Who tells them?
8. What budget and resources will you need to carry out your plan?
9. Who will carry out your plan?
10. How will you know whether your plan worked?

\*Source: former Bureau of Information and Education, Wisconsin DNR, created by Wendy Weisensel and Laurel Steffes.

ideas. Webmaster Nora Simmons can help with questions about style or structure. We'd like to put together a "Blog Group" with regular contributors.

*Committee Updates continued on page 5*

## *Committee Updates (continued)*

A revised basic WGF PPT has been shared with several organizations—with each presenter changing and customizing the PPT to meet specific needs. We plan to add presenter notes to the basic PPT, make additional slides as options for customizing a talk, and post the PPT online. That way, it will be relatively easy for many members to use or modify it and to present confidently the organization, its history and mission, and how we work. We'll also create a list of experts who can do presentations on topics that are more complex or politically charged.

Stories of successes in science-based natural resource management are at the heart of our mission. We want to gather stories so many members can talk about them with others. Have you worked with parties on all sides of an issue and found a way to meet the long-term needs of all involved? Please send your stories to [info@wlgreenfire](mailto:info@wlgreenfire).

## **Development**

*By Fred Clark*

WGF's Development Committee met on June 19 to set some initial fundraising goals and projects for the remainder of the year and beyond.

We identified two strategic needs in a 3-5 year time frame, which we can share with potential supporters: (1) a WGF Action Fund (a reserve fund to respond rapidly to priority issues, e.g., by hiring consultants with specific expertise), and (2) increased staffing (perhaps an executive director and/or communications coordinator).

To raise money for these needs, we will be applying for grants from foundations (one submitted, others planned), reaching out to individual donors, planning two initial fundraisers (one in Madison, one in conjunction with the annual meeting), and requesting donations through our year-end appeal (to new individuals and our current members and supporters. To help with these requests, we will be updating our "case for support" and creating a year-end review to show what your generous donations have accomplished to date.

## **Membership**

*By Jim Perry*

As of mid-June, WGF had 390 members. This number is not a significant increase over that previously reported, but not

unexpected. New members are most likely to join during appeals for support and following presentations to groups unfamiliar with us. To increase the visibility of WGF to such groups, members of the Communications Committee and the Education Work Group, who were present at the May Summit, have agreed to serve as the initial members of a WGF Speakers Bureau. Others are encouraged to join this initial cadre of WGF Speakers Bureau speakers and get the word out.



Art credit: Mary Uedelhofen

At our Second Annual WGF Meeting, members can renew their membership for 2019.

About 56 percent of our members are Founding Members. We have added two new categories of membership: Family (General or Professional) and Sustaining (General or Professional). So far, there are no members in the Student membership category—why not consider giving a gift of a WGF membership to a student you know who has an interest in natural resource conservation?

In the near future, we will be able to accept membership fees electronically. Eventually, we would like the capability for monthly electronic transfer of funds.

# *Updates from Work Groups*

## **Air Quality**

*By Jon Heinrich*

At the Wisconsin Green Fire Summit in May, our Air Quality Work Group set two comprehensive priorities for the coming months.

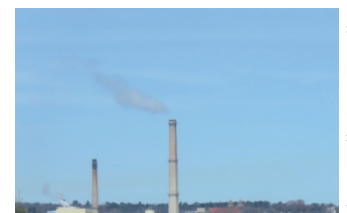


Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

The health of Wisconsin's citizens depends on clean air.

(1) Review the air quality impacts of new legislative proposals and policies and of significant air permit applications.

Foxconn air quality issues fall into this priority. We are concerned about at least three major issues related to the Foxconn liquid crystal display (LCD) manufacturing complex to be constructed in western Racine County:

*Work Group Updates continued on page 6*



## *Work Group Updates (continued)*

(1) the piecemeal approach Foxconn is taking in seeking air quality permits from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) so each of the small permits does not trigger more stringent permit requirements and the full impacts of the entire complex are harder to evaluate, (2) a change in the US EPA designation for air quality for Racine County from non-attainment to attainment, so less strict air quality requirements will be applied, and (3) the action by the Wisconsin legislature that requires removal of an ozone monitor at Kohler-Andre State Park which would eliminate the information source the public should have access to if ozone levels should become unhealthy. The work group is following these activities closely and will provide comment as necessary. [Click here for a blog on the Foxconn air quality issues.](#)

(2) Develop a history of Wisconsin's air quality management, both for its educational value and to document the actions taken over the last six years that limit WDNR's regulatory authority. The actions also eliminate a longstanding collaborative decision-making process that represented all interests and considered public health and the environment as well as regulatory costs.

These recent changes (1) have made it harder to create rules to protect public health and the environment (e.g., more administrative hurdles that take three years instead of one year, agencies required to review and repeal certain regulations), (2) do not include consideration of public health benefits as a requirement for the review of regulatory compliance costs, and (3) have created mandatory deadlines for issuing environmental permits regardless of the public health and environment consequences.

## **Climate Change**

*By Mike Meyer*

Members of the Climate Change and Air Quality (AQ) work groups met jointly at the WGF Summit in May. We identified areas of mutual interest and found that our priority tasks intersect and overlap.

We agreed we should coordinate efforts related to climate change. For example, we could work jointly to: (1) update the previously-established recommended actions (no cost, low cost, and high cost actions), which, if implemented, could reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Wisconsin, and (2) evaluate whether Wisconsin's strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are sufficient. We can benefit from the AQ Work Group's expertise in meteorology, the tracking of current greenhouse gas emissions trends, and knowledge of air program policies (state and federal).

We also want the work of WGF to complement that of other entities through partnerships with: (1) scientists at the University of Wisconsin and WDNR who are associated with the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) and (2) the Citizen's Climate Lobby (CCL). CCL is a non-partisan group that trains volunteers to lobby Congress. WGF can provide CCL with our distinctive science-based input and a more local Wisconsin-based viewpoint.

We agreed that a priority focus of the Climate Change Work Group is to produce and share science-based climate information with Wisconsin's citizens. We discussed strategies to get existing published information to them in an accessible, non-polarizing manner.

## **Conservation Funding**

*By Terry Daulton and Ron Grasshoff*

At the WGF May Summit, the Public Lands and Conservation Funding Work Group decided to split into two separate groups recognizing that these issues require different expertise and contacts. However, the two are connected in that it would be very difficult (aside from benevolent donors) for Public Lands to exist and to be managed in the public interest without a reliable source of conservation funding. Therefore, it is paramount that conservation funding be an immediate and long term priority for WGF, which is best addressed by a separate work group.

While this group does not have co-chairs at this time, some work is ongoing while the board seeks members interested in serving in co-chair roles. Fred Clark and Jerry Bartelt have volunteered to represent WGF at a recently formed Madison-based coalition working on the Stewardship Bill. This group includes The Nature Conservancy, Gathering Waters, and other NGOs. This group's main goal is to insure the reauthorization of the Stewardship Fund in the 2019 state budget. WGF may



Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

Climate change may mean more intense storms, such as the June rain events that created flooding in northern Wisconsin. U.S. Route 2 west of Ashland was completely washed out by North Fish Creek.



Art credit: antique postcard

*Work Group Updates continued on page 7*

### *Work Group Updates (continued)*

develop a paper outlining conservation needs for land protection, the economic impacts of recreation and forest products jobs, and the tax impacts related to Stewardship lands. This technical review would be challenging, and WGF would likely need funding to support the work.

If you are interested in leading this work group, please contact the WGF Board or Terry Daulton via [info@wlgreenfire.org](mailto:info@wlgreenfire.org).

## **Environmental Education**

*By Dolly Ledin*

At the WGF summit in May, the Environmental Education Work Group met jointly with the Communications Committee. These two entities will collaborate to develop general communication resources.

Primary goals for the Environmental Education Work Group are:

- (1) Include sessions at the WGF Annual Meeting on education skills and opportunities.
- (2) Monitor policy changes in K-12 environmental and science education and involve WGF members in providing information to policy makers on these issues.
- (3) Explore the uses of WGF products, such as issue papers, in educational settings. Adapt products for use with broader range of audiences.
- (4) Explore ways to diversify the perspectives and membership of WGF.
- (5) Help recruit educators, education researchers, and social scientists to join or collaborate with WGF.

Additional goals that could be pursued later include:

- (1) Develop a mentoring program for youth and aspiring professionals
- (2) Develop outreach to K-12 and college students
- (3) Expand WGF's education scope through outreach to Citizen Science and other educational groups.

In relation to these additional goals, i.e., mentoring, outreach to K-12, and outreach to other groups, we realize we need to assess the interests and expertise of *all* WGF members for these roles. To that end, we will create a survey (jointly with Communications Committee) for all WGF members to complete. Once we know the education functions in which WGF members are willing to serve, then we can develop a database of members and their specialties, along with plans for projects that are both realistic for WGF

members and that meet the needs identified by the priority audiences we hope to serve.

We value and need your ideas for WGF's work in education or specific projects you'd like to work on. Please send your input to Dolly at [daledin3@gmail.com](mailto:daledin3@gmail.com).

## **Environmental Rules and Water Resources**

*By Paul La Liberte*

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we are managing these two work groups jointly because the priority issues overlap. We had good discussions on our three priority issues during the May Work Group Summit:

### **(1) High capacity wells (George Kraft, lead)**

With the help of the Communications Committee, we plan to create a video from our issue paper on high-capacity wells (which is posted on WGF's website). The video will empower WGF members to share this information widely. Many work group members expressed interest in receiving training to take the video to the public once it is available.

### **(2) Mining (Tom Jerow)**

Tom Jerow has been providing input to counties drafting zoning ordinances related to mining, but so far, he has done this as an individual and not representing Wisconsin's Green Fire. This input is something environmental groups want help with. Marathon, Oneida, and Marinette are the three counties most affected, as they have identified metallic deposits. Marathon County has been especially interested in Tom's help. Taylor County also has a deposit, but has an ordinance in place.

As of July 1, new state rules limit the ability of counties to establish mining ordinances. Counties can still pass ordinances after July 1, 2018 but it will be less clear at that point whether the general state rule might take precedence. Short deadlines on mining permits make collection of adequate background data difficult and monitoring is a good subject area for WGF to provide assistance to local governments.

The group agreed that a foundational document stating the principles of the WGF position on mining is needed so that members can speak about mining ordinances on behalf of WGF.

### **(3) CAFO & nonpoint source pollution (Paul La Liberte)**

We continue to investigate the relationship of agriculture with water quality—phosphorus impacts on surface water, nitrogen impacts on groundwater, and health effects in

*Work Group Updates continued on page 8*



Photo credit: Lucy Tyrell

## Work Group Updates (continued)

both surface and groundwater. We're considering another video as a tool for educating WGF members and others on this issue. Here are some facts on cropland management in Wisconsin:

Seventy-one percent of watershed impairments are due to nonpoint sources. Around 90 percent of nitrogen inputs to groundwater in Wisconsin can be traced to agricultural sources including manure spreading and fertilizer application. Only one-quarter of the phosphorus applied to Wisconsin fields is in the form of manure. Seventy-five percent of phosphorus moves through a watershed in the wettest 29 days. Only 2 percent of the phosphorus mined worldwide comes from the U.S. while 77 percent comes from Morocco.



Photo courtesy: Paul La Liberte

## Fisheries

By David Vetrano

Although there are currently no "hot issues" in fisheries, we are forging ahead with our priority projects discussed at the May 17 work group planning session:

- (1) Integrate the efforts of the Fisheries Work Group with those of other WGF work groups when they relate to aquatic ecology issues held in common (e.g., wetlands and wildlife, water quality, water quantity, climate change), in order to emphasize an ecosystem management approach.
- (2) Network with state (Wisconsin DNR), federal (USGS, USFWS, GLIFWC), and non-governmental organizations (Trout Unlimited, other sportfish groups) about current and emerging fisheries issues.
- (3) Recruit members for the Fisheries Work Group with varied and broad experiences and expertise, including retired agency professionals, current academics, and informed citizens.
- (4) Mentor students and young professionals.

These projects address Wisconsin fisheries issues and topics which include:

- Great Lakes salmonid fish stocking
- Great Lakes and inland invasive and exotic species



Photo credit: Dave Vetrano

- CAFOs and nutrient pollution of streams and lakes
- Groundwater pumping and surface water habitat for aquatic organisms
- Support for conservation funding (including habitat stamp and Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources (AFWA))
- Economic and social aspects of fisheries resource

## Forestry

By Ron Eckstein

We convened the first meeting of the Forestry Work Group at the WGF May 17 Summit. A group of five discussed events that have impacted forest habitat, ecology, and management since 2011. We discussed the increased role of the forest products industry on forest management, legislation that has changed the Managed Forest Law, and legislation that has changed northern State Forest Master Plans. We also talked about the severe impacts that white-tailed deer have on forest ecology and forest regeneration.

Our priorities are: to contact WGF members who expressed interest in forestry issues, to develop an outline of foundational principles for the Forestry Work Group, and to seek funding for an economic/ecological study of the impact of deer on forests.



Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

In the last few months, Ron Eckstein attended the meetings of the Governor's Council on Forestry (in Madison) and of the Silviculture Guidance Team (in Antigo). Ron's role is to provide technical information on forest habitat, forest biodiversity, and outdoor recreation.

WGF sent comments to Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry on draft revisions to a document called Forest Management Guidelines. This 280+ page document is a summary of forest management information for private landowners. The WGF comments called for minor improvements and additions in the chapter on forest habitat and biodiversity.

## Public Lands

By Terry Daulton and Jerry Bartelt

While this work group waits for co-chairs to step forward, Eric Epstein, Ron Grasshoff, and Jerry Bartelt

*Work Group Updates continued on page 9*



## Work Group Updates (continued)

have drafted a “foundational” paper now under review regarding the importance of public lands, the values WGF holds regarding public lands, and what WGF believes should be the goals and actions for addressing public lands issues. More detailed papers would follow addressing specific topics on the use of public lands. The authors hope to have a revised draft ready for the WGF Board by its July meeting. The document would be used by work group members as guidance when responding to issues relating to Public Lands as well as serving as an overall educational paper for the public.

If you are interested in leading this work group, please contact the WGF Board or Terry Daulton via [info@wigreenfire.org](mailto:info@wigreenfire.org).



Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

## Public Trust and Wetlands

By Michael Cain and Ron Grasshoff

The Public Trust and Wetlands Work Group met at the WGF Summit in May and established three priorities for our continuing work:

(1) An ongoing initiative to provide analysis of and comments on proposed legislation that will impact water and wetland resources. We will continue to be actively involved in the legislative process and have received positive feedback for our input so far that reflects the technical expertise and program experience we contribute. We hope to work proactively when we become aware of issues that are being brought to the legislature.

(2) An education and outreach program with an active Speakers Bureau. We want to develop education materials that the WGF Speakers Bureau can use for outreach opportunities.

(3) An initiative to build capacity and expand our membership and expertise. We are working to find opportunities to expand our membership and impact by reaching out to the University and consulting communities.

Our goal is to diversify our membership, expand our pool of expertise, and to find opportunities where students or practitioners can assist in gathering and synthesizing data documenting the long-term impacts to Public Rights from recent legislation and legal action.



Art credit: Pat Gierziec

We plan to create a foundational document to enumerate these goals or initiatives, identify the audience(s) for each, find partners where interests overlap, and develop a one-year work plan. We look forward to hearing from you, members, who have ideas to help us pursue these priorities. Send an email to [cainmjc@gmail.com](mailto:cainmjc@gmail.com).

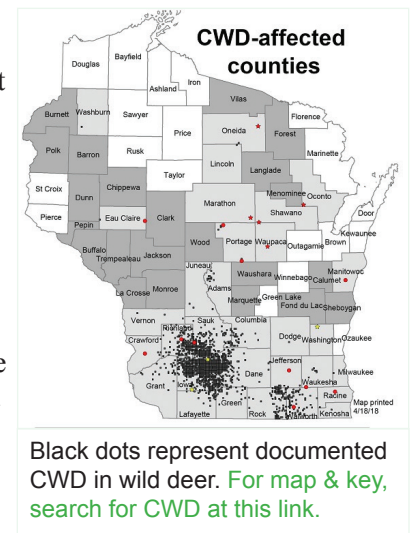
## Wildlife

By Tom Hauge

Twenty members of Wisconsin’s Green Fire have indicated they would assist our Wildlife Work Group efforts. Seven of these members met at the WGF Summit on May 17 and identified two issues related to white-tailed deer on which we’ll focus our attention over the next year:

### (1) Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD).

Unfortunately, CWD is spreading and its prevalence is increasing rapidly in infected areas of the state. Over the last six years, leadership in the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) has taken a passive “watch and monitor” approach to the disease. Our work group would like to increase outreach to decision makers on the disease to encourage a more active response.



### (2) Deer management.

We are concerned

about the rapid growth of Wisconsin’s statewide deer herd and the impact on forest regeneration, plant diversity, and deer herd health. In the last decade, legislation has heavily limited harvest management regulations and policy. Also, County Deer Advisory Councils (CDACs) are concerned about the lack of tools at their disposal to curb or reverse herd growth.

Since the Summit, the Wildlife Work Group sent a letter to the WDNR’s Natural Resources Board regarding the 2018 deer seasons and antlerless quotas. We supported WDNR’s recommendation to offer some antlerless quotas in northern counties where CDACs had suggested zero quotas. We also recommended that extra hunting opportunities be offered uniformly in the CWD-endemic areas of the state. For example, at this time, the antlerless Holiday Hunt is offered in Dane, Richland, and Sauk

*Work Group Updates continued on page 10*

### Work Group Updates (continued)

counties but not in Iowa County, where prevalence is the highest.

As work group chair, I also assisted with outreach about the CWD “Payment4Positives” program advanced by retired wildlife biologist Mike Foy. The goal of this program is to encourage landowners, hunters, and small businesses (that sample for CWD) to work together and remove CWD+ deer from infected areas. When a deer is brought in that tests positive for CWD, payment is made to the landowner, the hunter, and the business that took the sample. Wisconsin would benefit from a pilot of this program. [Link to Payment4Positives Facebook page.](#)



Art credit: Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center

Also, I have written several letters—to the US Department of Agriculture urging an update of CWD Herd Certification Standards (standards for captive cervid farms wishing to participate in the Herd Certification program), and to the Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources and of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection expressing support for the recent CWD directives from Governor Walker. WGF will need to weigh in on these important rule proposals in the months ahead.

In the coming year, our work group will do our best to address other important wildlife issues that will need our attention while trying to have an impact on our two priority deer issues.

*The second of many stories—to share Wisconsin’s*

## Profiles in Conservation

### Hydropower Relicensing, Chippewa River

By Paul La Liberte, WDNR for 36 years

Relicensing hydropower plants only happens every 30-50 years—or once during my 36-year career with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). My most notable role in representing the WDNR in renegotiating these joint relicensing agreements was that between the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and Xcel Energy for relicensing the six hydropower dams impacting 70 miles of the Lower Chippewa River in western Wisconsin. As with other relicensing, I coordinated the WDNR’s participation in technical evaluations of the affected river and flowages and in gathering input from interested parties including staff of power companies and federal, state, county, and city governments.

Under the previous license, power demands were met by significant daily and weekly water level fluctuations, along with seasonal draw-down in flowages. This negatively affected plants and animals living in the river and sometimes stranded or flooded people navigating or river camping between Eau Claire and the Mississippi River.

I am proud and grateful that all parties committed to gathering good scientific information, which we used to balance environmental benefits against power company economics. In 2003, after a 10-year process, these parties all supported the relicensing agreement—and no one tried to bypass the science-based discussions with political influence. Hydropower still generates sustainable energy in the Chippewa River. But now more reliable river flows (and city riverfront re-development) have enhanced historic boating and fishing uses in the river, and encouraged a new popular activity—tubing. I can vouch for improved bluegill fishing in Lake Wissota (upstream). Also in recognition of approval for long-term use of a public water body, Xcel Energy created an environmental fund for projects that enhance river ecosystems.



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