



WISCONSIN'S  
**greenfire**  
VOICES FOR CONSERVATION

Winter 2019

# NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Number 1

## In this issue:

- 1 Behind the Scenes at WGF
- 1 Dumpster for Deer
- 2 President's Message
- 2 WGF Mission, Vision, Values
- 3 Year in Review
- 5 Call for photos, stories, Letters to the Editor
- 5 Profiles in Conservation
- 5 Words of Encouragement
- 6 Membership information

## *Behind the Scenes at WGF*

### **The Many Tasks of Administrative Coordination**

*By Nancy Larson*

My work as administrative coordinator supports WGF's volunteers so they can focus on the work they joined WGF to contribute. WGF is clearly making a difference. Whenever we get a note of appreciation from a citizen or another conservation organization, we know we are on the right track. From my days as a manager at DNR, I chafed under the heavy yoke of bureaucracy, and now I appreciate the systems and people that paid the bills and managed the databases and processes. It feels like ironic justice to help build the scaffolding for WGF.



Photo credit: Lucy Tyrrell

As WGF blossomed from an idea to hundreds of members, it became clear that we needed some paid help. I resigned the Board in February 2018 and entered into a contract with WGF as our part time administrative coordinator—a bridge to when WGF could afford to employ staff and establish an office. To help plan for the future, I keep detailed records of my work.

So what is my role as WGF's administrative coordinator? I help our president, Terry Daulton, and the rest of our Board keep the plates spinning. In this first year, organizing our two work group summits and our annual meeting have been major commitments.

I'm also the first contact when people reach out to WGF via our email, web site, or Facebook page. People contact us with

questions and to request our assistance or involvement with issues. Sometimes we can help by explaining a regulatory process, or providing insight into an issue. I respond to contacts and discuss what our organization of volunteers can and can't do, and offer suggestions. As appropriate, I ask the work group chairs to get involved. We have had 152 such contacts since we started tracking them in late summer 2017.

When the media contacts us, I reach out to someone in WGF who works on the issue to see whether they can help the reporter flesh out a story.

*continued on page 6*

## *Dumpster for Deer*

*By Tom Hauge*

Wisconsin's Green Fire has "adopted" a deer carcass dumpster in Sauk County within the village of Plain. This dumpster provides hunters with an ecologically-safe way to dispose of deer remains to reduce human-assisted spread of chronic wasting disease (CWD). Information about WGF (logo, website) is listed on the sign beside the dumpster.



Photo credit: Tom Hauge

# President's Message

Photo courtesy Terry Daulton



## Looking Back, Looking Ahead

By Terry Daulton

This newsletter shares a snapshot review of WGF's activities in 2018. I looked back at last January's WGF board meeting notes. We were grappling with our 501(c)3, a contract to hire a part-time administrator (Nancy Larson), choices for a logo, and our "science in advocacy" approach. We had just analyzed proposed bills on wolves and wetlands and testified at the legislature. We were puzzling

over membership categories, whether to dip our toes in the social media world, and how to get our board meetings from six-hour marathons to a more realistic four hours with a lunch break! At that time, having just finished up a remarkable first "membership" drive, which raised over \$50,000, we were navigating how to work with our fiscal agent, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, and set up our first annual budget.

Fast forward to today. We have made major strides. We now have two contract part-time employees. In addition to Nancy Larson, Paul Heinen has joined us as a part-time legislative liaison. His role is to help us network with policy makers and partners, and help us prepare for pending legislation. We also have a short-term contract with Mel Vollbrecht, who brings an incredible resume from her career as a high-level administrator with WDNR. Mel will be working with us to create a report card on natural resources in Wisconsin. This document will be a road map identifying top issues and policy initiatives to improve natural resources management in our state. The list of projects is not shorter, but we have advanced from basic levels of organization to a higher plane of conservation activities.

In office management and communications, we are considering more staffing. As a side note, you might be wondering why your newsletter arrived via traditional mail versus online. We knew the newsletter sent by email was getting about 50% opening rate, which is considered very good for online communications. However, we heard from many members who preferred the hard copy that could be held in hand. After reading membership comments, we decided switch to hard copy. If you have a strong desire to go paperless, please let us know. Please feel free to share your copy with friends.

Looking ahead for 2019, we expect WGF to continue to grow. We are launching a three-year capacity-building campaign (see side bar *What's ahead in 2019?* on page 4). A sound financial basis will increase our volunteer efforts and efficiency. We plan to work with the new administration in Madison as well as to reach out to leaders from all sides of the political spectrum. As 2019 unfolds, we hope to be even more relevant and effective in the public policy arena, to continue to increase our public presence and memberships, to launch our speaker's bureau, and to build our relationships with all of our members and donors.

## Wisconsin's Green Fire: Voices for Conservation

### Mission

[see Year in Review, page 3]

### 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.

# Year in Review

## 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.

### Board

Terry Daulton, President  
Jim Perry, Vice President  
Ron Eckstein, Secretary  
Fred Clark, Treasurer  
Jerry Bartelt\*  
Thomas Hauge  
Paul La Liberte  
Bob Martini  
Michael Meyer  
David Mladenoff\*\*  
Shannon Thielman\*\*  
\*term expired in 2018  
\*\*incoming Sept 2018

### Staff (contract)

Nancy Larson,  
administrative coordinator  
Paul Heinen,  
legislative liaison

### Newsletter Editor

Lucy Tyrrell

### For more information

[www.wigreenfire.org](http://www.wigreenfire.org)  
[info@wigreenfire.org](mailto:info@wigreenfire.org)

Wisconsin's Green Fire  
P.O. Box 1206  
Rhineland, WI 54501

## Wisconsin's Green Fire in 2018

Thank you for your contributions of time, experience, and funds in 2018. Please continue your involvement in 2019 as one of our voices for conservation. We share our year-end review of many of our achievements in 2018 on these two pages.



Jeff Wilson

### Administration & Operations

- Completed by-laws, 501(c)3 status, and articles of incorporation
- Contracted with administrative coordinator and legislative liaison (both part-time)
- Held monthly board meetings
- Used board planning retreat to evaluate WGF values and future
- Developed guidance for work groups
- Received non-profit status for bulk mailings
- Held two work group summits, set work group priorities



Falon French

### Membership

- Increased to 413 member donors
- Purchased software to handle member donations
- Participation: Annual Meeting in Ashland (100), Summit—one or both (72)



Terry Daulton

### Development

- Drafted 3-year development plan for building financial stability of WGF
- Raised over \$180,000 since 2017
- Launched campaign to contact potential donors
- Enlisted 13 donors who gave at \$1000 or higher
- Submitted two grants



### Communications

- Published 4 issues of WGF *NewsLetter*
- Wrote and posted monthly issue "blogs" on the website
- Established social media presence with Facebook
- Participated in 20 media interviews
- Developed revised WGF PowerPoint to share WGF mission and updates
- Presented several public talks "Introduction to WGF"
- Organized presentations/field trips for public education

WGF's Committees

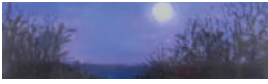


## WGF's Work Groups

In 2018, work groups enlisted chairs, co-chairs, and members. They set issue priorities, drafted foundation documents, commented on draft Wisconsin DNR documents, analyzed proposed legislation, provided testimony on bills, and participated in meetings and collaborative planning related to Wisconsin's natural resources.

Selected accomplishments are listed:

Pat Gierziec



### Air Quality

- Analysis of proposed air quality bill (Mar 2018)

Lois Osterberg



### Climate Change

- Initial planning to coordinate with Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts (WICCI) (ongoing)

Sue Lietz



### Environmental Education

- Conducted survey of a sample of WGF members about WGF's role in education (Aug 2018)

Barbara McFarland



### Environmental Rules/Water Resources

- Analysis paper: "High Capacity Well Impacts on Wisconsin Lakes, Streams, and Wetlands" (May 2018)
- Comments on WDNR "Draft Total Maximum Daily Loads for Total Phosphorous in Wisconsin River Basin" (Sept 2018)
- Comments on WDNR "Draft Guidance for 2018-2020 Triennial Standards Review Priorities for Water Quality" (Sept 2018)
- WGF Received River Champion Award, The River Alliance

Jeff Nelson



### Fisheries

- Comments on WDNR Proposed Program Guidance for Angler Recruitment, Retention, and Reactivation (May 2018)

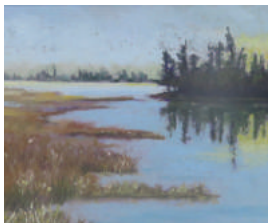
NGL Visitor Center



### Forestry

- Participation in DNR Silviculture Guidance and Forestry Management Review (ongoing)
- Comments on WDNR ATV/UTV trail proposals
- Comments on fall timber sales for northern State Forests

Ann Christensen



### Public Trust/Wetlands

- Analysis of amendments to proposal to remove state regulatory oversight of non-federal wetlands AB547 / SB 600 (Feb 2018)
- Testimony on SB 816, Meteor Timber Wetland (Feb 2018)
- Comments on Implementation Guidance and Updated Implementation Guidance for Nonfederal and Artificial Wetland Law (July 2018, Oct 2018)

NGL Visitor Center



### Wildlife

- Comments to WDNR on Deer Hunting Quotas and Seasons (May 2018)
- Letter, testimony to Natural Resources Board on Ruffed Grouse Season (Sept 2018)
- Testimony to Natural Resources Board on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) (Oct 2018)
- Testimony to Joint Committee on Review of Administrative Rules on CWD Emergency Rules (Oct 2018)

## Wisconsin's Green Fire: Voices for Conservation



### What's ahead in 2019?

Between the lines of this *Year in Review* are thousands of hours contributed by volunteers. In 2019, we are launching a campaign to build capacity toward supporting these incredible volunteers. Our goal—to raise \$260,000 each year for three years to advance WGF in these ways:

- Maintain a regular policy presence at the Capitol and serve as a trusted resource for policy makers, partners, and the public.
- Celebrate the achievements of natural resource professionals by telling their conservation stories.
- Build a WGF Action Fund to respond to conservation issues.
- Provide public education through a WGF speaker's bureau.

We have already secured \$120,000 toward our 2019 goal (not counting year-end member renewals). Our projection is to raise \$140,000 from individuals, \$100,000 from foundations, and \$20,000 from organizations. These funds will support our volunteers through high quality analyses and communications. We welcome fundraising suggestions, contacts, and your continued support.

### WGF Definition of "Science in Advocacy"

*Using science and professional experience in decision-making while maintaining trust and credibility as a science-based organization.*

# Profiles in Conservation

## Banding Eagles in Wisconsin

By Ron Eckstein, WDNR for 36 years

As a DNR wildlife biologist, I had the privilege of working on bald eagle management from 1976 through 2010 and, in retirement, as a volunteer from 2010 through 2018. During this period, the bald eagle population in Wisconsin increased from less than 100 nesting pairs in 1974 to over 1,500 nesting pairs in 2018 (see map for 2017 nest pairs).

One aspect of my eagle work from 1976 through 1989 was banding eagle chicks. Charles Sindelar, an independent raptor biologist, led the effort. Aerial surveys located eagle nest trees and two field crews were deployed to climb up into the nest and band the eaglets.

Dave Evans, a raptor specialist, banded ~1,650 eaglets and I banded ~1,350 eaglets. Each summer I looked forward to this “work,” which was full of expectation, a bit of risk, and the thrill of being high up in an eagle’s nest while the towering white pine gently swayed in the breeze. The only danger was from the climb, not from the eagles. The adults were disturbed, but they never attacked.

In those years, 75 percent of all Wisconsin eagle nests were in tall white pines and the average nest was four feet wide and three feet deep. Unusually large nests were 6 feet wide and 11 feet deep. Some nests, according to landowner records, had been in the same tree for over 75 years. Successful nests had 1-3 eaglets (average was 1.7).

Banding studies show that immature eagles from Wisconsin winter on large flowages and rivers in an arc from Oklahoma to Indiana. Adult eagles, those over five years old, never leave Wisconsin. Analysis of banding recoveries indicate annual adult eagle mortality was low (15%). The oldest Wisconsin banded eagle recovered to date was a 32-year-old bird.

WDNR biologists and volunteers continue to survey and protect eagle nests, and, as a volunteer, I still fly eagle aerial surveys in north central Wisconsin.



Photo courtesy Ron Eckstein



## Your Input Needed

- Stories and photos of research and resource successes for “Profiles in Conservation” (blue bar this page)
- Photos of natural resources and conservation action in Wisconsin
- Letters to the Editor

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

## Words of Encouragement

To Fred [Clark] and WGF—

On behalf of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation Board of Directors and staff, it has been a pleasure for the WWF to assist a great new organization, Wisconsin’s Green Fire, to sprout and grow into a strong and highly credible, science-based conservation organization. The WWF takes great pride in its past efforts to provide support as new startup conservation organizations, such as WGF, get off the ground.

Green Fire has had an amazing birth and growth—truly impressive, but of no surprise knowing the caliber and determination of those who lead and support the group. Keep up your excellent work; it has helped all of the existing groups in the conservation community and the general public. The time was right and Green Fire has met the challenge.

May the wind always be at your back,  
George

—Email to WGF from George Meyer, Wisconsin Wildlife Federation (pictured below at a WGF summit).



Lucy Tyrrell



P.O. Box 1206, Rhineland, WI 54501

Not a member?  
Please join  
Wisconsin's Green Fire

Please visit:

<https://wlgreenfire.org/make-a-difference/>  
to join or renew on-line or to download  
a membership form.

Thank you for supporting  
the conservation legacy of  
Wisconsin.



Art credit: Janasia Schawntes, Washburn School, Grade 3



Photo Credit: Lucy Tyrrell



Art credit: Northern Great Lakes VC

#### *Behind the Scenes (continued from page 1)*

I help the work groups distribute WGF press releases, and make sure we have updated content for our web page and Facebook page. I ensure the newsletters are distributed electronically and by mail.

Wisconsin Wildlife Federation served as our fiscal agent from May 2017 until October 2018. We are now a stand-alone organization and checks need to be written to "Wisconsin's Green Fire." Thanks to Fred Clark and Tom Jerow, we now have set up our own bank account, financial software, and a contracted CPA to provide reviews and prepare our IRS reports. We are also set up to receive donations of stock.

I now manage our membership and donor information through a subscription to NeonCRM which integrates with our financial software and Constant Contact email system. Don't hesitate to contact me at [nancyjean.larson@gmail.com](mailto:nancyjean.larson@gmail.com).



Art credit: Dagmar Plenk, Detail Strata #7