

LEAVE A **Wisconsin Conservation Legacy** FOR THE GENERATIONS WHO FOLLOW

Many of our member/supporters at Wisconsin's Green Fire have devoted their lives and careers to protecting and enhancing natural resources and upholding Wisconsin's well-deserved reputation as a national leader in conservation. Whatever our background, all of us are committed to ensuring Wisconsin remains a beautiful place to live, work, and recreate. And yet environmental threats grow more profound each year, putting many of our hard-earned victories at risk.

Wisconsin's Green Fire (WGF) works to maintain that strong land ethic, conservation tradition and science-based perspective in the management of our natural resources. *Support from dedicated conservation-minded people makes our work possible.*

There are many ways to leave a legacy, but one of the most lasting, positive ways to support Wisconsin's Green Fire is through planned giving.



ABOUT WISCONSIN'S GREEN FIRE

VOICES FOR CONSERVATION

Wisconsin's Green Fire is a 501(c)(3), independent conservation organization focused on bringing sound science and field experience to understanding and managing our natural resources and conserving our environment.

Since our founding in 2017, WGF has become a go-to organization providing science-based information to policy makers, state and local agencies, and citizens who care about our conservation tradition and sustaining our natural resources.

Wisconsin's Green Fire members all work together to advance science-informed analysis and policy solutions that address Wisconsin's greatest conservation challenges.





WGF member/supporters include both concerned citizens, as well as career conservation professionals. Our expert members include wildlife biologists, fisheries scientists, water quality experts, ecologists, foresters, engineers, land protection specialists, attorneys, and environmental educators. Our deep pool of collective experience makes us uniquely positioned to help guide conservation decisionmakers and policy on critical issues ranging from wetlands and water quality to wolf management.

Wisconsin's Green Fire's mission is to advance science-informed analysis and policy solutions that address Wisconsin's greatest conservation challenges.

But fulfilling that mission requires financial support from people like you.



WAYS TO LEAVE A LEGACY

In addition to making annual gifts, a growing number of our supporters contribute to Wisconsin's Green Fire through both planned giving during their lifetime and through gifts via bequests defined in their wills or estate plans. **Planned giving can be an important estate planning tool that also brings tax benefits for you, or your heirs.**

Some of the ways you can support Wisconsin's Green Fire and other charitable organizations during your lifetime and beyond include:

- Outright tax-deductible donations
- Making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from an IRA
- Gifts of stocks, bonds and other securities
- Gifts of real estate, used vehicles, or other assets
- Naming Wisconsin's Green Fire in your will or estate plans

We would be happy to discuss how each of these giving options can help meet your needs and support our conservation mission for the long term. As with all estate and financial planning, we strongly recommend you work with a trusted legal or financial advisor when considering your options for planned giving and planning your estate.

PLANNED GIVING IN YOUR LIFETIME

Outright Gifts

Outright gifts are made during your lifetime and can be made with any kind of tangible assets and transferred directly from you to WGF. Outright gifts are straight-forward and can provide you with a charitable contribution that can be deducted for income taxes in the year the gift is made. Removing assets from your estate through charitable contributions may also provide estate tax benefits. Outright gifts can also include personal property such as donations of real estate, vehicles, boats, or other items of substantial appreciated value.

Outright gifts have an immediate positive impact on WGF's most current conservation efforts.

IRA Distributions

If you have a traditional IRA, 401(k), TSA-403(b), or Deferred Compensation-457 and you have reached a designated age you may need to take annual Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) from your account, which is generally taxable income. Your RMD is the minimum amount you must withdraw from your account each year. Retirement plan owners must start taking withdrawals from IRA, SEP IRA, SIMPLE IRA, or retirement plans at age 72 (in 2021).

You can gift some or all your RMD to qualified charities such as Wisconsin's Green Fire via a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) which eliminates income tax on the amount donated.

Because many retirement investments appreciated significantly in 2021, Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) in 2022 are higher than they have been in recent years, which means this year could provide an especially good opportunity to offset tax liability with a Qualified Charitable Distribution.

If you have a tax deferred account such as a 401(k), 403(b), or 457, these funds can be easily rolled over (with no tax consequences) to an IRA so that this kind of distribution can be made.


Gifts of Stocks & Mutual Funds

Most investors know that selling appreciated securities or assets can result in significant capital gains tax liability. However, by gifting stock or securities or real estate directly to charities such as WGF, the full current market value of the assets can be considered a charitable gift – creating an allowable income tax deduction and avoiding capital gain tax liability.



Gifts of Real Estate

Do you have a lake cabin, woodland, farmland, or even commercial property? The same capital gains issue holds true for real estate gifts. Donors can gift any real estate directly to WGF to sell without incurring capital gains. The full fair market value of the property (or direct sale price of the parcel if sold within a year of the gift) can be claimed as a charitable deduction for income tax purposes. Any time is a good time to take this approach, but when the market value is higher it can bring optimal benefits.



“I chose to support Wisconsin’s Green Fire for many reasons, but perhaps the main draw is their many years as natural resource related professionals. These are people who know the issues inside out. Additionally, WGF addresses issues based on science, not political influence or expedience. This made it easy for me to gift WGF with an appreciated security. I know these are funds well spent.”

- **Jim Friedrich**

PLANNED GIVING BY BEQUEST

One of the simplest ways of making a gift to Wisconsin's Green Fire is through a bequest in your will or trust. Bequests to charities such as WGF are free from federal estate tax and can offer valuable estate tax benefits. There is no limit to the amount you can leave to WGF or to other charitable organizations through your will or as a beneficiary of your trust.

Bequest options may involve designating a specific asset, specific amount, or percentage of an estate to the organization in your will. Bequests can involve gifts of cash, stocks, bonds, real estate, or other assets, or you can name WGF as residual beneficiary of your estate.

Planned giving specialists and financial advisors often suggest that when making an outright specific bequest to a charity, it is best to specify that a percentage of your estate go to that organization, rather than a specific sum. This allows your charitable giving to adjust with your changing life circumstances.



“I’ve included WGF in my will because the organization is small, so I know my gifts have a bigger impact. The work of the organization helps create the kind of legacy I want to leave. I find WGF’s work matches my interests through science-informed policy change, intentional conservation diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, and support for aspiring conservationists.” - **Patricia McConnell**



Gifts of Property by Bequest

For many people, our biggest assets are our homes or other real estate. Making plans today for a bequest of a home, cottage, commercial building, farm, or wooded property at your death can be an easy, straight-forward means to dispose of property while supporting causes that are meaningful for you. Such gifts can have a great impact for WGF. Planning for gifts of such designated assets can allow them to be excluded from probate values, which may make the job of the executor of your will easier. Depending on current federal and state estate tax provisions, bequests may also reduce estate tax liabilities for your heirs.

Retirement Accounts

Another simple but effective strategy is to name WGF as a beneficiary for state, federal, or other retirement plans, or for Individual Retirement Accounts. It is generally very quick and easy to update your beneficiary forms with the retirement accounts.

Life Insurance

You can also designate WGF as a beneficiary for a specific amount or percent value of the life insurance policy, or the policy can be donated outright. You can do so by contacting your insurance agent.

Working Through a Foundation

Planned gifts and bequests can always be made directly to Wisconsin's Green Fire. Alternatively, many donors establish a designated fund supporting WGF or other charities through a foundation such as the Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin (NRF), or a local community foundation. Foundation held funds can take many forms including Donor Advised Funds (DAF) or endowments.

One of Wisconsin's Green Fire's generous supporters recently set up a fund at the Duluth Superior Community Foundation which will be taking over distributions to his favored charities. This donor advised fund will provide a significant contribution every year to support WGF.

However they are established, endowed funds mean the donor's gift will keep on supporting Wisconsin's conservation tradition into the future – truly a lasting legacy for any family.



GIVING TO WISCONSIN'S GREEN FIRE

Wisconsin's Green Fire, Inc., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, tax exempt conservation organization organized as a nonstock corporation under the laws of the State of Wisconsin.

Our business mailing address is P.O. Box 5411, Madison, WI 53705. WGF's federal tax identification number is 82-3383564. You may wish to keep this information on file and to also provide a copy to your attorney.

The information provided here is intended for general guidance and is not intended to be specific legal or financial advice. In all matters of estate planning, we recommend that you contact your own legal or financial advisors to learn how giving options fit into your specific circumstances. Please also contact us if you, your attorney, or other financial advisors, have any questions or would like assistance planning and directing your gift to WGF.

If you intend to include, or have already included, Wisconsin's Green Fire in your planned giving or estate planning, please let us know! Of course, we honor all requests for anonymous donations.

Supporting charitable organizations doing good work takes many forms. Wisconsin's Green Fire thanks you for your many contributions.



CONTACT:

Fred Clark, Executive Director

P.O. Box 5411

Madison, WI 53705

Phone: (608) 697-2226

E-mail: fclark@wigreenfire.org

Website: www.wigreenfire.org