

Happy Earth Day from Wisconsin's Green Fire!

Earth Day is a celebration of the planet we all call home, and a day to remember why it is so important to fight for the conservation and protection of our natural resources. We asked some WGF leaders to share what makes Earth Day so special to them, and why they choose to dedicate their life for the protection of the planet.

Reflecting on the First Earth Day



"I was an undergraduate student at UW-Stevens Point during the first Earth Day in 1970. We mobilized, with thousands of others across the country, to fight to restore and protect these resources. As I look back to those days in 1970, it was a worthy cause and we, collectively, had some

great successes. *We still have work to do, but it is encouraging to see the continued commitment and energy to protect and conserve our planet for future generations!*

Earth Day continues to provide an opportunity to shine a spotlight on these critically important issues. Every time I enjoy a sunset on Lake Mendota in Madison (see photo), where local visionaries have preserved many miles of shoreline for public use, *I know that there is hope, with continued vigilance, to protect these resources in Wisconsin and globally."*

-Michael Cain

Photo: The Madison skyline from Lake Mendota, credit: Michael Cain

"During my 30+ year career with WDNR I dealt with wastewater permits and hydropower

licenses. In the earlier years, I worked with consultants hired by regulated parties to *find solutions* to compliance problems. In later years, when the problems became more subtle (think pollutant tainted fish rather than dead fish), I was dealing with

attorneys hired by regulated parties whose job was obviously to *delay solutions* as long as possible. I see the opposite occurring now with climate change. When the effects on society were theoretical and subtle, much effort was put into denying impacts and delaying action. Now that effects are becoming obvious, people expect more serious efforts toward solutions. *Earth Day is an annual opportunity for people to step up and demand solutions to environmental problems. To reverse a phrase from the movie Field of Dreams - "If you come, society will build it".*

-Paul LaLiberte



Individual Action, Global Change

"Earth day is a cumulation of all of our efforts, 365 days of the year, big and small, far and wide, to respect the planet. We all do different things, from lifestyle choices (recycling, solar, alternative fuels, conservation, etc.), to volunteering, voting, and the smallest of eco-friendly choices, to make the planet better for the future. This button is at least 30 years old but I still keep it to remind me!"

-Robin Schmidt



The Power of the Next Generation

"Of all the things my natural resources career has allowed me to do, going fishing and teaching my daughter Priya (left) how to fish is easily my favorite. I never thought growing up in Milwaukee, and never owning a fishing rod till I was 30, that I would have

the opportunity to fish the Mississippi River, Lake Superior and Michigan, the Wisconsin River, and Madison's Lake Monona, Mendota, and Waubesa with her. I bet she will pass her talents along to her kids someday!"

-Paul Heinen

Photo: Priya Heinen fishing at Egg Harbor in Door County, WI. Credit: Paul Heinen



"For decades after the first Earth Day the mantra was "Think globally and act locally." Now we must **ACT** globally, locally, and personally if we are to salvage a healthy planet in the age of climate change. I have faith in young people as an action force because they...are well educated, have better tools (computers, better science, etc.), and there

is a much better understanding of the mechanisms of worldwide interconnectedness than previous generations. The old guard is stepping down, and it is time for the next generation to step up!"

-Bob Martini

Photo: Young people enjoying the outdoors near Clear Lake, Wis. Credit: Bob Martini

Connecting with the Natural World

"As a youth, the terms "ecosystem thinking" would have been foreign to my family, but they did instill in me a deep, but sometimes misdirected connection to the natural world (or "the woods," in their language). As first a UW-Marathon County undergrad and later a UW-Madison student at Gaylord Nelson's first Earth Day, and as a developing disciple of Aldo Leopold, my evolution to a systems thinker was accelerated. They are still "the woods" to me, but the spiritual depth has become magnified more than I could ever have imagined in 1972.

Now what some might consider an old man, I realize I was standing on shoulders of giants."

-Jim Perry

Photo: Joy Perry, Jim Perry's wife, thinking like a mountain at the Potato River. Credit: Jim Perry



[Read more Earth Day reflections here](#)

WGF Welcomes New Development Director and Conservation Fellow



WGF is excited to welcome two new staff members to our team! Read on to learn a bit more about Flossie Siebert, WGF's new Director of Development, and Sam Dawson, our Conservation Fellow:

As WGF's Director of Development, [Flossie Siebert](#) (left) manages our fundraising efforts through grants, donor engagement, and membership outreach.

Flossie will collaborate closely with our Executive Director, our Membership and Development Committee, and our working teams to create and implement a multi-faceted strategy that will sustain and grow the support for Wisconsin's Green Fire.

Flossie's background includes work in higher education, the nonprofit/public sector, as well as private sector philanthropic giving. Her work has connected her with a diverse set of leaders, colleagues, and communities that are ideal partners for Wisconsin's Green Fire mission and work.

Flossie received a Bachelor's of Fine Arts from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in 1996 and a M.S. in Leadership and Organizational Development from Lakeland University in 2021. Flossie lives in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin with her husband and dog where they enjoy camping and hiking in the Kettle Moraine State Forest. She also finds time to garden, listen to local live music, swim, and ride her bike.

[Sam Dawson](#) joins WGF as our 2023

Conservation Fellow, and will help coordinate activities with the [Conservation Pathways Program](#) and [Aspiring Conservation Professionals Work Group](#).

Sam comes to WGF with a decade of experience working with nonprofits, working with organizations in Milwaukee, Seattle, and in Central America. In addition to his work with WGF, Sam serves as a Program Manager for the Vashon-Maury Community Food Bank. He holds experience in fundraising and project development with rural communities in Panama and Nicaragua related to health, economic opportunity, and environment conservation.



Sam has a B.A. in International Affairs from Marquette University (2016), and is currently a Masters of Public Administration candidate at the University of Washington. Outside of work and school, Sam loves spending time outdoors, hiking and camping with his wife, Kim.

Photo credits: Flossie Siebert and Sam Dawson

[Read more about Sam and Flossie here](#)

Thank You for Making WGF's Spring Auction a Success!



In late March, WGF hosted our first auction, and thanks to our generous donors and bidders it was a success! During the two weeks of the auction, **we raised almost \$8,000 in bids and donations** - all of which will go towards supporting Wisconsin's conservation legacy and our work in 2023.

We would like to specifically thank our donors who generously donated their time, resources, and expertise to our auction for bidders to enjoy. Specifically our corporate sponsors which included [Wild Ones Fox Valley Area Chapter](#), [Orvis](#), [Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua](#), [Wild Ones Central Wisconsin Chapter](#), [LandServe LLC](#), [Wild Ones Kettle Moraine Chapter](#), and [Raptor Education Group, Inc.](#)

Stay tuned for more news from us about upcoming events and opportunities to engage with our work!

Photo credit: Ed Culhane

WGF Members Meet with WDNR Secretary Adam Payne



Wisconsin's Green Fire members have been representing WGF at meetings organized by incoming WDNR Secretary Adam Payne.

WGF's Wildlife Work Group member Tom Hauge recently joined Secretary Payne at a meeting with statewide conservation organizations. WGF

Policy Director Paul Heinen (far right in photo) recently attended a similar meeting with representatives of 20 environmental organizations.

Secretary Payne briefed the groups on his budget priorities, including staff and funding to support PFAS research, programs, and management, funding to control water pollution, changes to the Knowles Nelson Stewardship Fund process, and a number of other items included in [Governor Evers' 2023-2025 State Budget](#).

WGF will continue to work closely with WDNR staff and the Natural Resources Board to inform natural resource decision making in the state.

Photo credit: Paul Heinen

[Read WGF's 2023-25 State Budget Highlights Here](#)

Aspiring Conservation Professionals Column

A Spring Here, A Summer There: Reflections on Seasonal Conservation Education Work



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ASPIRING CONSERVATION PROFESSIONALS

The following is a reflection written by Isabelle Bieser, ACP Work Group member and Manager of Innovation & Community Engagement

at the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, the non-profit partner to the county government-operated Milwaukee County Zoo.

With summer almost upon us, many aspiring professionals may be considering seasonal work. Seasonal work is a phenomenal way to experience different fields within conservation, work for different types of organizations, and visit new places. In my early twenties, I worked seasonally exploring private, state, non-profit organizations, and the work they offered. Each type of organization stood out in different ways:

Private organization: I worked as an Outdoor Instructor for the Pali Institute in California where I taught environmental education programs. We were well equipped and had the money and resources to try new things.

State government: I worked as an Eagle Watching Guide with Pere Marquette State Park in Illinois and volunteered with the state government to give eagle tours. I noticed a strong sense of community and emphasis on service in these positions.

Federal government: I worked as an Education Intern at Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge in Illinois where I led education programs and community science projects. This position had a strong programmatic foundation, and the field trips and community science projects pulled together great partners.

Non-profit: I worked as timber Stand Improvement Specialist at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico. I have found that non-profits prioritize their people. They know it takes people to get the work done and they care about your wellbeing.

These were a handful of my experiences and there are aspects of working for a non-profit I see reflected in working for a state agency. However, keep in mind when applying for work opportunities that each type of organization has different priorities, work atmospheres, and focuses.

Want to learn more? Please reach out to me with questions at isabieser@gmail.com!



Photo: Isabelle monitoring wood duck nests at Two Rivers National Wildlife Refuge in Illinois. Credit: Isabelle Bieser

[Read more about WGF's ACP Work Group](#)

Get Involved in Wisconsin Conservation

Volunteer with the Rice Lake Association for Weedpull 2023: The Rice Lake Association in Mercer, WI is currently seeking volunteers for Weedpull

2023 to help remove Curly Leaf Pond Weed from Rice Lake. There will be three opportunities to volunteer between May 31st and June 11th, each volunteering opportunity will span over three days.

[Click here](#) to learn more and register.

Attend Conservation Lobby Day with Wisconsin Conservation Voters: On April 25th, Wisconsin Conservation Voters will gather in Madison to meet with Wisconsin legislators on four priorities included in Governor Evers' 2023-2025 Budget: clean water, clean energy, democracy for all, and supporting local communities. WGF Executive Director Fred Clark will be addressing WCV members on "What can a Pro-conservation Natural Resources Board Do and How You Can Influence Them".

[Click here](#) to learn more and register.

Watch the 2023 Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame Induction

Ceremony: On Tuesday, April 25th, the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame will induct four individuals who have shown dedication to Wisconsin's conservation legacy. The inductees include Byron Shaw, Michael Dombeck, Mark Martin, and Susan Foote-Martin.

The induction ceremony will be held via Zoom, you can register and learn more [here](#). Since each of the inductees were associated with UW Stevens Point during their careers, UWSP will be hosting a watch party at the Dreyfus University Center (DUC) Theater, 1015 Reserve Street, Stevens Point, Wisconsin on the UW-Stevens Point Campus.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the inductees and ceremony schedule.

Wisconsin Conservation News

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Ideas Lab April 7th article by WGF's Jenny Washam: [Practical Tips for celebrating Earth Day everyday through conservation, stewardship.](#)

Wisconsin Examiner April 17th article featuring WGF's Adrian Wydeven, [Republicans introduce bill setting specific wolf population number.](#)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' April 18th article: [DNR Announces New Green Tier Charter for Climate Action.](#)

Wisconsin's Green Fire needs your support. Your donation assures that conservation issues are around the state are addressed with the best scientific information available.

**Give Today to Support Conservation
Tomorrow!**

