

August News from Wisconsin's Green Fire

□ Join us for WGF's Fall Events! □



By Flossie Siebert, WGF Development Director

We're thrilled to announce the return of our fall 2023 Conservation Socials, **plus our month-long partnership with Delta Beer Lab in September!** These engaging and casual gatherings will be held throughout September and October across Wisconsin, bringing together WGF members and conservation enthusiasts from all over the state.

Come connect and socialize while enjoying local drinks and food, all in the name of preserving Wisconsin's natural resources.

During each social, you'll have the opportunity to learn about WGF's impactful work and discover how you can get involved. The socials will also travel to six more communities across the state in September and October.

We'll [kick off our fall events](#) season this September at Delta Beer Lab in Madison with our month-long nonprofit partnership! Throughout September, all tips given at Delta Beer Lab will be donated to WGF (staff earn a livable wage).

Here's a quick look at our upcoming socials and nonprofit partner events:

- **Sep. 6 – Madison** - [Delta Beer Lab](#) Nonprofit Partner Kick-off Event, 4:30-6:30pm
- **Sep. 13 – Madison** - [Delta Beer Lab](#) Trivia Night, 7:00-9:00pm
- **Sep. 22 – Madison** - [Delta Beer Lab](#) Live Music, Food Truck & WGF Guest Beer-tenders, 5:00-7:00 pm
- **Sep. 28 – Madison** - [Delta Beer Lab](#) Crafting Conversation — Panel Discussion on PFAS in Drinking Water, 6:00-7:30 pm
- **Sep. 30 – Washburn** - Oppedahl Homestead, Apple Cider Pressing & Pulled Pork Feast, 4:00-6:00pm
- **Oct. 4 – Madison** - [Delta Beer Lab](#) Presentation of Check to Wisconsin's Green Fire—Final Delta Event, 4:30-6:00pm
- **Oct. 11 – Eau Claire** - [The Brewing Projekt](#), 5:00-7:00pm
- **Oct. 12 – Athens (Wausau)** - [Stoney Acres Farm](#), Pizza on the Farm, 5:00-7:00pm
- **Oct. 18 – Manitowish Waters** - [North Lakeland Discovery Center](#), 5:00-7:00pm
- **Oct. 23 – Milwaukee** - [Urban Ecology Center \(Riverside\)](#), 4:00-7:00pm
- **Oct. 25 – Appleton** - [Bubolz Nature Preserve](#), 5:00-7:00pm

These events are open to the public and completely free, but we recommend registering ahead of time to secure your spot. Space is more limited (max. 30 attendees) at the Washburn and Athens events. **Visit our Events page for the full event details and register today!** <https://wigreenfire.org/events>.

Let's come together, support conservation efforts, and make a positive impact on Wisconsin's beautiful natural environment. See you at the Conservation Socials!

**Learn More and Register for
Events**

WGF Supports Approach in Updated Draft Wolf Plan



*By Don Behm,
Communication Committee
Chair*

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) is out with a plan for the “conservation, stewardship and management” of gray wolves in the state that aims to maintain a sustainable wolf

population and address conflicts with the predators. The plan also provides recommendations for effective regulation of hunting and trapping seasons.

The Natural Resources Board is scheduled to act on the department’s revised draft 2023 Wolf Management Plan at its Oct. 25 meeting in Madison. Here is a link to the wolf management webpage:

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/wildlifehabitat/wolfmanagementplan>.

The robust recovery of gray wolves in Wisconsin is confirmed by recent winter estimates that show the population is stabilizing at around 1,000 wolves, primarily in northern and central counties where they find the most favorable habitat.

Wolf numbers would remain in that range, according to the revised draft plan, under adaptive strategies that incorporate natural population dynamics and flexible harvest levels targeting specific management zones. The plan does not set a numeric statewide population cap.

Wisconsin’s Green Fire (WGF) supports this approach and last month published its latest Conservation Bulletin, [“The 350 Wolf Goal in Wisconsin: An Assessment by Wisconsin’s Green Fire on Setting Population Goals for the State’s Gray Wolf Population.”](#)

A 1999 WDNR plan that set 350 as a wolf management goal has been misinterpreted as a population cap. The 350 goal was recommended at the time as “the minimum level” of wolf population recovery needed to trigger management controls and a hunting season.

Photo: Wisconsin DNR

WGF Presents at CWD Conference in Colorado

By Mike Foy, Wildlife Work Group Member

ID #97 **From the Dust Bowl to Carbon Sequestration, Conservation Incentives Work—Let's Use Them for Healthy Herds!**

Thomas Hauge (thauge.1953@gmail.com) & Michael Foy (mikefof@gmail.com), retired Wisconsin wildlife biologists representing Wisconsin's Green Fire - Wildlife Work Group, www.wlgreenfire.org

Our proposal: A 5-year, \$50 Million (USD), 10-state pilot evaluation of a USDA Healthy Herds Initiative under the 2025 or 2030 Farm Bill

- Goal would be to pilot a practicable, expandable, and sustainable management strategy to protect the biological, cultural, tribal, local food & recreational benefits—plus the \$20-50 Billion (USD) estimated annual economic value of maintaining healthy wild deer populations in North America. Pilot would evaluate both landowner/hunter participation and disease management potential of large-scale incentivized targeted removal of CWD-positive deer.
- Participating states and/or tribes and partners would choose pilot study areas for a state, tribal, NGO, small business & federal partnership to encourage landowners and their hunters to voluntarily conduct targeted removal of CWD-positive deer to help manage CWD to tolerable levels. Landowners & their hunters would receive a USDA Healthy Herds Initiative reward for each CWD-positive deer they remove and confirm by agency testing or equivalent. Cooperating small businesses would also be rewarded for every CWD-positive sample they collect and submit with proper supporting data.
- States and/or tribes and partners would create annual spatio-temporal probability “hotspot” or “thunderstorm” maps to help identify & predict locations with a high probability of having sick deer. Agencies they would be able to implement with no required changes to season, bag, methods, licensing or other hunting regulations. Reward amount would be calibrated to maximize landowner and hunter participation & disease control effectiveness—using disease reduction goals, market analysis, human resources evaluation, & current epidemiological research.



Voluntary conservation incentives worked in 1940 to tame the Dust Bowl, & they work now to address many other resource challenges. They can help us manage and maintain CWD at tolerable levels



Thanks to generous assistance with travel expenses by an anonymous donor, Mike Foy was able to represent Wisconsin's Green Fire at the [4th International Chronic Wasting Disease Symposium](#) in Denver, Colorado from May 30th to June 2nd.

While there, Mike presented a [poster](#) he prepared with WGF Wildlife Work Group co-chair Tom Hauge encouraging use of the federal USDA Farm Bill to incentivize landowners and hunters in managing chronic wasting disease (CWD). The CWD symposium had the feel of a relatively small, intimate gathering, attracting some 400 participants. Mike said it has been many years since he attended a conference where there was just a single session offered at any one time, which meant you could relax and attend every presentation if desired, without feeling you should be in multiple places at once.

Session topics included Prion Biochemistry, Surveillance & Testing, Disease Management, Environmental Contamination, Transmission, Intervention/Prevention, Human Dimensions, Epidemiology, and Pathogenesis/Strains. There was also an interesting state/provincial disease management roundtable held one evening. As in previous symposiums, the presentations leaned heavily on basic CWD epidemiology such as prion biochemistry, genetics, and disease transmission and surveillance; and relatively lighter towards practicable management approaches to prevent or control disease.

Photo: CWD Symposium poster by Mike Foy and Tom Hauge.

Read More About Mike's reflections on the CWD Symposium

2023 State Budget - Natural Resources Highlights

By Paul Heinen, WGF Policy Director

Governor Tony Evers signed the 2023-2025 State Budget on Wednesday, July 5, 2023. [Click here to read selected highlights about natural resources funding from the Governor's point of view](#) as taken from his budget message.

These highlights from the budget about natural resources topics include Water, Forestry, and Parks. Overall, the DNR budget was increased by 7.6%. However, staff was reduced by a total of 53 positions.

[Read More Budget Highlights](#)

Aspiring Conservation Professionals Column

Conservation Pathways

By Ruth Oppedahl, Interim Program Director

The goal of Conservation Pathways is to give all students from all backgrounds an opportunity to feel they belong and can succeed in conservation and environmental fields. 2022-2023 was our “pilot” year with two students. Some of the things we learned:

- Students are hungry for connections to natural resource careers outside of school.
- Being connected to a larger network like Green Fire gives hope to young people who are living in a changing world.
- First generation college students need and want a mentor to make sense out of the college experience.
- Mentors who are recent graduates are valuable for helping students see their own path in a few years.
- Women students appreciate women mentors.
- More peer-to-peer connections would be valuable.
- The \$1000 scholarship was appreciated.
- Students are interested in staying in contact with their mentors as they enter their careers.

Coaching the next generation of natural resource professionals is important to the work we do. We hope to improve and expand the program as funding allows.

Thanks to the Potawatomi Foundation and the Evjue Foundation for supporting future generations.

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

Get Involved in Wisconsin Conservation



We're Hiring! Executive Director

- ✓ Build and lead teams among diverse communities
- ✓ Create and collaborate on strategic plans
- ✓ Manage fundraising through donors and grants
- ✓ Serve as the public face of Wisconsin's Green Fire



We're Hiring! Wisconsin's Green Fire seeks a new Executive Director.

Go to wigreenfire.org/employment for the full application package.

Please share widely with your networks!

**Review of applications begins
September 1st, 2023.**

Upcoming Conservation Meetings and Conferences Around Wisconsin

- *2023 Nutrient Management Regional Meetings*
 - **Register Here**: Multiple Dates and Locations (Aug 28 - Sep 7)
- *Native Gardening Conference*
 - **Register Here**: Sep 10th at the Arboretum, Madison WI
- *Great Lakes Area of Concern Conference*
 - **Register Here**: Sep 13-14th in Green Bay WI
- *2023 Midwest Climate Resilience Conference*
 - **Register Here** (register early to save \$): Oct 25-27 in Duluth MN

STOP THE FALLOUT FROM BIRD-WINDOW COLLISIONS



Up to 1 BILLION birds die every year in the United States after colliding with windows. Will you please help our songbirds fly south safely by fixing one problem window?

FREE WEBINARS
Aug. 23, 2023, Noon and 7 p.m.
Register now:
sossaveoursongbirds.org/webinar

Madison Audubon's Brenna Marsicek will discuss why birds collide and demo 3 easy ways to prevent bird-window collisions.

Sponsored by:
WI Bird Conservation Partnership
Madison Audubon
SOS Save Our Songbirds



SCAN ME

Help Birds Fly South Safely

Fall migration is one of the deadliest times for birds. The Wisconsin DNR and other members of the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Partnership have some tips on how you can help:

Learn how to prevent birds from flying into problem windows. **Register here for a free webinar** Aug 23 at either noon or 7 pm.

Provide water for birds to drink and bathe in. The **Cornell Lab of Ornithology** has tips.

Help birds get the energy they need by **planting native plants** for fat-rich seeds and fruits.

Wisconsin Conservation News

WPR's *Route 51* radio show July 21st featuring WGF's Adrian Wydeven:
Encore: Living With Wildlife

Wisconsin's Green Fire needs your support. Your donation assures that conservation

issues around the state are addressed with the best scientific information available.

**Give Today to Support Conservation
Tomorrow!**

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www.wigreenfire.org

STAY CONNECTED

