

Tending the FIRE

IN 2023



Wisconsin's Green Fire (WGF)

is leading statewide efforts to enhance Wisconsin's legacy of conservation. From wolf conservation to PFAS contamination to natural climate solutions, we are Wisconsin's preeminent voice providing facts and analysis on top environmental issues.

Since our founding in 2017, WGF members have used their years of expertise so all Wisconsinites can enjoy

the benefits of clean water, clean air, and healthy ecosystems.

We are a community of people who care about conservation. We are scientists, policy experts, educators, land protection specialists, students, and more! We are hikers, hunters, gardeners, and kayakers.

We invite you to join us and support this work as one of the Voices for Conservation.



Chequamegon National Forest
Photo by P. Henry

ACHIEVEMENT HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023

We're proud to highlight the achievements of WGF's dedicated member-experts in 2023. We invite you to get involved!



Agricultural Conservation

WGF is leading a two-year project to assess new models for farm incentives that protect clean water, working in partnership with Clean Wisconsin and with support from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

▶ *Sara Walling, Paul LaLiberte, Jimmy VandenBrook, John Exo*



Climate and Energy

As a member of the Clean Economy Coalition of Wisconsin and in partnership with the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters, WGF is playing a leading role statewide on Natural Climate Solutions and Community Climate Adaptation and Resilience.

▶ *Nancy Turyk, Linda Parker, Keith Reopelle, Fred Clark, Ron Eckstein*

Public Trust and Wetlands

WGF members analyzed how the U.S. EPA's new rules rolling back federal wetlands protections may impact wetlands in Wisconsin.

▶ *Michael Cain, Ron Grasshoff, Joanne Kline*



Protecting Conservation Lands

WGF members collaborated with local communities to advocate for state funding to permanently protect 70,000 acres of forested lands in Northeast Wisconsin known as the Pelican River Forest, Wisconsin's largest privately-owned, unprotected block of forest.

▶ *Ron Eckstein, Tom Jerow, Don Behm*

Water Quality

Our PFAS in Wisconsin Conference in May 2023 brought together local government leaders from throughout Wisconsin to learn about and assess PFAS related needs. WGF team members have influenced historic investments in the 2023-2025 state budget addressing "forever chemicals" in water.

▶ *Jim Baumann, John Robinson, Mark Thimke, Meleesa Johnson*



Wolves in Wisconsin

Members of WGF's wildlife work group helped shape an updated Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan that reflects current science and carrying capacity, and the rights of Wisconsin tribal nations. WGF has emerged as a leading voice in framing the conversation about wolves in Wisconsin.

▶ *Adrian Wydeven, Peter David, Tim Van Deelen, Tom Hauge, Erik Olson, William Clark*



Lakes Management

WGF developed curriculum and piloted workshops in Vilas and Oneida counties to train lake association leaders on tools to assess lakes condition and quality and lakes management planning.

▶ *Mike Meyer, Jim Kreitlow, Terry Daulton*

Supporting Tomorrow's Conservation Leaders

In 2023 we launched our Conservation Pathways program, providing scholarships, mentoring, and engagement for non-traditional students from Nicolet College, Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwe University, and Madison College.

▶ *Dolly Ledin, Ruth Oppedahl, Jenny Washam*

WGF's New Leadership

After five years, our Executive Director and founding member Fred Clark is stepping back. Fred's leadership helped establish WGF as one of Wisconsin's leading voices for conservation.

WGF has hired a new Executive Director, our own member Meleesa Johnson! She will direct WGF in addressing urgent conservation priorities and continue fulfilling our strategic goals in 2024.



Fred Clark (left) and Meleesa Johnson (right) at a 2021 WGF event.

New Report on Understanding PFAS in Wisconsin

Read our new *Opportunities Now* paper "PFAS in Wisconsin Water Supplies: A Summary of Current Detections and their Implications for Wisconsin." WGF's publications and recorded conference sessions are available on our website.





Green Fire members working on today's "pressing" conservation issues! Washburn Conservation Social, Sep. 2023

Will you make a gift to support Wisconsin's Green Fire today?

By contributing to Wisconsin's Green Fire, you are making possible our work to conserve biodiversity, protect our air and waters, promote climate actions, and develop tomorrow's conservation leaders.

Your contribution of **\$1000, \$500, \$250, \$125**, or any amount that is meaningful for you, will help us meet our goals and assure that we can respond to emerging issues in 2024. Can you make a gift today? We hope you'll join us and become a part of the WGF family.

New in 2023, we are forming **Wisconsin's Green Fire Stewardship Society** to recognize members who make annual gifts of **\$1000 or more**. As a member of the Stewardship Society, you'll receive preferred access to WGF events and activities, and special recognition for your support.



Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, Photo by P. Henry



Wisconsin's Green Fire

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How to Give

Your support of Wisconsin's Green Fire can take many forms including:

- Individual unrestricted gifts
- Planned monthly giving
- Sponsorship of a WGF program
- Gift of appreciated securities
- Including WGF in your estate plans



Our work is only made possible through the generous support of people like you. Contributions can be made online: wigreenfire.org/2023-fall-appeal/

Or by mail: Wisconsin's Green Fire, PO Box 5411, Madison, WI 53705