



WISCONSIN'S  
**greenfire**  
Student and Young Professional Workgroup

**Wisconsin's Green Fire** is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support the conservation legacy of Wisconsin by promoting science-based management of Wisconsin's natural resources. Within the organization are a host of work groups, composed of field experts that endeavor to advise conservation action with sound science. As you have seen from "Conservation Connections," these workgroups are busy addressing a wide range of conservation issues around the state.

**The Student and Young Professional Work Group** is the newest addition to Wisconsin's Green Fire's host of work groups, and we have a slightly different purpose. Instead of being centered around an issue or topic, our workgroup is centered around our audience - emerging professionals. Just as proper deer management, informed climate change action, and environmental justice are vital to the sustainable future of our state, so too is ensuring that there will be a connected, diverse, and passionate next generation of professionals to carry the torch. Our mission is to help connect students and young professionals with the expertise and experience of Wisconsin's Green Fire, developing relationships that will foster career advancement and ensure the continuation of Wisconsin's conservation legacy. Ratified just this fall, we are excited to begin branching out and to connect with aspiring educators, communicators, researchers, policymakers, and natural resource professionals around Wisconsin.

**"Conservation Connections"** is our first initiative as a work group. It is a newsletter designed to keep students and young professionals up to date on conservation issues in Wisconsin. Through this newsletter we hope not just to inform, but also connect individuals and groups with similar interests. Are you passionate about wolves? Are you intrigued by the problems posed by PFAs? Are you driven by environmental justice? Do you have a piece of nature writing or photography you would like to share, or an event you would like to promote? Reach out to us and we will work to connect you with people who can help.

**Reach out to us via email at [syp.workgroup@gmail.com](mailto:syp.workgroup@gmail.com).** If you or your group is doing work that aligns with our mission of supporting Wisconsin's conservation legacy we would love to promote you in "Conservation Connections".

## Who are we?



**Will Vuyk**

**Role: Chair**

Will is in his third year as an undergraduate at UW Madison where he is studying biology and history. Passionate about the outdoors and long fascinated by nature, Will still isn't quite sure what he wants to do after college. Some of Will's favorite activities include running, catching frogs, and intentionally getting lost. He has been involved with Wisconsin's Green Fire since 2019 and is honored to be the first chair of WGF's Student and Young Professional Workgroup.

Will once got so fed up with itchy mosquito bites that he intentionally rubbed his legs with stinging nettle. Worked like a charm!



**Shyanne Eustace**

**Role: Board Liaison**

Shyanne is a 3rd year student at Northland College located in Ashland Wisconsin, where she is majoring in Natural Resources with an emphasis in ecological restoration. Born and raised on the reservation of Cochiti Pueblo, she is interested in ecological restoration to restore her ancestral farmlands and plans to bring her teachings back to her Tribal community located along the Rio Grande in New Mexico. At Northland, she Co-led the Native American student association, a part of the residential life team, plays division III softball, and interns at the BRICK ministries.

Although her schedule may seem intense, she enjoys hiking around beautiful Lake Superior, painting with her friends, fishing, and reading.

She has been involved in Wisconsin's Green Fire since 2019 and has been very excited to see the future for WGF!



**Nancy Franz**

**Role: Advisor**

Dr. Nancy Franz is a Professor Emeritus in the School of Education at Iowa State University. She retired from higher education in 2014 after 33 years with the Cooperative Extension System at Land-Grant Universities in Wisconsin, New York, New Hampshire, Virginia, and Iowa. She served as a county 4-H Agent, District Program Liaison, Program Coordinator, Associate Director, Program Development and Evaluation Specialist, Associate Dean, and Director of Professional Development over her career with Extension. In retirement she provides organizational development consultation and education, is appointed to her county conservation board, volunteers in her community, savors reading and the outdoors, and enjoys dark chocolate. Her academic publications can be found at: [https://works.bepress.com/nancy\\_franz](https://works.bepress.com/nancy_franz)



**Dolly Ledin**

**Role: Advisor**

Dolly Ledin coordinated outreach for UW WISCIENCE for 27 years where she built long-term partnerships between the university, local K-12 schools and youth organizations. She worked as an elementary and middle school teacher, an environmental educator with the Wis. Dept. of Natural Resources and adjunct faculty with UW Stevens Point. She has also led courses for teachers in Puerto Rico, led university students on a study-abroad course in rural Ecuador and spent a year as the environmental education coordinator at the Cloud Forest School in Monteverde, Costa Rica. She has an MS in Land Resources from UW Madison Institute for Environmental Studies. She received the Sister Joel Read Civic Leadership Award from the Wisconsin Campus Compact in 2015 and has received partnership awards from the Madison School District and UW Madison. Dolly now volunteers as Education Co-Chair for Wisconsin's Green Fire.



**Marie Fiori**

**Role: Member**

Marie (she/her) is a PhD student in the Department of Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She studies organic glasses, similar to the ones used in OLED displays, using X-ray scattering techniques. She moved with Wisconsin after graduating from Kalamazoo College in 2016, where she had the opportunity to study sustainable development in Chiang Mai, Thailand. In addition to her research, Marie engages with science policy work with Catalysts for Science Policy and the National Science Policy Network.

Marie loves to bike and bake. She recently started brewing her own kombucha.



**Ashley Gries**

**Role: Member**

Ashley is a Graduate Student at the Nelson Institute for Environment and Conservation, and holds undergraduate degrees in Environmental Studies and Interior Design from Iowa State University. Her research focuses on biocultural restoration, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, hydropolitics, and dryland riverine restoration. Current projects include inter-Tribal research and oral-history gathering on Lake Winnebago's water quality and historical wild rice populations, and national policy effects on Wisconsin wetlands. Ashley is a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, having served from 2008-2010 in coastal Panama working on endangered sea turtle conservation, citizen science programs, and ESL training.



**Nick Hahlbeck**

**Role: Member**

After 18 years of reading No Trespassing signs and books about wandering wild places, Nick left Wisconsin determined to find freedom in nature and a way to protect it. He studied the splendor of the sea in Miami, learned the complexity of managing fisheries in California, pretended to be Darwin during a semester in Galápagos, and investigated the future of trout in the changing climate of the interior Northwest. Perhaps inspired by those trout, after a long roaming migration, Nick felt an irresistible urge to return to the place he was hatched. He is excited to be back, finishing his PhD writings and working as a new member of WGF to make sure future young Nicks always have places worth wandering in Wisconsin.

Nick met his fiancée over a thousand miles from Wisconsin, at the University of Miami... and she still turned out to be a Bears fan. Go figure.



**Loretha Jack**

**Role: Member**

Loretha is a recent graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where she majored in Biological Sciences and Conservation and Environmental Science. Her research has focused on the community ecology of algae and aquatic plants which make up the base of freshwater and marine food webs. She loves nature and hopes to use the work she does in the lab and outside of it to help build a more sustainable society. In Fall 2021, she will be applying to ecology and marine biology PhD programs and aims to become a professor in the future.

In her free time, Loretha likes to hike, garden, draw, embroider, cook, and hang out with her three cats. She joined Wisconsin's Green Fire in 2019, and in addition to her involvement with the S&YP Workgroup, she is also having great experiences supporting conservation work in the Public Trust & Wetlands Workgroup.

Loretha is addicted to houseplants and has adopted over 90 leafy green children.





**Zena Jensvold**

**Role: Member**

Zena is a PhD student in the Biochemical Sciences at the UW-Madison, studying viruses and the role they play in cancer and disease development. She moved to the Midwest in 2017 after getting a B.S. in Biology at University of Oregon, studying marine microbiology at hydrothermal vents. She is interested in exploring the science policy and science communication fields, leading her to join WGF through a WISCIENCE collaboration in 2020 on energy policy recommendations in Wisconsin.

In her free time Zena loves to bake, play hockey, go camping and canoeing, and hang out with her gigantic (16lb) cat, Jerome.



**Ben Martin**

**Role: Member**

Ben is a 3rd year PhD student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he studies with the Center for Limnology. Ben is a Madison transplant from New Holland, Pennsylvania and completed his undergraduate at Juniata College. Ben grew up fishing his local creeks, ponds, and lakes and developed a curiosity for the ecology of aquatic organisms. This curiosity has motivated Ben to continue studying invasive species, food webs, and fisheries with a hope of helping protect our natural resources.

Ben acknowledges the ivory tower of academia that can hinder science from going beyond the academic walls. Therefore, Ben looks for opportunities to give his research 'legs' and promote science in the community around him. This has led Ben to become a member of Wisconsin's Green Fire in 2020 and he is excited to see the Student and Young Professionals working group grow and foster science-based decisions for Wisconsin's natural resources.



**Kate McGinn**

**Role: Member**

Kate McGinn is a PhD student in the Forest and Wildlife Department at UW - Madison. She studies the ecology and conservation of California spotted owls, examining individual and population level consequences of rising temperatures and the role forests play in buffering potential negative consequences of exposure. She also uses bioacoustics to model the distribution and ecology of the community of forest owls in the Sierra Nevada. She is interested in building data-driven curriculum using spotted owls and other owl species as models for the biological impacts of rising temperatures.

Kate is a new dog-mom and has been training her pup to help out with research in the field!



**Jenny Oren**

**Role: Member**

Jenny is a graduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison studying Environmental Conservation at the Nelson Institute. She is originally from Virginia and graduated from North Carolina State University with a degree in Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology. Jenny grew up exploring and wondering at the nature that surrounded her and has a passion for protecting the earth and the wildlife that live in it. As a senior at NC State, she played a role in developing and passing wildlife corridor legislation in Virginia.

In her free time, she enjoys biking and hiking, exploring new trails whether it be at home on the East Coast or here in the Midwest, baking, and finding new restaurants to try. Jenny has been a member of Wisconsin's Green Fire since 2020 and is looking forward to becoming more connected to the world of conservation in Wisconsin!

