

***The Aldo Leopold Foundation and
Pheasants Forever Present:***

The Community Concept: Strengthening our Human and Ecological Communities through Conservation Education

**The Leopold Education Project
National Conference**

Conference Dates and Venue:

June 25-27, 2009
The Leopold Center
Baraboo, WI

Conference information and registration:

<http://www.aldoleopold.org/lep/>

Event co-sponsors:

[The Aldo Leopold Foundation](#)
[The Leopold Education Project](#)

Schedule last updated 4.23.2009

LEP National Conference Schedule at a Glance

Thursday, June 25th

Pre-Conference Workshops

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

- NEW-Exploring the Outdoors with Aldo Leopold: Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's Outdoor Activities Guide Training (full day, 9 am – 4 pm)
- Land Ethic Leaders Training (full day, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm)
- River Ecology Workshop (half day- 9:00 am – 12:00 pm)
- NEW- LEP GPS Curriculum training (half day- 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm)

Registration Table Open

Thursday, June 25th

4:00 pm – 6:00 pm (at the Leopold Center)

9:00 pm – 10:00 pm (at the Clarion, for late arrivals)

Friday, June 26th

8:00 am – 8:45 am (at the Leopold Center)

Saturday, June 27th

8:00 am – 8:45 am (at the Leopold Center)

Friday & Saturday, June 26th and 27th

Main Conference: See detailed schedule for concurrent and workshop session times and descriptions. Each day's program begins at 10:00 am, following the morning keynote.

Keynote Speakers:

Friday: Gary Nabhan, 9:00 – 9:45 am

Saturday: Jim Wilson, 9:00 – 9:45 am

Field Trips:

Friday, June 26th 2:30 – 4:30 pm

- Guided tour of the [Leopold Shack and the Aldo Leopold Legacy Center](#)
- Guided tour of the [International Crane Foundation](#)
- Guided ecology and land management hike on the [Leopold Memorial Reserve](#)

Evening Events:

Thursday night, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Opening reception at the Leopold Center

Friday night, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Formal banquet, preview of *Greenfire* film, and silent auction at the Clarion Hotel

Saturday night, 5:00 – 8:00 pm

Closing campfire, dinner and celebration at the Aldo Leopold Shack and Farm

LEP National Conference Detailed Schedule

THURSDAY, JUNE 25TH: *Optional pre-workshop day*

1. Exploring River Ecology with Gretchen Kruse (half-day, 9 am – 12 pm) \$30

We will explore social, cultural, ecological, and biological aspects of river ecology, and discuss how you can connect students' cultural and social values to the river's ecological and biological values. The class will be based on the following quotes:

"Culturally sustainable landscapes incorporate ecological health with cultural and aesthetic aspirations."

"Landscapes that satisfy our cultural or aesthetic aspirations are more apt to be appreciated."

We will also look at how the river/riparian health in times of flood determined the ability of the ecosystem and communities to recover, referring to both Leopold's essay "Come High Water" and the 2008 floods in the Midwest.

2. Lessons in GPS Technology: Connecting Students to Nature with Christine Jacobson (half-day, 1 pm – 4pm) \$30

Participants will be trained in the new Leopold Education Project's GPS curriculum. You'll learn the basics of how to use a GPS receiver, and walk through each of the curriculum activities. This new curriculum includes habitat mapping, animal tracking, basics in navigation and the principle use of GPS receivers and Google Earth. Come read the landscape, and enjoy some time in the outdoors learning this exciting new curriculum.

3. Land Ethic Leaders Training (full-day, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm) \$60

Led by Buddy Huffaker and Jennifer Kobylecky (Aldo Leopold Foundation), Dena Wortzel and Jessica Becker (Wisconsin Humanities Council), Jennifer Erickson (Sauk County UW-Extension), Christina Beam (University of Wisconsin – Sauk County), and Gary Nabhan (writer and conservationist).

The Aldo Leopold Foundation works with community organizers across the country to help plan events that connect communities to the land ethic. In Wisconsin, these events fall under the umbrella of Aldo Leopold Weekend, celebrated annually the first weekend of March across the state. The core principles of these events are transferrable to communities across the nation, and this workshop will focus on sharing skills and tools to plan and conduct community based events centered on the land ethic, including:

- Your place in the Aldo Leopold Foundation's vision for the Land Ethic Leaders network
- Sharing tools to equip Land Ethic Leaders
- Presentation skills and media relations/promotions training
- Discussion facilitation training
- How to talk about environmental issues facing communities today: climate change, water use, population, and more-- through the lens of Aldo Leopold's land ethic.

4. LEP: Exploring the Outdoors with Aldo Leopold- Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's Outdoor Activities Guide with Treva Breuch and Marc and Suzanne Hirrel (full-day, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm) \$60

The Leopold Education Project has recently updated their classroom curriculum with new activities designed for non-formal educators in nature centers, parks, and zoos. Come learn new activities and understand how they can be used at your educational facilities. Participants will receive copies of both the new activities and the original LEP curriculum guide.

**Conference Registration table open at Leopold Center:
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm**

**Welcome Reception at the Leopold Center
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

Come meet and socialize with conference participants and presenters. Preview the conference site on a warm summer's eve and enjoy an array of hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar.

**Conference Registration table open at the Clarion Hotel for late arrivals:
9:00 pm – 10:00 pm**

FRIDAY, JUNE 26TH: Day one of conference

8:00 – 8:45 am: Registration table open at the Leopold Center

9:00 – 9:45 am: Keynote Speaker: Gary Nabhan, PhD.



Gary Paul Nabhan is an Arab-American writer, lecturer, food and farming advocate, rural lifeways folklorist, and conservationist whose work has long been rooted in the U.S./Mexico borderlands region he affectionately calls "the stinkin' hot desert." He recently accepted a tenured professorship as a Research Social Scientist based at the Southwest Center of the University of Arizona---his alma mater.

For his literary non-fiction, grassroots conservation and community-based ethnobiology projects, Nabhan has been honored with the John Burroughs Medal for Nature Writing, a MacArthur "genius" award, a Lannan Literary Award, a Pew Fellowship in Conservation and Environment, a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Society for Conservation Biology, and a Quivira Coalition award for excellence in science that contributes to "the radical center."

He is the author of *The Geography of Childhood*, *Coming Home to Eat*, *Cultures of Habitat*, and most recently *Where Our Food Comes From*, among other books.

FRIDAY MORNING WORKSHOP SESSIONS

10:00 am – 11:30 am

1. Tricks, Tools and Treats: Working with Children - Carolyn Rock

Got treats? Know some tricks? Have you got the tools? Discover how to stretch your teaching talents using everyday items, innovative concepts and a little time to challenge children to learn. Create activities that excite, educate and are recyclable. Loads of take-home ideas. With cutbacks and increased demands, naturalists, educators and interpreters are asked to do more with fewer resources and increased group sizes. Discover some new tricks and old treats to help educate students without stretching the budget or taking up too much time. Participants will take home templates of the examples provided.

2. A New Approach to Engaging Landowners in Improving Forest Health - John Exo and Debbie Beyer

Private, non-industrial woodland owners collectively own 60% of Wisconsin's 16 million acres of forests. They play a vital role in the future health and sustainability of the state's wooded land and forest industry. Since only about 20% of these woodland owners have a management plan, there is great potential to improve the sustainability of forests while increasing owners' ethic and appreciation of the health of their woods. This session will explore an innovative approach to engaging the remaining 80% in educational opportunities that increase community based conservation behaviors by breaking down barriers to their participation.

3. What a Wonderful World - David Drake

David's environmental program "What a Wonderful World" presents songs for the earth, of other cultures, of peace between people, and "recycled" sing-alongs. David performs on concertina and guitar and handmade dulcimer, banjo, and Native American flute and will do short demos on how you can learn to play these instruments and use these songs in your programs. David is the resident musician and educator for the Wisconsin Lake Schooner Project tall ship "Denis Sullivan." The Wisconsin Area Music Industry named him Folk Music Artist of the Year and Family Music Artist of the Year.

FRIDAY LUNCH

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Optional activity: walk the planned route for the Leopold Center interpretive trail, and share feedback on signage.

Meals are provided by Vintage Port Catering in Baraboo, with local and organic options taking center stage. Dairy products donated by Organic Valley.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1:00 – 2:00 pm

**1. Listening to the Land, a Yearlong Celebration of Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac*-
Susan Setterlin**

Come learn how a Central Ohio community connected with the timeless thoughts and words of Aldo Leopold. Through a variety of venues offered monthly, the community connected and reconnected with the land through both readings and related outdoor activities. Successes and challenges will be discussed as well as an activity that will get you started planning your own special Leopold event. This session will share the steps in the year of planning and year of implementation that brought this incredible event together.

**2. Building a Youth Environmental Stewardship Program through Collaboration -
Matt Bremer and Penny Pohle**

Would you like to start a program where youth become involved and make a difference in the local community and environment? This session will provide an overview of how a group of county departments and environmental organizations did just that. Youth Environmental Projects of Sauk County (YEPS) is a coalition of county governmental departments and local environmental organizations that organizes and facilitates youth environmental stewardship projects. YEPS projects include prairie seed collecting and planting, acorn collecting, bat house and bluebird house construction, and everything in between. Participants will learn project details and replication hints and ideas.

3. Stewardship in a Tourist Destination- Tom Scharbach

Session will focus on the tension between commercial exploitation and community preservation of the fragile and unique ecology of the Wisconsin Dells river corridor. Tom Scharbach is one of the founding members of the group Stewards of the Dells, which has worked since 2006 to protect the natural resources in this beautiful area from the threats of development. The Stewards began meeting in response to development on the river, working within commercial and political power structures in four counties, two towns, and four townships to preserve the natural heritage of the landscape while encouraging economic growth, focusing on the Dells river corridor. Come to this session to recognize strategies for protections and preservation. Identify strategies to work within existing power structures, and discuss potential ideas to work within this tension.

SNACK BREAK

2:00 – 2:30 pm

Optional activity: walk the planned route for the Leopold Center interpretive trail, and share feedback on signage

FIELD TRIPS:

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Select one during on-site registration.

1. Shack and Leopold Center Tour (limit 50)

The Shack is a re-built chicken coop along the Wisconsin River where the famous environmentalist Aldo Leopold and his family stayed during weekend retreats. The land surrounding the Shack provided the inspiration for the essays in the conservation classic *A Sand County Almanac*. The Leopold Center is an educational and interpretive facility near the Leopold Shack, located on the very land where Aldo Leopold died in 1948 fighting a brush fire. It has not only received the US Green Building Council's LEED® platinum certification, the highest possible level, but it was more highly rated than any other building yet rated in the United States. It is also the first building ever to be certified "carbon neutral." The guided site tour highlights Leopold's history and legacy, includes a visit to the interior of the Leopold Shack, explores the landscape, and illuminates how the green-built Leopold Center inspires us to carry the land ethic into the 21st century and beyond.

2. International Crane Foundation Tour (limit 30)

The International Crane Foundation (ICF) commits to a future where all crane species are secure - a future where people cooperate to protect and restore wild populations and their ecosystems. These efforts sustain the places where cranes live, to the benefit of countless other species. The only place in the world where you can see all 15 crane species, ICF has gained international acclaim as one of the world's leaders in the conservation of endangered species. While visiting ICF, you will learn about the techniques used to preserve some of the rarest birds in the world. For generations, cranes have captivated the people who live near them. They have become important figures in the legends and mythology of aboriginal peoples around the world.

3. Guided hike with Steve Swenson- Leopold Memorial Reserve Ecology and Land Management (limit 20)

Why should we care for land? What is the Aldo Leopold Foundation (ALF) doing about it? Join staff ecologist Steve Swenson for a discussion and exploration in the field of land stewardship, land health, the Important Bird Area (IBA), adaptive management and conservation partnerships in the area. Steve has been working for ALF since 1999 and is responsible for the science and stewardship work on foundation property and in partnership with private landowners. Steve's work builds on the critical connection between people and land – the land ethic. He received his Bachelor's degree (1995) in environmental science and biology from the University of Wisconsin – Green Bay and a Master's degree (1999) in plant ecology from The Ohio State University.

FRIDAY EVENING BANQUET

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Clarion Hotel

A fun and informal evening is planned at the Clarion Hotel in Baraboo. Buffet dinner, silent auction, raffles and lots of time to visit and relax. Bring an auction item from your region – all proceeds will support community project grants. Dress is casual.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27TH : *Final day of conference*

9:00 – 9:45 am: Keynote Speaker: Jim Wilson, PhD.



Jim has been a biologist, educator and administrator for most of his life. Raised in the hills of Northeast Missouri, he received his Bachelor's degree in biology and education from Northeast Missouri State and his MS and PhD. degrees in plant ecology from Iowa State. In his current position as part of the Des Lee Collaborative at UM-St. Louis, he teaches and works with Forest Park Forever to develop education programs that will better connect people to nature in the park and the greater St. Louis region.

There is a growing awareness of the disconnect between young people today and the natural world. Nature Deficit Disorder has become the watchword of a new wave of educators who know that it is good for kids to have time outdoors. Recent studies have even shown that people think better with periodic time in nature and that those improvements are measurable. Early communities in this country were often built around a public green space that was jointly held and used by the populace. These were the "commons". Functional vestiges of the commons occur today as parks, greenways, conservation areas and sometimes vacant lots. While we laud adventures in field, stream and wilderness, it is often in these community common areas where nature initiation occurs and opportunities abound. Passages occur in social institutions just as they do in the lives of individuals. Social networking and the sense of community identity have evolved significantly since the early days of conservation organizations and Leopold's writing. This presentation will consider the relevance of Leopold's work today and explore the challenges of integrating kids, families and community, based on experiences in a large urban park and other common areas of cities and towns.

SATURDAY MORNING CONCURRENT SESSIONS

10:00 am – 11:00 am

1. Taking Our Students into the Field- Kevin Grasley

"Into the Field" will take participants along on a journey from Kevin's return from the third National Leopold Education Project Conference, through the development of two classes at

his middle school: "LAND" and "TURTLES." LAND let students research, plan and construct/plant/improve outdoor areas in hopes of improving our world (and developing their own land ethic). This nine week, elective course grew into a full semester class called TURTLES (Together Understanding Responsibility, Teamwork, Leadership, and Everyday Service). TURTLES allowed students to create and implement outdoor projects of greater size and duration. The experiences in the classroom have grown into a college level course called "Into the Field." This class creates an opportunity for undergraduate students to create future elementary and middle school classrooms where Aldo Leopold holds special significance. Interspersed between the stories of these experiences will be opportunities to view/search support materials, plan for participants' own applications, and even assemble one of the projects that Kevin's students selected.

2. Leave No Family Inside- Emily Hill and Karen Dostal

The "Leave No Family Inside" (LNFI) project was co-developed by Emily Hill, while Emily was a master's degree candidate at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point between 2006 and 2008. Emily worked closely with the Environmental Education Coordinator of the Stevens Point Area Public Schools and Director of the Boston School Forest, Karen Dostal, as well as with the Boston School Forest staff in the development and implementation of the LNFI programs. Karen and Emily achieved three grants to fund the 2007-2008 pilot of the LNFI programs. Karen is continuing the "Leave No Family Inside" programs at the Boston School Forest and additional programs have been adopted elsewhere. From "Leave No Trace Family Camp" to "Geocaching and Questing," experience how this series of family-oriented, place-based outdoor educational programs influences adult participants' environmental sensitivity. Receive a "Leave No Family Inside Guidebook" for family program development information and inspiration!

3. Leopold's Land Ethic in Today's World- Bill Faber, PhD.

Join Dr. Faber for a discussion of his philosophy and approach on how important Aldo Leopold's words and ways are integral to the future of wildlife and natural resources, both here and abroad. The presentation will be in context to the relatedness of human communities to the natural community, and will emphasize the urgency in realizing how important the land ethic and sense of community is to our future on this planet. Dr. Faber has taught wildlife and natural resources at the college level for nearly 10 years, and has been in the wildlife profession for nearly 30 years, with almost half that time spent on international wildlife.

SATURDAY LUNCH

11:00 am – 1:00 pm

11:00 am

Pre-Lunch Speaker

An Organic Valley representative will speak briefly on the importance of local and organic foods (Organic Valley will be donating dairy products for all meals at the LEP conference)

11:30 am – 1:00 pm

Lunch

Optional activity: walk the planned route for the Leopold Center interpretive trail, and share feedback on signage.

Meals are provided by Vintage Port Catering in Baraboo, with local and organic options taking center stage. Dairy products donated by Organic Valley.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON CONCURRENT SESSIONS

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

1. Nature Classrooms in Small Communities- Michael Hoke

This presentation will provide objectives, knowledge, and strategies to begin the building of a successful nature classroom in a small community. Methods presented in this program have successfully been used to begin at least five nature classrooms, all operating within small communities. Although many of the strategies used are somewhat intuitive, this program will package them into a cookbook that will allow a motivated teacher to develop his/her own nature classroom to serve the needs of their small community. Hoke is the founder and Director of Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center, a 262 acre Platinum LEED facility in East Texas, and founded "Bios, A School on Wheels," a summer environmental education program which operated for 29 years. He received a Presidential Award for Excellence in Science Teaching in 1989.

2. Adapting Experiential Activities for Ethical and Character Education- Jim Wilson

Ethical and character education often focus on relationships between people, but relationships between people and the land are valid components of this field as well. Mobile initiatives and powerful reflective techniques characterize some fields of experiential education and are adaptable to considerations of ethics and character. This session will include several hands-on group development activities and discuss their application to land stewardship education.

3. Evaluating LEP Activities and Materials- Jenna Gatzke

The University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point and LEP have been conducting a research project together focusing on expanding LEP's audience and meeting educator needs. The project will be outlined in detail during this session. Recently, almost 300 responses were received to the web-based survey issued to LEP Educators across the nation. This talk will also focus on some of the preliminary results from the data analysis. Time will be devoted to answering any questions that LEP Educators may have about the research project.

SNACK BREAK

2:00 – 2:30 pm

Optional activity: walk the planned route for the Leopold Center interpretive trail, and share feedback on signage

SATURDAY AFTERNOON WORKSHOP SESSIONS

2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

1. Photography- Illustrate Your Point- John Lee

Teachers who want to engage their students in their growth can begin to document it better using photography. Students may design their own presentations using photography in computer programs as well as with prints. Portfolios are a valuable tool to show growth. Photography can also be used to document your own community and be a tool to advocate for change. Illustrate your objectives and achievements to community leaders using before and after photos. Jon Lee has presented dozens of lectures to varied groups on using photography as a valuable educational tool. (Bring a digital camera along.)

2. Connecting Kids and Community through Outdoor Classrooms- Wendy Cheek and Elizabeth Roxberry

Investigate three schoolyard habitat case studies and learn some very practical and applicable tips and techniques for engaging students, teachers and the community in the creation of an outdoor classroom. Team up with workshop instructors to begin plans on your own project—and leave with your start-up plan in hand. Wendy and Liz are both LEP state facilitators, and bring many years of academic and practical expertise to the table.

3. Surviving the Wild Columbia Bottom Style- Jamaica Duane

Have you ever wondered if you could survive in the wilderness with only basic supplies? This is your chance to find out! The three most important things you will need are fire, water, and shelter. Master all three of these key components in a fun outdoors setting. Make fire with your own hands, gather water from thin air and even pitch a primitive shelter. See if you will survive! Jamaica Duane has worked as a naturalist for the Missouri Department of Conservation for nearly five years.

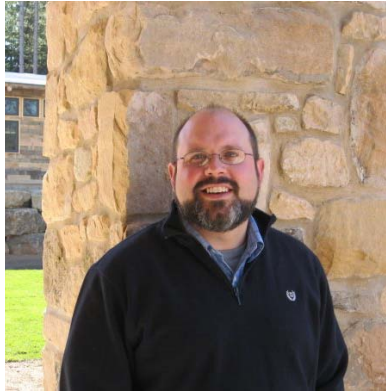
BREAK

4:00 – 4:15 pm

WRAP-UP SPEAKER

4:15 – 4:45 pm

Wrap-up Speaker: Buddy Huffaker



As the Executive Director of the Aldo Leopold Foundation, Buddy Huffaker serves as a leading voice for the power of combining the emerging interests of the green building movement with the longer standing conservation and environmental movements. Building upon Huffaker's academic background in landscape architecture, he was deeply involved in every aspect of the design and construction of the Aldo Leopold Legacy Center, currently the U.S. Green Building Council's highest ranked LEED NC (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, New Construction category) building in the world. Further demonstrating his leadership is his participation in the White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation and his election to represent the Northeast Region at the US Forest Service's Centennial Congress. In addition, he has contributed to two books; *The Farm as a Natural Habitat* (Island Press) and *Aldo Leopold and the Ecological Conscience* (Oxford University Press) and addressed audiences across North America on why and how society must develop an ecological conscience. During his tenure as Executive Director, Huffaker has directed the Foundation's growth from an operational budget of \$100,000 in 1999 to an annual budget of \$1,000,000 and increased the staff capacity over that time from 1.5 FTE to 12 FTE. Huffaker has also been recognized as an Executive Scholar in Not-for-Profit Management by Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

CLOSING CELEBRATION

5:00 pm – 8:00 pm

We'll carpool from the center over to the Aldo Leopold Shack and Farm for the evening. We'll all have some free time to socialize, explore, journal, or take a dip in the river. Then we'll enjoy sharing stories and listening to live music over dinner. Watch the sun set over the Wisconsin River and see the pines silhouetted against the night sky as you wrap up your conference experience in the same place that inspired Leopold so deeply.