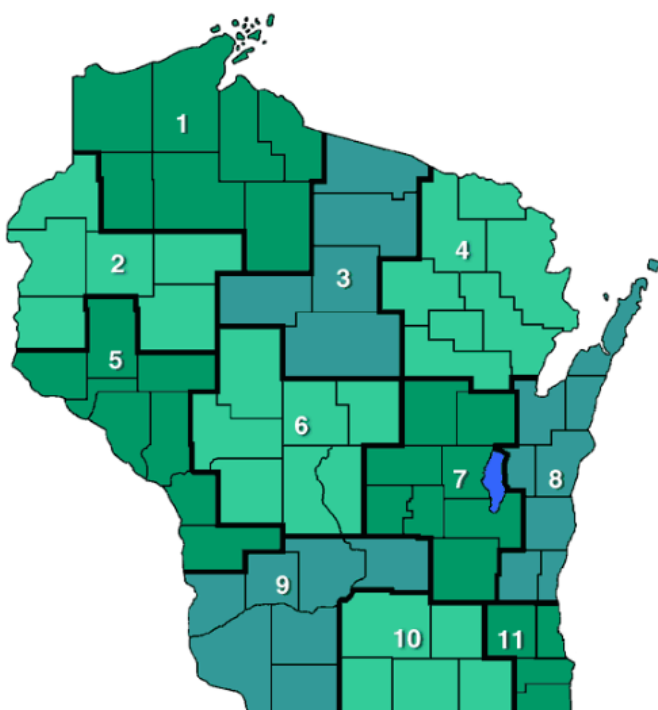


## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is the Wisconsin Conservation Congress?

Created in 1934, the Conservation Congress is the only statutorily-created citizen advisory body to the Natural Resources Board. (Citizens elect delegates to represent their county interests and advise the Natural Resources Board and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on the management of Wisconsin's natural resources.



*Wisconsin is divided into 11 Districts for the Conservation Congress. Each of the 72 counties have five delegate seats on the WCC for a total of 360 delegates.*

### How does the Wisconsin Conservation Congress support youth conservation?

In 2009, the Natural Resources Board (NRB) asked, "Would you support the concept of establishing a Youth Conservation Congress?" on the Spring Hearing questionnaire. The question passed overwhelmingly. With favorable input from the citizens, the NRB asked the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) to proceed with getting a Youth Conservation Congress established that would function under the umbrella of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress. The WCC undertook this charge with support from the DNR.

### What is the Youth Conservation Congress Initiative?

The goal of the program is to effectively engage, educate, and involve youth in the management and protection of our natural resources and foster a conservation ethic through participation on the Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress (YCC). The YCC purposes to give young people a voice and instill a sense of ownership, civic pride, involvement and advocacy as future stewards of our state's natural resources and sporting heritage. The YCC intends to be a hands-on opportunity to involve youth in natural resource management, citizen-based science, and provide them an avenue to engage in policy making.

### What do Youth Congress delegates get to do?

YCC delegates will have the opportunity to preferentially work with DNR staff on a wide variety of volunteer opportunities (depending on youth interests, season and opportunities available) such as fish netting or wildlife surveys, tagging or marking fish at a hatchery facility, assisting with habitat assessments, air monitoring, ride-alongs, or water quality sampling. In addition, YCC delegates will have a complimentary membership in the Natural Resources Foundation. YCC delegates will attend Conservation Congress meetings with their mentor and learn about the policy making processes.

### What are the benefits of participating?

YCC delegates will be exposed to various career options in natural resource related fields and will also be able to participate in typical work done by natural resource professionals. Participants can strengthen valuable problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and leadership skills through working with other Youth Conservation Congress delegates, Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) delegates, and DNR staff. This program will offer youth opportunities to strengthen core competencies sought by employers and will provide resume building experiences. Youth delegates will also work together to mold and shape the YCC program moving forward. The Youth Conservation Congress may fulfill independent study requirements or service-learning hours/credits for some schools.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What is required of me as a Youth Conservation Congress delegate?**

YCC delegates will be expected to attend and participate in WCC meetings including two district meetings per year, the Spring Hearings and the annual convention. Field days, DNR opportunities and mentored activities will be planned across the state for the YCC delegates. Youth involvement in these additional opportunities will be dependent on youth interest and availability. Support from the WCC and DNR will be provided to all youth. It will be up to each youth to make the most of the program opportunities.

### **What is the time commitment?**

The district meetings and spring hearings are typically held on weekday evenings, while the annual convention and any advisory committee meetings will be full day commitments. The time commitment for service learning activities will vary depending on the opportunity.

### **When will the YCC activities take place?**

YCC group activities, field days and service learning opportunities will take place throughout the year. The WCC district meetings will take place in March, the Spring Hearings are the second Monday in April, and the WCC's annual convention is in May.

### **What mentoring activities are available?**

Youth delegates will be paired with an adult mentor from the WCC. Typically these mentors will be in the same county as the youth. All mentors possess different skills and knowledge. Mentored activities could include: hunting, trapping, fishing, trail camera monitoring, silent sports, nest box building, visiting a fish hatchery, and countless other outdoor experiences.

### **How do I find a WCC mentor?**

YCC applicants can initiate contact with the WCC delegates in their county to find a mentor, or the Wisconsin Conservation Congress also has a committee that will work with you to find a mentor within the five-person delegation in your county.

### **Who can apply to participate in the YCC?**

There are no specific age requirements, however the program is typically geared toward youth that are of high school age. Some DNR volunteer activities are only available for youth ages 16 and up. Youth can participate in the YCC through the end of the summer following their senior year of high school.

### **How do I get independent study credit for participating in the YCC?**

Youth should work with their school to determine if this program will fulfill the requirements for independent study credit.

### **Can more than one student from my school participate?**

Yes, absolutely!

### **Is there a deadline to apply?**

Applications for the program are accepted and reviewed on an ongoing basis.

### **Is there a cost to participate?**

There is no cost to participate in the YCC program outside of the inherent costs to travel to the meetings, field days, and service learning opportunities.

### **How do I apply for the YCC?**

The YCC application and consent form can be found at <http://dnr.wi.gov/About/WCC/ycc.html>.

