

Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress

Wisconsin students interested in the outdoors are invited to join the Youth Conservation Congress (YCC). This statewide youth program is designed to grow and develop future conservation leaders across the state. The YCC is a student extension of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC).

The purpose of the YCC program is to give young people a voice and instill a sense of ownership, civic pride and advocacy for Wisconsin's natural resources. The YCC strives to effectively engage, educate, and involve youth in the management and protection of our natural resources and foster a conservation ethic through participation in the program.

The YCC program offers opportunities for students from all backgrounds, including seasoned outdoor enthusiasts and novices alike. Although the program is best suited for high school students, younger individuals are welcome to apply.

YCC student delegates are exposed to various aspects of natural resource management and have access to learn from professionals in those fields. Students also receive real-world experience through service-learning and job shadowing opportunities.

By joining, members gain an understanding of the process for how Wisconsin's natural resource policy is determined, including the role and history of the WCC – the state's statutorily recognized citizen advisory body.

Participants will strengthen valuable skills such as problem-solving, effective communication, teamwork, and leadership competencies through working with other YCC delegates, WCC delegates and DNR staff while building an appreciation for the many facets of resource management.

The YCC program mirrors the WCC's focus on county level initiatives. WCC delegates serve as mentors and as a point of local contact for the YCC delegates.



Statewide Opportunities:

- **January: Ice fishing weekend** (2025 will be on the Castle Rock Flowage). All YCC delegates are invited to learn new fishing techniques from mentors and peers, review safety on the ice, learn about local aquatic ecosystems, and enjoy fishing with friends.
- **March: Explore UW-Stevens Point.** The YCC Oversight Committee meets yearly at UWSP and YCC delegates learn about the College of Natural Resources through a behind-the-scenes tour.
- **May: Annual Conservation Congress Convention** (2025 will be in Oshkosh). YCC delegates learn about the business of the WCC, participate in field trips, listen to speakers talk about local conservation initiatives, meet new YCC delegates, compete in trivia, and much more.
- **June: YCC career day** (2025 will be in Madison). YCC delegates explore natural resource related professions, discover jobs within the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and explore educational institutions with natural resource degrees.
- **August: YCC summer program** (2025 will be held along the Mississippi River). This is a 4 day program for YCC delegates to learn about local natural resource management, explore conservation careers, help with service work, develop leadership skills and spend time recreating outdoors. We partner with county, state and federal natural resource managers to explore local conservation efforts around landscape, wildlife, water, and human dimensions of conservation.
- **August: Youth Zone at the Waterfowl Expo** (Oshkosh). YCC delegates lead learning stations and help with hands-on activities for families and youth of all ages.
- **October: Fall YCC hunt for upland birds or waterfowl** (location to be determined). Novice and experienced hunters are welcome. Equipment and instruction will be provided.



Local Opportunities:

- Connect with WCC delegates and participate in county meetings, local initiatives, mentored hunting activities, and learn more about the Conservation Congress.
- Volunteer with local natural resource professionals to learn about careers and assist with management objectives and research tasks (duck banding, goose banding, pheasant stocking, fish surveys, fish stocking, wildlife surveys, job shadowing and more)
- Volunteer with local conservation groups to assist with service projects, fundraisers, and educational events.
- Connect with local mentors to participate in hunting, fishing and trapping experiences.
- Participate in leadership opportunities to promote the YCC through civic organizations, local clubs, school classes, and youth groups.
- Gain academic credits by participating in YCC activities and initiatives. The YCC provides a variety of experiential learning opportunities that could be applied towards academic credit for a high school student looking to complete an independent learning project.





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Youth Conservation Congress Application

Name of youth applicant: _____ Date of application: _____

Gender: _____ Date of birth ____/____/____

Address: _____ County of residence: _____

Grade level: _____

Youth cell phone: _____ if applicable Graduation year: _____

Youth email: _____ Name of school: _____

Parent/guardian name: _____

Parent/guardian cell phone: _____ Parent/guardian email: _____

Emergency Contact (please list different contact than parent/guardian named above):

Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship to participant _____

How did you hear about the Youth Conservation Congress? _____

Will your participation in the YCC be used for independent study, school credit, or volunteer hours? Yes No

Please indicate your area(s) of interest:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> Endangered Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste and Remediation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks and Recreation | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Resources |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |

Briefly explain why you are interested in participating in the Youth Conservation Congress. Please include the outdoor activities in which you participate and your involvement in outdoor or conservation organizations:

I, _____, affirm that the information provided above is accurate and truthful.

(Print name of applicant)



Youth Conservation Congress Application

_____ has indicated an interest in participating in the Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress.

(Print name of applicant)

Participation in the YCC is being done with the goal of developing and mentoring future conservation leaders. The parent and/or legal guardian (signed below) has given their permission for the minor to attend and participate in WCC functions such as study committee meetings, the Annual Convention, Spring Hearings, district meetings, and other WCC functions.

The parent and/or legal guardian understands that the above named minor may be offered the opportunity to participate in conservation-related activities with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources staff. Activities may include, but are not limited to, field days, fish netting or wildlife surveys, tagging or marking fish at a hatchery facility, assisting with habitat assessments, and boating activities associated with fisheries management. The parent/legal guardian understands that such activities may involve physical activity and may take place outdoors. The parent/legal guardian understands the risks involved with participation and has given their permission for the minor to participate in such activities.

The parent/legal guardian agrees to assume full responsibility for the minor's participation in any such activities. The parent/legal guardian hereby agrees to release, hold harmless, and waive any and all claims against the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, its employees and agents, and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and its delegates for any bodily injury, accident, illness, death, loss or damage to personal property, or other claims related to the minor's participation in such activities.

The parent/legal guardian consents to the reproduction and use of my likeness by the State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources / Wisconsin Conservation Congress in all manners, including advertising, display, exhibition and art purposes in perpetuity. And the parent/legal guardian consents to the use of the minor's photograph by any nominee or designee of the State of Wisconsin, Department of Natural Resources/ Wisconsin Conservation Congress including any publisher or agency, and such picture of me may be used for all of the aforesaid purposes without any limitation or reservation.

I, _____, authorize _____ to participate in
(Parent/legal guardian printed name) (Youth participant printed name)

Department of Natural Resources/Wisconsin Conservation Congress/Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress meetings and activities. I further consent to the photo release for the applicant as described above.

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: _____, Date: _____

Applicant Signature: _____, Date: _____

All Youth Conservation Congress delegates will be assigned a Conservation Congress adult delegate mentor from their county or a nearby county. Do you already have a mentor? Yes No

If you already have a mentor, please fill out and include the mentor form with this application. If you do not have a mentor, you do not need to fill out the mentor form at this time. We will help match you with a WCC delegate locally.

Mail this application to: Kyle Zenz, DNR Field Office, 910 Hwy 54 E, Black River Falls, WI 54615

Your application will be followed up by a short phone interview.



Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress



YCC Mentoring Program Activity Consent Form

☒ Complete and send in this form in when YCC delegate has been matched with a mentor

Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress Participant:

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip Code _____

Birth date (month/day/year) ____/____/____ Age _____

Emergency contact during activity:

Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____

Name _____ Phone _____ Relationship _____

WCC Mentor/Sponsor Contact Information:

First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip Code _____

Telephone Number _____

Birth date (month/day/year) ____/____/____ required for background check

Relationship to YCC participant _____

_____ has indicated an interest in participating in the Wisconsin Youth Conservation Congress. Participation in the YCC is being done with the goal of developing and mentoring future conservation leaders. The parent and/or legal guardian (signed below) has given their permission for the minor to attend and participate in WCC functions such as study committee meetings, the Annual Convention, Spring Hearings, district meetings, and other WCC functions listed above. The minor will be accompanied by the WCC member, (signed below), who will act as his/her mentor/sponsor throughout the YCC participant's term.

The parent and/or legal guardian understands that the above named minor may be offered the opportunity to participate in conservation-related activities with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources staff. Activities may include, but are not limited to, field days, fish netting or wildlife surveys, tagging or marking fish at a hatchery facility, assisting with habitat assessments, and boating activities associated with fisheries management. The parent/legal guardian understands that such activities may involve physical activity and may take place outdoors. The parent/legal guardian understands the risks involved with participation and has given their permission for the minor to participate in such activities.

The parent/legal guardian agrees to assume full responsibility for the minor's participation in any such activities. The parent/legal guardian hereby agrees to release, hold harmless, and waive any and all claims against the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, its employees and agents, and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and its delegates for any bodily injury, accident, illness, death, loss or damage to personal property, or other claims related to the minor's participation in such activities.

(over)



YCC Mentoring Program Activity Consent Form

(Continued from previous side)

Parent/Legal Guardian Printed Name _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

I understand & agree to abide by all WCC Code of Procedures & be an active participant.

Youth WCC Participant Printed Name _____

Youth WCC Participant Signature _____ Date _____

The minor has been given permission by the following parent or legal guardian as stated above, to attend and participate in Wisconsin Conservation Congress functions and be accompanied by _____,
(WCC Mentor)

As the WCC Mentor, I agree to be responsible for the transportation, supplies and/or provisions necessary for the minor to participate in and attend WCC functions. I also understand that participation in this activity is entirely voluntary and requires participants to abide by any and all applicable rules and standards of conduct, to include the WCC Code of Procedures. Therefore, I will assure that the minor behaves in a proper, respectable, and safe manner.

WCC Mentor/Sponsor Printed Name _____

WCC Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Please include this mentored activity consent form with your YCC application and mail to:

Kyle Zenz
DNR Field Office
910 Hwy 54 E
Black River Falls, WI 54615