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**WISCONSIN OUTSIDE** | October 2020

## A Note from the Director

Hints of fall are all around. Strokes of yellow and orange are beginning to paint the landscape and cooler evenings merit the favorite, cozy sweater that has been tucked away. As the time changes and we have less daylight, we seek to soak up the last bit of summer. Witnessing the amazing transformation of the seasons and reveling in the brilliant autumn colors, there's an overwhelming sense of gratitude in the air for the natural places in which we are privileged to recreate.

Wisconsinites are fortunate to live in a state where over 20% of the land is open to public access and where we can partake in a wide array of outdoor activities. Even better, those lands treat us with awe-inspiring views from their rocky outcroppings, colorful prairies, and freshwater coasts.

Each fall, hunters take to the woods and uplands, too, many taking advantage of these same public lands and enjoying the views while on their quest. Hunting, shooting, and trapping are a large part of Wisconsin's outdoor recreation economy contributing \$149 million to the state's GDP, and the excise tax on equipment is a major source of conservation funding.

Whether you choose to experience Wisconsin's colorful season by hiking a trail, observing from a deer stand, or cruising a scenic byway – enjoy these moments of connection with the outdoors.



Mary Monroe Brown  
Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation

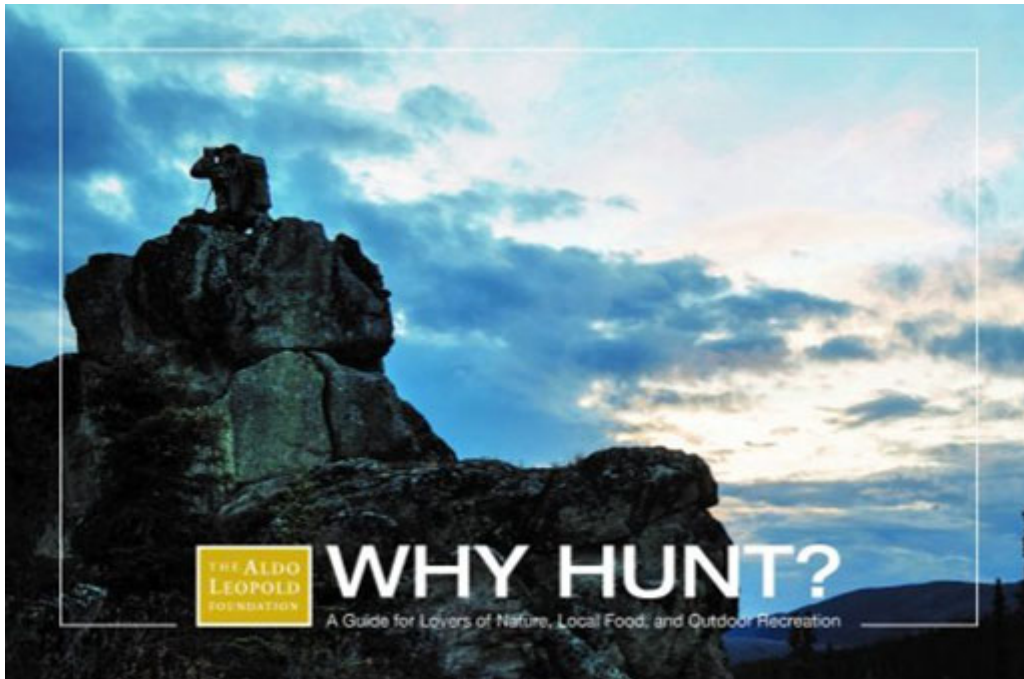
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## Why Hunt?

A recent collaboration by the Aldo Leopold Foundation, the Wisconsin DNR and the US Fish & Wildlife Service works to convey an understanding of the ecological, social, and economic underpinnings of hunting. Targeted for a general audience, [Why Hunt? A Guide for Lovers of Nature, Local Food, and Outdoor Recreation](#) aims to share with conservation-minded readers how hunting evolved and how it plays a role in modern day wildlife management and more.



*Why Hunt? A Guide for Lovers of Nature, Local Food, and Outdoor Recreation seeks to reach a general audience and convey an understanding of hunting. Photo courtesy of the Aldo Leopold Foundation.*

For readers who are considering taking up the activity, the guide shares several profiles of individuals who began hunting as adults as well as their motivations and their pathways into the activity. From a vegan who wanted to begin eating meat responsibly to a young natural resource professional wanting to connect with the land, the faces and stories included are diverse yet familiar and challenge the stereotypical perception of a “hunter.” A section at the end shares information and resources on how to get started.

More information on the guide can be found [here](#), or for more on the topics of hunting and connecting to the outdoors, conservation, ethics, and food, a sequel project springing from the guide is a [website](#) by the same name that curates and hosts articles for further reading.

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## **Responsible, Local, Sustainable, Healthy**

Trailing not far behind the foodie trend and the sustainable food movement is a rise in the number of new hunters coming to the activity to responsibly harvest their own meat. Taking the “farm to fork” movement one step further, these hunters are often concerned with the health benefits of organic and unprocessed foods, the humane treatment of animals, limiting their ecological footprint by sourcing locally, or have a desire to be self-sufficient.

The Wisconsin DNR offers [Learn to Hunt for Food](#) and [Fishing for Dinner](#) courses catering to this rising interest. The popularity of Steven Rinella's [Meateater](#), a podcast and Netflix series centered around the food aspect of hunting, has reached millions. A recent episode of [Wisconsin Foodie](#) features host Luke Zahm in the woods on a grouse and woodcock hunt before preparing the meal back at the cabin.

While overall hunting participation is down, this category of food-motivated hunters begins to provide a positive outlook that participation may slowly be reversing course. And this year in the wake of COVID-19, Wisconsin has experienced a 17% rise in the purchase of hunting licenses year to date as of mid-September. The trend has been noted nationwide as well.



**Venison Stew**

- 2 lbs venison, cubed
- Flour (salt and pepper to taste)
- ¼ c. butter or peanut oil
- 1 onion, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 c. dry red wine
- 1 c. beef broth
- ½ tsp. dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 carrots, chopped
- 4 potatoes, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

*Heat butter in bottom of large, heavy kettle or Dutch oven. Brown venison with onion, garlic. Add wine, broth, thyme, bay leaf, carrots, and potatoes. Simmer for 1 ½ hours or until meat and vegetables are tender. Add salt, pepper to taste. Thicken with more flour if desired. Serve with a green salad, dry red wine, and crusty bread for dipping.*

Photo: Garrison Gunter

Should you find yourself in the woods harvesting your own dinner or in the kitchen with a fresh harvest to prepare, here's a tried and true venison recipe courtesy of Wisconsin's own John Motoviloff. You can get more wild game recipes from his book [Wild Rice Goose and Other Dishes of the Upper Midwest](#).

## Industry & Community News

**Fall Color Report Widget for Partner Websites** Travel Wisconsin's Fall Color Report is an up-to-date guide for where to find the beautiful fall colors. A customizable widget allows partners to show a live feed of the report – for their area or the state – on their own website. View the report [here](#) or create your widget [here](#).



**Benefits of a State Outdoor Recreation Office** Ashley Brinkman of the RV Industry Association recently presented on the important role these offices serve and shared her thoughts in a four-part web article specifically mentioning the Wisconsin office's stakeholder survey as a tangible example of the good work these offices are doing. [Read the article.](#)

**Celebrating National Public Lands Day and the Outdoor Economy** Wisconsin DNR's Keith Warnke shares the economic impacts of Wisconsin's outdoors in celebration of National Public Lands Day. [Watch the interview.](#)

## Events

*Note: In-person events may change due to precautions based on COVID-19 guidance. Please see each individual event for more information.*

**Telemark Ascent Mountain Bike | Cable | October 4** Choose 1 lap (13 miles) or 2 laps (26 miles) on the course that tackles portions of the Birkie, Kortelopet, and Old World Cup trails. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Turtle Flambeau Canoe Fishing Expedition | Manitowish Waters | October 7** Paddle the flowage from Fisherman's Landing to Murray's Landing with seasoned local fishing guides. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Ironbull Red Granite Grinder | Wausau | October 17** Experience the grit riding through areas not usually open to bikes and pass by ginseng fields and dairy farms, climb Rib Mountain, roll through Nine Mile Forest and more. [Learn more and register.](#)

**Fox Cities Trail Summit: Focus on Diversity & Inclusion | October 27** The online community conversation features author Dudley Edmondson on why people of color are underrepresented in the outdoors and how to bring about diversity. Results of the February Fox Cities Trail Summit will also be released. [Learn more.](#)

## Announcements & Resources

**NEW! Trail Conditions Report Seeking Trail Reporters** In collaboration with the Office of Outdoor Recreation, Travel Wisconsin is developing a Wisconsin Trail Report. We are seeking volunteers to adopt a local trail network and report conditions. [Contact us](#) to join the network!

**Hiking Safety for Hunting Season** The Ice Age Trail Alliance provides good reminders, such as wearing blaze orange, for anyone hiking during hunting season as well as specific information on which segments of the IAT are open for hunting. [Learn more here.](#)

**Hunter and Firearm Safety** The Wisconsin DNR offers [safety education courses](#) for hunting, archery, snowmobiling and more, which are required before purchasing

licenses or engaging in the activities. For hunters who have already completed safety education these [tips and resources](#) are good reminders for firearm safety.

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The [Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation](#) is housed within the Wisconsin Department of Tourism.



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