

Green Fire

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Bullfrog Community Screening & Discussion Guide

Roll out the red carpet! Use your film screening of **GREEN FIRE** as a tool to explore the philosophy and ideas of Aldo Leopold, and think about how they can be applied in our daily lives to enhance our relationship with the environment and land community. This guide offers some background information plus helpful tips & discussion questions for an informative and rewarding screening. **Good Luck!**

For additional resources, visit greenfire.bullfrogcommunities.com/gfire_resources

About GREEN FIRE

GREEN FIRE was produced in partnership between the Aldo Leopold Foundation, the Center for Humans and Nature, and the US Forest Service. The film provocatively examines Aldo Leopold's thinking, renewing his idea of a land ethic for a population facing 21st century ecological challenges. GREEN FIRE describes the formation of Leopold's idea, exploring how it changed one man and later permeated through all arenas of conservation. The film draws on Leopold's life and experiences to provide context and validity, challenging viewers to contemplate their own relationship with the land community.



About the Directors



Along with his wife Ann, Steve Dunsky has written, directed and edited films and videos for more than twenty years. As producers for the U.S. Forest Service, their programs cover a wide range of conservation issues. David Steinke is currently assistant director for public affairs in the U.S. Forest Service's Rocky Mountain Region. A 26-year veteran of the agency, Steinke runs the Region's Creative Services Department, which produces videotapes, presentations, exhibits and Web content and oversees some training and meeting facilitation.

ready to watch!

Here are some ideas and best practices to help make your community screening of GREEN FIRE a success!

1. Publicize Your Event! This is the most important step. Not only can you tell the world about your screening, but you can also let the Bullfrog Community team know about your plans so we can help you publicize your event. Visit greenfire.bullfrogcommunities.com/gfire_screenings to register your screening of GREEN FIRE.

2. Visualize Your Goal! What do you hope to achieve with your screening? Your goal could be to generate a lively post-film discussion with your audience about land health, land ethics and wilderness preservation, or to mobilize your community to support of a variety of environmental causes and conservation efforts. Or, you can simply provide an opportunity for families to watch and learn together.

3. Where To Host? Consider which locations in your area would be ideal for accommodating a community film screening of the size you anticipate: churches and synagogues, town halls, community centers, public libraries, school auditoriums, outdoor screenings at parks and playgrounds — all have been used as venues for many successful community screenings.

4. Find A Partner! Give some thought to who is already working on improving your community. Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Speak on a panel discussion after the screening? Some potential partners include: universities, colleges, high schools, faith-based organizations and institutions, museums, parks, nature centers, environmental groups, farmer's markets, CSAs, farmers, small-business owners, human rights and social justice groups, and other organizations concerned about the environment.

5. Invite A Guest Speaker! Guest speakers and panels are a great way to encourage discussion and debate after a community screening. When people are thinking about the issues, they will stay engaged long after the screening has passed. Contact your local urban/city/or town planners, city government agencies, teachers, museum directors, park directors, farmers, activists, and professors who have expertise or insight into the issues raised by the film, and invite them to attend and participate in a discussion or Q&A session. The GREEN FIRE film team and participants in the film may be available to appear in person or via Skype for a Q&A. [Contact Bullfrog Communities](#) if you are interested.

6. Engage Your Audience! Included in this handout is a section called Ready to Act! which is meant to be a hand-out at your screening. It will help your audience know what they can do to educate themselves about key issues brought up in the film.

7. Spread The Word! Think about the best methods available to you for publicizing the film screening to people in your community. Sending emails, creating event notifications on Facebook or Meetup, using Twitter, and placing screening announcements in local newspapers and newsletters is a good start. Use the GREEN FIRE screening poster & press photos at greenfire.bullfrogcommunities.com/gfire_resources to help publicize your event around town.

8. Tell Us How It Went! Visit greenfire.bullfrogcommunities.com/gfire_discussion to tell us about your event. Where it was held? Who attended? What went well, and what was challenging? Your feedback will help others in organizing their own successful events and will energize the Bullfrog Environment community as a whole.

ready to talk!

**Your audience will be excited to discuss the issues raised by GREEN FIRE.
Here are some questions that will get people talking.**

- 1.** Near the beginning of the film, Baird Callicott says that Leopold, Muir, and Thoreau are the giants on whose shoulders we all stand. Why do you think many people know Thoreau and Muir, but fewer are familiar with Leopold? How does he compare to them?
- 2.** How did Aldo Leopold's upbringing build his later ideas? How did he convey his values to his children?
- 3.** How did cultural diversity contribute to or change Aldo Leopold's ideas? What was life like for him as a young forester in the Southwest and how did it change his thinking?
- 4.** How have attitudes toward the natural world changed since Leopold's time? Since the first settlers arrived in America? In all human history?
- 5.** Aldo Leopold saw tremendous change and transformation of the landscape around him during his lifetime which greatly influenced his thinking. How has the land where you live changed within your lifetime? Has it affected your thinking?
- 6.** There will always be conflict in conservation. Can Aldo Leopold's ideas help us to work through some of the them? How? Which ones?
- 7.** What is land health? How is that idea different from species conservation or land preservation?
- 8.** Is it important to have designated wilderness? Why or why not?
- 9.** How does Leopold's wilderness philosophy conflict or mesh with his land ethic or resource management perspectives? How do the professions of "wildlife management" and "forest management" fit with modern society and the disconnect with the natural world?
- 10.** Do we have a greater responsibility to the land than other members of the ecosystem do? Why?
- 11.** Leopold calls land "a community." Think about your own idea of community—who does your definition include? How do you feel about your community including "soils, waters, plants, and animals"?
- 12.** How does a relationship with land differ from a relationship with a person? How is it the same?
- 13.** Views on predators have changed considerably, at least among some constituencies, since Leopold's early career, mainly informed by a scientific understanding of the role predators play in an ecosystem. Can you think of other examples of how science has fueled a change of mind in society?
- 14.** How would you feel about having wolves or other large predators where you live?

- 15.** Leopold suggests that “only a mountain has lived long enough to listen objectively to the howl of a wolf.” What does he mean? Is a mountain alive? How?
- 16.** Sandhill cranes have been brought back from the brink of extinction through tremendous effort. Other species, like the passenger pigeon, have been lost forever. What does it mean to lose a species permanently? Is it worth the effort to save ones that are endangered?
- 17.** Aldo Leopold chose his own land and Shack based on its “lack of goodness.” Why? How did that affect his and his family’s experience there?
- 18.** What does the Shack symbolize today?
- 19.** What does “green fire” mean to you?
- 20.** How would you “live on a piece of land without spoiling it”?
- 21.** What does it mean to “think like a mountain”?
- 22.** Leopold said “our tools are better than we are.” What did he mean? Do you agree?
- 23.** Leopold describes the power of seeing the “green fire” die in the wolf’s eye, but he didn’t understand until many years later why his actions felt wrong. Have you ever done something you thought was right, but regretted it later? What made you realize you were mistaken?
- 24.** How would you define a land ethic?
- 25.** How does a land ethic apply in urban areas?

ready to act!

handout

Share this handout with your
GREEN FIRE screening audience!

You've seen **Green Fire**, so now what? We've put together a list of a few ways that you can stay connected to the Leopold legacy and continue to explore the idea of a land ethic in your own life.

Join our thinking community! Like The Aldo Leopold Foundation on **Facebook**, follow on **Twitter** and **subscribe to the Foundation's e-newsletter** to learn more about the work they do and how you can get involved. Tell your friends about the film by tweeting with the hashtag #GreenFire, and link them to **Bullfrog Communities!**

Watch additional bonus features that build on the stories and ideas in the film. Subscribe to the Foundation's **YouTube Channel** to be alerted as more of these features are developed.

Train to become a Land Ethic Leader in your own community. The Aldo Leopold Foundation's **Land Ethic Leaders program** is designed to help people broaden the audience exposed to Leopold using **Green Fire** as a tool. Emphasis is also placed on ways to deepen the conversation by connecting people not only to the land, but also to each other.

Donate to keep the Green Fire burning. Would you like to see the film released widely on public television stations across the country? Can you imagine thousands of teachers using an educational resource kit to integrate the film and Leopold into the classroom? Would you have liked to learn more about various parts of the story in DVD extras? The Aldo Leopold Foundation is still working to complete their **fundraising** goals and we invite you to support the Foundation's efforts. Every little bit helps!

Get involved with a group in your own community. Here is just a small sampling of some great websites where you can connect with groups working on environmental issues all over the world:

Pledge to become part of the **Billion Acts of Green** movement, making Earth Day every day.

Also see:

The Children and Nature Network
The National Environmental Education Foundation

...and check out the **Leopold Connections** from the film itself.

website resources

handout

AldoLeopold.org

The Aldo Leopold Foundation works to inspire an ethical relationship between people and land through the legacy of Aldo Leopold.

HumansandNature.org

Center for Humans and Nature explores humans and nature relationships. The Center brings together philosophers, biologists, ecologists, lawyers, artists, political scientists, anthropologists, poets and economists, among others, to think creatively about how people can make better decisions — in relationship with each other and the rest of nature.

FS.Fed.US

U.S. Forest Service works to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Leopold.IAState.edu

Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture is a research and education center on the campus of Iowa State University created to identify and reduce negative environmental and social impacts of farming and develop new ways to farm profitably while conserving natural resources. The Center is named for Aldo Leopold (1887-1948), a Burlington, Iowa, native known internationally as a conservationist, ecologist, and educator. He saw the need for development of a land ethic, outlined in his 1949 book of essays, *A Sand County Almanac*.

Act.EarthDay.org

Earth Day Network's A Billion Acts of Green is an international movement to protect the planet and secure a sustainable future. It is the largest environmental service campaign in the world, and is steadily building commitments by individuals, organizations, businesses and governments to protect the planet. The campaign inspires and rewards both simple individual acts and larger organizational initiatives that reduce carbon emissions and support sustainability.

WiserEarth.org

Wiser Earth describes pathways of change in books and research reports, and creates tools for connecting the individuals, information, and organizations that create change.

350.org

350.org is working to build a global climate movement through online campaigns, grassroots organizing, and mass public actions coordinated by a global network active in over 188 countries.