

AMERICAN CONSERVATION FILM FESTIVAL



**MARCH
13-15, 2026
SHEPHERDSTOWN, WV
CONSERVATIONFILMFEST.ORG**

WELCOME to the 2026 Festival. This year's lineup will carry you across continents and ecosystems, revealing the extraordinary places and people working to protect the natural world. These stories inspire action, spark curiosity and deepen the understanding of our planet. We're so glad you're here and part of this community.

We kicked off the festival on March 12 with Student Day on the Shepherd University campus. This special ACFF program introduces public school middle and high school students to conservation themes and filmmaking. We extend our thanks to the students and teachers of Jefferson County and the Frederick County (MD) Career and Technical Center for their participation. Students viewed short films and took part in breakout sessions with filmmakers, scientists, and conservationists.



Student Day was made possible through the generous support of the Eastern West Virginia Community Foundation and the creative efforts of the following individuals:

Katy Babinski	Emiley Garcia-Zych	Mary Logan Hoxton	Randy Robinson
Brian Bloodworth	Elizabeth Green	Ellen Murphy	Amy Thomas
Jason Caldwell	Althea Guevara	Potomac Valley	Carolyn Thomas,
Francis Carroll	Mikayla Hamrick	Audubon Society	Coordinator
Laura Carter	Amber Hodges	Thad Reid	Brent Walls



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P.O. Box 889
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FRIDAY MARCH 13

1PM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 1

- Red Wolf in Time Out
- Fish for the Future
SUPER SHORT FILM AWARD WINNER
- Potomac Protector
- Fighting the Krill Collapse
- aRTIFICiAL PLANET
STUDENT FILM AWARD WINNER

SPECIAL GUESTS

After the films, stay for a discussion on AI and the future of wildlife storytelling with filmmaker **Christopher Paetkau** and watch filmmaker **Matthew Benton** accept the 2026 Super Short Film Award.



2PM - 3:30PM EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

3:30PM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 2

- The Birds
- Wild Hope:
Building for Birds

SPECIAL GUESTS

After the films, hear from **Naamal DeSilva** of the American Bird Conservancy and *Wild Hope: Building for Birds* filmmaker, **Sam LeGrys**.



4:30PM - 6PM EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

6PM
FEATURE

- Unless Something Goes Terribly Wrong

SPECIAL GUESTS

After the film, stay for a conversation with Shepherdstown's public works team, **Mayor James Gatz**, **"Woody" Coe**, and **Kenny Shipley**, on the real-world systems that safeguard our water.



Fish for the Future
SUPER SHORT FILM
AWARD WINNER



aRTIFICiAL
STUDENT FILM
AWARD WINNER

SATURDAY MARCH 14

11AM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 3

- **In Her Nature: Sloth Detectives**
- **In Her Nature: Behind the Scenes**

SPECIAL GUESTS

After the films, stay for a discussion with five filmmakers behind the groundbreaking project *In Her Nature*: **Katie Schuler, Jocelyn Stokes, Melanie Lippert, Jess Wiegandt Gomez, and Ash Benzwie.**



12PM - 1:30PM

EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

1:30PM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 4

- **A Bottomless Reservoir of Joy**
- **A Little Story About Forever**
- **Cone People**
- **An Optimist's Guide to the Planet: Energize**
- **Data Center Tipping Point**

SPECIAL GUESTS

After the films, join us for a Q&A about the proposed data center in Jefferson County with **Dr. Christine Wimer** and filmmaker **Kayla Shea.**



2:30PM - 4PM

EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

4PM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 5

- **Guardians of the Earth**
- **For Deer Life**
- **The Clearing**
GREEN SPARK AWARD WINNER

SPECIAL GUEST

After the films, stay for a discussion about the impact of environmental activists with **Holly Jonas**, Director of Mongabay's Network Program.

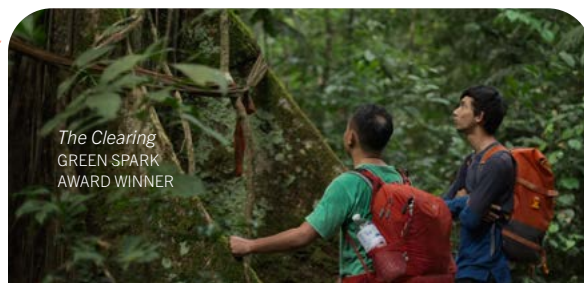


5PM - 6:30PM

EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

6:30PM
FEATURE

- **Snow Leopard Sisters**



SUNDAY MARCH 15

11AM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 6

- **Trash Pie**
- **Reindalen**
- **Little Brown Bird**

SPECIAL GUESTS

After the films, stay for a Q&A with filmmakers **Chloë Fitzmaurice** (*Trash Pie*) and **KT Bryden** (*Little Brown Bird*).



12PM - 1:30PM

EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

1:30PM
SHORT FILM
BLOCK 7

- **The Detectorists**
- **A Body Called Life**
- **The Rewilders**
GREEN FIRE AWARD WINNER

SPECIAL GUESTS

Stay after the films for a post-film discussion with filmmaker **Kyle Gunther** and River Conservationist **Mark Angelo** and the presentation of the 2026 ACFF Green Fire Award.



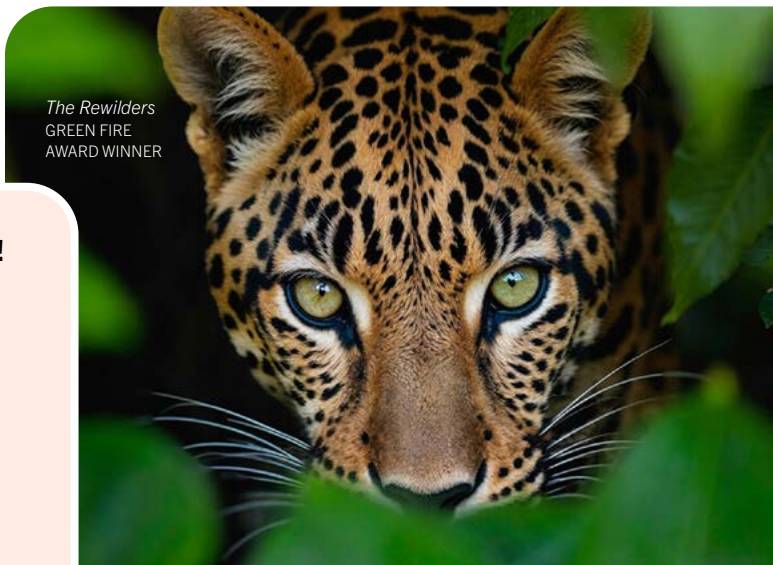
2:30PM - 4PM

EXHIBIT HALL OPEN

4PM
FEATURE

- **Unearth**

The Rewilders
GREEN FIRE
AWARD WINNER



Vote for the Audience Choice Awards!

After attending the screenings your ratings help determine the winner for ACFF's Short Film and Feature Audience Choice Awards. You can rate eligible films from your "My Ticket" page.

ACFF EXHIBIT HALL

For the second year, ACFF will host exhibits and concessions in McCoy Hall during the Festival. Stop in between screenings to connect with local conservation organizations, learn about their work, and discover ways to get involved in protecting the places we love.

While you're there, browse a selection of books and enjoy food and beverages from local favorites Alma Bea, Amy & Alex Coffee, Bistro 112, and Community Garden Market.

Hours are listed in the Festival schedule.

EXHIBITORS

Appalachian Trail Conservancy
 Berkeley-Jefferson Master Gardener Association
 Blue Ridge Wildlife Center
 Four Seasons Books
 Friends of the National Conservation Training Center
 Friends of the Cacapon River
 Jefferson County Farmland Protection Board

Land Trust of the Eastern Panhandle
 Potomac Valley Audubon Society
 Shepherd University Lifelong Learning
 Shepherdstown Bee City
 Shepherdstown Community Club
 Town Run Watershed
 West Virginia Land Trust

SPECIAL THANKS

Amy Matthews Amos	Sue Kemnitzer
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 Behind the Scenes*

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AS OF MARCH 1, 2026



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