

Ashley Gries

402.980.5341 • www.ashleygries.com • ashleygries@gmail.com • www.linkedin.com/in/ashleygries

RIPARIAN RESTORATION AND PUBLIC LANDS ADVOCATE

Project Management | Communications & Outreach | Water Policy & Research

Passionate, thoughtful, and collaborative conservation professional with valuable experience working with Indigenous communities and an ability to cultivate meaningful relationships and coalitions across diverse sectors. Expertise in community outreach, policy analysis, and project coordination, with strong systems analysis & development experience.

EDUCATION

M.S. Environmental Conservation – *University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI* **Aug. 2021**

Areas of focus: Hydropolitics, land and water protection, water policy, Native American studies

Relevant Coursework: Land Use & Policy Planning, Conservation Management, Grant Writing, Restoration Ecology

Dual Degree: B.A. Interior Design and Environmental Studies – *Iowa State University, Ames, IA* **May 2007**

CONSERVATION EXPERIENCE

The Wilderness Society – Bozeman, MT (*Remote*) **June 2021 – Present**

Native Lands Partnership

- Research and development of key database and policy report for Executive Leadership Team on Native American land policy and co-management practices on federal lands. Provided strategic direction and federal policy recommendations, and a framework for a paradigm shift in co-management practices.
- Developed portfolio of new connections and opportunities for expanded partnerships in Indian Country.
- Crafted org-wide survey & assessment to evaluate TWS's existing work with Native Nations to inform internal recommendations on improving support for Native-led projects and Tribal capacity-building.
- Led creation of Letters of Support, social media content, and key graphics on public lands equity work and place-based campaigns.

The Nature Conservancy – Colorado River Basin (*Remote*) **May 2021 – Aug. 2021**

Water and Tribes Initiatives Fellow – *Colorado River & San Juan River Basins*

- Analyzed 150+ Federal grant & loan programs to identify the challenges Tribes face in accessing Federal funding for water conservation projects. Created robust database for basin-wide partners to improve access to and knowledge of Federal programs. Made policy and practice recommendations and presented findings.
- Supported development & coordination of community-building event among San Juan Basin Tribes aimed at facilitating basin-wide Native-led conversations about the future of the San Juan.

University of Wisconsin-Madison – Madison, WI **Nov. 2020 – Aug. 2021**

Graduate Researcher – *Lake Winnebago Intertribal Connectivity Project*

- Coordinated project team, intertribal partners, and state and local agencies to develop project plan and implementation of biocultural restoration of Lake Winnebago and its aquatic resources.
- Qualitative & quantitative data analysis and literature review on L. Winnebago ecology and cultural history.
- Conducted cultural story-mapping interviews with Tribal Elders in L. Winnebago watershed.
- Secured \$250,000 in key project funding through SeaGrant, with additional grant applications underway.

The Nature Conservancy – Madison, WI (*Remote*) **Oct. 2020 – Present**

Researcher & Co-Author – *Water Science & Policy article to be submitted for publication Winter 2022*

- Partner with Principal Investigators and co-Authors in writing, editing, and preparation of manuscript.
- Conduct literature review and created synthesis matrix on WOTUS definition changes, U.S. water policy, geospatial mapping of wetlands, riparian connectivity, and ecosystem services.
- Prepare and present detailed reports to project team and stakeholders on research & publication findings.

Peace Corps - Playa Chiquita, Panama
Environmental Conservation Specialist

Apr. 2008 – Jun. 2010

Developed strategic initiatives addressing environmental conservation, community health, and water access.

- Coordinated productive partnerships between government environmental agencies and community stakeholders on grants and proposals for restoration ecology and land management projects including watershed management, environmental health, and endangered species conservation.
- Led community outreach in impoverished rural areas to identify opportunities for environmental & social impact projects including improved access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene.
- Trained community volunteers in citizen science conservation and ecological restoration techniques.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

Casa & Co. Interiors - Madison, WI

Apr. 2018 – Jul. 2020

Owner, Design Director

- Oversaw project management to ensure that activities, budgets, and milestones were coordinated and updated frequently to ensure that project scheduling, spending, and reporting supported objectives.
- Navigated complex team dynamics within commercial client groups by conducting deep-dive research and brainstorming sessions creating outcome-oriented concepts focused on desired business metrics.

Casa & Co. Design Studio - Madison, WI

Jul. 2010 – Apr. 2018

Entrepreneur

- Developed and executed business plan, arranged financing, developed go-to-market strategies, and produced, marketed, and sold products in retail stores, online shops, and own web store.
- Grew client base from 0 to 2500+ through marketing, direct engagement, and outreach.
- Created in-house graphic design, copy, and photography for all product literature, marketing, & branding.

Arbee Associates Business Interiors – Gaithersburg, MD

Aug. 2007 – Apr. 2008

Interior Designer

Managed highly valuable contracts from Apple Inc., Blackboard, and the U.S. Government.

- Developed scoping requests for subcontract work and coordinated across design teams and client boards for the successful implementation of multi-million-dollar, high-pressure projects.

TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Familiarity with Western water policy & dynamics, U.S. water policy, and Federal Indian Law & Governance
- Dependable self-starter with outstanding organizational, interpersonal, and problem-solving abilities
- English (Fluent), Spanish (Intermediate)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

River Network | Society for Ecological Restoration | River Management Society | Outdoor Writers Association

VOLUNTEERING

Society for Ecological Restoration – Digital Marketing Specialist - SER Conference 2021

2021 – Present

Friends of Starkweather Creek – Water Quality Monitor

2020 – Present