Name: Melissa B. Youngquist

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Current Affiliation and Title: Shedd Aquarium; Amphibian Research Biologist

Dear Members of Midwest Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation,

I am writing to express my interest in being a candidate for the MWPARC Advisory Board. I work at Shedd Aquarium as the Amphibian Research Biologist. As part of the Haerther Center for Conservation and Research, my work centers on revitalizing habitats for amphibians and the broader wetland community. In this work, I partner with local volunteers and county ecologists to restore forested wetlands and monitor amphibian populations; I also serve as an amphibian ambassador to the public.

I have spent the last 11 years studying amphibian ecology and conservation across the Midwest; my research focuses on how changes in land cover and environment affect amphibian populations and community structure. As a doctoral student at Miami University, I examined how landscape structure affected cricket frog and American bullfrog populations. After earning my PhD, I spent three years in the North Woods of Minnesota as a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Minnesota. I collaborated with the U.S. Forest Service to study Black Ash wetland communities that are threatened by emerald ash borer invasion. And In 2019, I had the good fortune to join Shedd Aquarium and begin my study of amphibians in the greater Chicago area. Most of my research methods involves field surveys and experiments. I have worked in higher education, a federal agency, and an NGO; I have broad experience working with amphibians and a specific expertise with anurans; and I have worked in a range of aquatic ecosystems and landscapes. I hope to bring these experiences and expertise to the MWPARC Advisory Board and to further the conservation of amphibians and reptiles.

Sincerely,

Melissa B. Youngquist