



# Responding to new invasive species findings

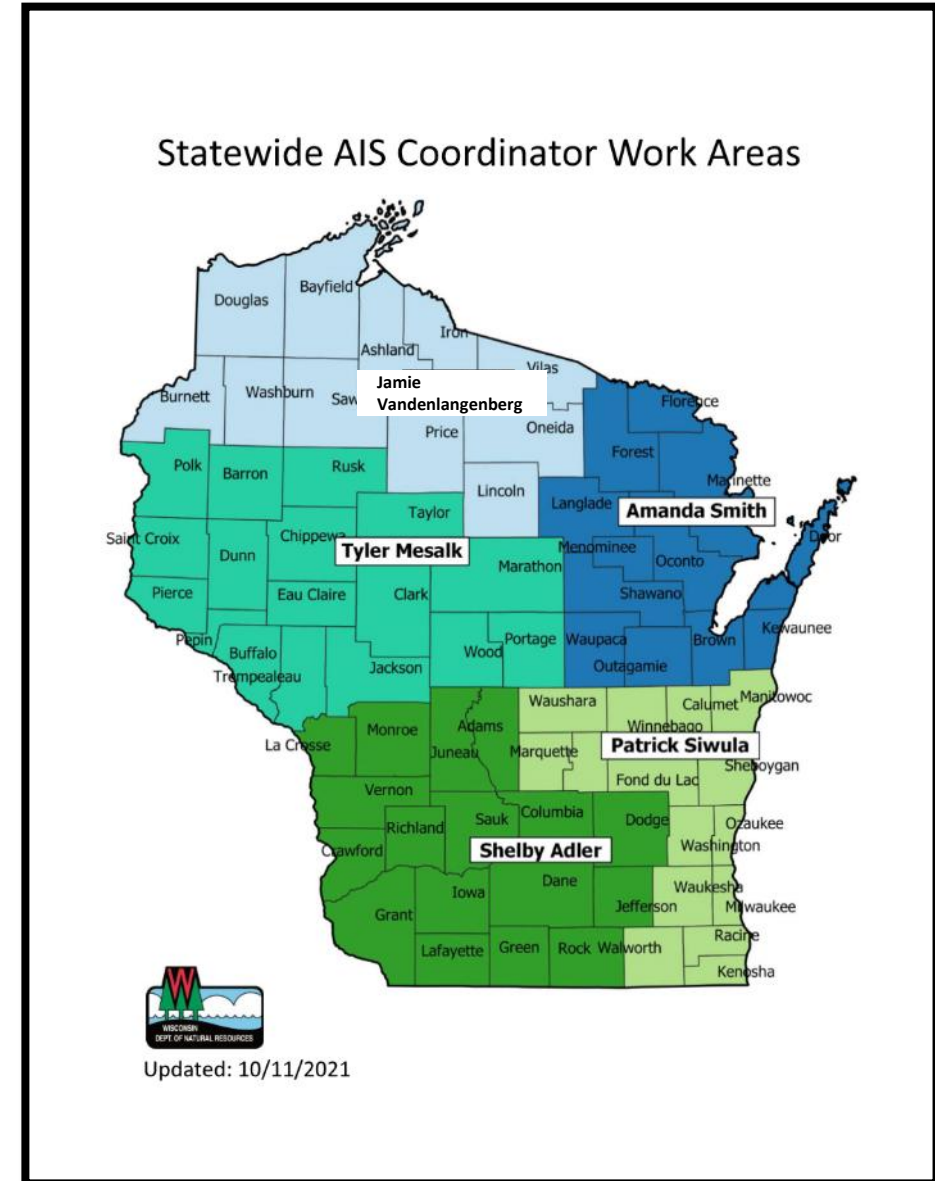
Patrick Siwula

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

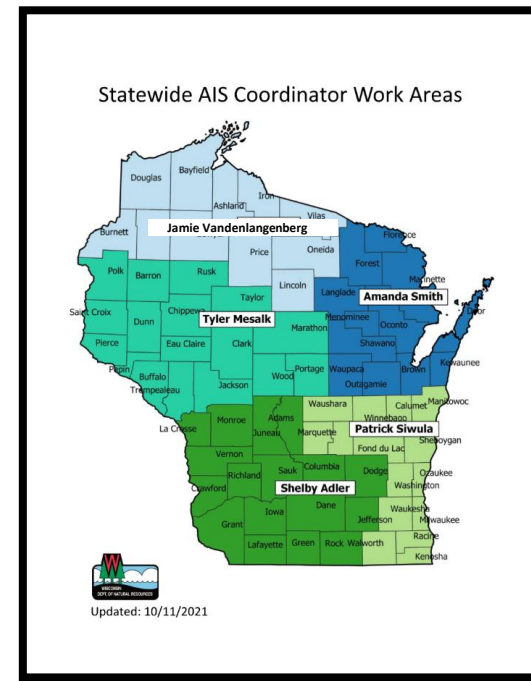
Aquatic Invasive Species Biologist

# Southeast Region Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Biologist

- AIS Response
  - Guide response to new, high profile AIS findings within or in close proximity to surface water resources
- AIS Prevention
  - Pathways management: Organisms in Trade
- Regional Point of Contact (SE)
  - AIS grant administration, technical assistance
  - Monitoring, research, data management
  - Outreach, education
- ‘Other duties as assigned’



# AIS Response



# DNR AIS Response Framework



## WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES' RESPONSE FRAMEWORK FOR INVASIVE SPECIES

May 12, 2017

### SCOPE AND PURPOSE

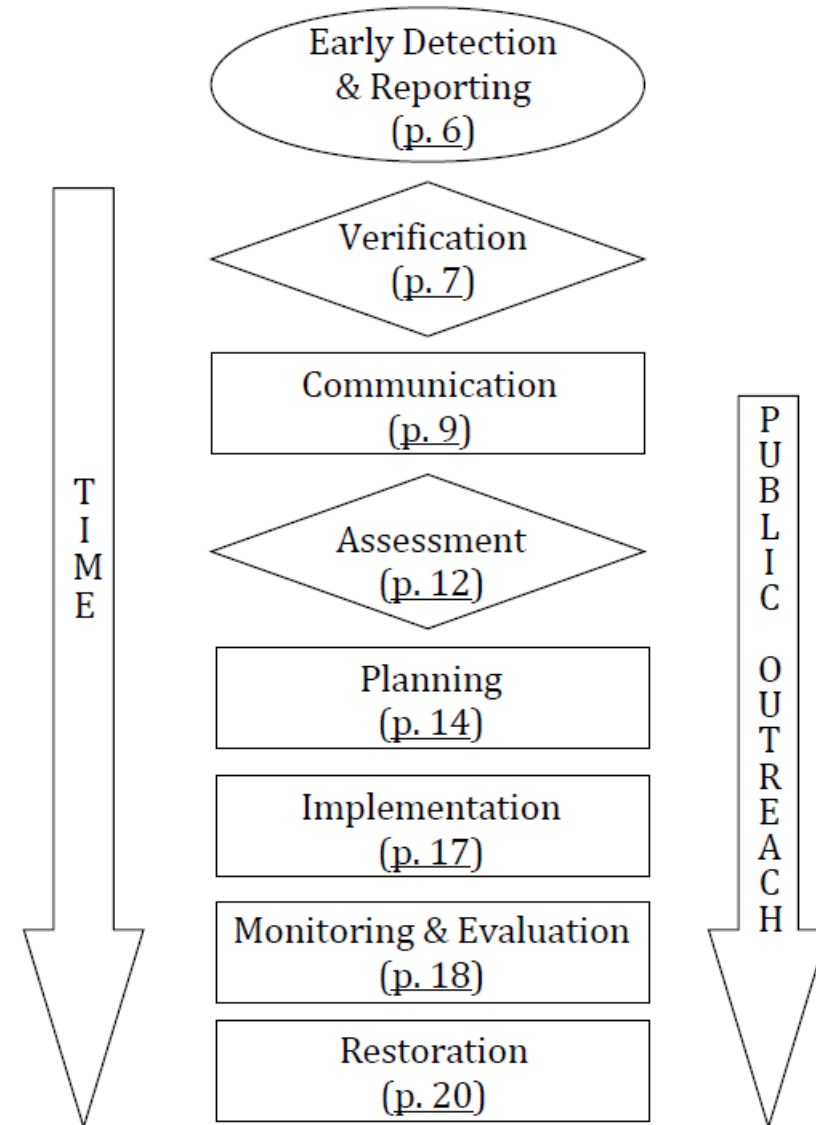
This document was developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Department Invasive Species Team (DIST) as an internal protocol for responding to newly detected populations of suspected invasive species. This framework cannot and does not attempt to provide answers or solutions to all of the issues associated with response activities. Rather, this document provides a framework to assist any manager in responding thoroughly, professionally, and effectively to the many challenges that result from new invasions.

### This framework will be used when:

- A terrestrial invasive species is found in a county where it is listed as Prohibited, OR
- An aquatic invasive species is found in a county where it is listed as Prohibited or Restricted, OR
- An invasive species is discovered in an area of the state where it has not been previously documented

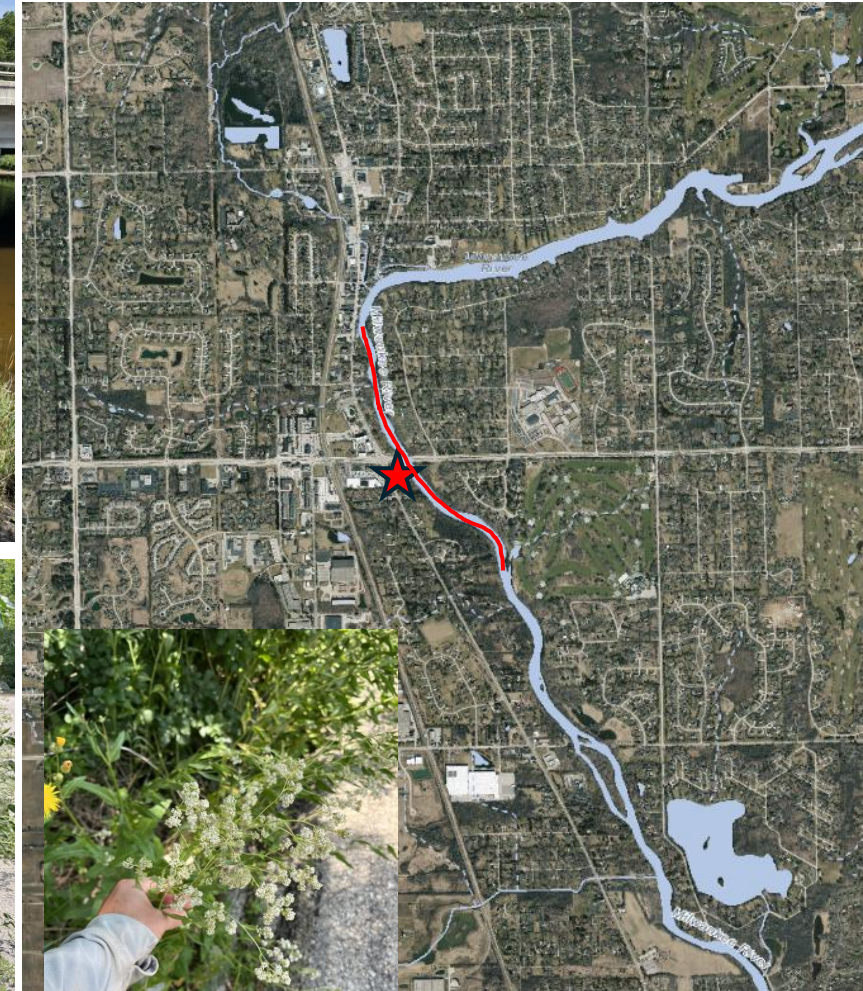
### AND:

- Legal access is granted for entry onto the property the species is found on



# Response – Perennial Pepperweed, MKE River (Mequon)

- Found by Mark Renz (UW Madison) summer 2025
- Growing at edge of parking lot along river
  - Fill introduction?
- Surveyed upstream and downstream
  - No additional Pepperweed found
- Mequon noxious weed ordinance being implemented for control



# Response – Round Goby, Lake Winnebago



**ATTENTION**

**ROUND GOBY**

- Competes with native fishes.
- Is found in Little Lake Butte des Morts; there are concerns that it may move into the Winnebago System.
- Should never be used as bait.
- Should not be moved (except one can be brought to a DNR office.)

**REPORT ROUND GOBIES**

If you think you've caught a round goby on the Winnebago System:

- 1 Place the dead fish in a plastic bag on ice.
- 2 Record specific information about where (GPS location if possible) and when it was caught.
- 3 Bring it to the DNR Oshkosh office (8:30-4:00, Mon-Fri; 625 E. County Rd Y Suite 700 Oshkosh, WI 54901) Phone: 920-420-9943.

**HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF INVASIVE SPECIES**

Before you leave your fishing site:

- INSPECT** all fishing gear.
- REMOVE** all plants, animals & mud.
- DRAIN** all lake, river or stream water from buckets, coolers and boats.
- NEVER MOVE** live fish, bugs & snails from your fishing site.
- KNOW** the minnow use regulations.

Visit [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov) and search "invasives" for more information

In the summer of 2025, round goby were verified near the mouth of the Fox River in Oshkosh.

The round goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*) is a non-native invasive fish first observed in 1990 in the St. Clair River and Lake Huron, and by 1995 was found in all the Great Lakes. In Wisconsin, gobies are not known to be present in any inland lakes, but were found in several Lake Michigan tributaries (e.g. Fox, Oconto, Kewaunee, and Sheboygan Rivers) upstream until the first impassable dam barrier.

In August 2015, a round goby was caught and reported to the Wisconsin DNR by an angler directly below the Neenah Dam in Little Lake Butte des Morts, which is one of two dams located at the outlet of Lake Winnebago.

Rapid Croche (A French term which means "fast hook" or "fast bend") is a permanently sealed lock and acts as a barrier to prevent invasive aquatic species from traveling from the Great Lakes to the Lake Winnebago system.

LLBDM = Little Lake Butte Des Morts

Created by: Amanda Smith, WDNR

# Responding to new invasive aquatic plants

Who/What/Where/When/How?

What else do we know about the aquatic plant community in the lake?

Is there ongoing management?

Do we have a comprehensive lake plan or aquatic plant management plan?

Who can help?!?





# Responding to new invasive aquatic plants

Species-specific considerations –

- Widespread species, or new to the state/region? Chances of re-introduction events?
- Potential to impact navigation/recreation? Native plant community?
- Are there control methods? Are there side-effects to native species?

Considering disturbance carefully – invasives thrive in disturbed systems

Setting realistic expectations – true eradication is typically not attainable

Learning (over time) system-specific trends and impacts – When needed, adaptive management

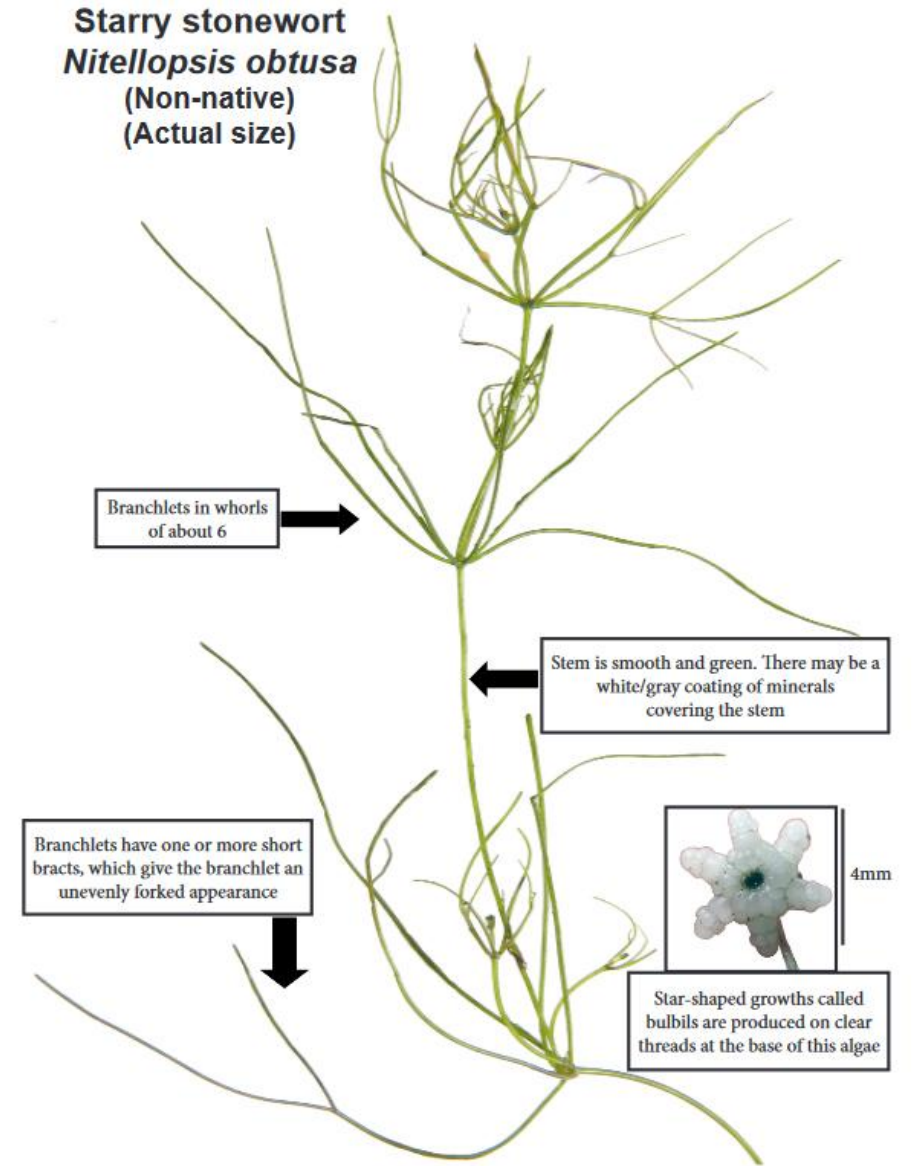
# Starry Stonewort

Native to Eurasia, present in N. America since 1978

Unique macroalgae species – not a true plant!



**Starry stonewort**  
***Nitellopsis obtusa***  
(Non-native)  
(Actual size)



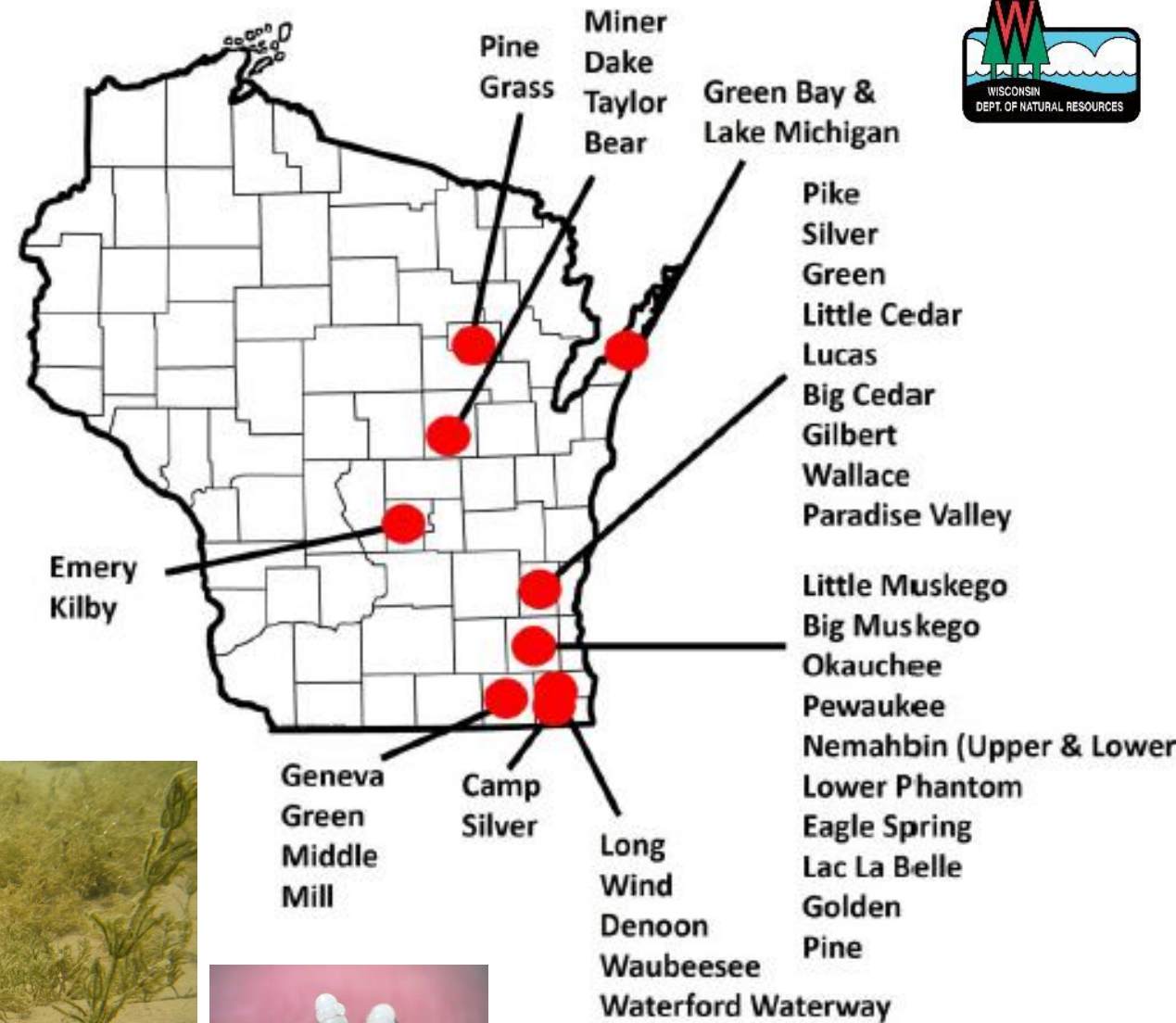
# Starry Stonewort in WI

2014 – first discovery (Little Muskego Lake)

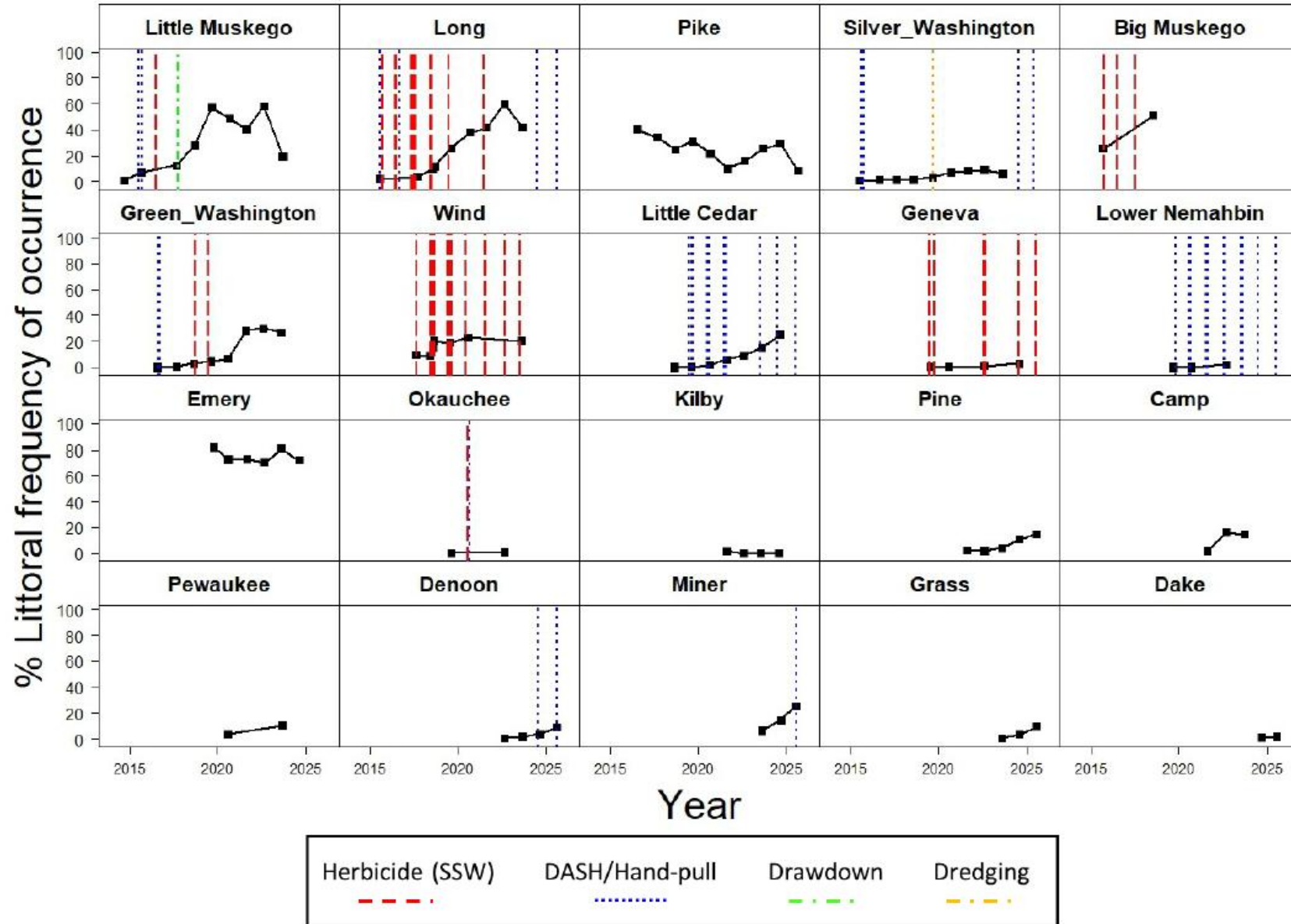
Now present in ~39 WI waterbodies

Requires hard water conditions

Unique management considerations



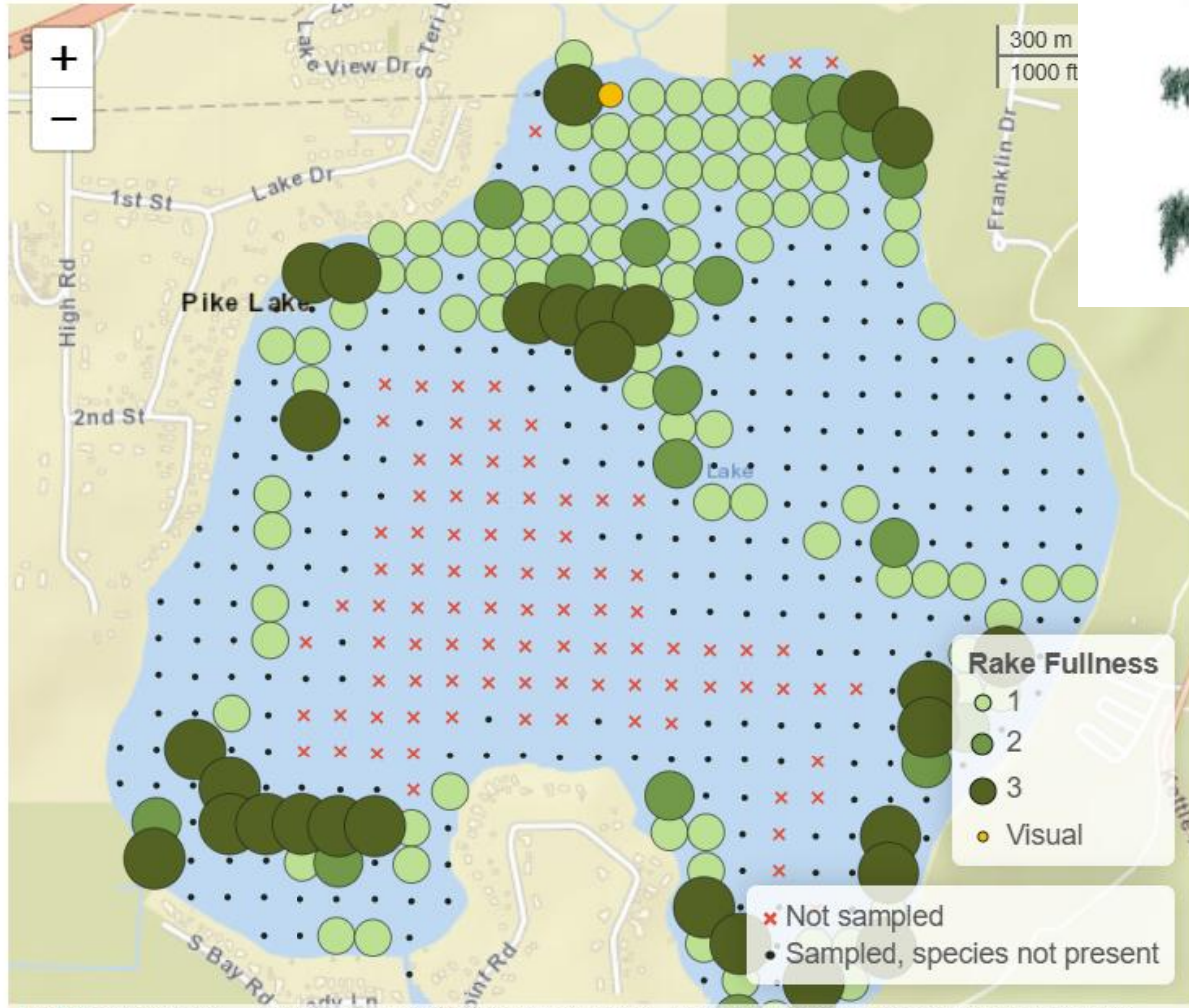
# Starry Stonewort % Frequency



# Individual Species

07/12/2016

Starry stonewort



Leaflet | Tiles © Esri — Source: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012

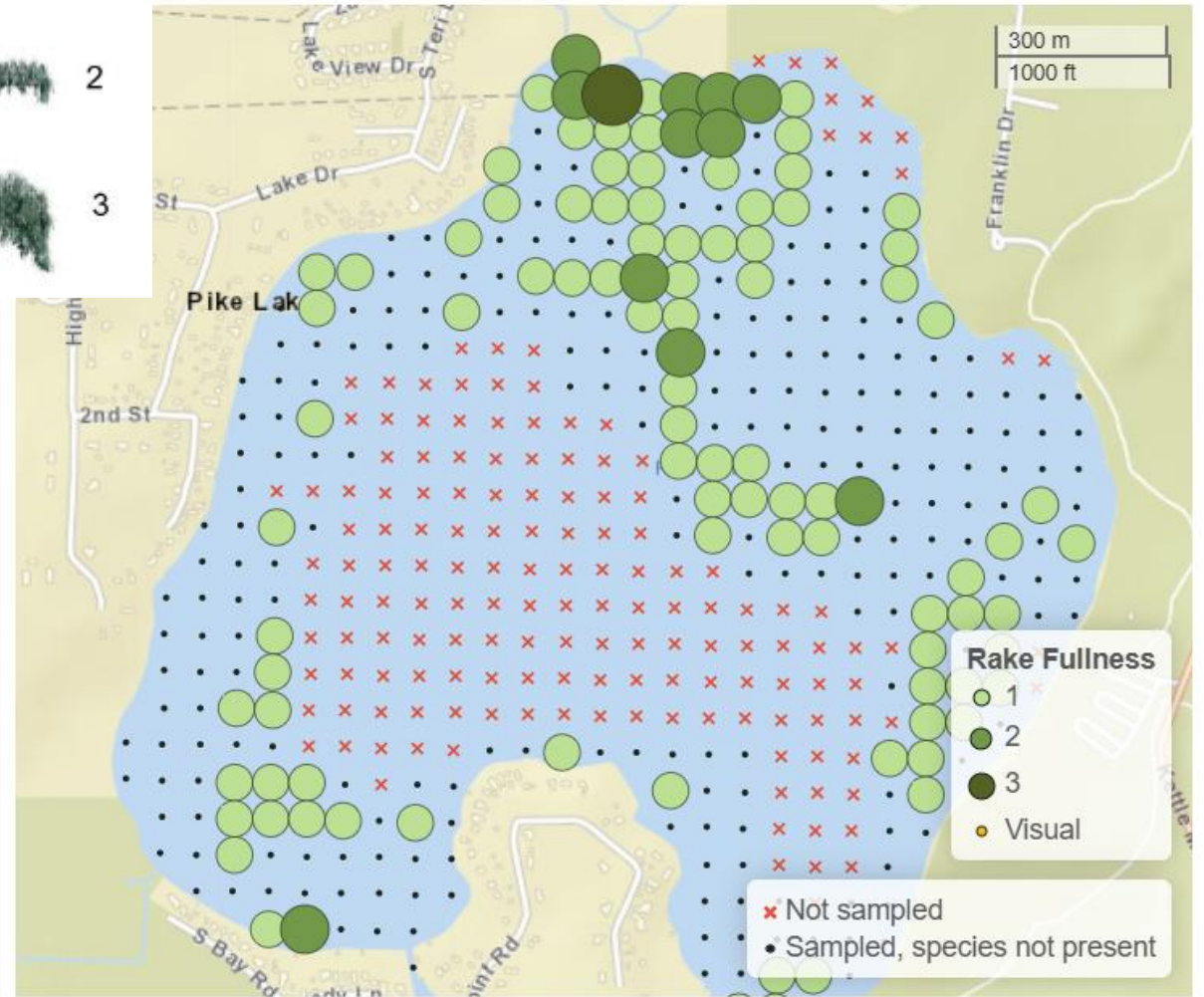
## Illustration of Rake Fullness Rating



# al Species

07/12/2017

Starry stonewort

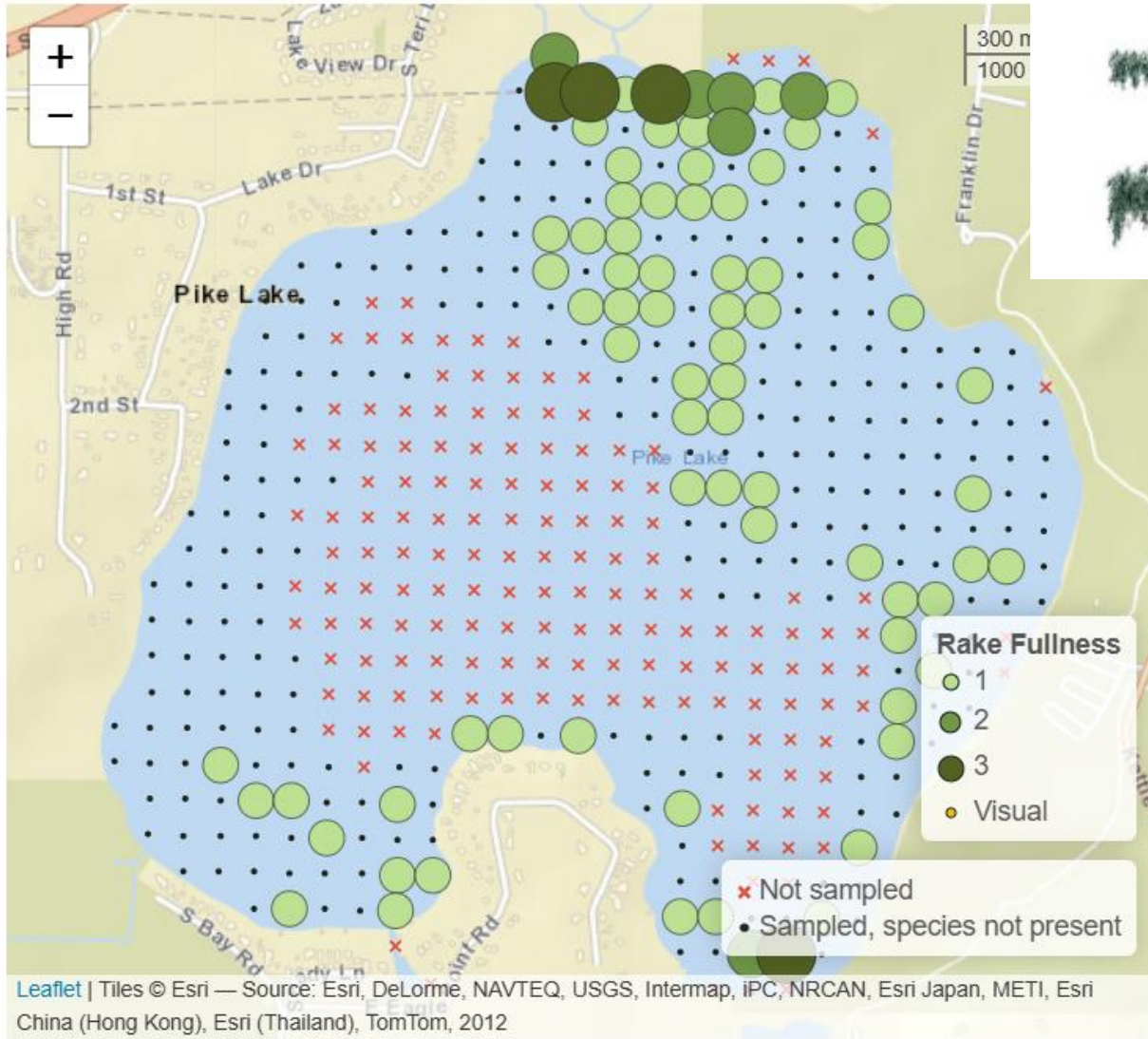


Leaflet | Tiles © Esri — Source: Esri, DeLorme, NAVTEQ, USGS, Intermap, iPC, NRCAN, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri (Thailand), TomTom, 2012

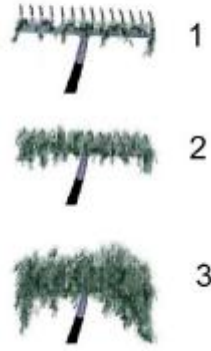
# Individual Species

09/10/2018

Starry stonewort



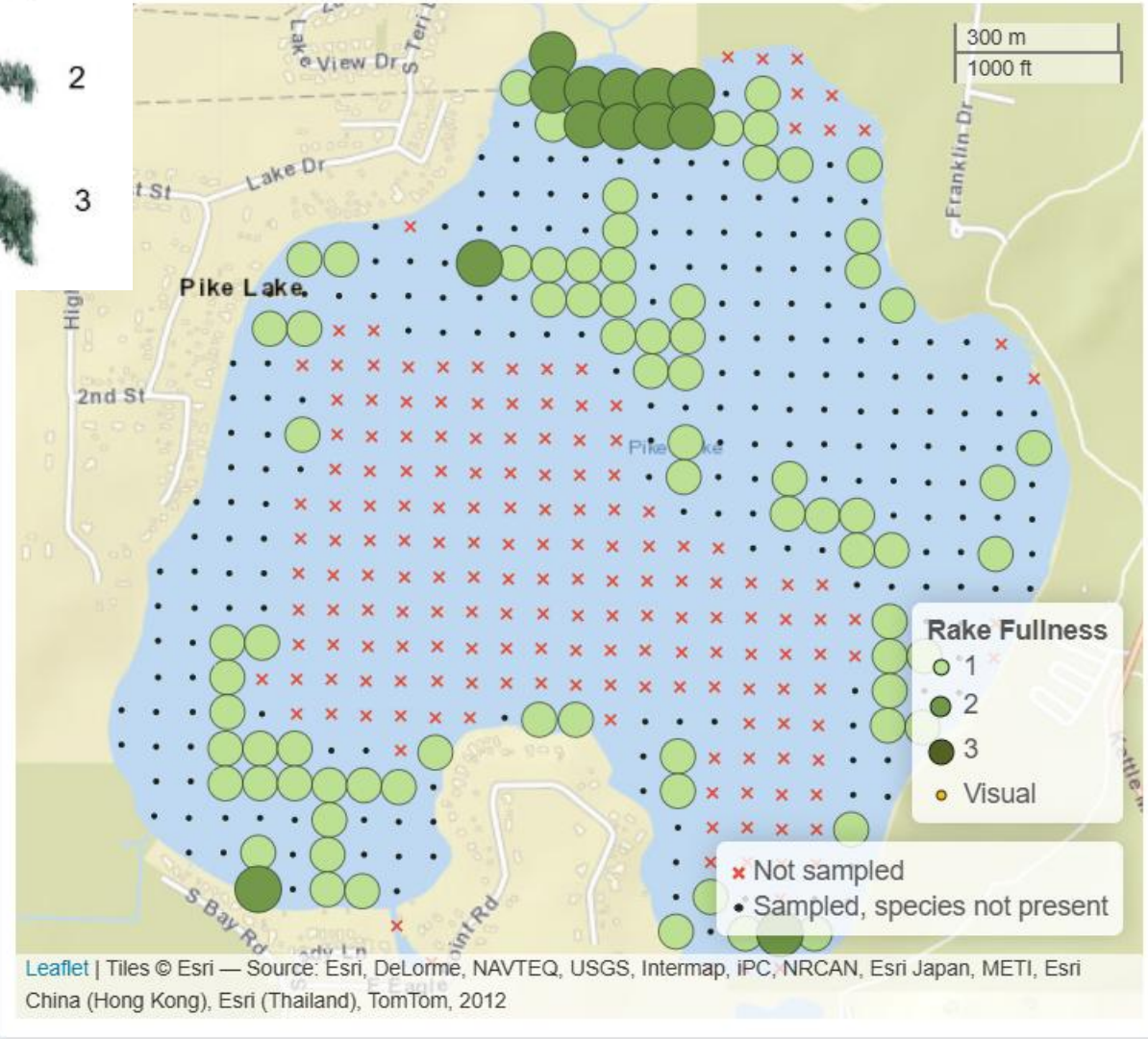
## Illustration of Rake Fullness Rating



# Visual Species

09/10/2018

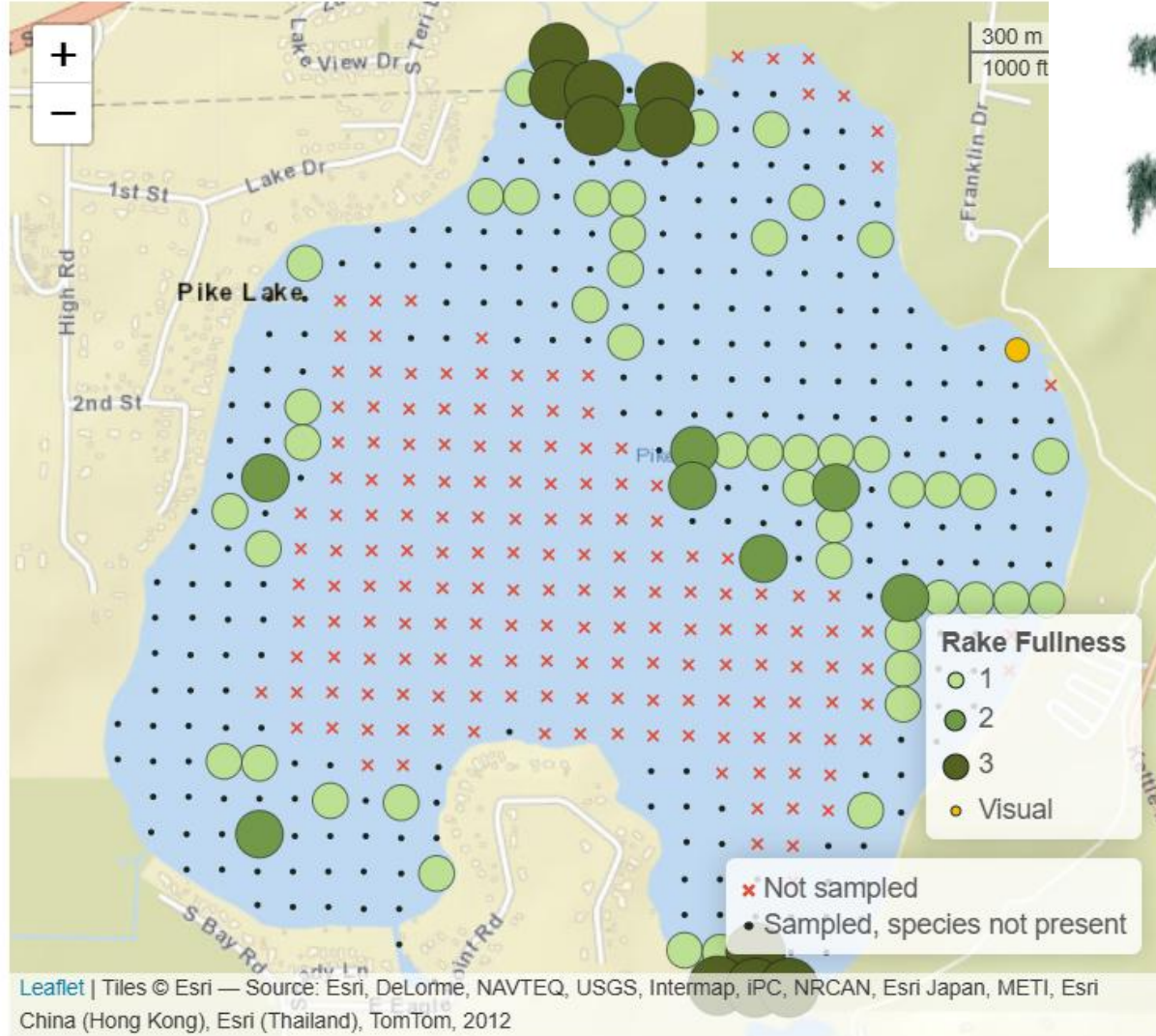
Starry stonewort



## Individual Species

09/01/2020

Starry stonewort



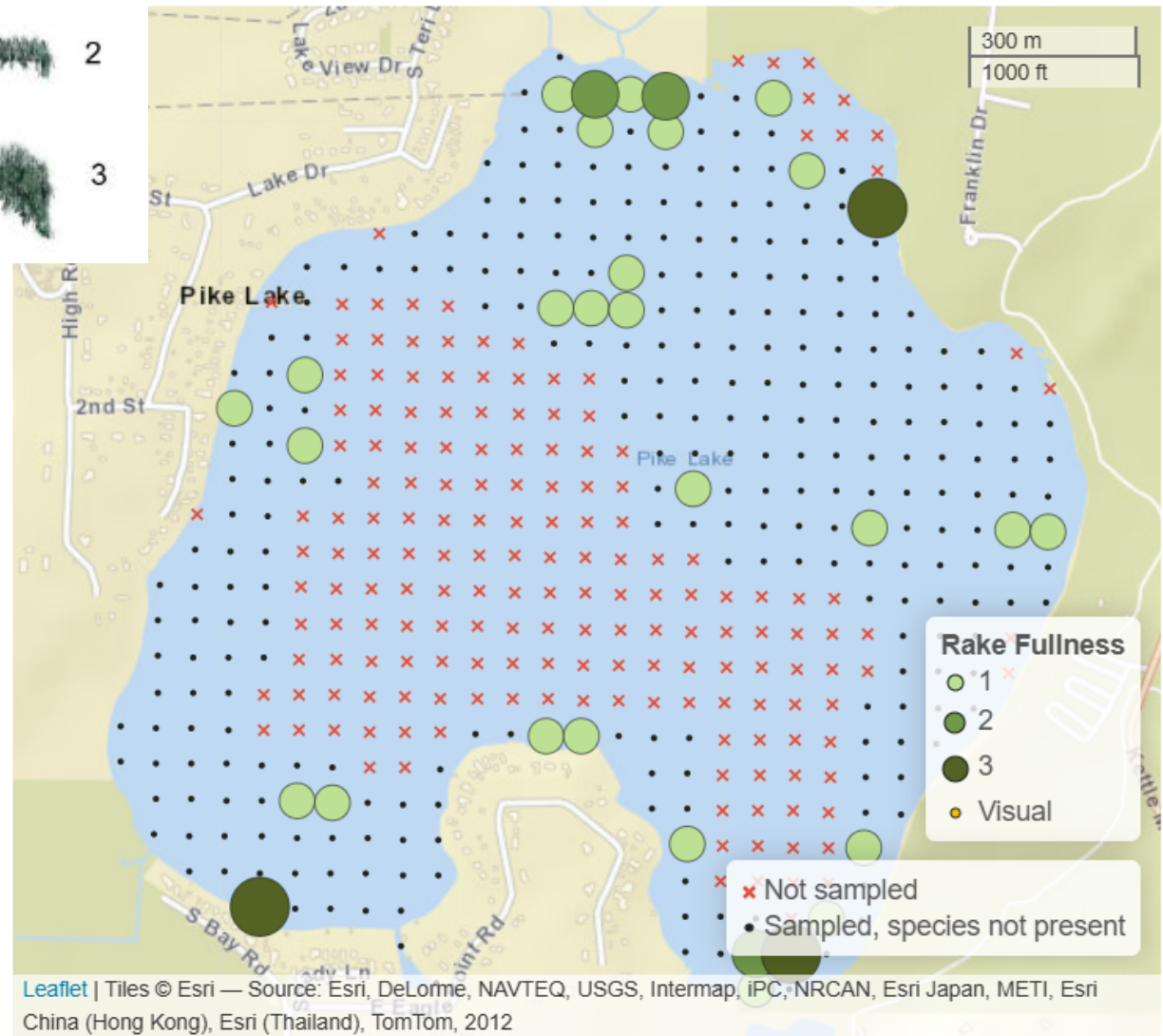
## Illustration of Rake Fullness Rating



## Aggregated Species

21

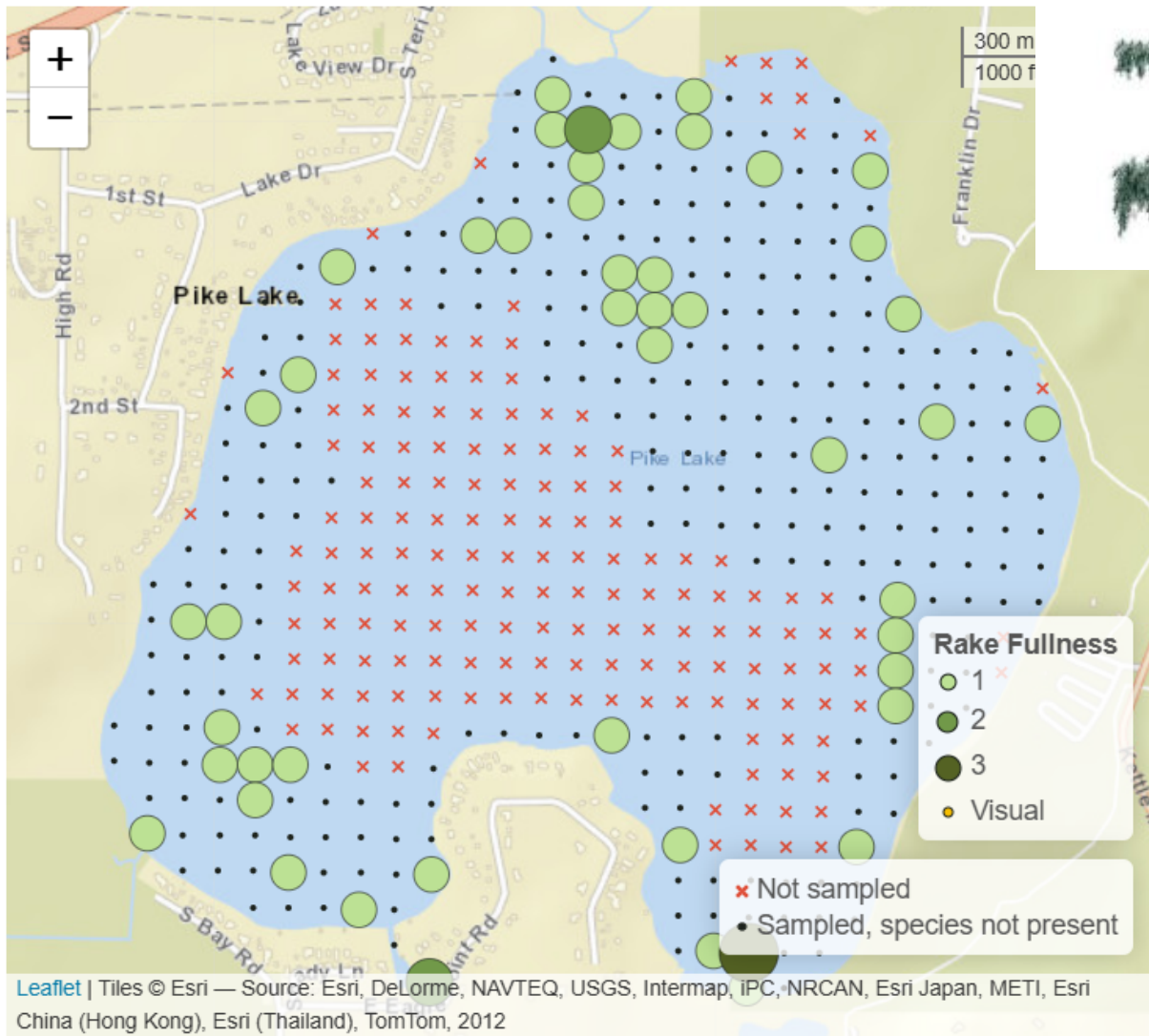
Starry stonewort



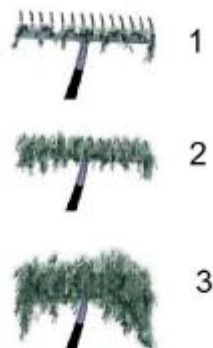
## Individual Species

08/29/2022

Starry stonewort



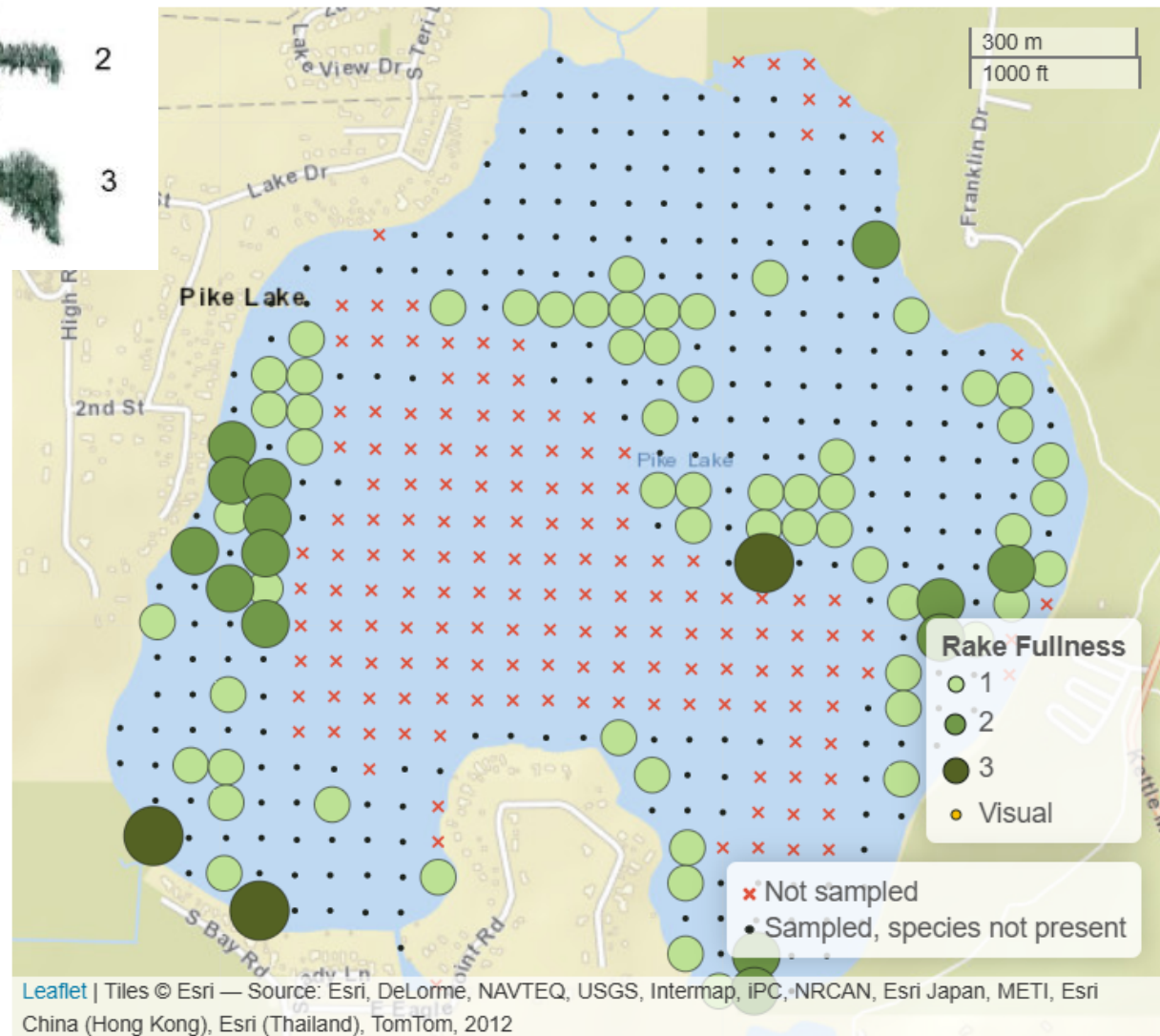
## Illustration of Rake Fullness Rating



## Individual Species

08/29/2022

Starry stonewort

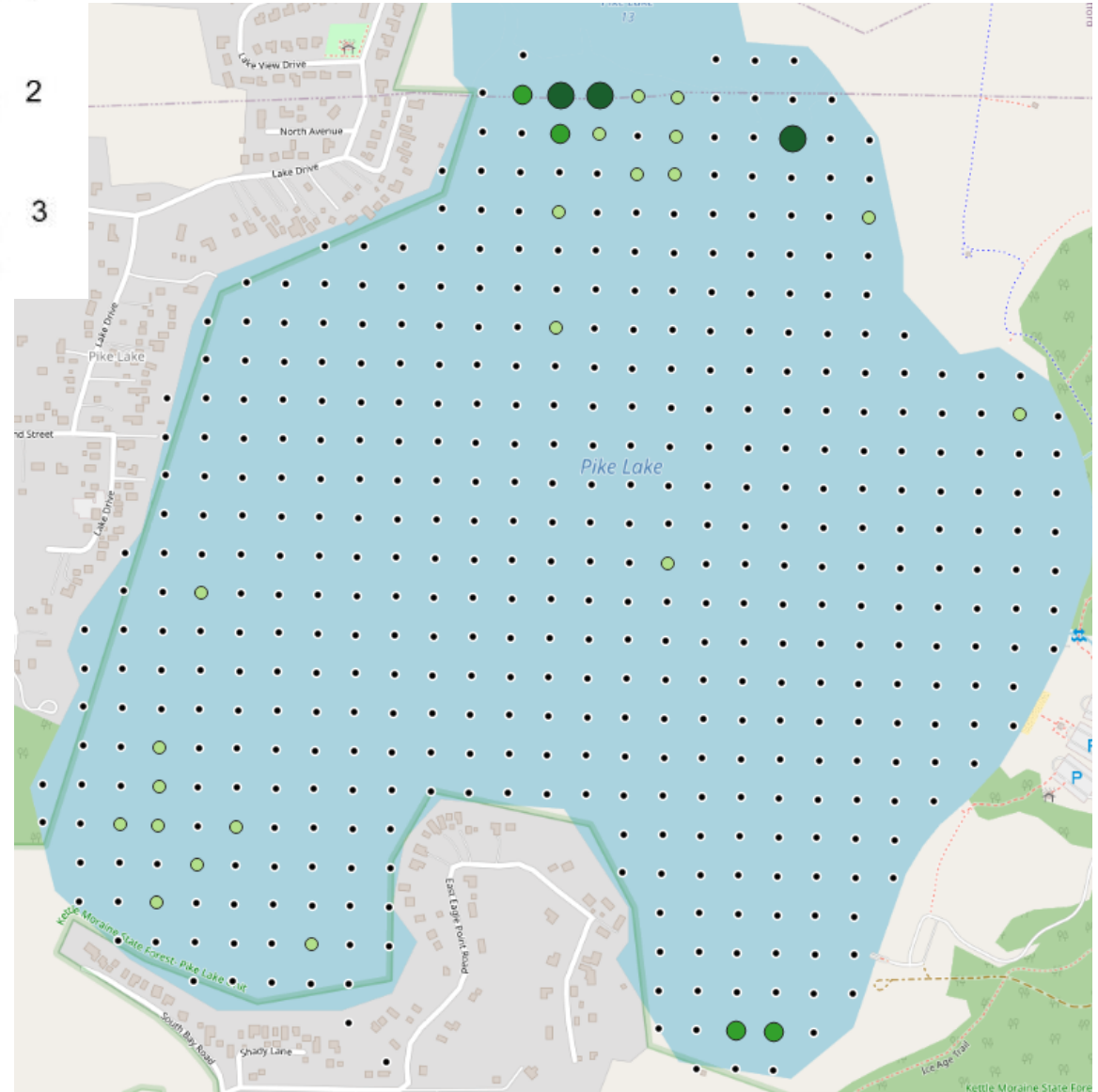
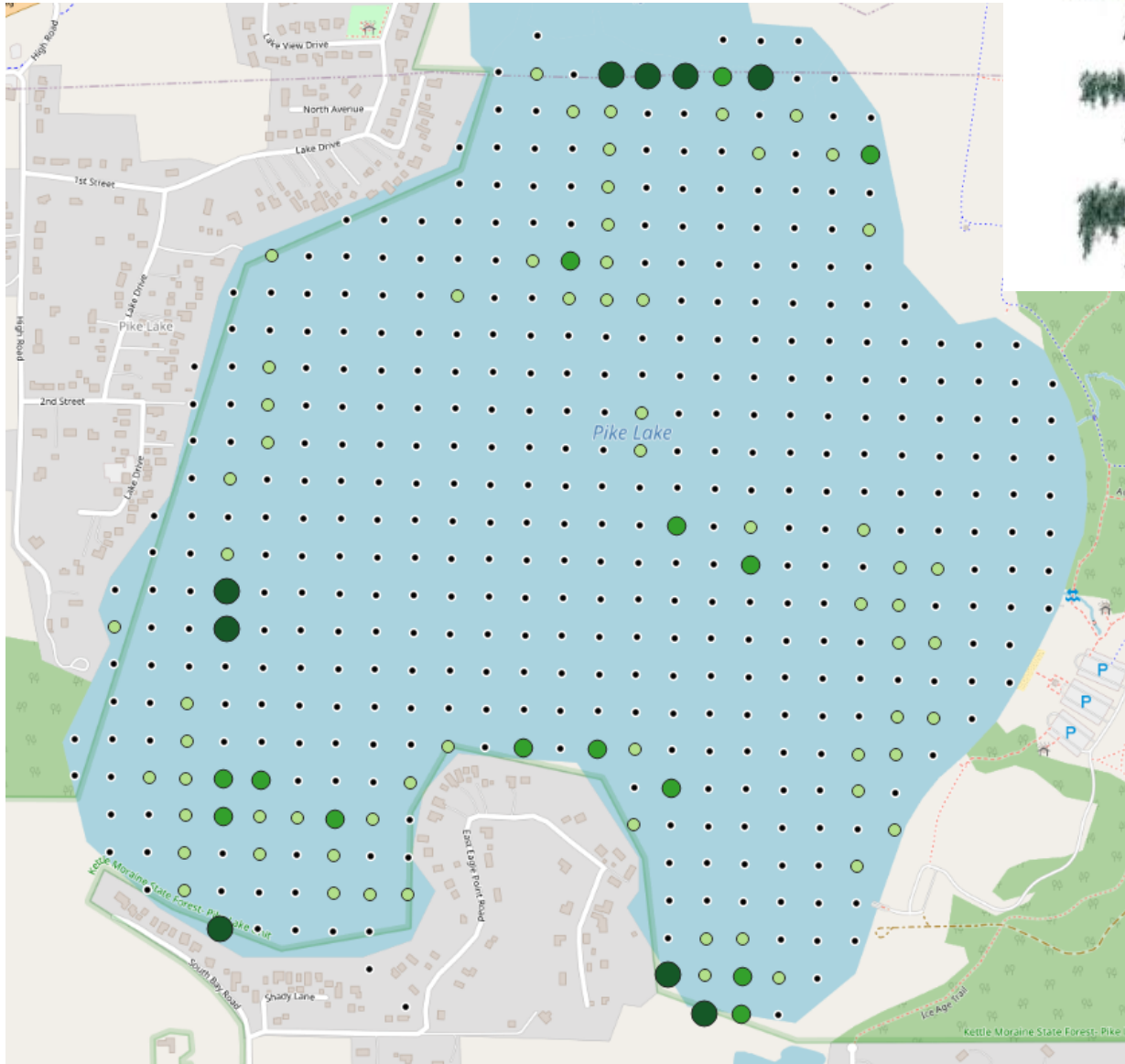


August, 2024

Illustration of Rake Fullness Rating



August, 2025





# Response – Starry Stonewort

Build understanding of population dynamics in the system – PI surveys, citizen monitoring, learn from other groups, etc.

If management is warranted - Containment-based management approach, using selective methods (hand-removal, DASH)

Framework to address :

- Nuisance conditions as they arise (nav/rec impeded)
- When located in high traffic/shallow areas (ie. boat launch)
- How monitoring will be done

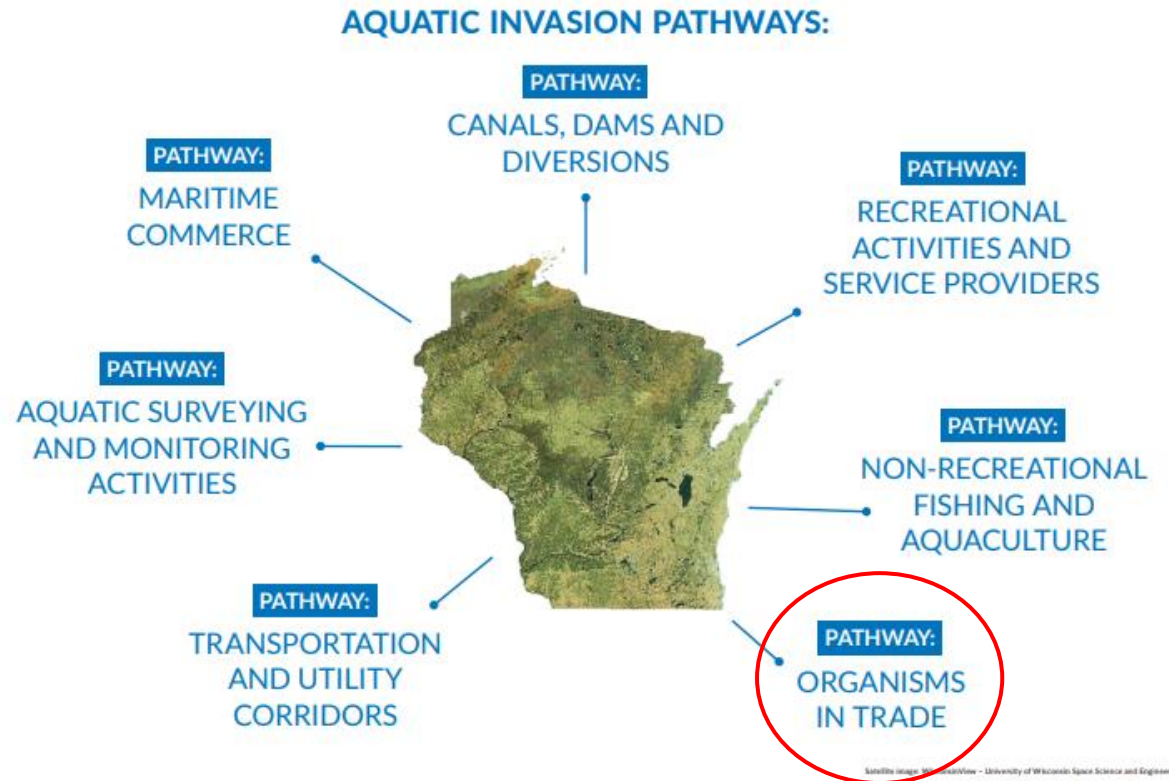
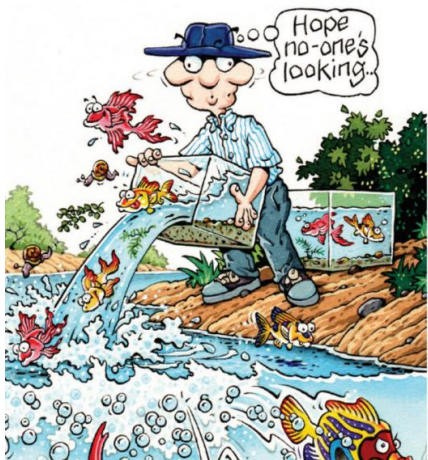
# AIS Prevention - Organisms in Trade (OIT)

Invasive plants and animals that may be introduced through trade

- Traditional sales
- Global internet marketplace

Can be introduced to the environment

- Unintentional escapes
- Intentional releases



# Organisms in Trade Pathway Impact

Crayfish boils (Wauwatosa, Altoona)



 Milwaukee Riverkeeper  
1h · 🌐

RIVER REMINDER: Please don't release your aquarium fish into our rivers. 🐟

Check out this #OscarFish found in the Burnham Canal: Oscars are native to #SouthAmerica and are not a part of our local ecosystem. Releasing non-native species can harm our waterways and local wildlife.

#ProtectMKERivers #ProtectOurRivers #MKE #Milwaukee #Rivers



👍 Like    💬 Comment    📧 Send    ➦ Share

Aquatic plant releases



Goldfish, Greenfield Park Pond



# Organisms in Trade (OIT) Program

Coordinate efforts to prevent the introduction and spread of invasives species through trade

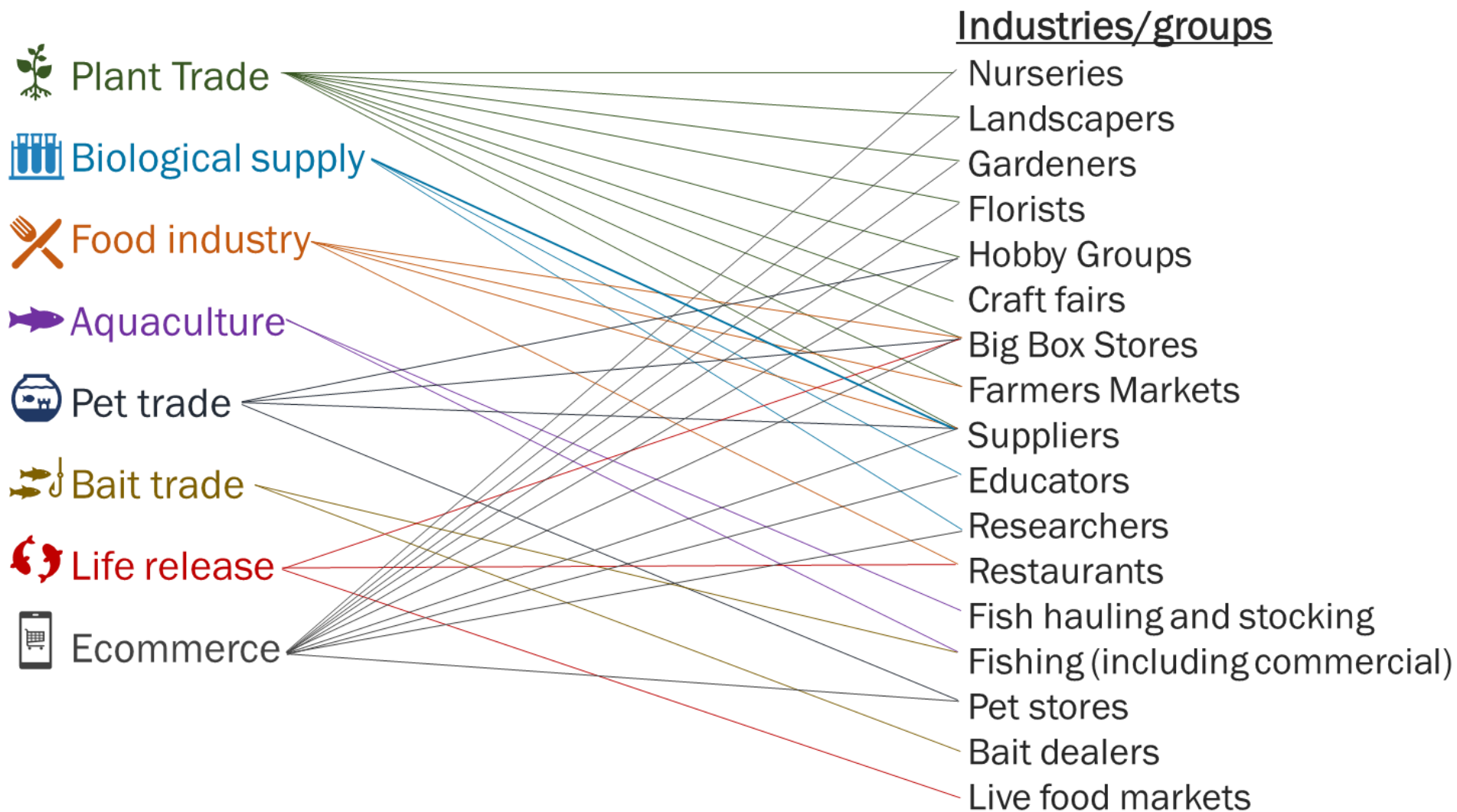
- Buy, sell, trade, give away
- Includes hitchhikers

Requires working with many groups

- Inter- and intra-agency cooperation
- Partners/citizens
- Industry
- Other agencies and jurisdictions



# OIT Sub-pathways



# Specimen identification – DNR Law Enforcement



# Pet & Aquarium Trade



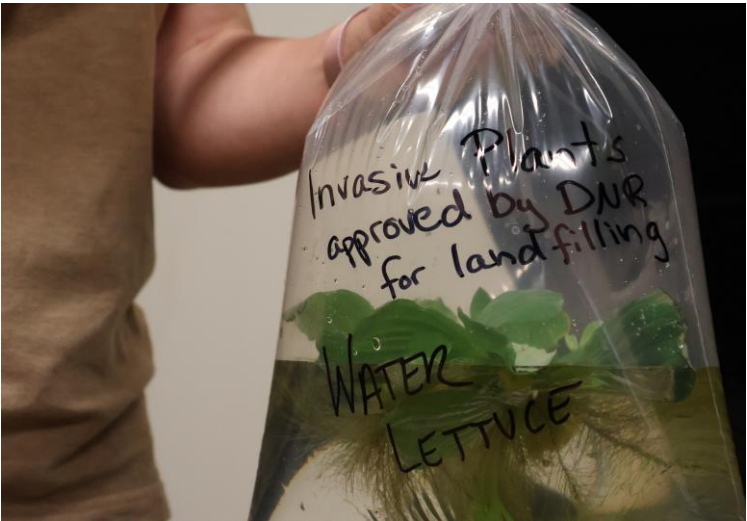
**AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES MONITORING:  
PET RETAILERS**

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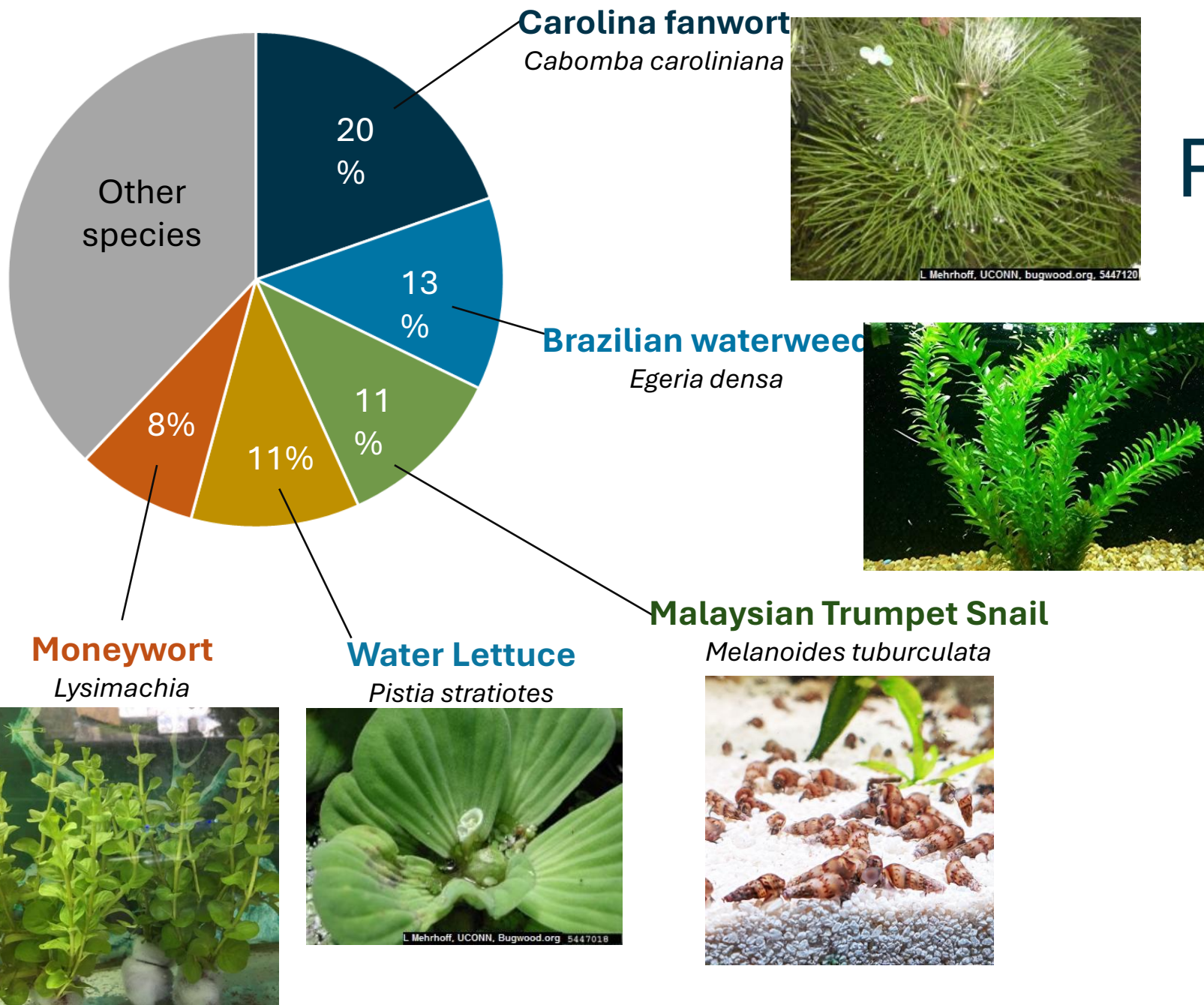
*State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources*

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

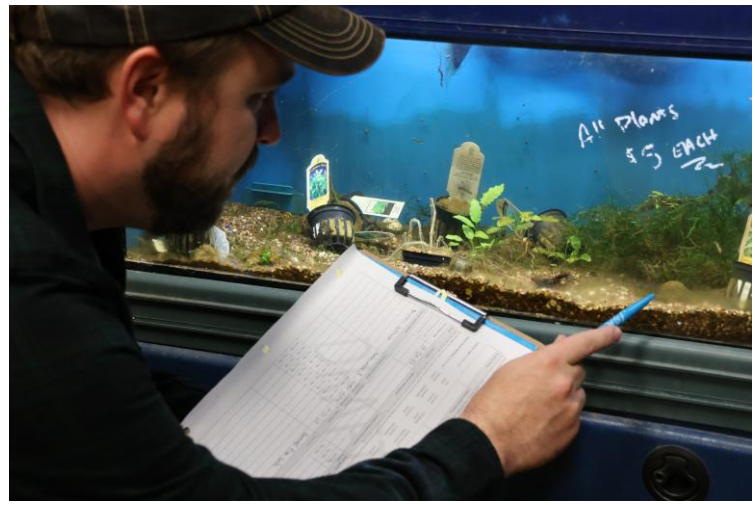
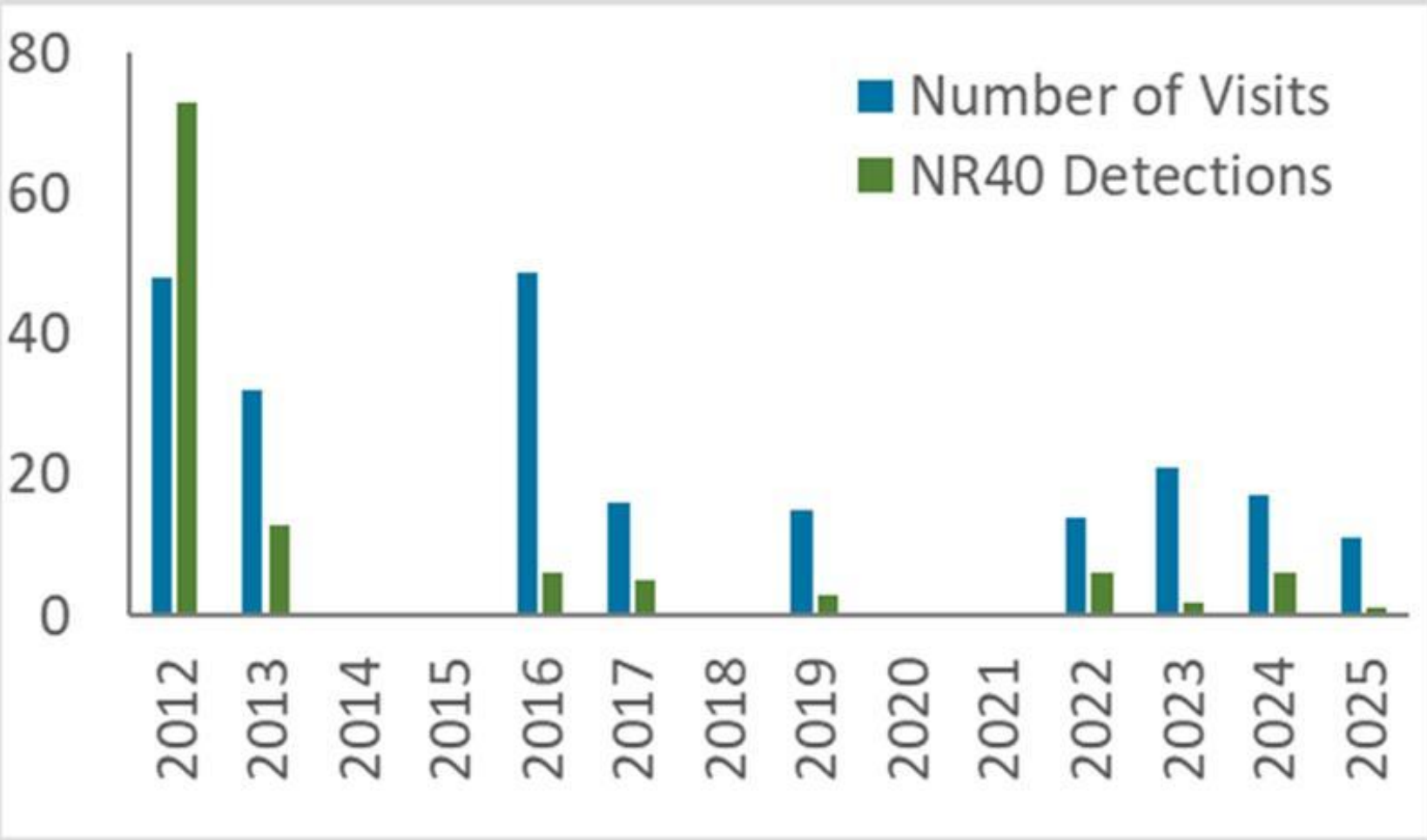
February 2025



# Most Common Regulated Species

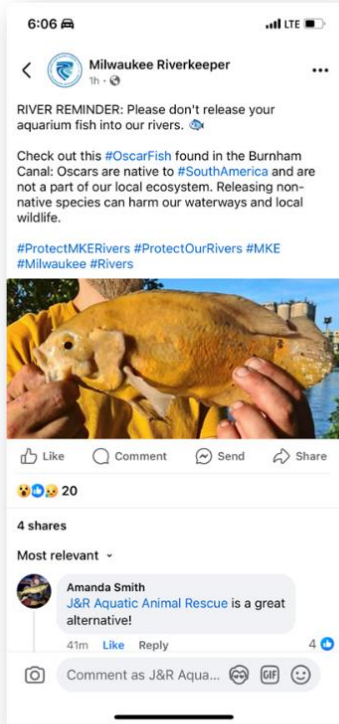
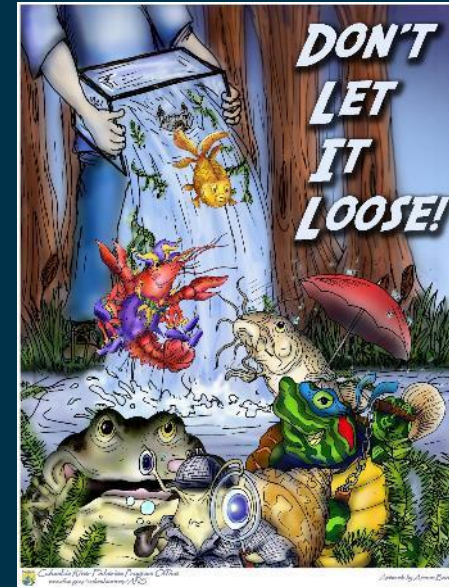


# Pet Store Efforts over the years

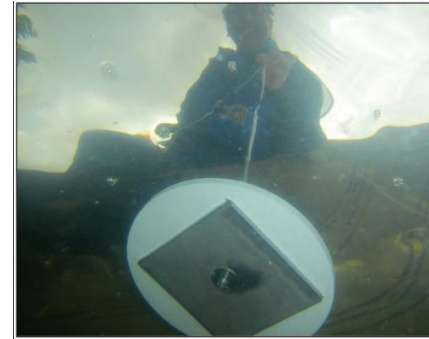
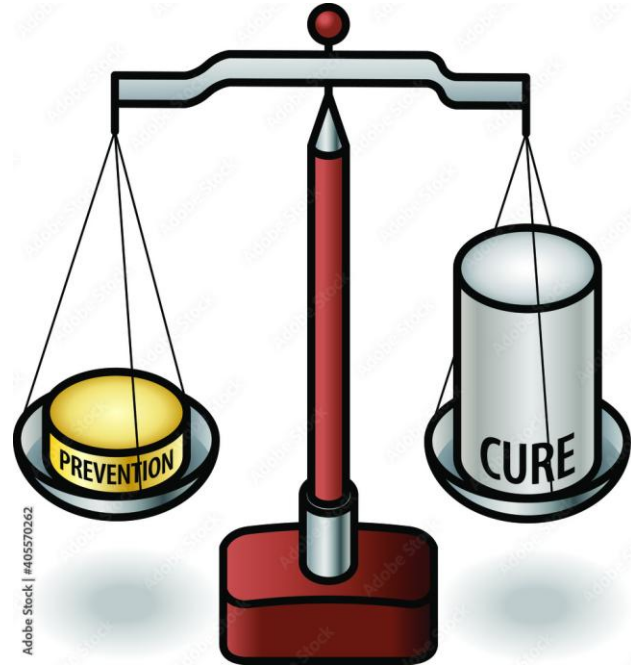


# Pet release happens...

# What can we do about it?



# The Big Picture

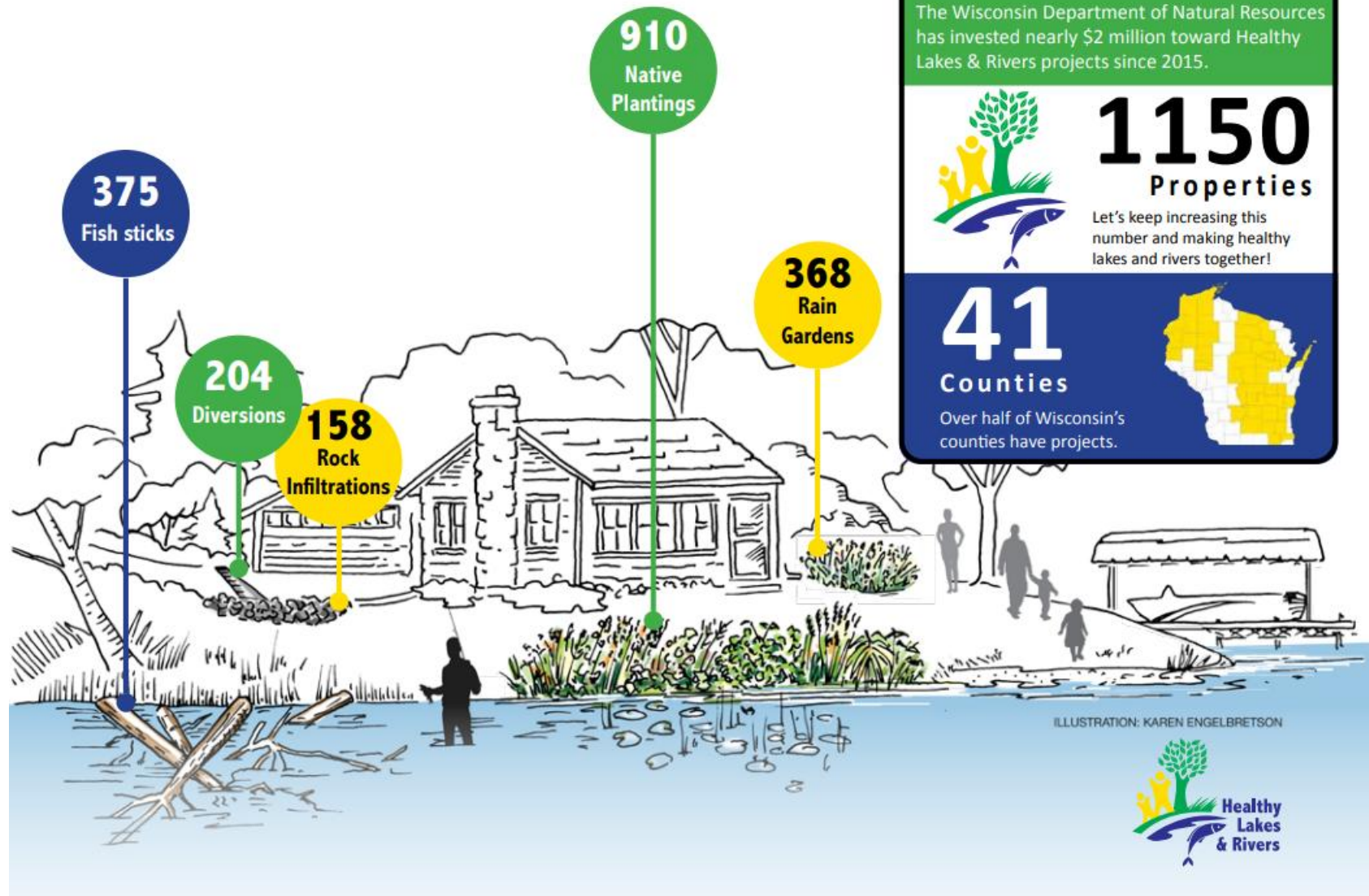


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# CONNECT WITH US

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"WILD WISCONSIN:  
OFF THE RECORD"