

# Clean Boats, Clean Waters Watercraft Inspection Program



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**LLAA 2025**



CLASS, TODAY WE'RE GOING  
TO STUDY WHY IT'S BAD  
TO INTRODUCE INVASIVE  
SPECIES...



# What we are going to go through Today?

- What are Invasive species?
  - How did they get here?
  - How do they Spread?
  - Why do we care?
- AIS relative to the area – 5 species
- Clean Boats Clean Waters Program
  - AIS prevention message
  - Regulations
  - How to inspect watercraft and approach a boater
- Resources and gear
- Mock inspections



# What are invasive species?

- Non-native species that can “take over”
- Not all non-native species are invasive
- Successful because:
  - No natural predators, parasites, etc.
  - Native species can’t hide, compete, or fight back
  - Often aggressive, prolific, and mature early



# How do they get here?

- Shipping - ballast water
- Intentional introduction - stocking
- Canals - migration from the ocean
- Nursery industry
- Anglers/Bait industry
- Aquaculture
- Aquarium trade



# How do they spread?



- Boaters
- Anglers
- Other water users (sea planes, SCUBA, etc)
- Water garden & aquarium owners
- Natural dispersal



# Why do we care?

- Economic impacts
  - Sport & commercial fishing
  - Tourism
  - Water users & property owners
- Ecological
  - Native fish, invertebrates, plants impacted
- Recreational impacts
  - Boating
  - Angling



# Eurasian Water-milfoil



- First found in WI in 1960s
- Currently found in 932 WI lakes & rivers (March 2024)
- Forms dense mats - interferes with water recreation
- Can spread from small fragments

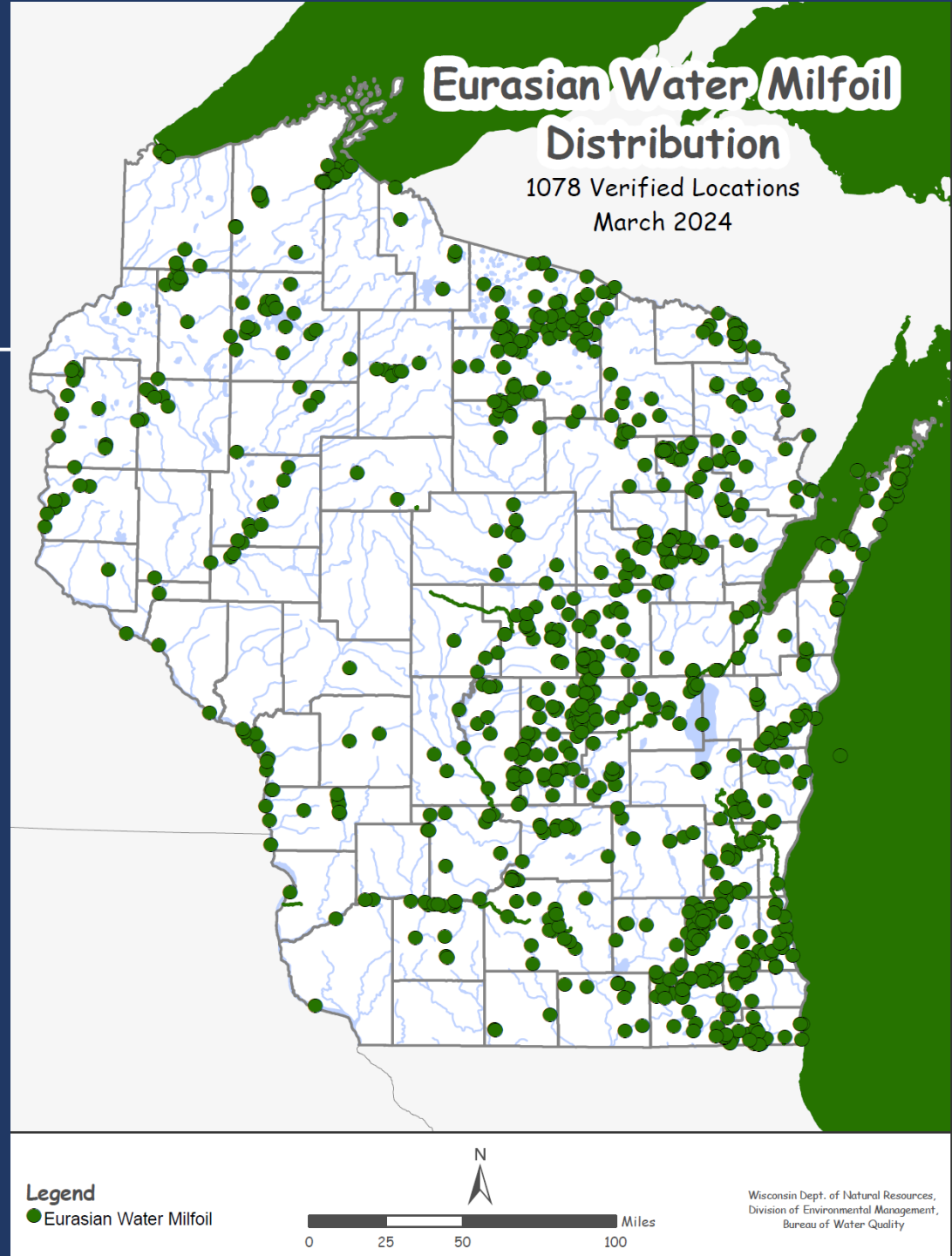




Adventitious roots  
develop on fragments

# Eurasian Water-milfoil Distribution

Restricted Species



# Native Watermilfoil Weevil



- NATIVE to North America
- Feeds on native watermilfoils and EWM
- Larvae do the most damage
- Requires natural shorelines to be effective





# Curly-leaf Pondweed



- Introduced through ballast water, aquarium dumping, and/or during common carp stocking programs
- Typically grows from October - June
- Releases nutrients into water column when it dies off – contributes to algae blooms



# Curly-leaf Pondweed



- Documented in 916 WI lakes and rivers (March 2024)
- Spreads by rhizomes and turions

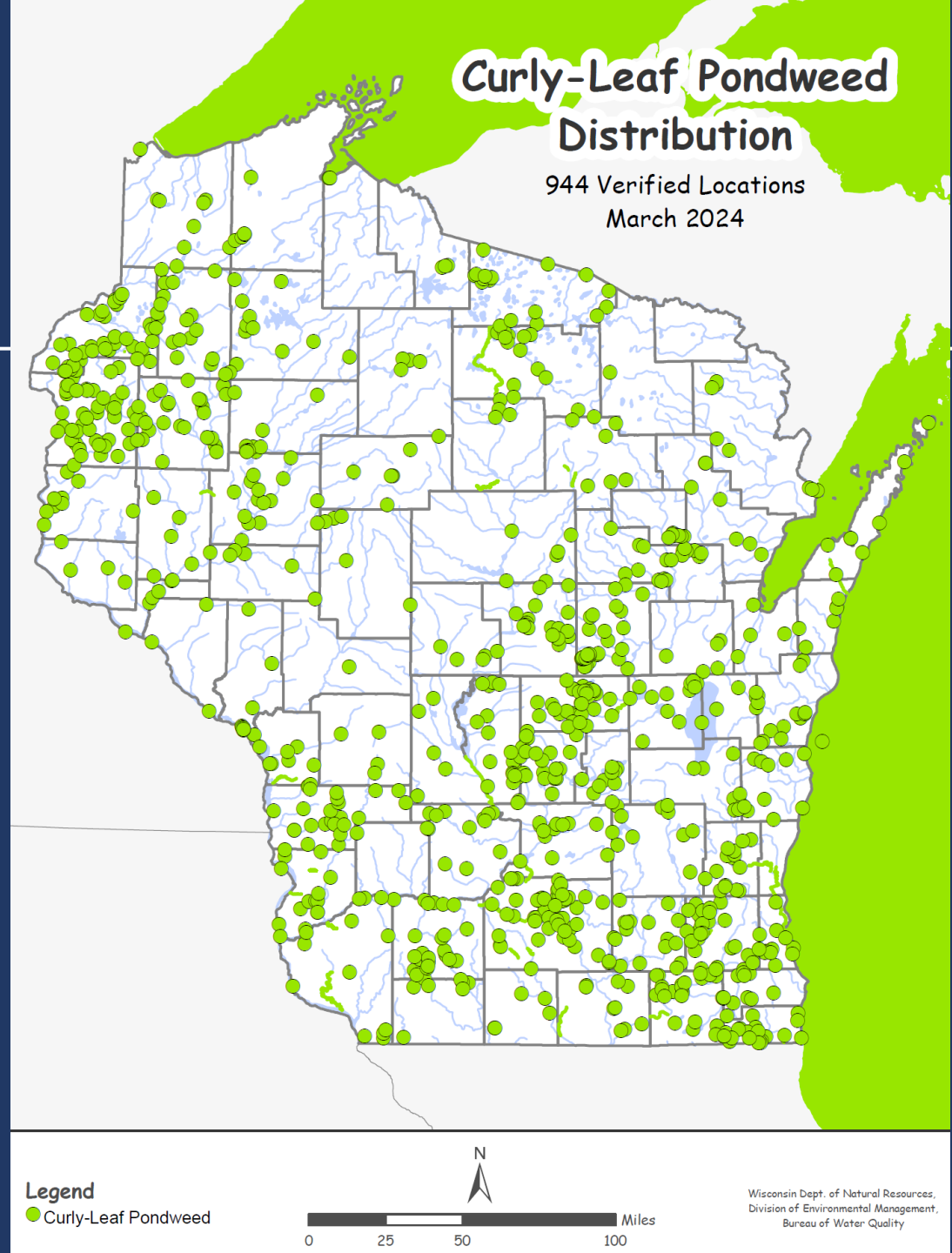


# Curly-leaf Pondweed Distribution

## Restricted Species

### Nearby Lakes

- Kentuck Lake
- Pine Lake



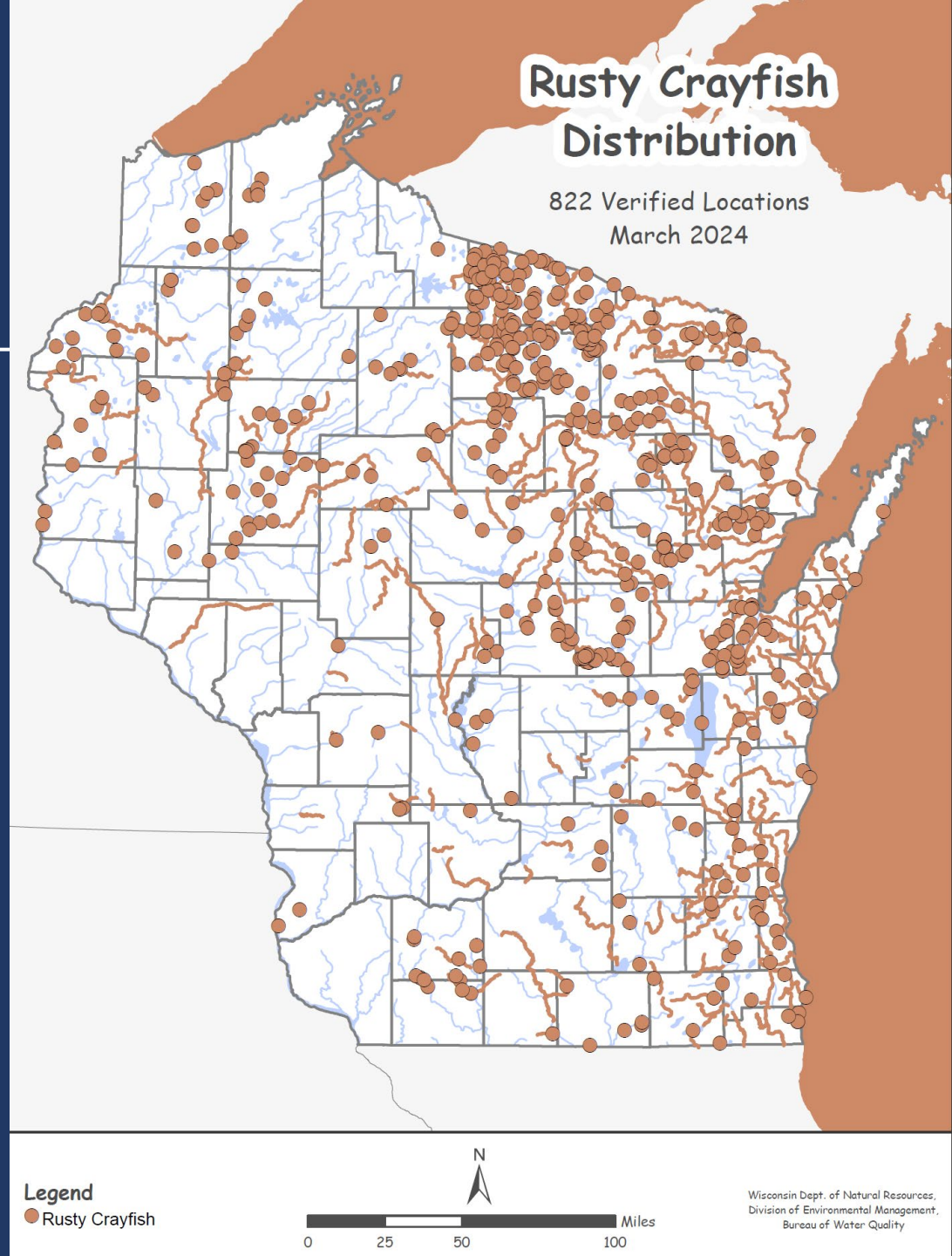
# Rusty Crayfish



- Brought to WI as bait 1960s
- In 870 lakes and rivers  
(March 2024)
- Severely reduce aquatic vegetation, impacting spawning
- Aggressive; compete with native crayfish and fish for cover and food

# Rusty Crayfish Distribution

Restricted Species





# Zebra Mussels



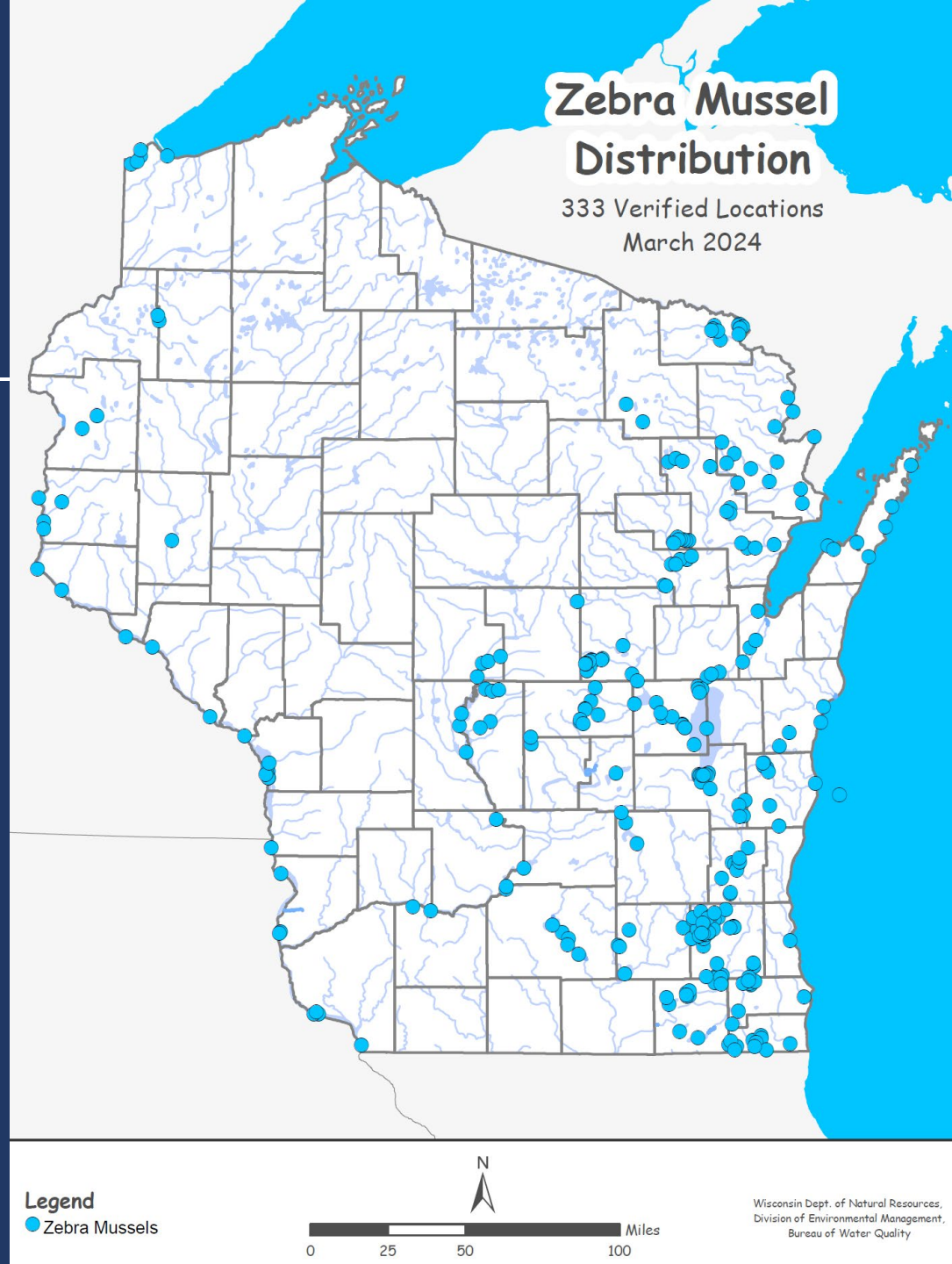
- Ballast water introduction to the Great Lakes in 1980s
- Present in 310 WI lakes & streams (March 2024)
- Attach to any firm surface - may reach tens of thousands per square meter!
- Are microscopic in early life stages
- Female can produce 1 million eggs/season

# Zebra Mussel Distribution

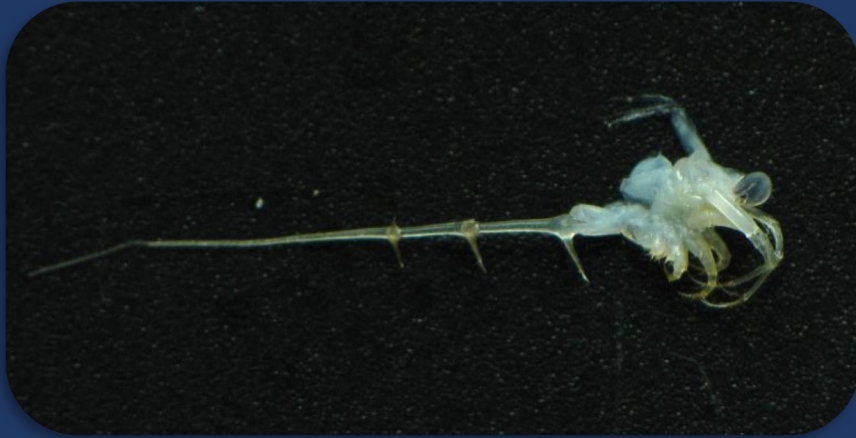
Restricted Species

Nearby Lakes

- Lake Metonga
- Robberts Lake



# Spiny & Fishhook Waterfleas



- Ballast water introduction to Great Lakes in 1980s
- Found in 27 inland lakes & streams (March 2024)
- Eat zooplankton & harm native fish
- Foul fishing gear—form gummy clumps



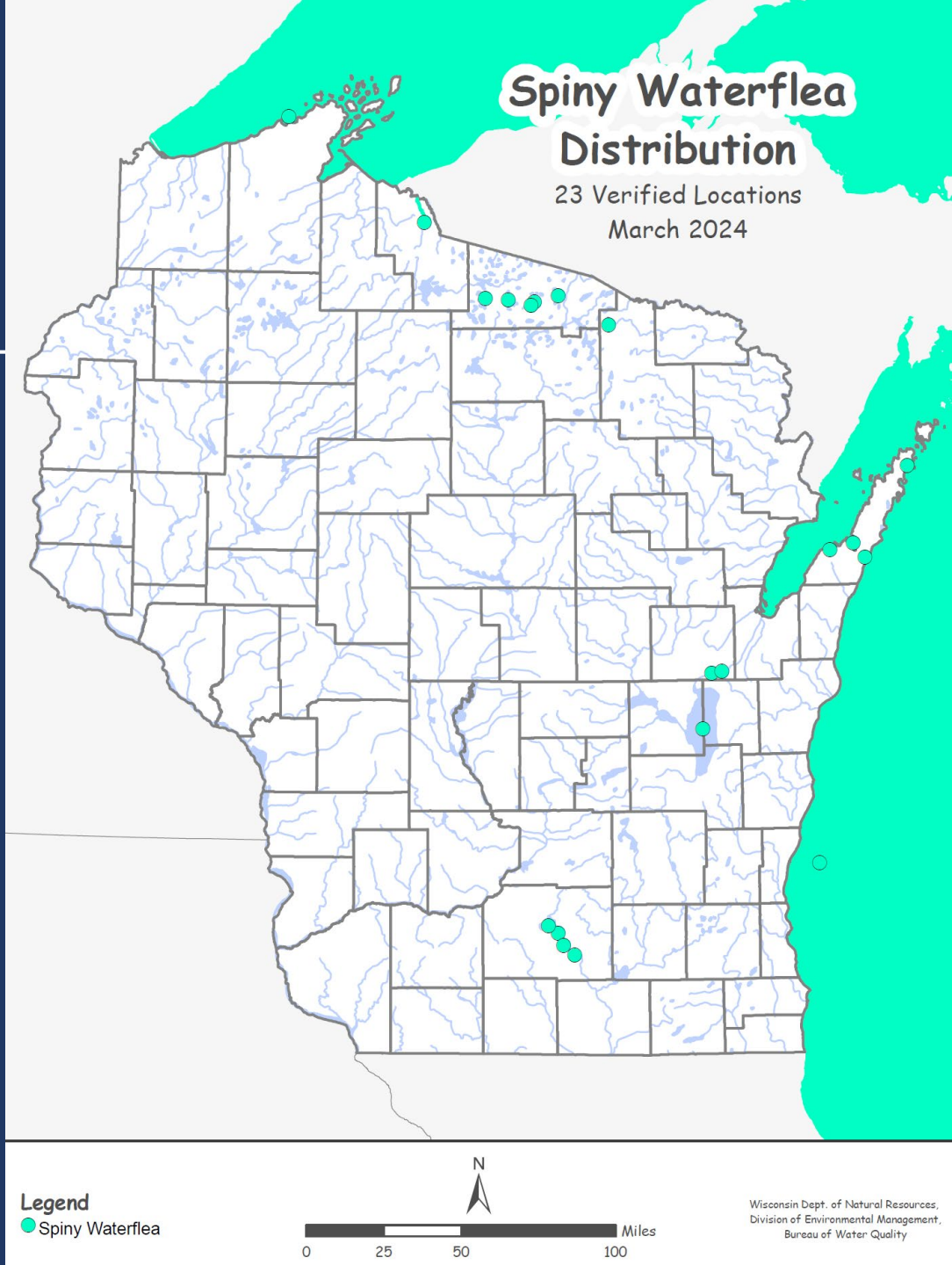


# Spiny Waterflea Distribution

Prohibited Species

Nearby Lakes

- Butternut Lake



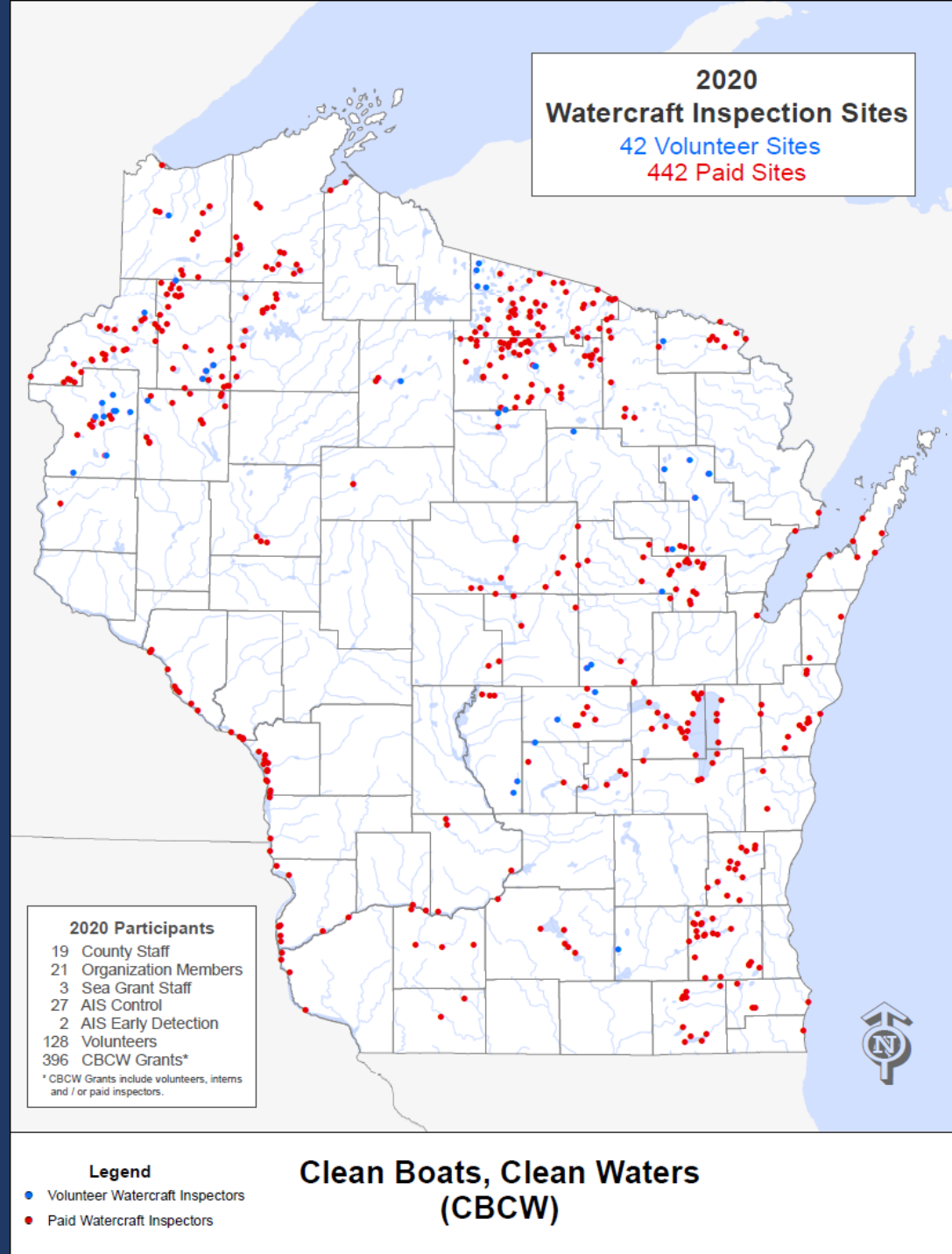


# Why watercraft inspection?



Several different  
Aquatic Invasive  
Species

As of May 2021





same prevention methods



# AIS Prevention Message

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- **INSPECT** boats, trailers, and equipment.
- **REMOVE** all attached plants and animals.
- **DRAIN** all water from boats, vehicles, and equipment.
- **NEVER MOVE** plants or live fish away from a waterbody.
- **BUY** minnows from a WI bait dealer. Use leftover minnows only under certain conditions.

# Current AIS Regulations

## NR 40

- Classification of invasives into two categories:  
Prohibited or Restricted

### Prohibited Invasive Species\*

- Not yet in the state or only in a few places
- Likely to cause environmental and/or economic harm
- Eradication and prevention is feasible

Regulations: Cannot transport, possess, transfer, or introduce without a permit.\*\*

**Control is required. DNR may order or conduct a control effort.**

### Restricted Invasive Species\*

- Already widely established in the state
- High environmental and/or economic impacts are evident with these species
- Complete eradication is unlikely

Regulations: Cannot transport, transfer, or introduce without a permit.\*\*

Possession is allowed except for fish or crayfish.  
**Control is encouraged but not required.**

*\*Any viable part of the species is covered by these regulations.*

*\*\* Certain exemptions do exist with these regulations. Please consult with the website or staff for clarifications.*



# Current AIS Regulations (cont'd)

## Live Bait Regulations

- All water must be drained from boats and equipment – up to 2 gal may be used for minnows.
- You may take leftover minnows away from any state water and use them again on that same water, or on other waters, but only if no lake or river water, or other fish were added to their container.
- You may not transport any live fish or fish eggs away from any state waters.

# Clean Boats, Clean Waters

- Inspectors Do Make a difference
- Trains volunteers, citizens, and staff to conduct boater education campaigns in their communities
- Over 2,500 people trained since 2004



# Preparing for Inspections

- Visit landings ahead of time: identify layout, traffic flow, unsafe areas
  - Determine emergency contacts
  - Make inclement weather plan
  - Pack water, snacks, & sunscreen
- 
- ✓ CBCW T-shirt or sticker
  - ✓ Clipboard & pencil
  - ✓ Select handouts: landing script, prompts handout, check points list, violation form
- 
- ✓ Watercraft Inspection form
  - ✓ SAH brochures & stickers
  - ✓ List of lakes identified with AIS
  - ✓ Cell phone & local law contacts

# Getting Started: Inspector Duties

- Inform and educate boaters
- Perform watercraft inspections
- Collect and report watercraft data
- Discuss the AIS preventive actions (which are now law)
- Offer outreach material -SAH sticker







Notice: Information is collected under s. 33.02, Wis. Stats. Personally identifiable information, including names of volunteers, will be broadly distributed in conjunction with lakes data.

Inspector Name(s)	Date	Start Time <input type="radio"/> am <input type="radio"/> pm	End Time <input type="radio"/> am <input type="radio"/> pm	Total Hours Spent: Paid: _____ Volunteer: _____
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Waterbody Name	County	Landing Location
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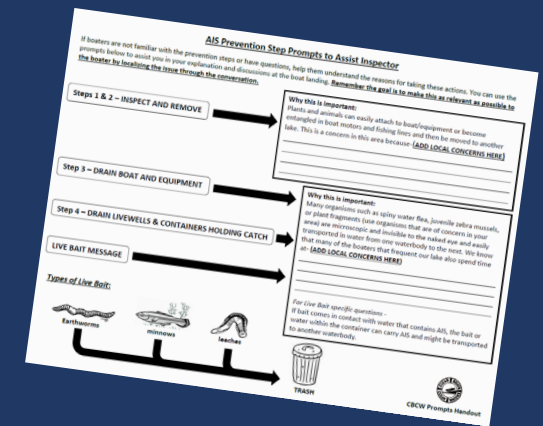
Boat Was... Entering Leaving		Questions to Ask Boater						Was boat used during the past 5 days on a different waterbody?	If YES, where?	Number of People Contacted	Discuss Following Prevention Steps with Boater
		Have you been contacted by a watercraft inspector this season?		Are you willing to answer a few questions?							
		Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N		
											<p><b>WI Law requires boaters to take the following steps when leaving a boat landing:</b></p> <p><b>Steps 1 &amp; 2: Inspect</b> boat, trailers and equipment and <b>remove</b> any attached plants/animals.</p> <p>» Have you heard of this before? (see prompt)</p> <p><b>Step 3: Drain</b> all water from <b>boats</b>, vehicles and equipment.</p> <p>» Do you have any questions? (see prompt)</p> <p><b>If angler, state following steps:</b></p> <p><b>Step 4: Drain</b> water from <b>livewells</b> and containers holding your catch.</p> <p>» This is a relatively new law. Were you aware that this is required? (see prompt)</p> <p>Do you use live bait? (If YES, share message below.)</p> <p><b>Bait Message:</b> If live bait comes in contact with lake/river water, it can only be used on that same waterbody or discarded in trash. (bait=minnows/leeches/worms)</p> <p>» Do you have any questions on this law as it can be a little confusing? (If yes, see Prompt and offer bait sticker/brochure)</p>
TOTALS: Enter the totals & waterbody information into SWIMS at <a href="https://apps.dnr.wi.gov/swims">https://apps.dnr.wi.gov/swims</a>											

Comments:	
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# Prompts Handout

- Resource for inspector
  - ✓ Reminder of why steps important
  - ✓ Leads to discussion rather than just information
  - ✓ Local concerns addressed
- Diagram layout simple & easy to read
- Quick visual reminder for live bait



# Collecting Data



- Determine traveling patterns of recreational users
- Useful data for lake planning grants, local ordinance reviews

## Efforts for 2023:

**154,087 boat inspections**

**301,676 people contacted**

**83,049 hours spent (3/24)**

# Watercraft Inspection Results

Location: Statewide ▼

Aquatic Invasive  
Species

Watercraft Inspection Efforts

Boater Statistics

Projects

Landings

## Contact information

For information on Lakes in Wisconsin,  
contact:

[DNR SWIMS](#)

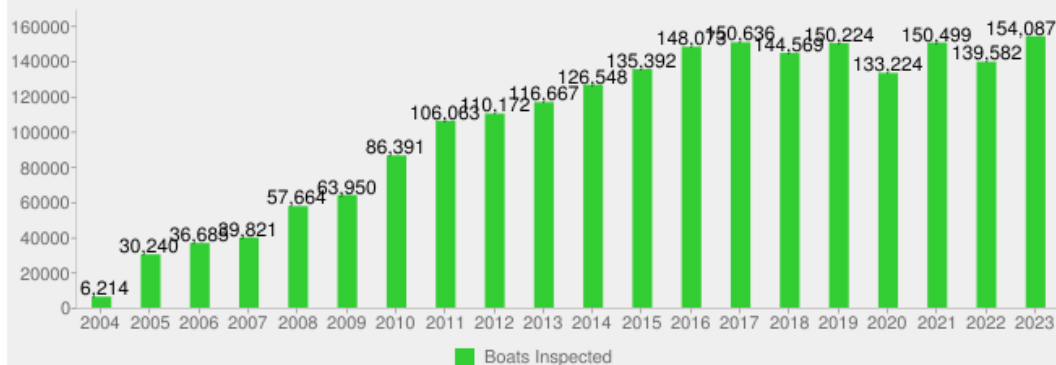
Division of Water

Bureau of Water Quality

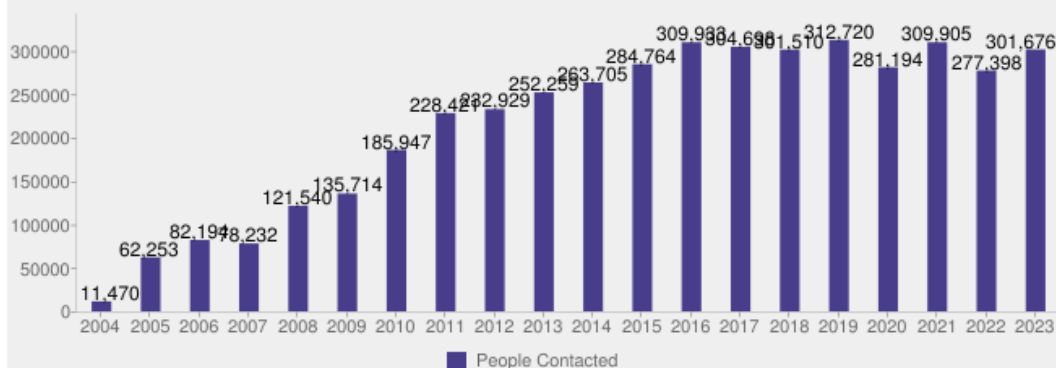
[Clean Boats, Clean Waters](#)

[Contacts](#)

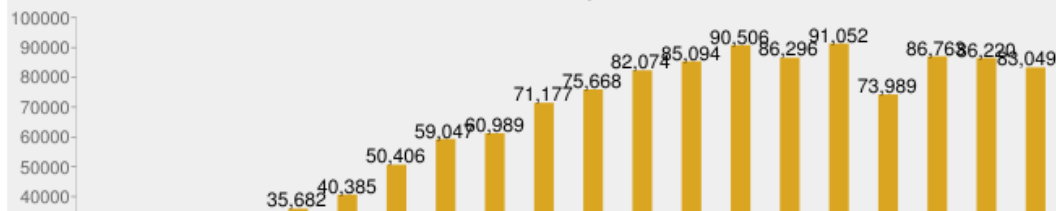
Boats Inspected



People Contacted



Hours Spent



<https://apps.dnr.wi.gov/lakes/invasives/WatercraftSummary.aspx>



# Clean Boats, Clean Waters - Lake Lucerne

Location:  ▼

**Watercraft Inspection Efforts**

**Boater Statistics**

**Boater Travel**

**Landings**

**Download**

**Contact**

For information  
contact:

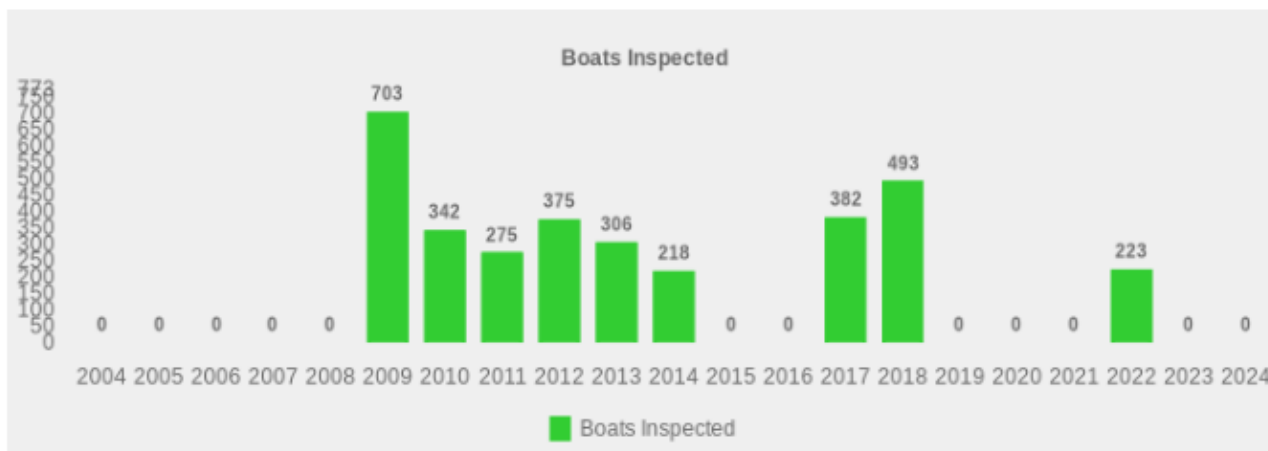
[DNR](#)

Division

Bureau

[Clean](#)

[Contact](#)



# Steps for an Effective Watercraft Inspection Program

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- Maintain effective inspection hours
- Develop a plan to recruit, train, and retain inspectors
- Wear Clean Boats, Clean Waters t-shirts or stickers
- Keep educational materials available
- Keep and report watercraft inspection records
- Report any suspect specimens

# Staying Safe During Inspections

## Unity

- Strength in numbers
- Easier to diffuse situations when together

## Boundaries

- Know your personal boundaries and when to address them
- Use your words
- Things get to complicated...leave....no fish is worth your life

# CBCW Resources & Gear

- **Resources**

- Watercraft Inspection Manual
- CBCW kit
- Video scenarios
- Website: [uwsp.edu/uwexlakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexlakes)

- **Gear – order online!**

- T-shirts
- Aprons
- Hats
- Stickers





# Statewide Contact Info

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- For more information contact:

Erin McFarlane

715-346-4978

[erin.mcfarlane@uwsp.edu](mailto:erin.mcfarlane@uwsp.edu)



- To download materials & presentations, visit our website: [uwsp.edu/uwexplakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexplakes)