



## The Next Generation UW-Madison Students Get Their Feet Wet Gathering Watershed Data

By Abigail Becker, Senior Associate for Communications & Outreach, University of Wisconsin-Madison UniverCity Alliance

*The city of Sun Prairie, the towns of Deerfield and Cottage Grove, the nonprofit Friends of Koshkonong Creek, and Badger Farms, LLC came together with the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2021 to improve the Koshkonong Creek, an impaired waterway, and to implement a vision for sustaining the watershed for the next several decades.*

**A**fter studying Koshkonong Creek and its surrounding land during the school year, University of Wisconsin-Madison Water Resources Management (WRM) students waded in – literally – to the next phase of research this summer.

The students are investigating the waterway’s hydrology and gathering data, like the depth of the sediment, to inform a watershed management plan.

“Hands-on field experience often requires problem-solving skills and provides insight into the challenges of environmental work,” Ed Boswell, a teaching faculty member in GIS and geodesign, said.

*(Continued on page 2)*



Bryce Richer

Ed Boswell, a teaching faculty member in GIS and geodesign, left, and student Germán González, right, add a second pole to the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) receiver as they prepare to take sediment level samples in Koshkonong Creek.



González and Boswell take measurements.

Wearing waders, WRM student Germán González walked into a section of the creek off of Baxter Road and County Highway BB in Cottage Grove on July 20. He held a Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) receiver connected to two poles vertically in the water. This device accurately measures the elevation of the bottom of the creek and the top of the sediment layer.

*Beyond the technical skills, gaining an understanding of the issues communities face and understanding people’s relationship with the environment goes a long way in making impactful and sustainable improvements.*

~ Germán González

The data will allow the students to calculate the volume of sediment in the creek and inform possible recommendations on what strategies to implement to improve water flow and reduce flooding. Eventually, this data will be used in simulation software to model how the water flows through the creek and how that might change depending on if the sediment is removed.

González says the hands-on experience was “absolutely indispensable,” especially coming from a non-STEM background.

“Beyond the technical skills, gaining an understanding of the issues communities face and understanding people’s relationship with the environment goes a long way in making impactful and sustainable improvements,” González says. “Having the opportunity to work within the community to make impactful changes that will, hopefully, improve the community and environment gives me invaluable experience that I can take into my career.”

Meanwhile, a group of WRM students were out in a field of swaying reed canary grass – an invasive species that grows well in wet open areas – collecting soil samples. Using an auger to spiral down into the earth, the students observed the layers of soil that are removed for clues about the fluctuating water table and how the area developed.

The students are focusing on Koshkonong Creek during their two-year graduate program through a partnership with a collaboration of local government and community partners facilitated by UniverCity Year (UCY).

From 2021 to 2024, a group that includes the city of Sun Prairie, towns of Deerfield and Cottage Grove, and Friends of Koshkonong Creek with support from Badger Farms is partnering with UCY to work toward a healthier Koshkonong Creek to improve water quality and support a variety of wildlife and human activities for generations to come.

Bryce Richter



Students Hannah Agner (left) and Heidi Putnam (center) work with Boswell while standing in a field of reed canary grass.

### Summary Reports

University of Wisconsin–Madison students working on projects coordinated by UCY prepared summary reports from 12 different courses, ranging from website design to geography to engineering. View and download their results online at: <https://university.wisc.edu/university-year-koshkonong/>. UCY will be initiating similar projects in Eau Claire County starting in 2023.



“No matter what I end up doing after graduation, effective communication is a huge part of natural resource management,” WRM student Hannah Agner says.

Agner says she has communicated with a range of people to inform her work on this project, including university faculty to discuss research questions, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to determine appropriate field sampling methodologies, and landowners to gain trust and understand the problems that are going on within the watershed.

“Getting experience interacting with these groups and others will allow me to be confident in my ability to work with related groups in the future,” Agner says. 💧

*This story was originally published on the University of Wisconsin-Madison news site.*



*No matter what I end up doing after graduation, effective communication is a huge part of natural resource management.*  
~ Hannah Agner

*Student Hannah Agner uses the Global Satellite System receiver to measure sediment depth while wading in Koshkonong Creek.*

## Hands-on Water Work

UCY is not the only program based at the University of Wisconsin-Madison helping to engage students in hands-on water work. Wisconsin Sea Grant’s Summer Outreach Opportunities Program supported a dozen undergraduate students to assist with outreach needs across the state. The effort was funded in part by a grant through the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin, an initiative to bring together all of Wisconsin’s public universities to tackle major water challenges. You can learn more about the 2023 Summer Outreach students and their projects in the Sea Grant news archive (<https://www.seagrants.wisc.edu/news-categories/news-archive/>). Here is an example of one of these projects:

### ***Project: Eat Wisconsin Fish***

For Jojo Hunt and Crow Idnani, this was the summer of fish. Paired with Food-Fish Outreach Coordinator Sharon Moen and Aquaculture Outreach and Education Specialist Emma Hauser in Superior, Wisconsin, the scholars spent their summer immersed in the commercial fishing and aquaculture industries across the state: visiting producers, learning about the industry and sharing what they’ve learned. Both scholars completed projects that seek to educate and connect consumers with fish caught or farmed in Wisconsin.

*Provided by Jojo Hunt*



*Provided by Crow Idnani*



*Students Jojo Hunt (left) and Crow Idnani (right) thoroughly enjoyed meeting fish at UW-Stevens Point Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility.*

# Like a Duck to Water

## Empowering Waterfowl Hunters to Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species

By Stephanie Boismenu, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator & Conservation Technician,  
Oneida County Land & Water Conservation Department

Stephanie Boismenu



Optimal waterfowl hunting location in the Northwoods.

**Protecting wetlands from the introduction and spread of AIS is not just up to waterfowl hunters, but rather the responsibility of all of us.**



Lake Tides 48(3)

**W**ith the 2023 migratory season underway, waterfowl hunters have the perfect opportunity to achieve one of the most important habitat conservation efforts possible while out in the field - to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). AIS are non-native plants and animals that can spread rapidly and widely and are often detrimental to Wisconsin's waterbodies. A few minutes of prevention will stop their spread, protect quality waterfowl habitats and food sources, maintain waterfowl populations, and preserve the hunting traditions that have lasted for generations.

Cold, gloomy days of trudging through water and muck to chase ducks comes with the territory and adds to the adventure. However, after a long day in the field, hunters are faced with a boatload of grimy gear: waders, clothing, decoys, decoy bags, ropes, anchors, blinds, push poles, paddles, canoes, kayaks, boats, trailers, carts, ATV/UTVs and other

hunting equipment. All of these items could harbor AIS trapped in mud, water, or attached to a plant. Please remember to drain all water from your boat and equipment and remove all plants, animals, mud, seeds and other debris before you toss your gear in the truck and leave the boat landing. These actions will prevent the spread of AIS, especially when hunting different waters within a few days.

### Four-legged hunters

Paws down, a wet and dirty dog is a sign that they had a great day of retrieving birds. Hunters should be aware that mud-caked fur, collars, and vests could hold viable AIS. Your dirty dog has the potential to be a vector of an invasive species and inadvertently spread it to the next hunting destination or even bring it home. Before loading your dog in the truck, inspect their fur, ear flaps, paw pads, belly, matted hair, collars, and vests for anything that doesn't belong. It's important to remove mud, grass, seeds, burrs, stickers, thorns, and ticks. Bathing them before leaving the landing is not always practical, but keeping a few grooming tools, scissors, and pet wipes with your hunting



Stephanie Boismenu

Sophie (shown running through a Northwoods wetland) can carry hitchhikers like the invasive faucet snail in the mud that sticks to her coat.

equipment will make the cleaning process easier. A jug of tap water and a towel kept in your truck will provide a good rinse and wipe down before the ride home.

## [AIS impact waterfowl populations and habitat](#)

One AIS of particular concern to waterfowl hunters is the invasive faucet snail (*Bithynia tentaculata*) that has been attributed to large-scale waterfowl die-offs in the Upper Midwest. The snail is an intermediate host for three intestinal trematode parasites that are passed from the snail to the waterfowl that consume them. When the infested snail is ingested, adult trematodes attack internal organs and cause lesions, hemorrhaging, and eventually death.

Smithsonian Environmental Research Center



The faucet snail lives in the substrate of shallow waters attached to aquatic plants, gravel, and other solid structures. It grows to a half inch long and has an operculum (trap door) that seals the opening of the shell, allowing it to live for several weeks in dry mud. Since it can survive out of water for so long, it is important to make sure your boat and hunting gear are properly cleaned and all water is drained before moving to a new waterbody.

Another invasive species that threatens waterfowl habitat is the non-native *Phragmites australis*, also known as common reed. This grass is often used to build hunting blinds and camouflage boats. *Phragmites* grows to 18 feet tall with stiff hollow stems and prominent plume-like seed heads. It spreads by below-ground rhizomes, above-ground stolons, and seed dispersal.

Once established, *Phragmites* encroaches shorelines, marshes, rivers, roadside ditches, heavily disturbed sites, and other low, wet areas. The dense colonies limit access to hunting areas, can eliminate plant diversity, food sources, nesting habitat, and reduce

stopover locations for migratory birds. It grows so aggressively that it often dominates entire habitats, which earned it a Prohibited classification on the NR40 Regulated Invasive Species list for northern and western counties in Wisconsin. Since it's illegal to possess *Phragmites* in counties where the plant is Prohibited, other plant species or artificial blind materials should be used.

## [Protecting prime waterfowl habitat](#)

According to the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, less than 15% of Wisconsin is currently wetlands. In contrast, 75% of native wildlife species depend on wetlands at some point in their lives, 30% of rare and endangered species rely on wetlands, and 50% of wetlands have been lost since the late 1800s. Wetlands provide many natural benefits beyond waterfowl hunting, such as clean drinking water, shoreline protection, flood protection, wildlife habitat, and they are an important part of our tourism and outdoor recreation economy. Protecting wetlands from the introduction and spread of AIS is not just up to waterfowl hunters, but rather the responsibility of all of us.

The methods to help prevent the impacts of AIS are simple. First, take a few minutes to clean gear and drain water. These steps are the

*(Continued on page 6)*

*Wetlands provide many natural benefits beyond waterfowl hunting, such as clean drinking water, shoreline protection, flood protection, wildlife habitat, and they are an important part of our tourism and outdoor recreation economy.*

Provided by Chris Hamerla



*Dense patches of Phragmites can grow in wetlands or along lakeshores and limit access to hunting areas, eliminate plant diversity, food sources, and nesting habitat, and reduce stopover locations for migratory birds.*



(Like a Duck to Water, continued)

single most efficient, economical, and effective conservation actions to stop the spread of AIS! Second, learn to identify invasive species and alert property owners, the DNR, or the

seventh year, staff from the Department of Natural Resources, County Land and Water Conservation Departments, and other statewide partners and volunteers meet hunters at many water access points around the state to discuss the impacts of various types of AIS and what hunters can do to help stop the spread. The program is modeled after the Clean Boats, Clean Waters (CBCW) watercraft inspection program that reaches boaters throughout summer. Participants conduct a hunting version of the CBCW survey and talk with hunters about specific aspects of waterfowl hunting that risk moving AIS.

### AIS Removal Tips for Waterfowl Hunters:

- Use a stiff brush to remove debris from boot treads.
- Use non-felt-soled boots to further reduce the risk of spreading AIS.
- Use elliptical, bulb-shaped, or strap decoy anchors to help avoid snagging aquatic plants.
- Check storage compartments in boats or kayaks that aren't in use the rest of the year and make sure they are clean and dry.
- Cut emergent vegetation in accordance with state regulations.

*It takes just a few minutes to do the required AIS prevention steps, which will help protect hunting traditions for generations to come.*

local County Land and Water Conservation Department of their presence. Early detection of an AIS can provide effective control measures before it becomes established and out of control.

The statewide AIS Waterfowl Outreach program is currently underway during the waterfowl hunting season. Now in its

Preventing the spread of AIS is an important component of waterfowl conservation. It takes just a few minutes to do the required AIS prevention steps, which will help protect hunting traditions for generations to come. Together, we can prevent the introduction and spread of AIS. An ounce of prevention will conserve our rich waterfowl habitats – with benefits to hunters and non-hunters alike. 💧



### Let's Make Healthy Lakes & Rivers Together!

The Healthy Lakes & Rivers initiative is a statewide effort providing outreach, technical assistance, and funding for five simple and inexpensive best practices that are appropriate for most waterfront properties. Pitch your Healthy Lakes & Rivers feature story to Pamela ([pamela.toshner@wi.gov](mailto:pamela.toshner@wi.gov)) or Amy ([amy.kowalski@uwsp.edu](mailto:amy.kowalski@uwsp.edu)).

### Have you scored your shore?

If not, you can check out this free tool at [survey.healthylakeswi.com](http://survey.healthylakeswi.com). The online Shoreland Evaluation Tool walks you through questions about the physical aspects of your lake or river property, as well as how you manage it. Questions are set up by property zone - Upland, Transition, and In-Water areas. The Tool also includes a section to identify habitat restoration as well as runoff and erosion control projects that currently exist on your property.

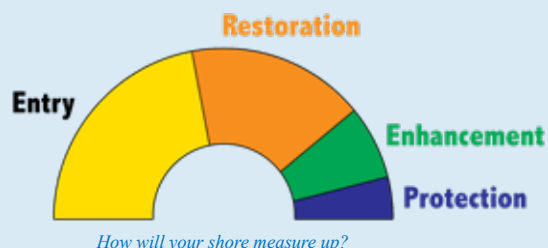
Using this Tool is entirely voluntary! Users get to decide whether to register for an account or answer anonymously. Registered users can save and print results and choose whether their information can be shared. Finally, responses will not be used for regulatory purposes no matter how you decide to complete the Shoreland Evaluation Tool.

You will get science-based recommendations for improving your land management in order to benefit the

waterbody.

In many cases, the Tool can help you learn which

Healthy Lakes & Rivers practices make the most sense for your property. Additional simple steps are also offered to reduce polluted runoff and support fish and wildlife near your home.



We encourage you to give the Shoreland Evaluation Tool a try, and please share it with your neighbors through newsletters, emails, and social media. As more and more people complete the self-evaluation process, we'll all get a better sense of the progress we're making towards slowing down runoff and providing native habitat around our shared waters.

## SWIMS Database Updates & Additional Resources

If you use the SWIMS database, you may have run into a few challenges this past spring/summer. Thank you for your patience and understanding as these issues were worked out. The Database Manager position for SWIMS has been vacant since June, so other IT staff within the Department of Natural Resources kindly stepped in to find and fix errors as quickly as they could.

The SWIMS database is now operating normally again, and you can go ahead and enter data. In addition, there are a couple new resources to help with the transition to the new database format. These resources specifically address many of the difficulties and errors reported this summer; they will provide solutions to most of the issues that you might encounter while entering data. Just go to [uwsp.edu/uwexplakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexplakes) and click on the program for which you need to enter data (either in the left side menu or on the logo). Select the “Data Entry” button to find SWIMS resources.

### User Guides to Entering Data

These guides are based off of the “New SWIMS Interface User Guide” and walk you through the basics of entering your data into the SWIMS database. The extended version of the guide covers more details and SWIMS tasks. Instructions on how to set-up a SWIMS account are also available!

### Videos

#### **How to Create a SWIMS User ID** (2 minutes)

This video demonstrates how to create a State of Wisconsin User ID that is then used to log into the SWIMS database.



#### **How to Enter Data into the SWIMS Database** (4 minutes)

This video demonstrates the step-by-step process of entering water quality data into the SWIMS database.

## 2023 Invader Crusader Award Winners

The Wisconsin Aquatic Invasive Species Partnership was well represented at this year’s Invader Crusader Awards, which were held at the Wisconsin DNR Horicon Marsh Education and Visitors Center.

#### **Professional Individual:**

Jaime Osterom  
Matthew Wallrath  
Mic Armstrong

#### **Volunteer Individual:**

Jim Giffin  
Nancy Gloe  
Richard “Dick” Ballou

#### **Professional Group:**

Melinda Myers LLC  
Mequon Nature Preserve

#### **Volunteer Group:**

Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed  
Silverwood Park Volunteers  
Wehr Nature Center

**Special Recognition:** Jim Hughes and Julie Fox



You can read about the accomplishments of the 2023 Invader Crusader Award winners here:  
<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/77961>



# Brown Trout

## Adapting in Waters Across Wisconsin

By Paul Skawinski, Statewide Citizen Lake Monitoring Network Educator

*Brown trout were introduced to much of North America and continue to be stocked in Wisconsin today as a popular sport fish.*

*This hefty brown trout was caught in a Lake Michigan tributary.*

Wisconsin is home to many species of the trout and salmon family, Salmonidae. These fishes generally prefer cool, clean, well-oxygenated waters. Some species prefer cold lakes, like chinook salmon and lake trout. Others are more common in streams, including the popular and widespread brown trout.

Like most of the Salmonidae species in Wisconsin, the brown trout actually isn't native here. You may hear of it referred to as the "German brown," which alludes to its

native range in Europe and parts of western Asia. Brown trout were introduced to much of North America and continue to be stocked in Wisconsin today as a popular sport fish.

Brown trout do well in Wisconsin streams and in many lakes. They can tolerate warmer temperatures than most of their relatives, so they are versatile and can be stocked into a variety of lakes and streams. Those that live in streams regularly reach 16-20 inches, but browns in Lake Michigan can reach enormous sizes. The current state record brown trout is divided into an "inland" record and an "outlying" (Great Lakes) record. The record "inland" brown trout is a respectable 18lbs, 6oz (34.3 inches) caught in Lake Geneva in Walworth County, while the "outlying" brown trout record is a gigantic 41lbs, 8oz (40.6 inches), caught in Lake Michigan near Racine County!

Fishing for brown trout is often best in low-light periods. Quiet, patient anglers can have good success with a variety of flies or small spinners in streams. Larger browns will also feed on salmon eggs (real or fake), crankbaits,



Paul Skawinski





or spoons. These fish tend to be pretty wary of people, so long casts and a quiet lure presentation will often yield the best reward.

Perhaps one of the lesser-known facts about brown trout is that they aren't always brown. Brown trout in larger lakes can be very silvery and difficult to tell apart from a rainbow trout or a salmon. These chrome beauties are often caught in shallow waters in springtime as baitfish schools congregate in the warmer waters near shore.

Brown trout and other trout and salmon are top predators in most of the waters they inhabit. The juveniles are eaten by other animals in Wisconsin, but the primary predators of adult brown trout are humans and the invasive sea lampreys, which feed on all trout and salmon as well as other fishes. Lampreys were responsible for the crash in lake trout populations in the Great Lakes and are currently heavily managed to keep their populations down.



*Brown trout in the Great Lakes can have a very silvery color.*

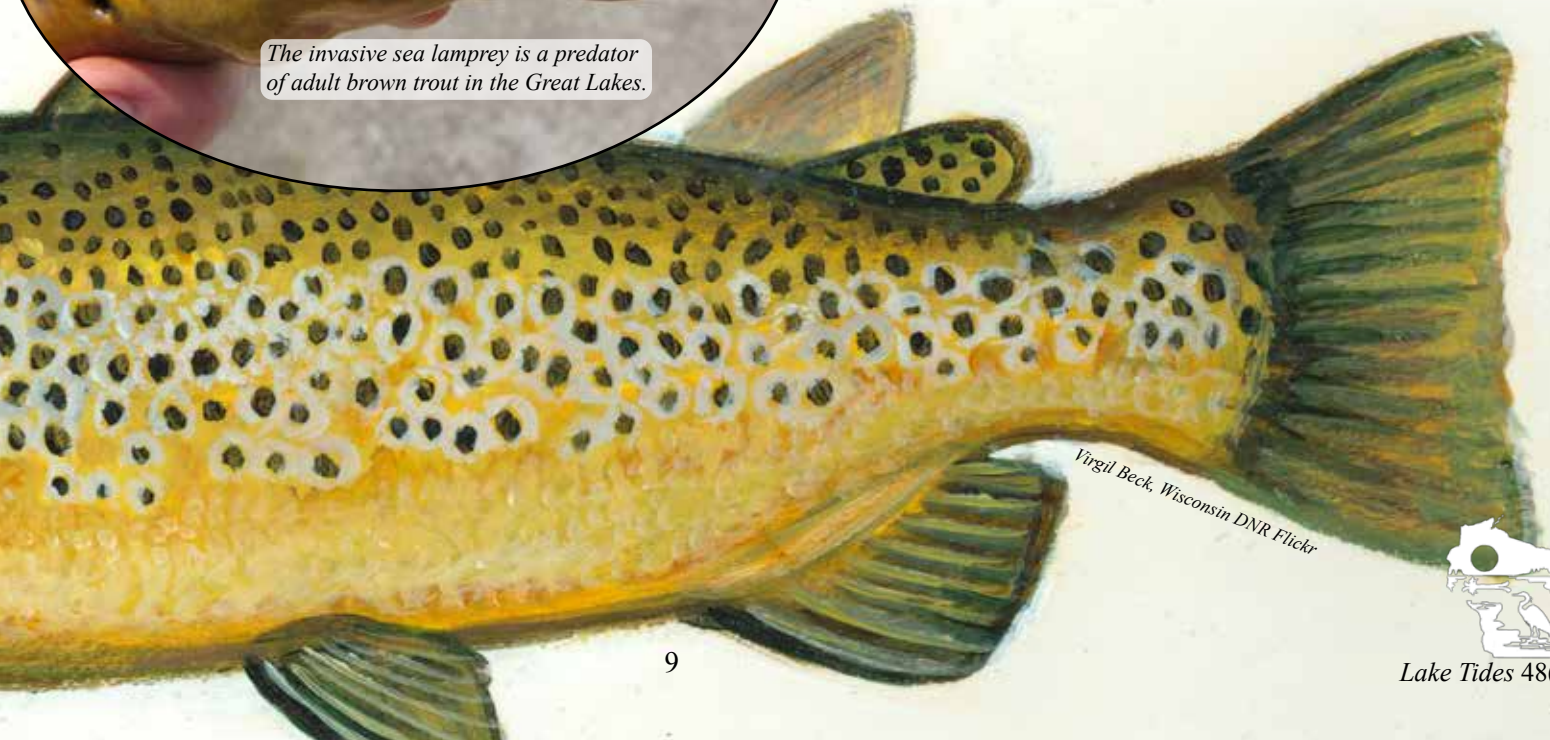
Funding for brown trout stocking in Wisconsin comes from sales of fishing licenses and the Salmon and Trout Stamps. These inland and Great Lakes stamps are add-ons to a fishing license that permit an angler to target trout and salmon in inland or Great Lakes waters.

Wherever you live or play in Wisconsin, you likely have brown trout nearby. Grab some light tackle on a cool, foggy morning, and you just might catch one. But be careful – one loud move and you might send those trout darting far away from you and your lure! 🐟

***Brown trout in larger lakes can be very silvery and difficult to tell apart from a rainbow trout or a salmon.***



*The invasive sea lamprey is a predator of adult brown trout in the Great Lakes.*



*Virgil Beck, Wisconsin DNR Flickr*



# Logical Partners

## Lake Groups and Land Trusts

By Eric Olson, Director, Extension Lakes



*We are seeing exciting collaborations taking place between lake groups and agricultural producers. Another set of logical partners for lake groups are land trusts.*

The model of organizational capacity that we are promoting includes not only what a group does on its own, but also what it does in partnership with others. We used the Fall 2020 edition of *Lake Tides* to share the idea of working more closely with farmers in your watershed through the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's Producer-Led Watershed Councils. Since then, the number of such watershed groups has grown, and

we are seeing exciting collaborations taking place between lake groups and agricultural producers. Remember, you can quickly find past Capacity Corner articles linked from the Extension Lakes website at [uwsp.edu/uwexplakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexplakes) (click on "Capacity Corner" under "Lake Organizations" in the navigation bar).

Another set of logical partners for lake groups are land trusts. These are non-profit groups created to protect natural land from development pressures. Land trusts use a tool called "conservation easements" to establish limits and expectations on private land management. Land trusts can also purchase land outright to keep it in its natural state and foster public recreation access.

Nearly thirty years ago, UW-Stevens Point (UWSP) faculty and graduate students set out to better understand how lake groups and land trusts were working together. At the time, there were only a handful of land trusts in Wisconsin, and taxpayers were looking for different ways to protect land and watersheds without relying solely on public acquisition. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Stewardship Fund was initiated in 1990, and it included options for land trusts to tap into state dollars for new land protection projects. The researchers at the time wanted to learn about new efforts that were developing as a result of the Stewardship Fund initiative and identify barriers to greater collaboration among conservation organizations.

A survey of both lake organizations and land trusts found that these conservation non-profits were more likely to collaborate with the Wisconsin DNR and less likely with other non-profits. The researchers argued that more innovative private land conservation could be accomplished by establishing and supporting partnerships between land trusts and other non-profit organizations like lake associations and lake districts.

Diva Plavalaguna - Pexels.com



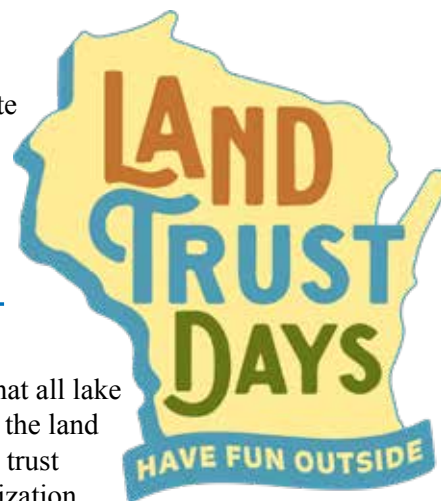
## New Research Project - Building on the Past

Fast forward to today and a new researcher at UWSP is looking to replicate and extend the work completed in 1993. Dr. Austin Holland recently relocated from Iowa to Stevens Point to take on a teaching and Extension job at the College of Natural Resources' Center for Land Use Education (CLUE). Austin's dissertation focused on lake access issues in Iowa, and he intends to continue including lakes in his future research projects. This past spring he collaborated with Dr. Adena Rissman at UW-Madison and Dr. Anna Haines, the faculty director of CLUE, to propose a project that would fund a graduate student who would carry research similar to what was done in 1993. The student would use one-on-one interviews to learn more about the nuances of collaboration between lake groups and land trusts. They would then send out a survey to all Wisconsin lake organizations to capture their experiences working on land conservation and their view of land trusts. The proposal was recently funded by the College of Natural Resources, and the student researcher will be starting in January

2024; lake groups who want to participate are encouraged to update their contact information in the Wisconsin Lake List found on the Extension Lakes website.

## Gathering Waters - Land Trust Days

In the meantime, we recommend that all lake groups become more familiar with the land trusts in Wisconsin. Finding a land trust is easy thanks to a statewide organization, Gathering Waters, who helps with training, support, and advocacy for land trusts and private land conservation. Their website, [gatheringwaters.org](http://gatheringwaters.org), has a directory of over 40 land trusts in the state. Each August and September, Gathering Waters works with dozens of local groups to promote Land Trust Days, a series of outdoor events that invite the public to visit lands conserved through land trusts. If you know of a conserved site near your lake that merits more attention, reach out to your local land trust to discuss ways to set up a hike or paddle in 2024. 💧



*We recommend that all lake groups become more familiar with the land trusts in Wisconsin.*



## Did you know your organization can search and use articles from *Lake Tides*' past 48 years?

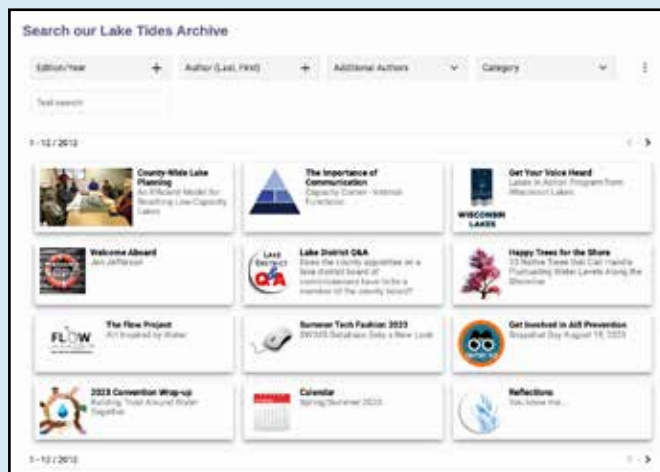
# DYK

That's right, our searchable database of over 2,000 *Lake Tides* articles is now back up and running! Just go to our website at [uwsp.edu/uwexlakes](http://uwsp.edu/uwexlakes), and click on "Newsletter" in the navigation bar. You can choose from different authors, categories, or just type in what you're curious about. Clicking on the rectangle that lists your chosen article should take you directly to the correct page within the PDF of that particular edition.

If you need any of these articles in a different format, please contact Amy at [Amy.Kowalski@uwsp.edu](mailto:Amy.Kowalski@uwsp.edu) or 715-346-4744, and she will be happy to get you what you need. We encourage you to use any past *Lake Tides* articles for educational purposes (commercial use prohibited). We are also willing to share images as available.

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Don't forget to let your readers know that they can sign up to receive *Lake Tides* for free!



# Save the Date - 2024!

## Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention



We invite you to join us in person at the 2024 Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention in Stevens Point, April 10-12.

With the theme *Chapter 33 Golden Jubilee: 50 Years of Partnering for Our Waters*, this event marks the 50th anniversary of Wisconsin's unique lake law, Chapter 33: Public Inland Waters. The legislature and governor worked together in the early 1970s to establish a collaborative research and management framework that

lives on today as the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership. The law also created the pathway for landowners around lakes to form Public Inland Lake Protection and Rehabilitation Districts. Today, over 250 lake districts exist in the state, and they all operate under the same policies and rules laid out in Chapter 33. As we gather in Stevens Point for our annual Convention, we'll look back at the progress made over 50 years of partnering to protect and restore waters, and we will collectively look ahead to the next 50 years to ensure that future generations of water lovers will continue our legacy of proactive lake, river, and watershed management.



**Digital Photo Contest**  
**Deadline: March 24**  
[wisconsinwaterweek.org](http://wisconsinwaterweek.org)

### What is the Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention?

This statewide convention brings together professionals, students, community members, and businesses who love water. We have been meeting annually for over 40 years and hope that you can contribute to this legacy.

We invite you to attend this statewide gathering to help better collaborate and cooperate around our lakes, rivers, watersheds, and across Wisconsin. With over 100 presenters, 18 workshops, keynotes, exhibits, and over 70 concurrent sessions, you won't want to miss it! Keep an eye on the website for additional information as it is released.

This event is a collaboration of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point College of Natural Resources' Extension Lakes Program, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, and the statewide organization of lake groups, Wisconsin Lakes. We are a partnership of people caring for our legacy of lakes, rivers, and streams through science, education, and citizen involvement.

2024 Convention includes:	Add ons:
<b>Wednesday, April 10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evening reception                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Flow Project Exhibit - meet the artists</li> <li>Networking opportunities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>Wednesday, April 10</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AM workshops</li> <li>PM workshops</li> <li>All-day workshops</li> <li>Field trips</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday, April 11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kick-off keynote</li> <li>Multiple concurrent session tracks</li> <li>Educational and business exhibits</li> <li>Lightning talks</li> <li>Poster session</li> </ul>	<b>Thursday, April 11</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Golden Gala Awards Ceremony and Banquet for Wisconsin lake and stream stewards (evening)</li> </ul>
<b>Friday, April 12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple concurrent session tracks</li> <li>Educational and business exhibits</li> <li>Keynote speaker and closing luncheon</li> </ul>	<b>Friday, April 12</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PM workshops</li> </ul>



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Secretary Adam Payne chats with participants at  
the 2023 Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention.



Let us know if you're planning to attend the 2024  
Lakes & Rivers Convention via the Facebook event:  
<https://www.facebook.com/wilakespartnership/events>

Doug Moore



wisconsinwaterweek.org

## Broad Call for Presentation Proposals

We are seeking various presentations for the 2024 Lakes and Rivers Convention, including:

- **Concurrent Sessions** - There will be five rooms with sessions occurring simultaneously. Concurrent sessions can be as short as 20 minutes in length or up to 60 minutes. We encourage presenters to build in time for Q&A at the end of their presentation.
- **Workshops** - We are scheduling half-day workshops (2-3 hours) on Wednesday morning, Wednesday afternoon, and Friday afternoon. Full-day workshops (6 hours) are also possible on Wednesday. Workshops are more interactive and/or hands-on and are meant to engage participants in conversations, problem solving, planning, and exploring.
- **Lightning Talks** - These quick, five-minute (or less) presentations are meant to introduce a topic/share a success, with the goal of exposing attendees to multiple topics in a short amount of time. We encourage Lightning Talk presenters to also present a Poster.
- **Posters** - Posters will be on display all day Thursday until Friday at 2:00 p.m. Poster presenters are required to be with their poster during the Poster Session on Thursday from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

We ask that you complete a form for each type of presentation you're interested in offering and encourage you to complete multiple forms if you have different formats or topics to share! A confirmation email will automatically be sent to you once you submit the form. This confirmation email, which should be kept for future reference, will include all the content you submitted, including your session title and description.

For more information about the Convention, or to submit a proposal, please visit [wisconsinwaterweek.org](http://wisconsinwaterweek.org) and click on "Lakes and Rivers Convention," then "Submit a Presentation."

### Deadlines:

#### **October 1, 2023**

Concurrent Session Proposals  
Workshop Proposals

#### **March 1, 2024**

Lightning Talk Proposals

#### **April 1, 2024**

Poster Proposals





## WISCONSIN LAKES

*None of the nonpoint contracts were included in this budget. Fortunately, as of the time of writing, it appears that Federal funding through the USDA may be used to keep those positions filled and the program active.*

# State Budget Roundup

By Mike Engleson, Executive Director, Wisconsin Lakes

*Wisconsin Lakes believes that a well-informed lakes community is key towards ensuring sound, science-based water policy in Wisconsin.*

**F**or the first six months or so of every odd numbered year, Wisconsin’s legislature and governor work (and often clash) on passage of a budget for the state. The 2023-2025 budget was signed into law by Governor Evers in July. Here are the most important surface water-related components.

### DNR Lakes and Rivers Funding

Funding for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Lakes and Rivers Section, which administers the Surface Water Grant program, saw a slight decrease in overall funding. Funding for the program comes from a portion of the gas tax that is attributed to motorboats, which fluctuates due to the change to a three-year boat registration. This fluctuation accounts for the decrease in this budget and should have a minimal impact on the program.

### County Conservationist Funding

County Land and Water Conservation departments receive some of their annual funding through state grants allocated in the budget. While the stated intent by legislative leaders was to keep this funding at the same level as in the last budget, a change in the calculation method of the amount resulted in a net decrease in funding to those departments.

### Natural Resource (Basin) Educators

Natural Resource Educators (also known as “basin educators”), a program of the UW-Madison Division of Extension, saw a complete elimination of funding in this budget. There has historically been a series of external contracts included in the DNR budget as part of the Wisconsin’s overall effort to address nonpoint source pollution (polluted runoff). None of the nonpoint contracts were included in this budget. Fortunately, as of the time of writing, it appears that Federal funding through the USDA may be used to keep those positions filled and the program active.

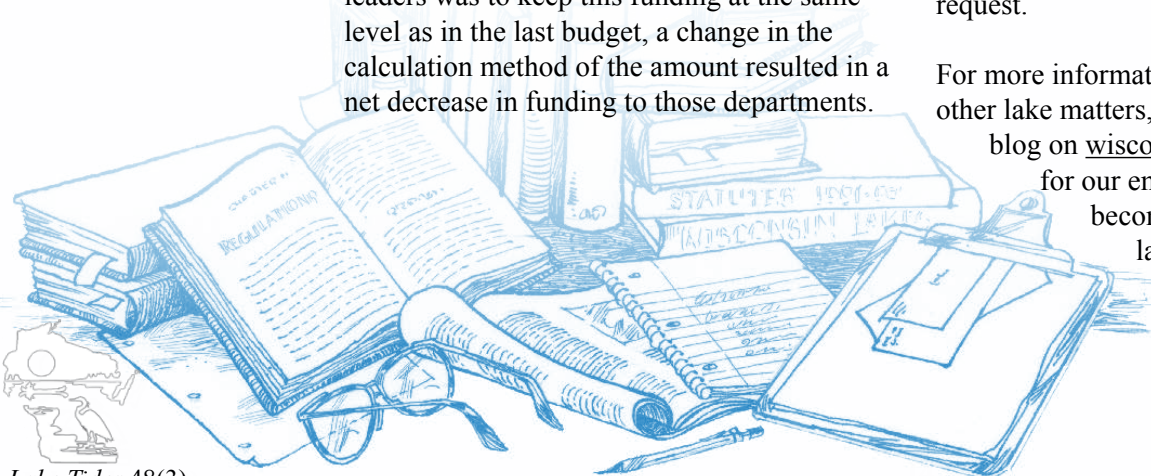
### PFAS Funding

\$125 million was allocated towards dealing with the presence of PFAS in our drinking, ground, and surface waters. Legislation directing how that money could be spent was left out of the budget and is subject to current legislation.

### Aquatic Plant Management Permit Fees

Fees for aquatic plant management permits currently go into a general DNR funding stream. The department requested, as it has for several years, for those fees to be applied directly to the aquatic plant management program, but the legislature rejected this request.

For more information on water policy and other lake matters, follow the “Lake News” blog on [wisconsinlakes.org](http://wisconsinlakes.org) and sign up for our email newsletters. Want to become a better advocate for lakes? Watch for our Lakes in Action advocacy trainings coming this fall! 💧



# WI Coastal Management

## \$1.6 M Available for Great Lakes Counties

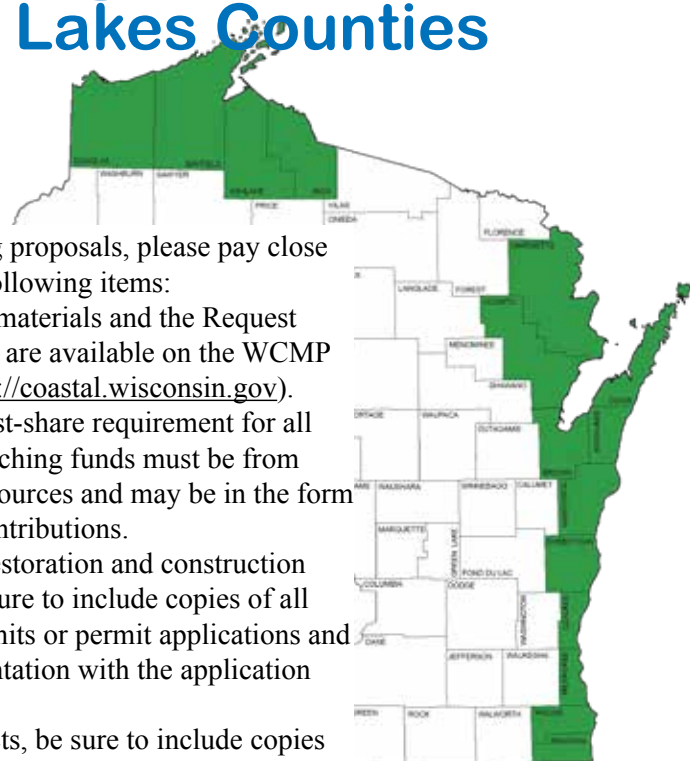
By Mike Friis, Manager, Wisconsin Coastal Management Program

The Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (WCMP) is seeking proposals to enhance, preserve, protect, and restore resources within the state's coastal zone – all counties adjacent to Lakes Superior and Michigan, with their nearly 1,000 miles of shoreline. The WCMP anticipates awarding up to \$1.6 million in grant funding.

WCMP grants are available for coastal wetland protection and habitat restoration, nonpoint source pollution control, coastal resource and community planning, Great Lakes education, public access, and historic preservation.

**Applications are due November 3, 2023.**

Applicants are encouraged to contact WCMP staff early to discuss ideas for project proposals and application requirements. Staff are available to answer questions about eligibility, application details, review process, etc., as well as discuss the substantive aspects of a proposal.



When developing proposals, please pay close attention to the following items:

- Application materials and the Request for Proposals are available on the WCMP website (<http://coastal.wisconsin.gov>).
- There is a cost-share requirement for all projects. Matching funds must be from non-federal sources and may be in the form of in-kind contributions.
- For habitat restoration and construction projects, be sure to include copies of all required permits or permit applications and title documentation with the application materials.
- For all projects, be sure to include copies of required documentation and letters of support.

WCMP staff hosted a live webinar on September 19, 2023. A recording is available at <http://coastal.wisconsin.gov>. For more information, please contact staff at [coastal@wisconsin.gov](mailto:coastal@wisconsin.gov).

### CALENDAR

**October 18-21, 2023 – Science in the Northwoods Conference, Rhinelander, WI**

For more information: <https://kemp.wisc.edu/sitnw/>

**October 25-27, 2023 – Midwest Climate Resilience Conference, Duluth, MN**

For more information: <https://mrcr.umn.edu/>

**November 2-4, 2023 – Midwest Environmental Education Conference**

To Hinųkwaseja: Restoring connections to land and each other

For more information: <https://meeconference.org/2023-conference/>

**[For more lake, river, and watershed events, go to uwsp.edu/uwexplakes and find the calendar!](http://uwsp.edu/uwexplakes)**



# Lake Tides -- AAM1598

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## Reflections

*“F or many of us, water simply flows from a faucet, and we think little about it beyond this point of contact. We have lost a sense of respect for the wild river, for the complex workings of a wetland, for the intricate web of life that water supports.”*

— Sandra Postel  
*The Last Oasis: Facing Water Scarcity*

