

100 WISCONSIN WETLAND GEMS®

Southeast Coastal Region

- SC-1 Chiwaukee Prairie Floodplain & Marshes
- SC-3 Germantown Swamp
- SC-4 Renak-Polak Woods
- SC-5 Root River Riverine Forest
- SC-6 Warnimont Bluff Fens

Southeast Region

- SE-1 Beulah Bog
- SE-2 Cedarburg Bog
- SE-3 Cherokee Marsh
- SE-4 Horicon Marsh
- SE-5 Huiras Lake
- SE-6 Lulu Lake
- SE-7 Milwaukee River Floodplain Forest
- SE-8 Nichols Creek
- SE-9 Rush Lake
- SE-10 Scuppernong River Area
- SE-11 Spruce Lake Bog
- SE-12 Sugar River Floodplain Forest
- SE-13 Waubesa Wetlands
- SE-14 White River Marsh

Central Region

- C-1 Bass Lake Fen & Lunch Creek Sedge Meadow
- C-2 Bear Bluff Bog
- C-3 Black River
- C-4 Blue Swamp
- C-5 Comstock-Germania Marsh
- C-6 Dewey Marsh
- C-7 Jay Creek
- C-8 Page Creek Marsh
- C-9 Quincy Bluff & Sohlberg Lake
- C-10 Suk-Cerney Wetlands
- C-11 Summerton Bog

West Region

- W-1 Big Swamp
- W-2 Fort McCoy
- W-3 Kickapoo Valley Reserve
- W-4 Lower Chippewa River Delta
- W-5 Lower St. Croix River Corridor
- W-6 Lower Wisconsin River & Wyalusing State Park
- W-7 Oak Ridge Lake
- W-8 Snow Bottoms
- W-9 Trempealeau River Sedge Meadow
- W-10 Upper Mississippi & Trempealeau River National Wildlife Refuges
- W-11 Van Loon Bottoms
- W-12 Whitman Bottoms

Northeast Region

- NE-1 Black Ash Swamp
- NE-2 Brazeau Swamp
- NE-3 Hortonville Bog
- NE-4 Kangaroo Lake
- NE-5 Kohler Andrae Dunes
- NE-6 Mink River Estuary
- NE-7 Miskauna Cedar Swamp
- NE-8 Moonlight Bay & Connected Wetlands
- NE-9 North Bay

- NE-10 Peshtigo River Delta
- NE-11 Point Beach & Dunes
- NE-12 Rushes Lake
- NE-13 Shivering Sands & Connected Wetlands
- NE-14 West Shore Green Bay Wetlands
- NE-15 Wolf River Bottoms

North Central Region

- NC-1 Atkins Lake & Hiles Swamp
- NC-2 Bear Lake Sedge Meadow
- NC-3 Bogus Swamp
- NC-4 Flambeau River State Forest
- NC-5 Grandma Lake
- NC-6 Hunting River Alders
- NC-7 Jump-Mondeaux River Floodplain
- NC-8 Kissick Alkaline Bog
- NC-9 Rice Creek
- NC-10 Savage-Robago Lakes
- NC-11 Spider Lake
- NC-12 Sugar River
- NC-13 Turtle-Flambeau-Manitowish Peatlands

Northwest Region

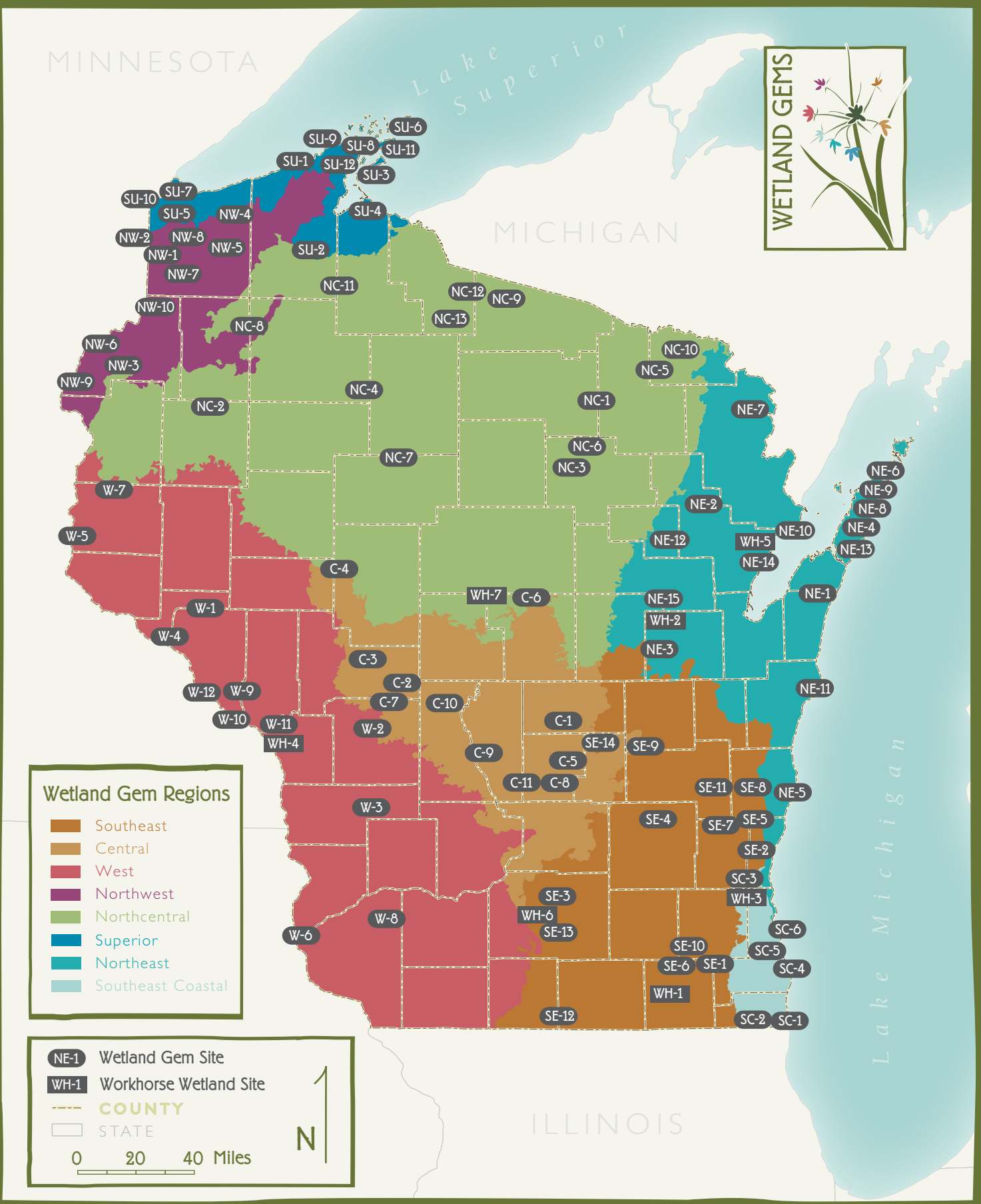
- NW-1 Belden Swamp
- NW-2 Black Lake Bog
- NW-3 Blomberg Lake
- NW-4 Blueberry Swamp
- NW-5 Brule Glacial Spillway
- NW-6 Crex Meadows & Rice Lake
- NW-7 Empire Swamp
- NW-8 Erickson Creek Peatlands
- NW-9 Fish Lake Meadow
- NW-10 St. Croix & Namekagon River Corridor

Superior Region

- SU-1 Bark Bay & Lost Creek Bog
- SU-2 Bibon Swamp
- SU-3 Big Bay
- SU-4 Kakagon-Bad River Sloughs
- SU-5 Nemadji Floodplain Forest
- SU-6 Outer Island Sandspit & Lagoon
- SU-7 Pokegama-Carnegie Wetlands
- SU-8 Red Cliff Raspberry Bay
- SU-9 Sand Bay
- SU-10 St. Louis River Marshes
- SU-11 Stockton Island Tombolo
- SU-12 Sultz Swamp

Workhorse Wetlands

- WH-1 Turtle Valley Wildlife Area: Wildlife Habitat
- WH-2 Spoehr's Marsh: Fishery Habitat
- WH-3 MMSD Greenseams Program: Flood Attenuation
- WH-4 Halfway Creek Marsh: Water Quality Protection
- WH-5 Oconto Marsh: Shoreline Protection
- WH-6 Pheasant Branch: Groundwater Connections
- WH-7 Mead Wildlife Area: Recreation & Education



Funding for this project provided by The McKnight Foundation, which seeks to improve the quality of life for present and future generations through grantmaking, coalition-building and encouragement of strategic policy reform, and the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act, Grant # NA07NOS4190064.



WISCONSIN'S WETLAND GEMS

Mink River Estuary—Clint Farlinger



WHAT ARE WETLAND GEMS®?

Wetland Gems® are high quality habitats that represent the wetland riches—marshes, swamps, bogs, fens and more—that historically made up nearly a quarter of Wisconsin's landscape. Critically important to Wisconsin's biodiversity, these natural treasures also provide our communities with valuable functions and services as well as recreational and educational opportunities. They are landscapes that both preserve the past and inspire for the future.

Wisconsin Wetlands Association's list of 100 Wetland Gems® includes 93 sites selected for their ecological value. These sites are distributed throughout the state and include examples of all of Wisconsin's wetland community types. We have dubbed an additional seven Workhorse Wetland Gems®, sites that illustrate how wetlands deliver priceless services such as flood attenuation, water quality protection, and fish and wildlife habitat. Look inside for more on the purpose of this project, how sites were selected, ideas for citizen and community involvement, a visitor's guide, and a list and map of the Wetland Gems® sites.

Visit our website for more information on this project: www.wisconsinwetlands.org/learn/about-wetlands/explore/.



Green Darner Dragonfly—Ken Tapp



Gail Epping Overholt





Marsh Wren—Brian Hansen



Blanding's Turtle—Allen Sheldon



Laura England



Grandma Lake—Gary Shackelford

WHY PUBLISH A WETLAND GEMS® LIST?

Historically, wetlands were not recognized and valued as natural treasures, but were instead generally considered wastelands and obstacles to progress. Since European settlement in the early 1800s, nearly half of Wisconsin's original 10 million acres of wetlands have been drained or filled to make way for land uses like agriculture, forestry, and urban and suburban development. A large portion of the 5 million remaining acres have been altered and degraded, which only heightens the value of the high quality wetland treasures that remain. *Wetland Gems*® collectively provide examples of our state's wetland heritage.

The misunderstanding and undervaluation of wetlands continues to be a key obstacle to wetland protection, conservation, and restoration efforts. Our purpose in promoting *Wetland Gems*® is to increase appreciation for these precious resources. Our vision is that the citizens of Wisconsin will someday value *all* wetlands as natural treasures and that the historic and ongoing loss of wetland acres will be reversed.

HOW WERE WETLAND GEM® SITES SELECTED?

The *Wetland Gems*® list builds upon the results of extensive conservation planning efforts that identified critical habitats, threats, and conservation actions to protect the state's natural communities, species, and special places. These include The Nature Conservancy's Ecoregional Plans, the Wisconsin Important Bird Areas Project, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' Land Legacy Report, Wildlife Action Plan, State Natural Areas Program, and Coastal Wetlands Assessment Report.

After reviewing the above conservation plans, we worked with experts to select 93 sites that collectively represent the diversity of wetland community types present in each geographic region (see map, back cover). Our goal was to include high quality representatives of each wetland community type found in each region. Wherever possible, we chose *Wetland Gems*® that contained multiple wetland and upland community types representing fully functioning ecological systems.

WORKHORSE WETLAND GEMS®

The seven *Workhorse Wetland Gems*® illustrate the functional values described in the *Wisconsin Rapid Wetland Assessment Methodology* including wildlife habitat, fishery habitat, flood/stormwater attenuation, water quality protection, shoreline protection, groundwater, and recreation/education. *Workhorse Wetland* sites were selected with input from our partners and natural resource experts.

WETLAND TREASURES NOT ON THIS LIST

The *Wetland Gems*® list is not exhaustive, but rather is a *representative* list of important, high quality wetlands in Wisconsin. Not appearing on this list are millions of acres of valuable wetlands that play important roles within our landscapes and watersheds as critical wildlife habitat, sites of water purification, and sites of flood water storage. **All of the state's wetlands are valuable and merit protection.**

PHOTOS FROM TOP: Cope's Gray Tree Frog—Allen Sheldon; White Lady's Slipper Orchid—David Schwaegler; Beaver—Brian Hansen; Northern Shoveler—Dennis Malueg; Purple Pitcherplant—Kate Redmond

Celebrate
and enjoy the
beauty and
unique nature
of these
Wetland Gems.

WETLAND GEMS® IN YOUR REGION: CITIZEN & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Wisconsin Wetlands Association encourages local conservation groups and other community organizations to celebrate and become stewards of their local and regional *Wetland Gems*®. Below is a sampling of ideas that local citizens and organizations can use to contribute to the long-term protection of wetland treasures in their communities and regions:

Celebrate & Raise Awareness of Wisconsin's *Wetland Gems*®

News Flash: February 2 is World Wetlands Day and May is American Wetlands Month. Use these designations as opportunities to draw community and media attention to a regional Gem site. Write a letter to the editor or pitch a story idea involving your *Wetland Gem*® to local outdoor writers.

Field Trips & Outings: Plan an outing to visit a Gem site with family and friends. Make it a community event by recruiting a local naturalist to lead a field trip and inviting members of your community to join you. WWA can help you find a qualified expert for your field trip.

Volunteer Stewardship of Wisconsin's *Wetland Gems*®

Working with Site Owners: Talk to site property owners to learn about their needs for volunteer help with on-the-ground stewardship projects such as habitat restoration and invasive species control projects.

Citizen Monitoring: Spend time in a beautiful wetland setting while listening for birds and frogs, surveying for native plants, or checking for invasive plants. WDNR provides a list of opportunities at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wetlands/volunteer.html>

Plan for Protection of Wisconsin's *Wetland Gems*®

Friends Groups: Organize a friends group for your *Wetland Gem*® by bringing together others in your community who are interested in conservation.

Preventing External Threats: Even protected wetlands are vulnerable to threats from outside their boundaries including invasive species, stormwater runoff, and regional groundwater drawdowns. Work with local friends groups, local conservation, and local officials to identify and abate these threats.

WETLAND VISITOR'S GUIDE: VISIT A LOCAL WETLAND GEM®

Get your feet wet! Wisconsin Wetlands Association encourages citizens and families to consider wetland destinations when planning recreational and educational outings. Our *Wetland Gems*® list provides many wonderful options for outings, which include hiking, hunting, fishing, paddling, bird-watching, photography, and exploring. While most of these sites are on public land, some are privately owned; please pay close attention to the ownership and access information provided on our Gem site fact sheets when planning your trips.

Be sure to dress appropriately for weather, walking, and wading. Protect your skin from sun, scrapes, and insects with long-sleeved shirts, long pants, and a wide brimmed hat. Some sites offer boardwalks and other paths that are relatively dry, but generally recommended footwear includes rubber knee boots or old tennis shoes that you don't mind getting wet and muddy. Be aware that Lyme disease is present in parts of the state. Prevent tick bites by wearing clothes that cover your skin and checking your skin and clothing for ticks when you get home. Bring water, field guides, and a sense of wonder.

Walk Lightly

Wetland Gem® sites include sensitive species and habitats. Please follow the "take only pictures, leave only footprints" philosophy for your visit. Here are some specific guidelines to follow:

Stay on trails (if available) and observe all regulations about trail usage, especially restrictions on ATVs. Where trails are not available, walk softly and leave the area as undisturbed as possible.

Be aware of private property inholdings at some sites and do not trespass.

Do not bring invaders with you! Prevent transporting invasive plant seeds by removing mud and soil from your shoes/boots and checking your clothing (including cuffs and pockets) to make sure there are no "hitchhikers."

Do not pick flowers or harvest any plants.

Resist the temptation to take home souvenirs. Leave items like stones, feathers, artifacts, wood, etc. so that others may enjoy them. State and federal laws prohibit removal of certain objects at some sites.

Observe wildlife from a distance. Avoid nest areas and other areas where wildlife may be disrupted. Do not feed wildlife.

Pack out what you pack in. Please pick up any trash you find.

Acknowledgments

Many individuals contributed to this project, including site property owners, members of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Wetland Team, and many other partners and natural resource experts. Special thanks to Eric Epstein, Randy Hoffman, Mary Linton, Tod Highsmith, and Carolyn Sandberg for exceptionally generous contributions of time and expertise. Laura England, former WWA Outreach Programs Director, led the *Wetland Gems*® project with assistance from Katie Beilfuss, WWA Programs Manager, and Becky Abel, former WWA Executive Director.

Wisconsin Wetlands Association is dedicated to the protection, restoration, and enjoyment of wetlands and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education and advocacy.

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