



# 2025 Wisconsin Aquaculture Association Conference

**WI DNR Regulatory Updates and Future Partnership Initiatives**

**Todd Kalish, Fisheries Management Deputy Bureau Director**

February 21, 2025 | [DNR.WI.GOV](https://DNR.WI.GOV)



# Wisconsin Aquaculture

- \$21 million in economic activity
- 500 jobs
- Most farms in Midwest
  - Number one in aquaculture sales
- #2 baitfish sales in US
- #6 in game fish sales in US
- More than 90% of fish consumed in the US are imported
- Fastest growing form of agriculture in the world



# Wild Bait Harvest Rule Summary

- ~65 commercial wild bait harvesters in WI and ~265 wild bait harvest permit applications per year
- Actively engaged the wild bait harvest community
- Goal of this rule: create, implement, and evaluate a wild bait harvest reporting system, address issues with the current rules, and develop a framework to address future issues
- Rule in effect spring 2024

# Wild Bait Harvest Rule Changes

- Permit Duration
- Reporting Requirements
- Non-Standard Gear Use
- White Sucker Egg Take

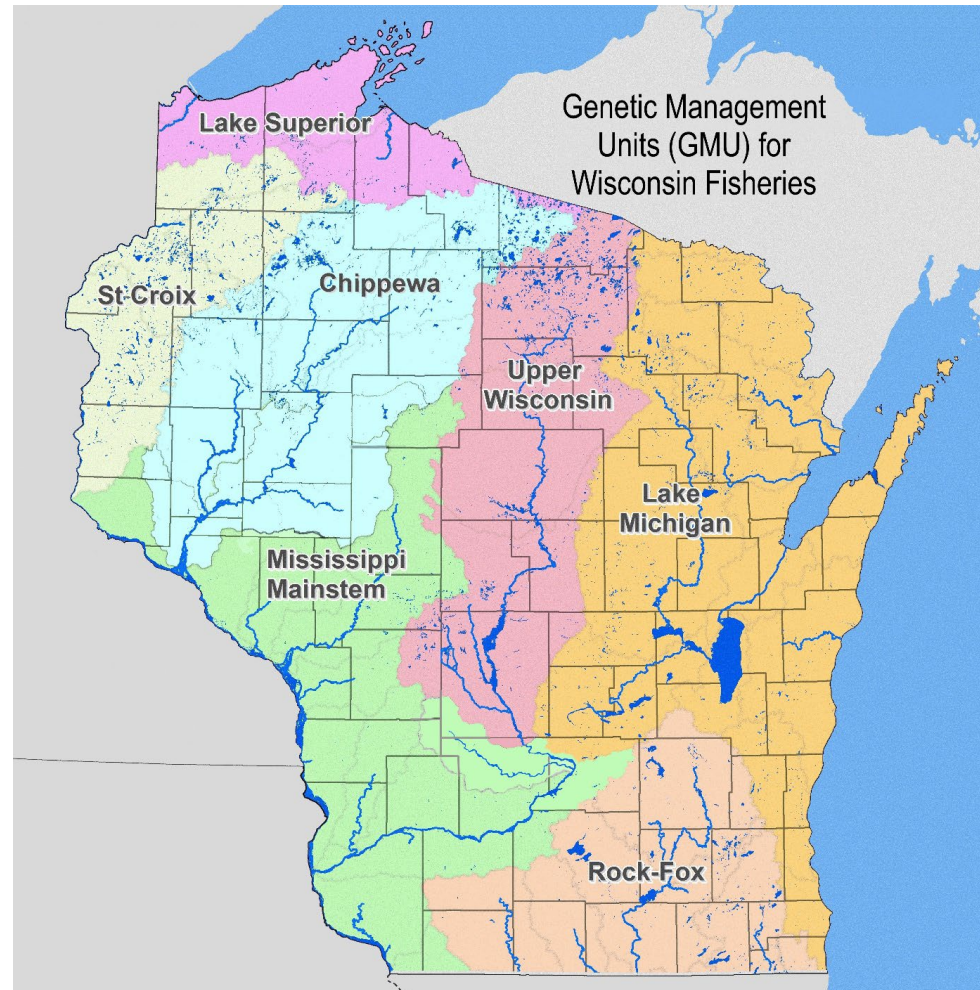


*Photo credit: Wisconsin DNR*

# Genetics Management Policy

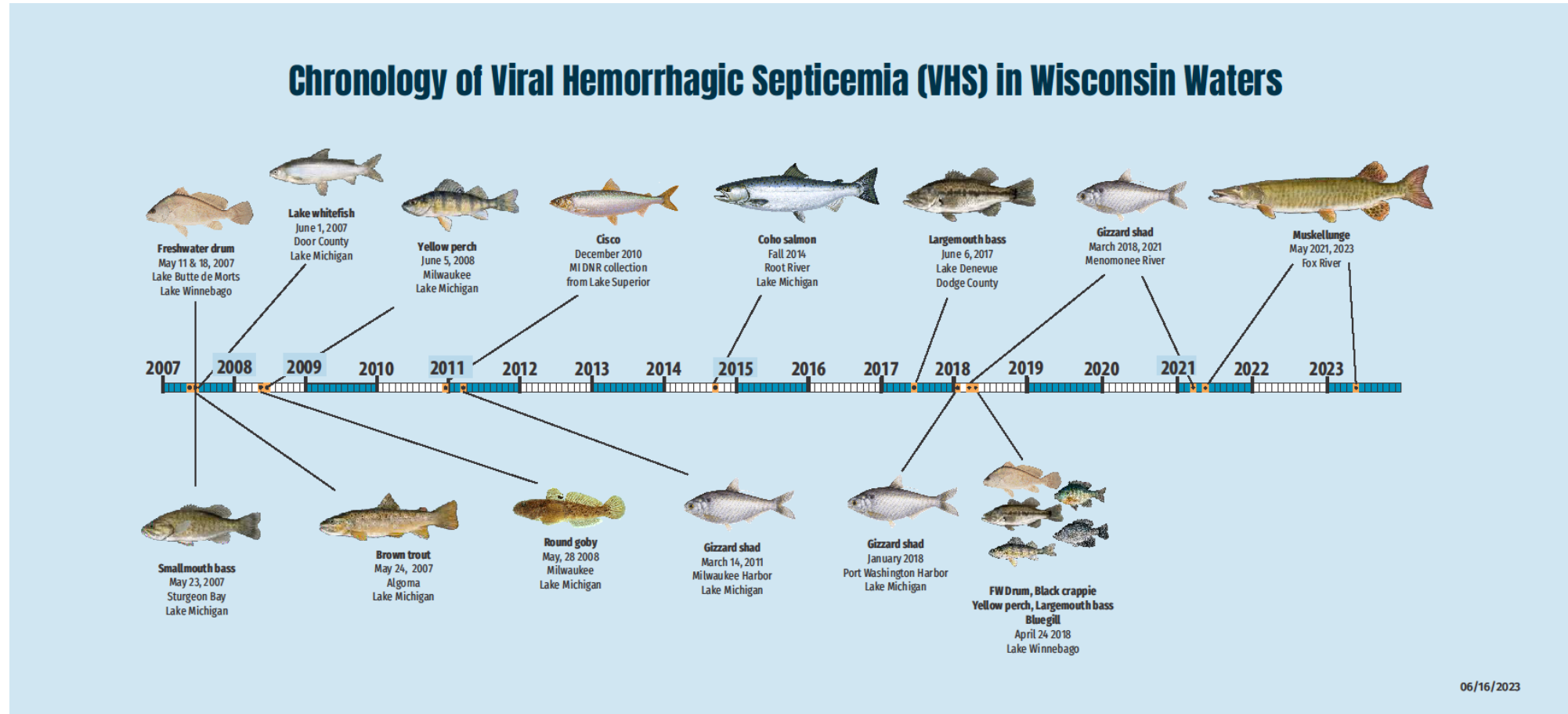
- WI Statute - 2017 WI ACT 21 – “Aquaculture Bill” directs DNR to define the role and extent that genetics are involved in fish stocking.
- WI Administrative Code, NR 1.02(4), NRB Genetics Policy, eff. 2/2020.
  - Preserving the genetic integrity of fish stocks documented and proven to survive and thrive in WI waters is a central goal of fisheries management in WI.
  - All inland fish stocking shall be authorized by permit and shall be conducted to maintain the genetic boundaries of fish best adapted to those waters.
  - The department shall implement fish stocking strategies to ensure that fish stocked are best suited to survive and thrive in the unique ecological conditions found throughout WI
  - These strategies shall be developed in partnership with private aquaculture to protect, sustain and improve the genetic integrity of native, nonnative and self-sustained fish populations.

# Genetic Management Units

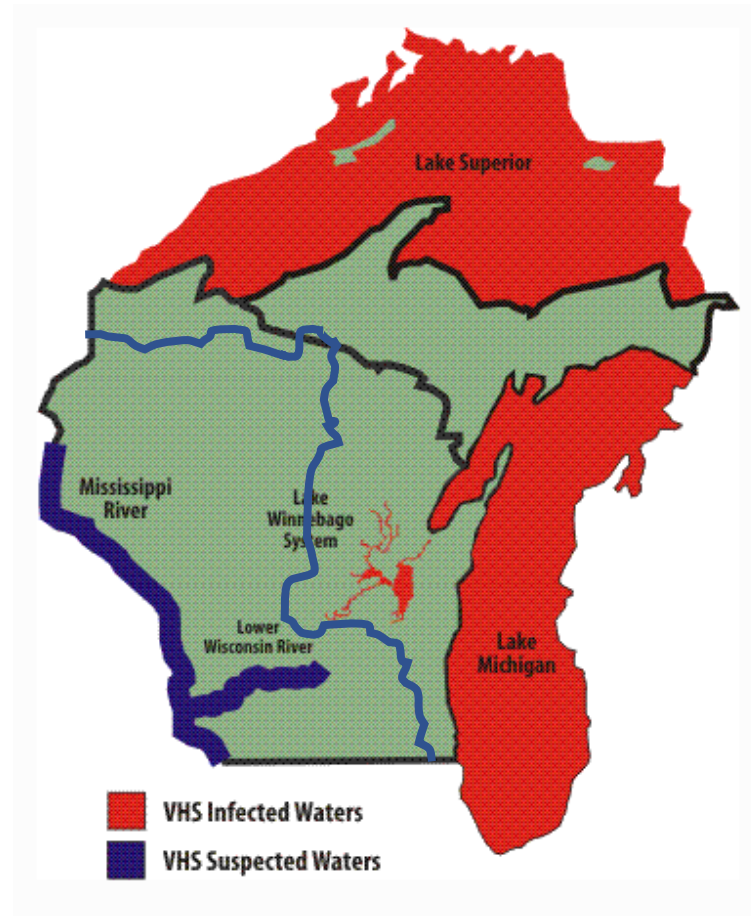




# VHS Collected in Wisconsin



# Wisconsin Watersheds





# *Myxobolus cerebralis* testing results

Case #	Collection Date	Location	GPS Coordinates	Species Collected	Number of Fish/spp	Submitted to Lab for Testing	Results
	08.12.2024	Buena Vista Creek	44.388562, -89.528306	BKT	60	Y	Negative
2024-117	08.20.2024	North Branch Pike River	45.6363°N, -088.85309°W	BKT	60	Y	Negative
2024-118	08.21.2024	South Branch Pike River	45.57484°N, -88.28196°W	BKT	47	Y	Negative
2024-119	08.29.2024	Drew Creek	45.13465, -88.89842	RBT, BKT	23 RBT, 19 BKT	Y	Negative
2024-133	09.03.2024	Evergreen River	45.17009, -88.80445	BKT, BNT	27 BKT, 14 BNT	Y	Negative
2024-134	09.04.2024	McGee Creek	45.12951, -88.88919	BKT	60	Y	Negative

# 2025 Engagement Opportunities

- DNR staff visit WI private hatcheries throughout the state
- DNR convenes public meetings to gather input and discuss management options
  - Wild bait harvest rules
  - Genetics management

# 2024 Wisconsin Aquaculture Association Conference

**Thank you**

**Questions or comments**

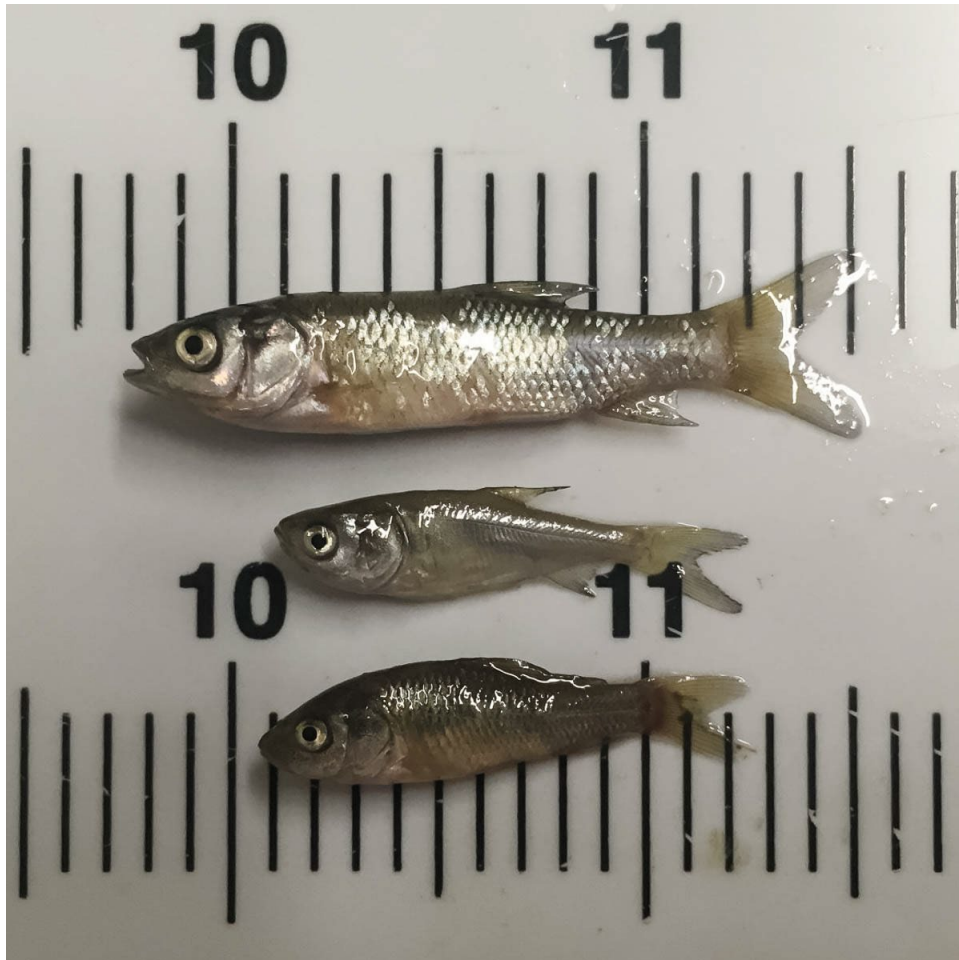
February 21, 2025 [DNR.WI.GOV](https://DNR.WI.GOV)



# Wild Bait Harvest Rule Summary

- ~65 commercial wild bait harvesters in WI and ~265 wild bait harvest permit applications per year
- The primary species targeted by commercial wild bait harvest are chubs, suckers (incl. common white suckers), fathead minnows, mudminnows, dace, emerald shiners, common shiners, bluntnose minnows, and spottail shiners
- Actively engaged the wild bait harvest community
- Goal of this rule: create, implement, and evaluate a wild bait harvest reporting system, address issues with the current rules, and develop a framework to address future issues
- Rule in effect spring 2024

## Invasive carp



## Fathead, shiner, dace

