

# WisDOT Landscape Updates

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DSPN Quarterly Meeting  
Virtual

**May 20, 2021**



# Outline

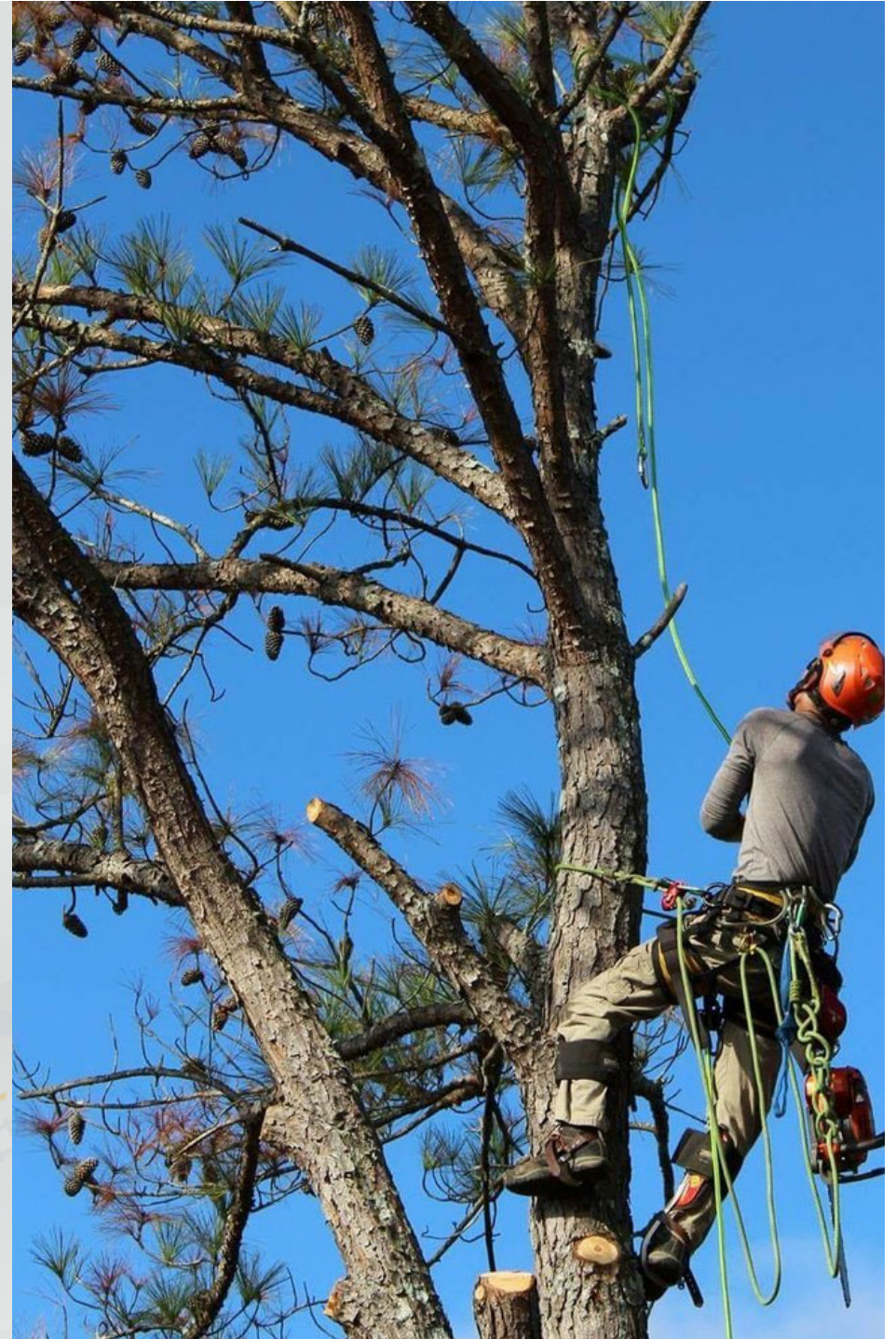
- Tree removals and replacements
- Rest Area Prairies and Demonstration Gardens Sites
- Endangered Species
  - Karner Blue Butterfly
  - Rusty Patched Bumble Bee
- Monarch Butterfly Conservation

# Tree Removals and Replacements



# Why Remove?

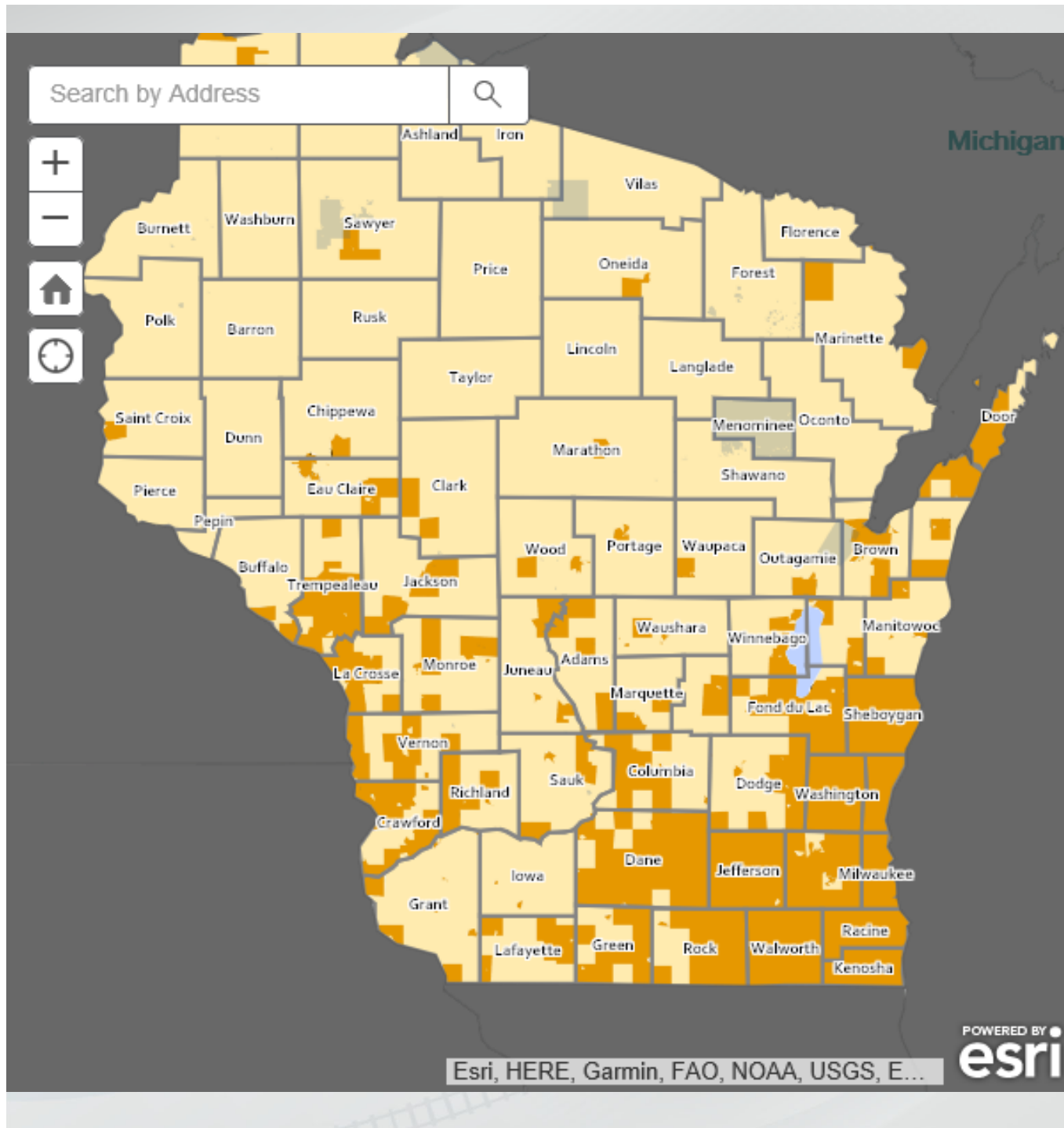
- Tree Death
  - Emerald Ash Borer
  - Oak Wilt
- Hazard Tree
  - Potential to fall on things or people
  - Safety risk
- Other need
  - Remove obstructions to scenic vista



# Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

- An invasive wood boring beetle
- Kills ash trees within a 2–4-year period
- Ash once dead will fall within 2-year period
- Ash is dominant in our roadside facilities





# Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

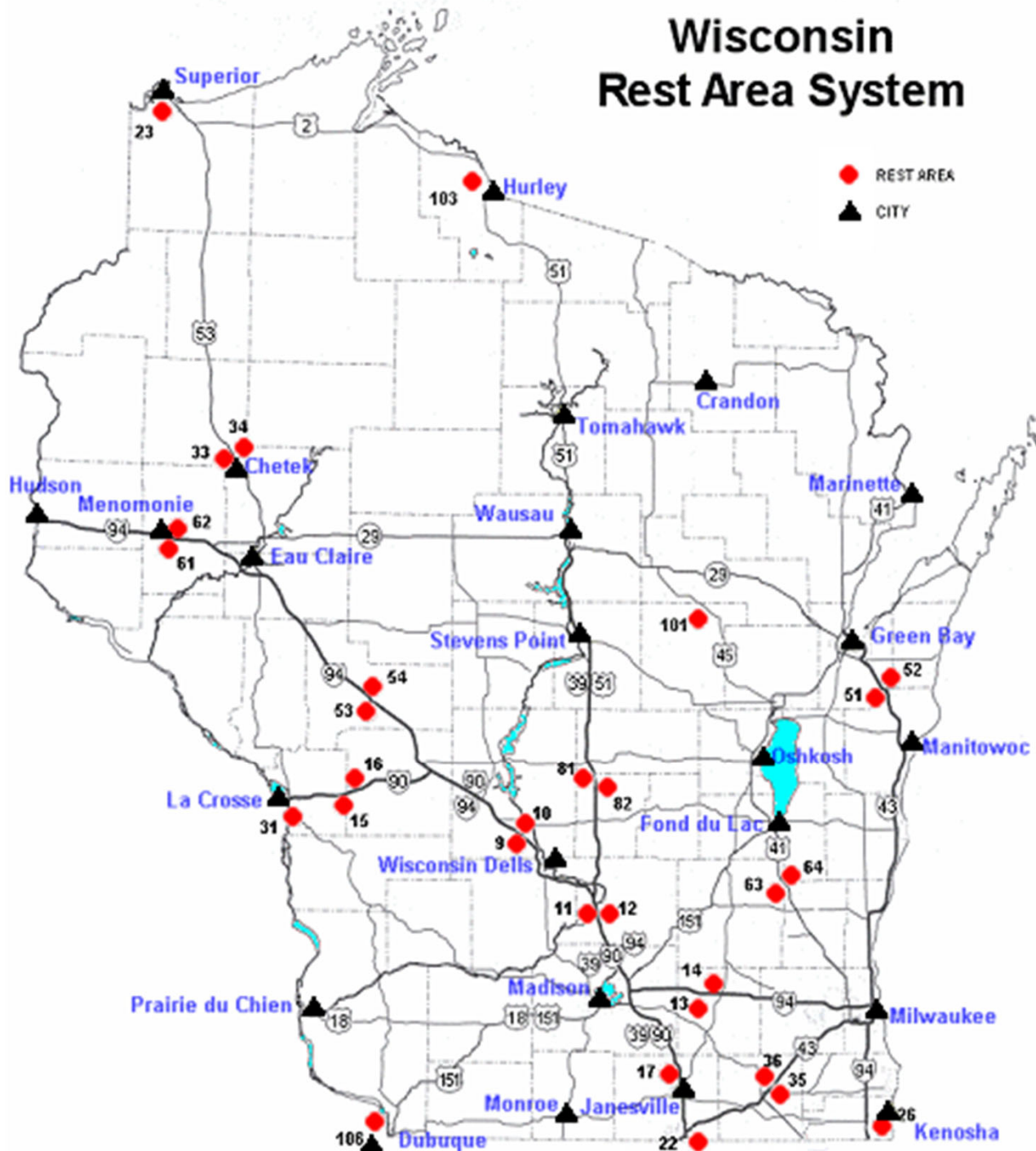
- EAB detections lookup tool
- <https://datcpservices.wisconsin.gov/eab/>
- Statewide quarantined
- Dark brown is verified detections

# Oak Wilt

- A tree disease caused by a fungus
  - Fungus spread by boring beetles and root to root contact
- Red and black oaks highly susceptible
  - Potential to die within 4mos
- Hard to diagnose
- Sudden yellowing let us know



## Wisconsin Rest Area System



# Tree Management Plan

- Rest Areas
  - Active inventory, removal and planting
- SWEFs
  - On an as needed reported basis
- Waysides & Other sites
  - Working with Counties and others

# Tree Management Plan

## Responsibilities

WisDOT	DSPN	Counties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inventory when feasible</li><li>• Coordinate removals, replacements and planting plans</li><li>• Endangered resources screening</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor and report dead or dying trees in all scenarios</li><li>• Second option removals through private vendor</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• First option removals<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Winter/Spring inspections on non managed DSPN sites</li></ul></li></ul>



# Prairies and Demonstration Sites



# Prairie Demonstration Gardens

## Habitat Set-Aside and Education

- Small scale creation of habitat as a result of the 1975 prairie passage and operation wildflower
- Now Pollinator Education



# Prairie Areas

## Habitat Set-Aside and Education

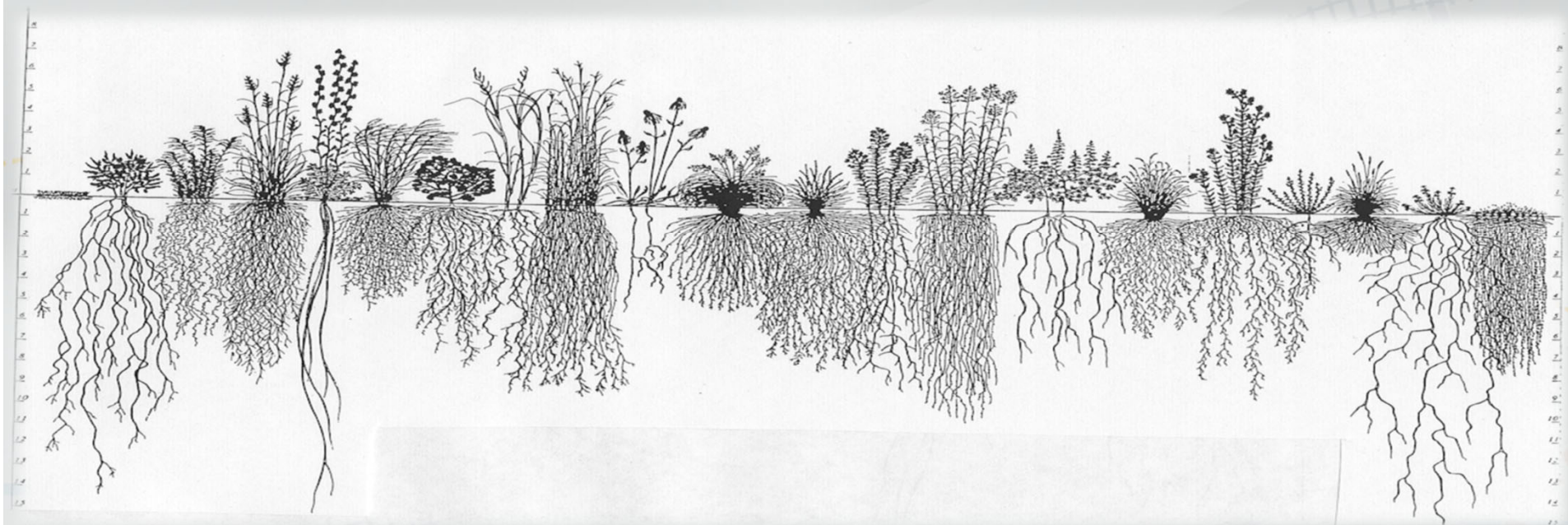
- Some locations have larger areas of prairie areas
- Example here of Columbia County- RA 11 & 12



# Restoration with Native Plants

## Native Seeding

- Native plants reflect the natural vegetation of the surrounding environment and require minimal maintenance once established
  - Drought tolerant due to their deep roots
  - Erosion prevention particularly on poor, droughty soils
  - Ability to compete well against invasive species and provide habitat



# Endangered Species and Monarch Butterflies



# Karner Blue Butterfly

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- Status: Endangered
- Description
- Habitat
  - Sand prairies, oak savannas, barrens
  - Wild blue lupine (host plant)
- Ecology
  - Active period: mid-May to mid-Aug.
  - Overwinters in WI



Photo by Ken Carlson

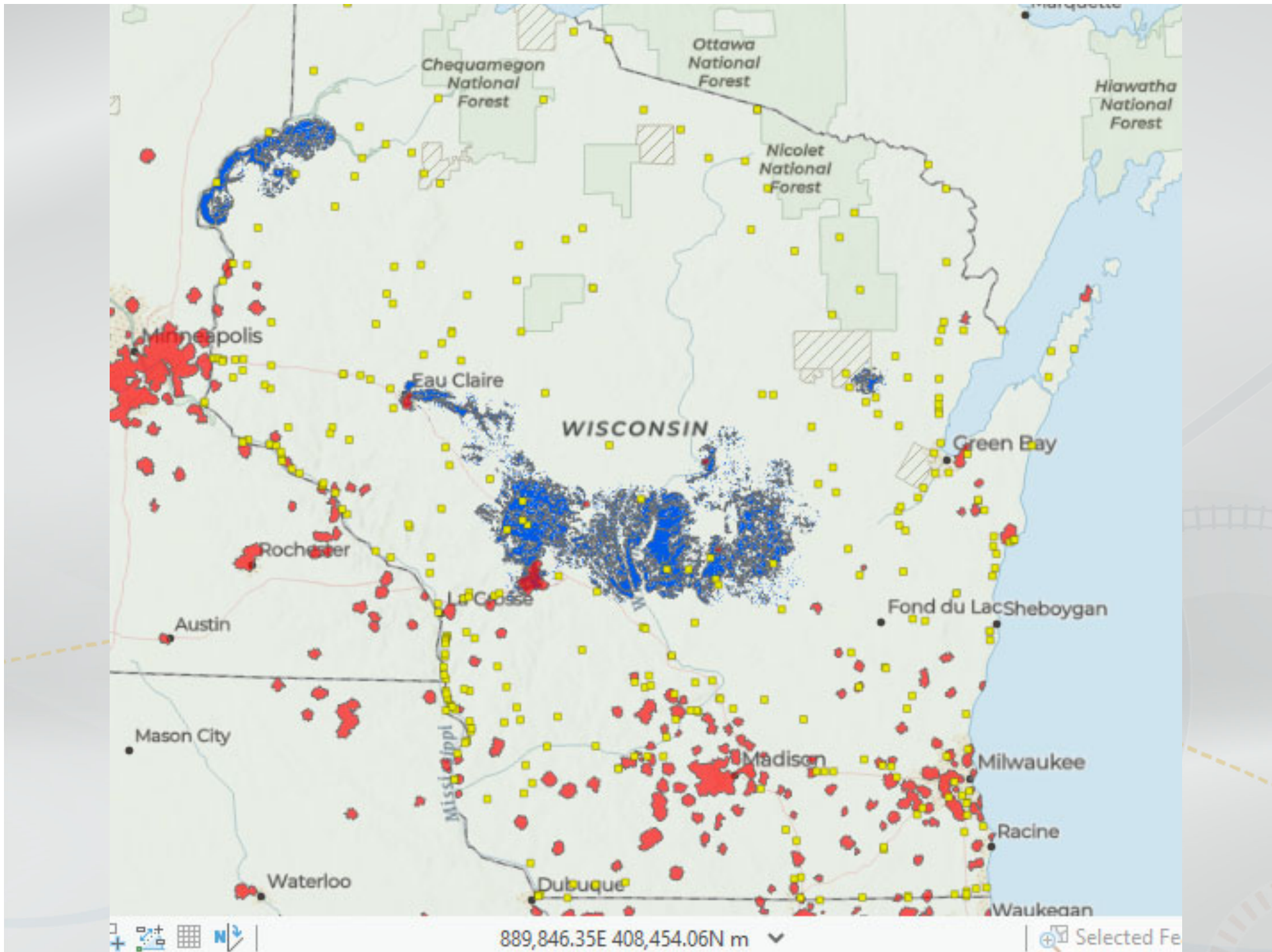
# Rusty Patched Bumble Bee

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- Status: Endangered
- Description
- Habitat and Range:
  - Generalist
  - Flowering plants April - September
  - Overwintering habitat



Photo by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

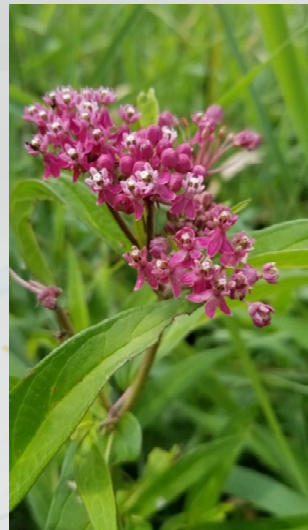


# Monarch Butterfly

- Description
- Habitat
  - Milkweed species (host plant)
  - Open areas with flowering plants
  - Roadsides?!



Credit: US Forest Service



Credit: Alyssa Barrette

# Why should we care?

- Pollinators support agriculture
  - 1 in every 3 bites of food, including coffee!
  - In WI: cranberries, apples, honey, veggies
- Iconic species with strong public support
- Actions to help monarchs also help other pollinators
- Regulatory implications

# What does this mean for Roadside Facilities?

- Endangered Species Act protections
- How do we comply?
  - Within high potential zone (HPZ)?
  - Suitable habitat present?
  - Potential for impacts?
  - Avoidance, minimization or mitigation opportunities?
- Conservation opportunities

# Questions?

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