

**Eurasian water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)
and Curly-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton crispus*)
Pre/Posttreatment Surveys
Lower Vermillion Lake – WBIC: 2098200
Barron County, Wisconsin**



2020 EWM/CLP Treatment Areas



Eurasian water-milfoil (Berg 2007)

Project Initiated by:

Vermillion Lakes Association, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and Lake Education and Planning Services, LLC (WDNR Grant ACEI20518)



Dead CLP with viable turions and severely burned EWM resprouting from stem 7/2/11

Surveys Conducted by and Report Prepared by:

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May 18 and July 2, 2020

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INTRODUCTION:

Lower Vermillion Lake (WBIC 2098200) is a 215 acres stratified drainage lake in northwestern Barron County, Wisconsin in the Town of Cumberland (T35N R13W S22 SW NE). It reaches a maximum depth of 55 feet in the central basin and has an average depth of approximately 25ft (Busch et al 1967). The lake is mesotrophic in nature, and, from 2000-2020, water clarity has been fair to good with summer Secchi readings ranging from 6-12ft and averaging 9.1ft (WDNR 2020). This clarity produced a littoral zone that reached approximately 11.5ft in 2020. Bottom substrates along the north, south, and southeastern shorelines are primarily rock and sand, while most of the east bay and main basin are organic muck or sandy muck.



Figure 1: Aerial Photo of 2020 EWM/CLP Treatment Areas

BACKGROUND AND STUDY RATIONALE:

In 2008, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) confirmed the presence of Eurasian water-milfoil (EWM) (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) in Lower Vermillion Lake, and the Vermillion Lakes Association (VLA) has been actively working to control this exotic invasive species ever since. Following the 2019 fall EWM bed mapping survey that found scattered patches of EWM throughout the northwest bays near the boat landing and in the east bay, the VLA, under the direction of D. Blumer - Lake Education and Planning Services, LLC (LEAPS) and in accordance with their WDNR approved Aquatic Plant Management Plan, decided to chemically treat three areas totaling approximately 5.13 acres (2.39% of the lake's total surface area) in 2020 (Figure 1). Several of these areas were simultaneously treated for Curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) (*Potamogeton crispus*) – another exotic invasive species that is locally abundant early in the growing season.

On May 18th, we conducted a pretreatment survey to gather baseline data from the scheduled treatment areas and to allow LEAPS and the VLA to finalize treatment plans. Following the herbicide application on June 2nd, we completed a July 2nd posttreatment survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment. This report is the summary analysis of these two field surveys.

METHODS:

Pre/Post Herbicide Surveys:

LEAPS provided treatment area shapefiles, and we generated pre/post survey points based on the size and shape of the proposed treatment areas. The 80 point sampling grid at 16.5m resolution approximated to nearly 16 pts/acre. Although this was well above the 4-10 pts/acre required by WDNR protocol for pre/post treatment surveys, the high number of points was requested due to the narrowness of the treatment areas and the difficulty in getting enough points in the target depths (Appendix I).

During the surveys, we located each point using a handheld mapping GPS unit (Garmin 76CSx) and used a rake to sample an approximately 2.5ft section of the bottom. All plants on the rake were assigned a rake fullness value of 1-3 as an estimation of abundance, and a total rake fullness for all species was also recorded (Figure 2). Visual sightings of EWM and CLP were noted if they occurred within 6ft of the point; however, visuals of other species were not recorded as they do not figure into the pre/posttreatment calculation. In addition to plant data, we recorded the lake depth using a metered pole and the substrate (bottom) type when we could see it or reliably determine it with the rake.

We entered all data collected into the standard APM spreadsheet (Appendix II) (UWEX 2010). Data was analyzed using the linked statistical summary sheet and the WDNR pre/post analysis worksheet (UWEX 2010). For pre/post differences of individual plant species as well as count data, we used the Chi-square analysis on the WDNR pre/post survey worksheet. For comparing averages (mean species/point and mean rake fullness/point), we used t-tests. Differences were determined to be significant at $p < 0.05$, moderately significant at $p < 0.01$ and highly significant at $p < 0.001$.

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Coverage</u>	<u>Description</u>
1		A few plants on rake head
2		Rake head is about 1/2 full Can easily see top of rake head
3		Overflowing Cannot see top of rake head

Figure 2: Rake Fullness Ratings

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Finalization of Treatment Areas:

Initial expectations were to treat three areas totaling approximately 5.13 acres (Table 1). Although Eurasian water-milfoil was a visual at a single point during the pretreatment survey, scattered plants were observed inter-point throughout the proposed treatment areas. Similarly, Curly-leaf pondweed was scattered throughout the proposed treatment areas. Because of this, it was decided to continue with the treatment as planned (Figure 3) (Appendix I). The chemical application was conducted by Northern Aquatic Services (Dresser, WI) on June 2nd. The reported water temperature at the time of treatment was 69°F, while the air temp was 75°F. Winds were out of the west at 3-5mph.

**Table 1: EWM/CLP Treatment Summary
Lower Vermillion Lake – June 2, 2020**

Area	Total Area Acreage	Chemical (Brand), Rate, Total lbs/gal and Coverage
East Bay	1.08	2,4-D (Amine 4) – 4ppm – 24.5 gallons – 1.08 acres
North Shoreline	0.49	Endothall (Aquathol K) – 2ppm – 3.3 gallons – 0.49 acre
Northwest Bay	3.56	2,4-D (Amine 4) – 4ppm – 50.6 gallons – 3.56 acres Endothall (Aquathol K) – 2ppm – 11.7 gallons – 0.65acre/1.12 acres
Total Acres	5.13	

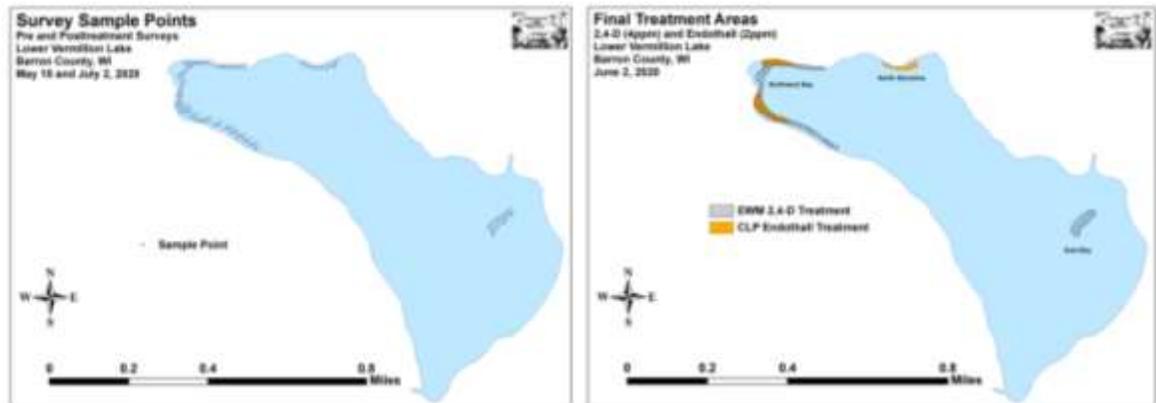


Figure 3: 2020 Survey Sample Points and Final Treatment Areas

Pre/Post Herbicide Surveys:

All points occurred in areas between 1.0ft and 11.0ft of water. The mean depth for all plants was 5.8ft pretreatment before declining to 5.3 posttreatment. The median depth also decline from 5.5ft to 5.0ft (Table 2). Most Eurasian water-milfoil was established over sand and gravel, while Curly-leaf pondweed reached its highest densities over areas with at least some organic muck (Figure 4) (Appendix III).

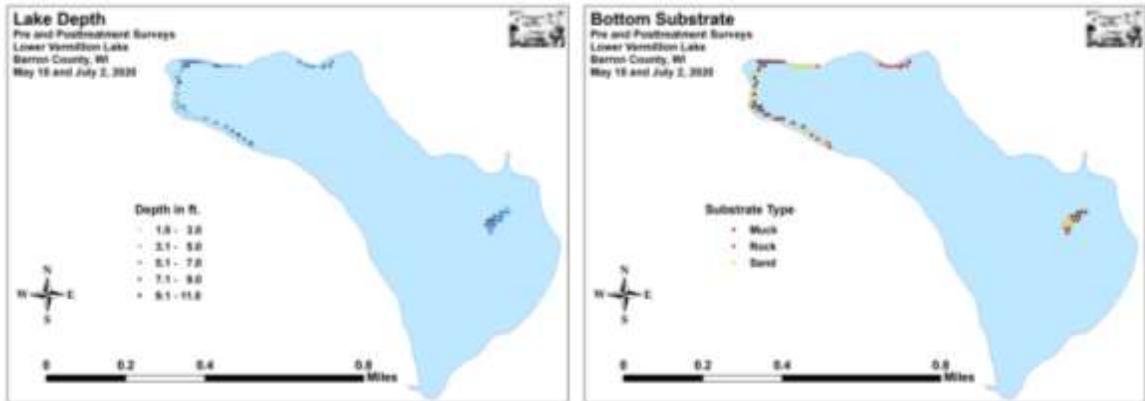


Figure 4: Treatment Area Depths and Bottom Substrate

The littoral zone extended to 11.0ft during both the pretreatment and posttreatment surveys. Within this zone, plants covered 71.3% of point pretreatment before expanding to 95.0% posttreatment (Figure 5) (Appendix IV).

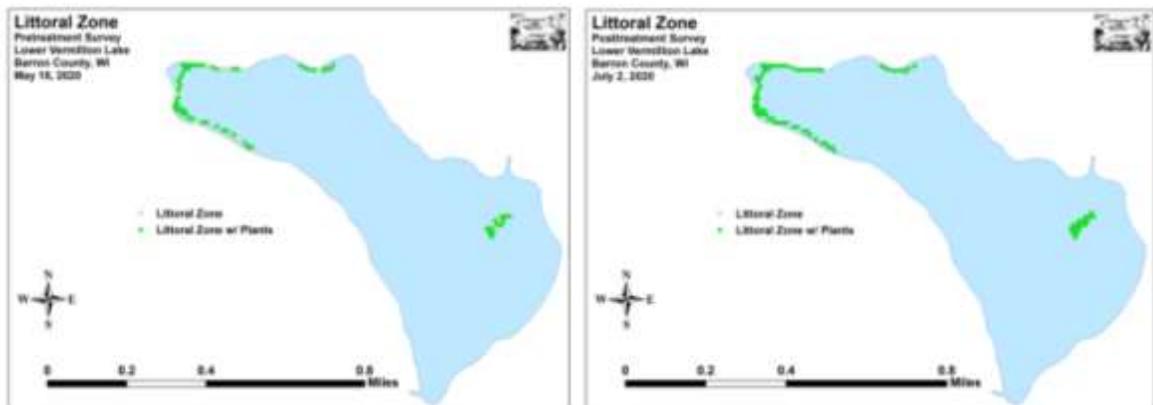


Figure 5: Pre/Posttreatment Littoral Zone

Initial diversity within the beds was moderate with a Simpson Index value of 0.61 pretreatment. This increased to a high 0.84 posttreatment. The Floristic Quality Index, another measure of only native species, also increased sharply from 13.1 pretreatment to 20.2 posttreatment. Total richness nearly doubled from eight species pretreatment to 15 species posttreatment. Similarly, the mean native species richness at sites with native vegetation experienced a highly-significant increase ($p<0.001$) from 1.26 species/site pretreatment to 1.75 species/site posttreatment (Figure 6). Total rake fullness saw a significant increase ($p=0.03$) from a low 1.49 pretreatment to a low/moderate 1.66 posttreatment (Figure 7) (Appendix IV).

**Table 2: Pre/Posttreatment Surveys Summary Statistics
Lower Vermillion Lake, Barron County
May 18 and July 2, 2020**

Summary Statistics:	Pre	Post
Total number of points sampled	80	80
Total number of sites with vegetation	57	76
Total number of sites shallower than the maximum depth of plants	80	80
Freq. of occur. at sites shallower than max. depth of plants (in percent)	71.3	95.0
Simpson Diversity Index	0.61	0.84
Mean Coefficient of Conservatism	5.3	5.6
Floristic Quality Index	13.1	20.2
Maximum depth of plants (ft)	11.0	11.0
Mean depth of plants (ft)	5.8	5.3
Median depth of plants (ft)	5.5	5.0
Average number of all species per site (shallower than max depth)	0.98	1.78
Average number of all species per site (veg. sites only)	1.37	1.87
Average number of native species per site (shallower than max depth)	0.90	1.60
Average number of native species per site (sites with native veg. only)	1.26	1.75
Species Richness (including visuals)	8	15
Mean Rake Fullness (veg. sites only)	1.49	1.66

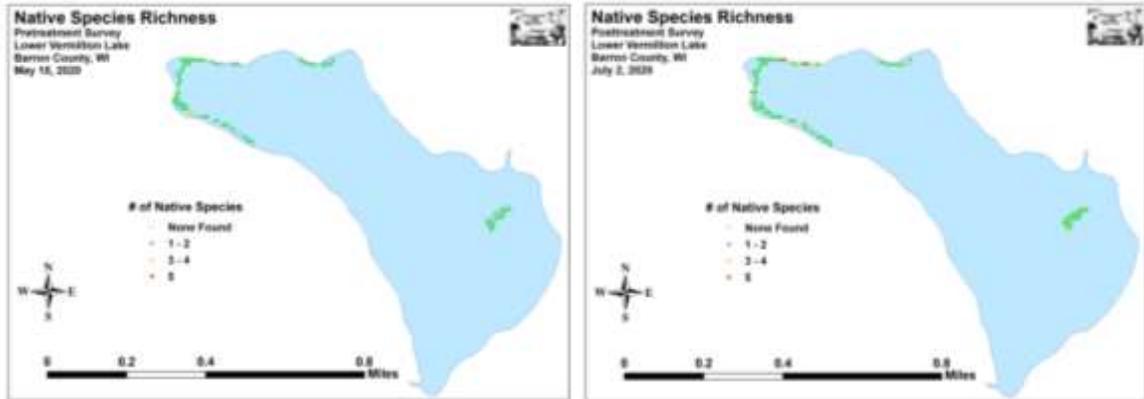


Figure 6: Pre/Posttreatment Native Species Richness

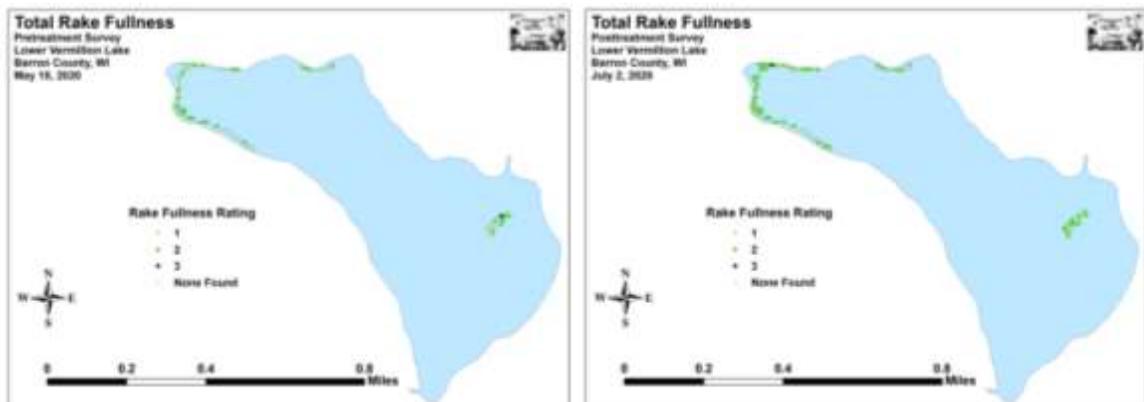


Figure 7: Pre/Posttreatment Total Rake Fullness

We recorded Eurasian water-milfoil as a visual at a single point during the pretreatment survey. Despite this, we did note plants inter-point in the treatment areas. During the posttreatment survey, we located a single severely chemically burned EWM at a point along the south shoreline of the northwest bay (Figure 8) (Appendix V). We also saw a couple of plants inter-point near the southeast border of the treatment area. Each of these was rake removed. Due to the low number of EWM plants found during both surveys, none of our findings demonstrated a statistically significant change (Figure 9).

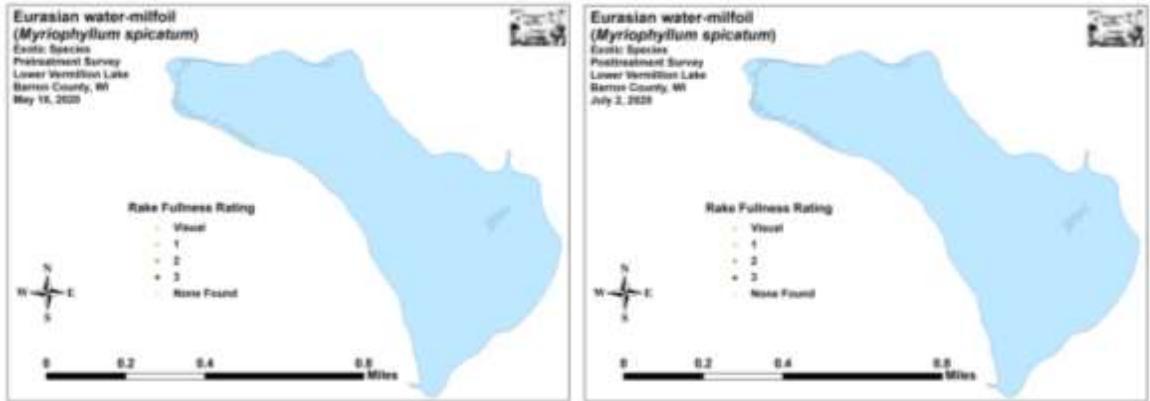
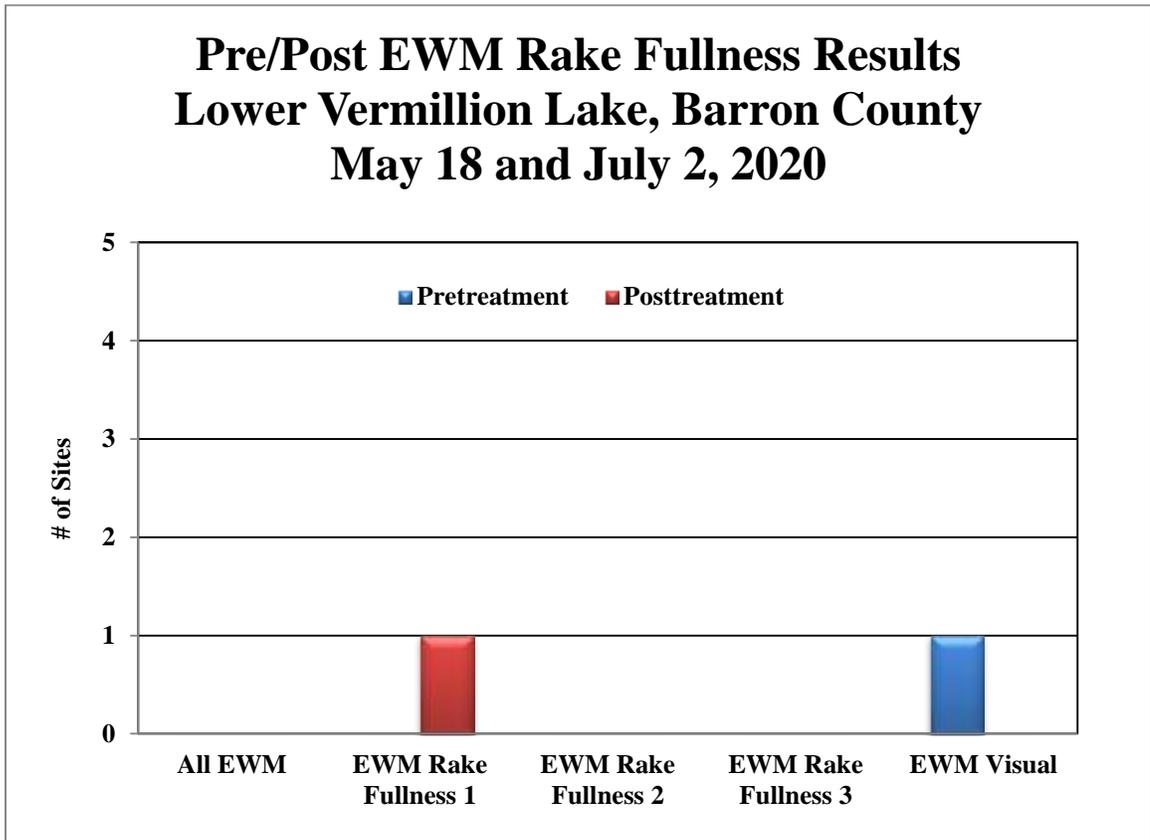


Figure 8: Pre/Posttreatment EWM Density and Distribution



Significant differences = * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure 9: Pre/Posttreatment Changes in EWM Rake Fullness

Curly-leaf pondweed was present at six of 80 sites during the pretreatment survey (7.5% coverage) with one additional visual sighting (Figure 10). Of these, none had a rake fullness rating of 3, three rated a 2, and the remaining three were a 1. This produced a mean rake fullness of 1.50 and suggested that 3.8% of the treatment areas had a significant infestation (rake fullness 2 or 3). During the posttreatment survey, we noted that many CLP plant appeared chemically burned, but survived to form viable turions. In these cases, we counted the plants as being alive. In total, we found CLP at 13 points (16.3% coverage) with nine additional visual sightings. None of these samples rated a 3, five were a 2, and eight were a 1 for a mean rake fullness of 1.38 (Appendix V). **Our results demonstrated a moderately significant increase in visual sightings. None of the other increases were significant, although the total increase was nearly significant ($p=0.09$)** (Figure 11).

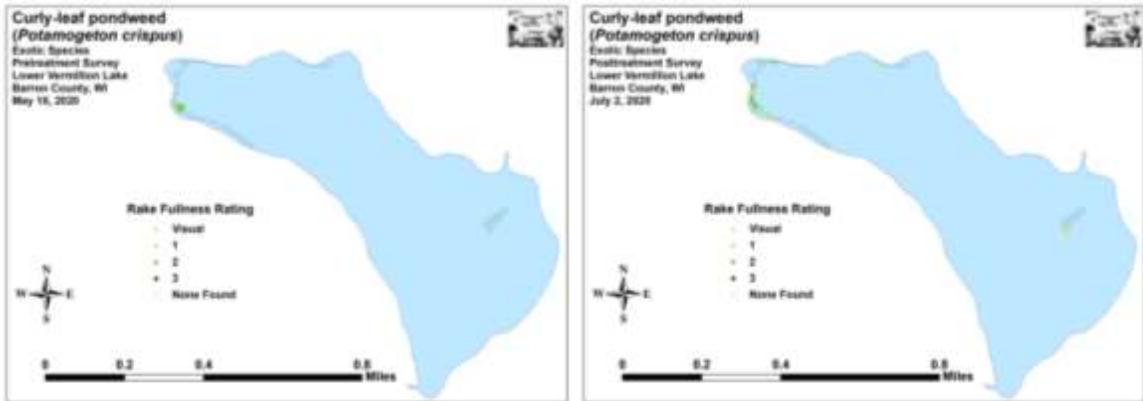
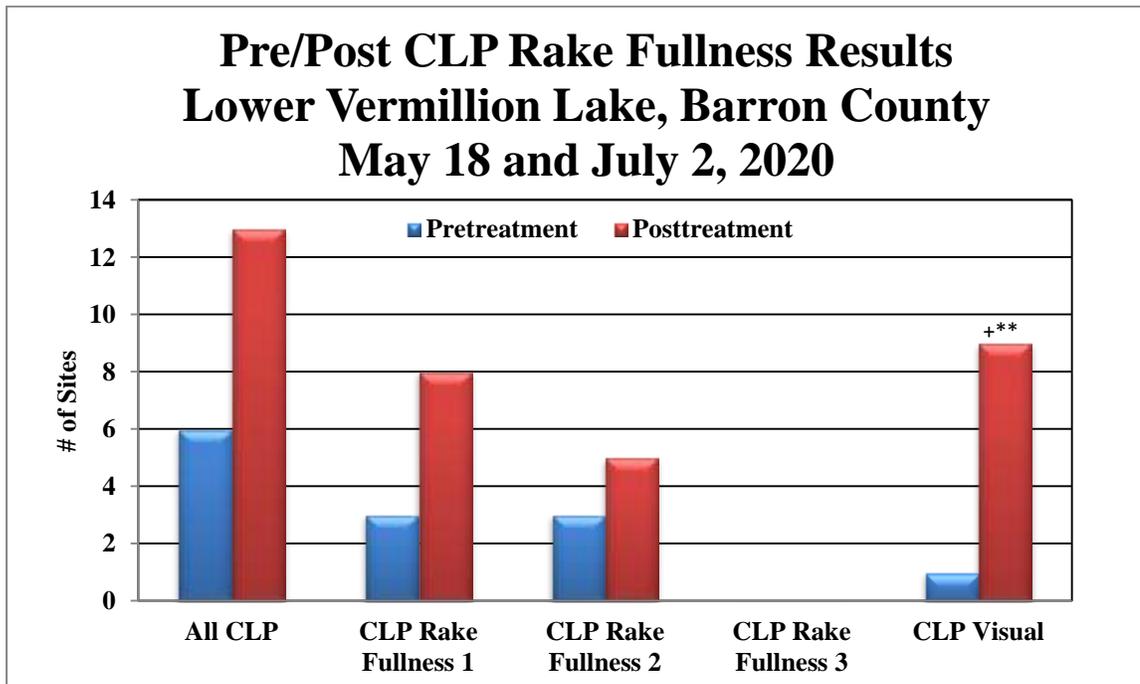


Figure 10: Pre/Posttreatment CLP Density and Distribution



Significant differences = * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$

Figure 11: Pre/Posttreatment Changes in CLP Rake Fullness

Coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) was the most common native species in both the pre and posttreatment surveys (Tables 3 and 4). Present at 47 sites pretreatment, it experienced a non-significant decline ($p=0.52$) in distribution to 43 sites posttreatment. Its density saw a nearly significant increase ($p=0.06$) from a mean rake fullness of 1.45 pre to 1.63 post (Figure 12).

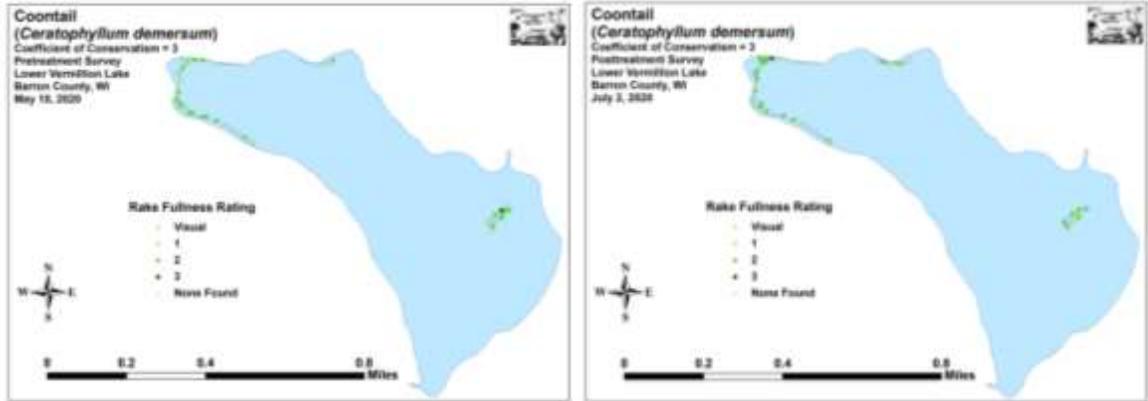


Figure 12: Pre/Post Coontail Density and Distribution

Common waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*) was the second most common pretreatment species (Figure 13). Present at seven points with a mean rake fullness of 1.14, it experienced non-significant increases ($p=0.60/p=0.20$) in distribution and density to nine sites with a mean rake of 1.33 posttreatment.

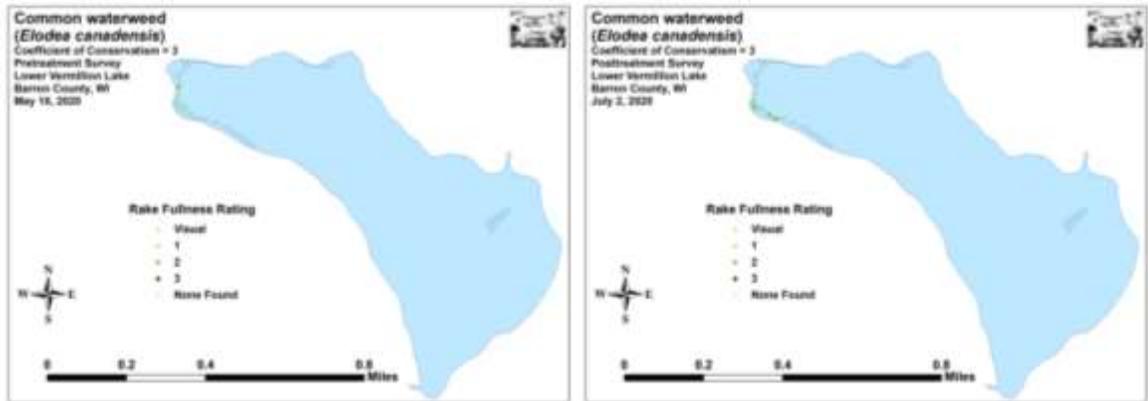


Figure 13: Pre/Post Common Waterweed Density and Distribution

Northern water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum sibiricum*) – which is also sensitive to 2,4-D – was the only native species that suffered a significant decline ($p=0.01$) in distribution posttreatment. Conversely, several late-growing species experienced significant expansions in distribution – Wild celery (*Vallisneria americana*) and Slender naiad (*Najas flexilis*) demonstrated highly significant increases ($p<0.001$); filamentous algae showed a moderately significant increase ($p=0.004$); and Water star-grass (*Heteranthera dubia*), Muskgrass (*Chara* sp.), and Sago pondweed (*Stuckenia pectinata*) had significant increases ($p=0.03/p=0.02/p=0.02$) (Figure 14) (Maps for all native species from the pre and posttreatment surveys can be found in Appendixes VI and VII).

**Table 3: Frequencies and Mean Rake Sample of Aquatic Macrophytes
Pretreatment Survey Lower Vermillion Lake, Barron County
May 18, 2020**

Species	Common Name	Total Sites	Relative Freq.	Freq. in Veg.	Freq. in Lit.	Mean Rake	Visual Sites
<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	Coontail	47	60.26	82.46	58.75	1.45	0
	Filamentous algae	39	*	68.42	48.75	1.33	0
<i>Elodea canadensis</i>	Common waterweed	7	8.97	12.28	8.75	1.14	0
<i>Myriophyllum sibiricum</i>	Northern water-milfoil	6	7.69	10.53	7.50	1.00	0
<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	Curly-leaf pondweed	6	7.69	10.53	7.50	1.50	1
<i>Heteranthera dubia</i>	Water star-grass	5	6.41	8.77	6.25	1.40	0
<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i>	White water crowfoot	4	5.13	7.02	5.00	1.50	0
<i>Nuphar variegata</i>	Spatterdock	3	3.85	5.26	3.75	1.00	0
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	Eurasian water-milfoil	**	**	**	**	**	1

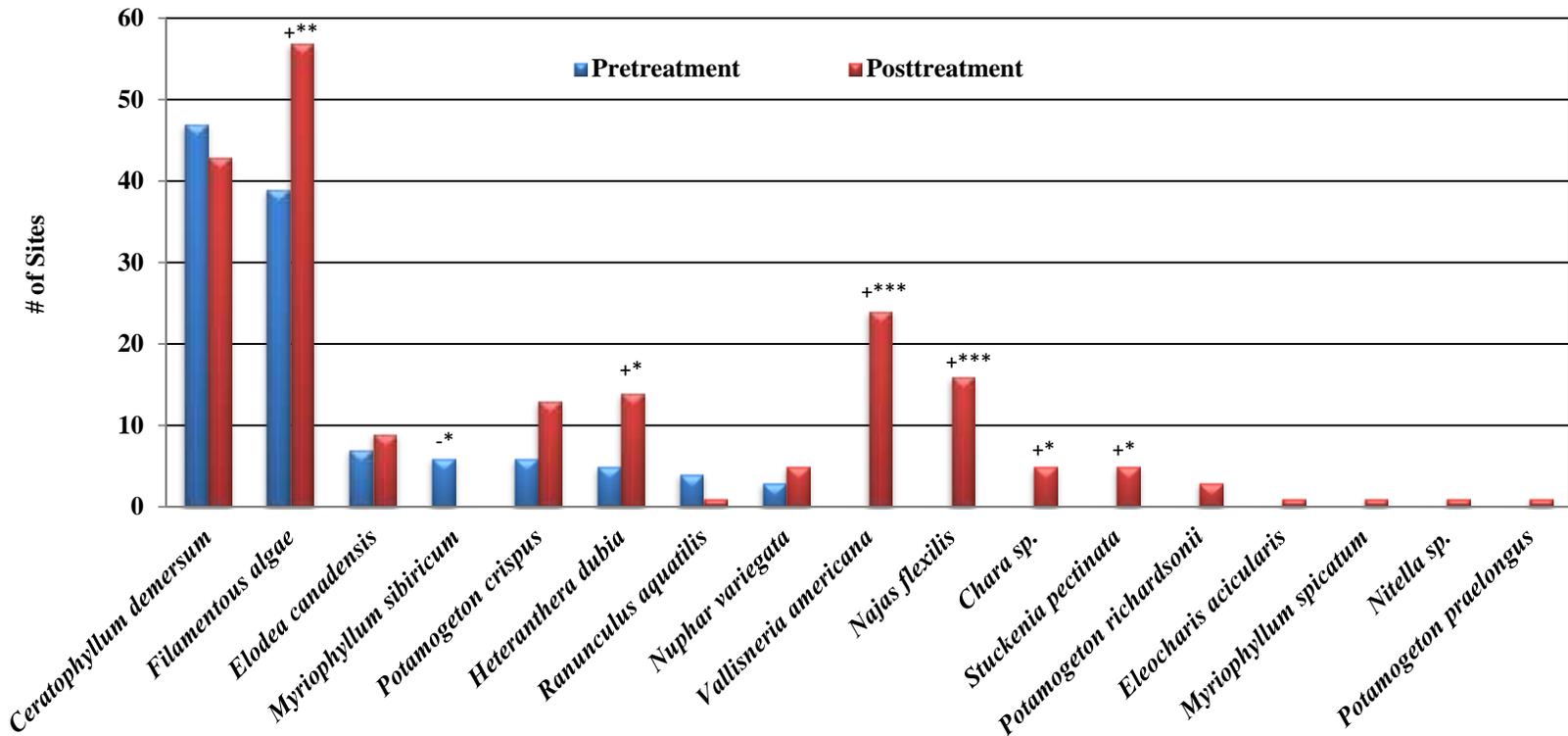
* Excluded from Relative Frequency Analysis ** Visual Only

**Table 4: Frequencies and Mean Rake Sample of Aquatic Macrophytes
Posttreatment Survey Lower Vermillion Lake, Barron County
July 2, 2020**

Species	Common Name	Total Sites	Relative Freq.	Freq. in Veg.	Freq. in Lit.	Mean Rake	Visual Sites
	Filamentous algae	57	*	75.00	71.25	1.40	0
<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>	Coontail	43	30.28	56.58	53.75	1.63	0
<i>Vallisneria americana</i>	Wild celery	24	16.90	31.58	30.00	1.25	0
<i>Najas flexilis</i>	Slender naiad	16	11.27	21.05	20.00	1.31	0
<i>Heteranthera dubia</i>	Water star-grass	14	9.86	18.42	17.50	1.29	0
<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>	Curly-leaf pondweed	13	9.15	17.11	16.25	1.38	9
<i>Elodea canadensis</i>	Common waterweed	9	6.34	11.84	11.25	1.33	0
<i>Chara</i> sp.	Muskgrass	5	3.52	6.58	6.25	1.40	0
<i>Nuphar variegata</i>	Spatterdock	5	3.52	6.58	6.25	1.40	0
<i>Stuckenia pectinata</i>	Sago pondweed	5	3.52	6.58	6.25	1.40	0
<i>Potamogeton richardsonii</i>	Clasping-leaf pondweed	3	2.11	3.95	3.75	1.00	0
<i>Eleocharis acicularis</i>	Needle spikerush	1	0.70	1.32	1.25	1.00	0
<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	Eurasian water-milfoil	1	0.70	1.32	1.25	1.00	0
<i>Nitella</i> sp.	Nitella	1	0.70	1.32	1.25	1.00	0
<i>Potamogeton praelongus</i>	White-stem pondweed	1	0.70	1.32	1.25	1.00	0
<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i>	White water crowfoot	1	0.70	1.32	1.25	1.00	0

* Excluded from Relative Frequency Analysis

Pre/Post Differences for All Species Lower Vermillion Lake, Barron County May 18 and July 2, 2020



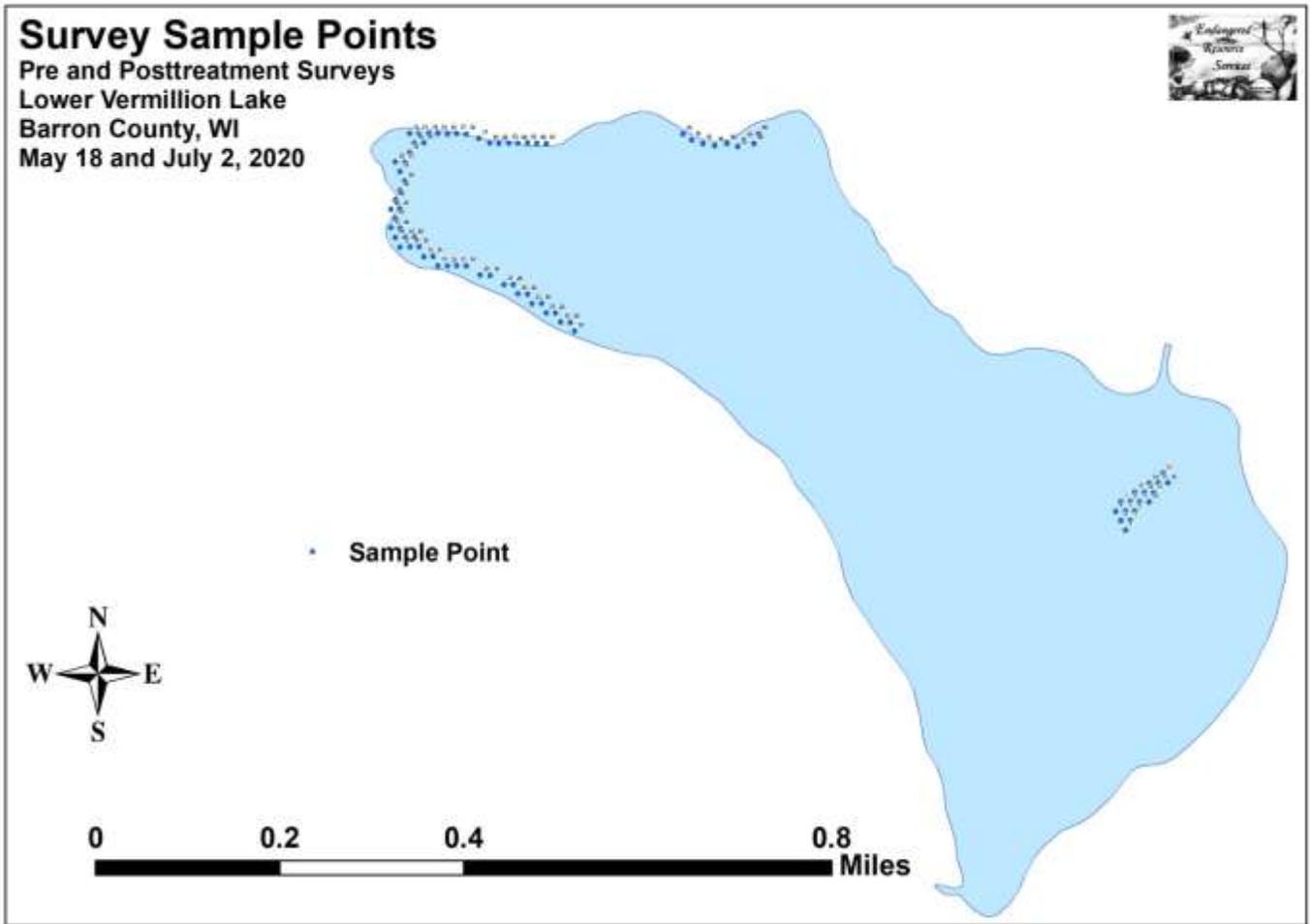
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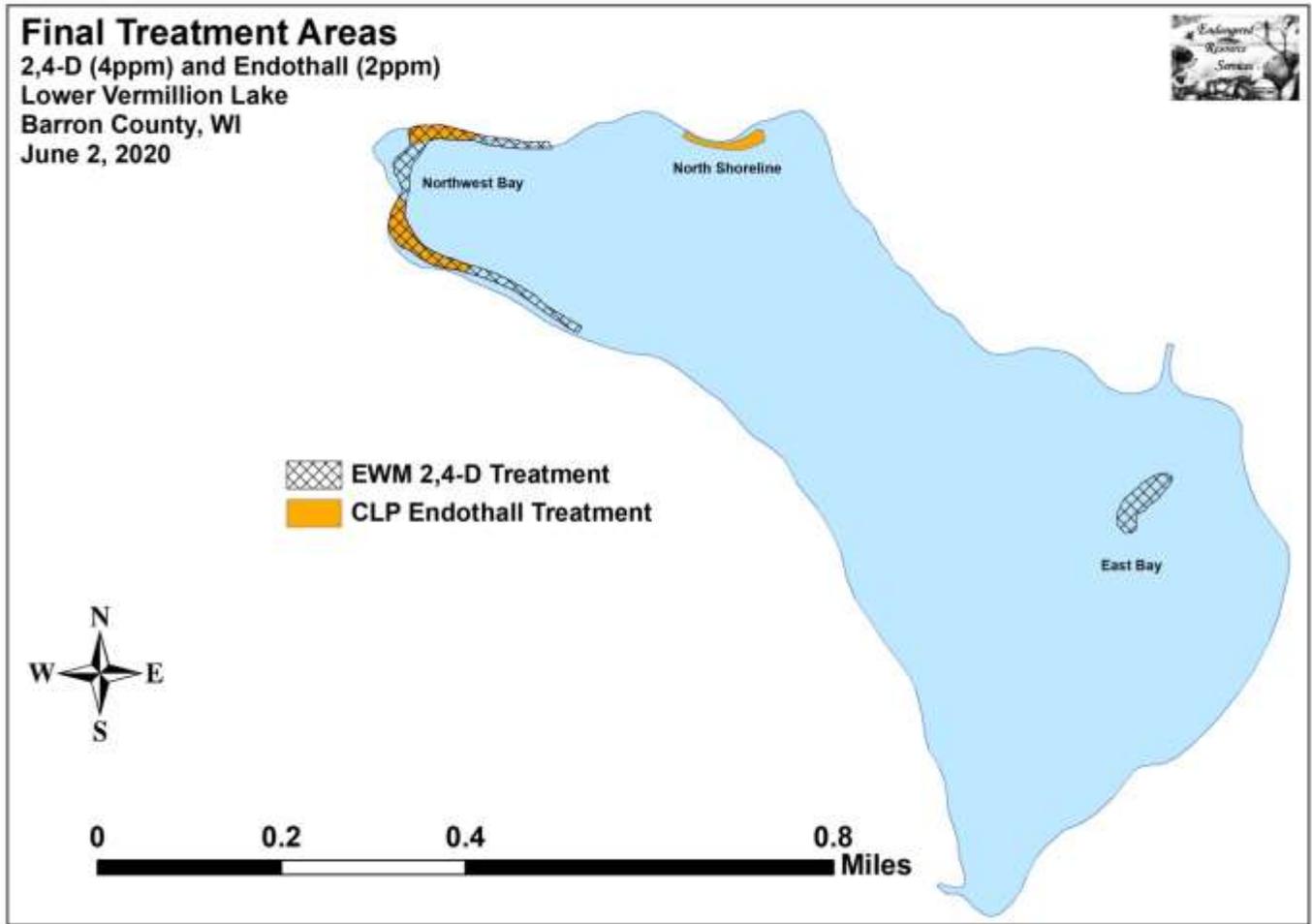
Figure 14: Pre/Posttreatment Macrophyte Changes

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- WDNR. [online]. 2020. Lower Vermillion Citizen Lake Monitoring Water Quality Database. Available from <http://dnr.wi.gov/lakes/waterquality/Station.aspx?id=033185> (2020, July).

Appendix I: Survey Sample Points and EWM/CLP Treatment Areas

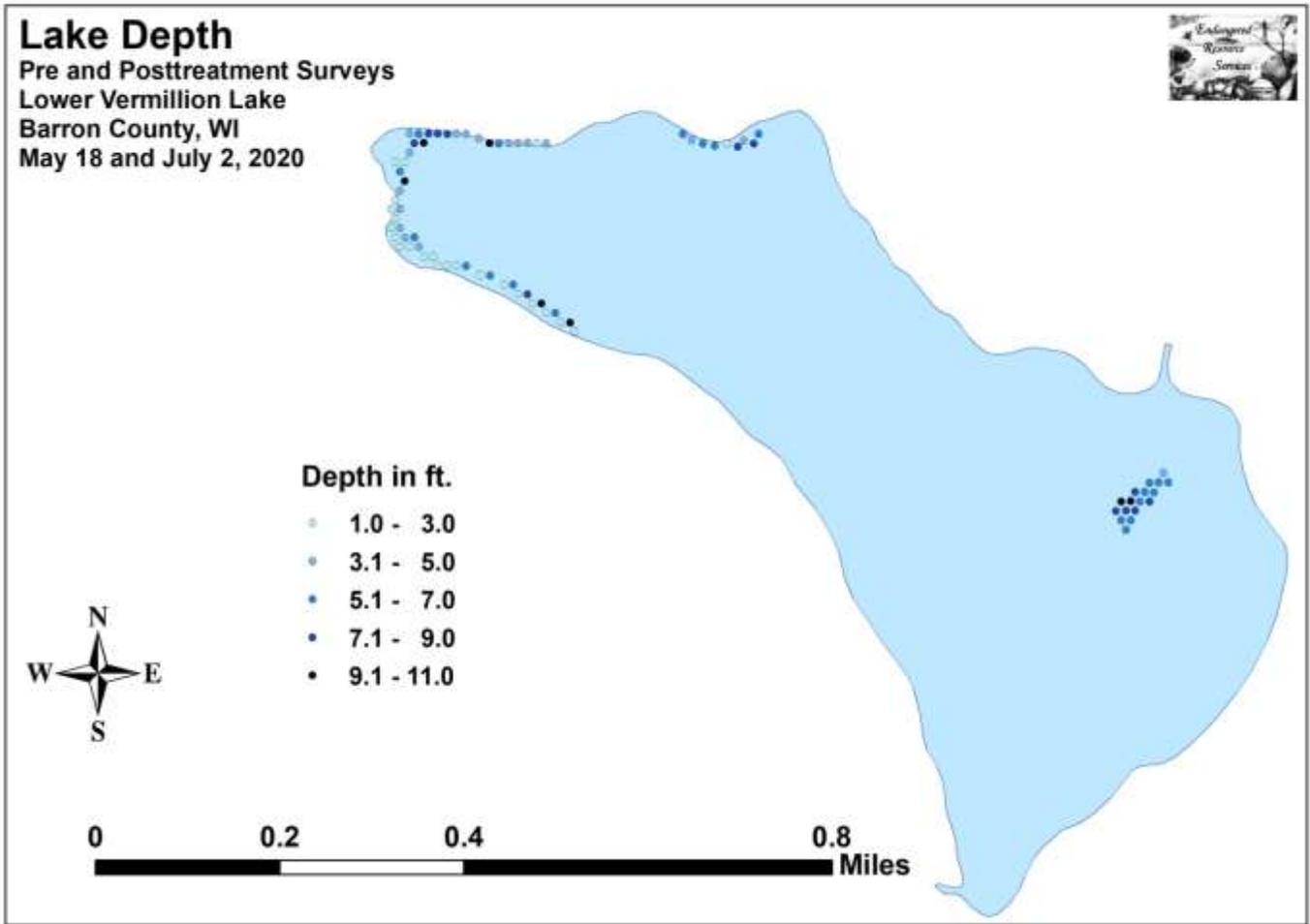


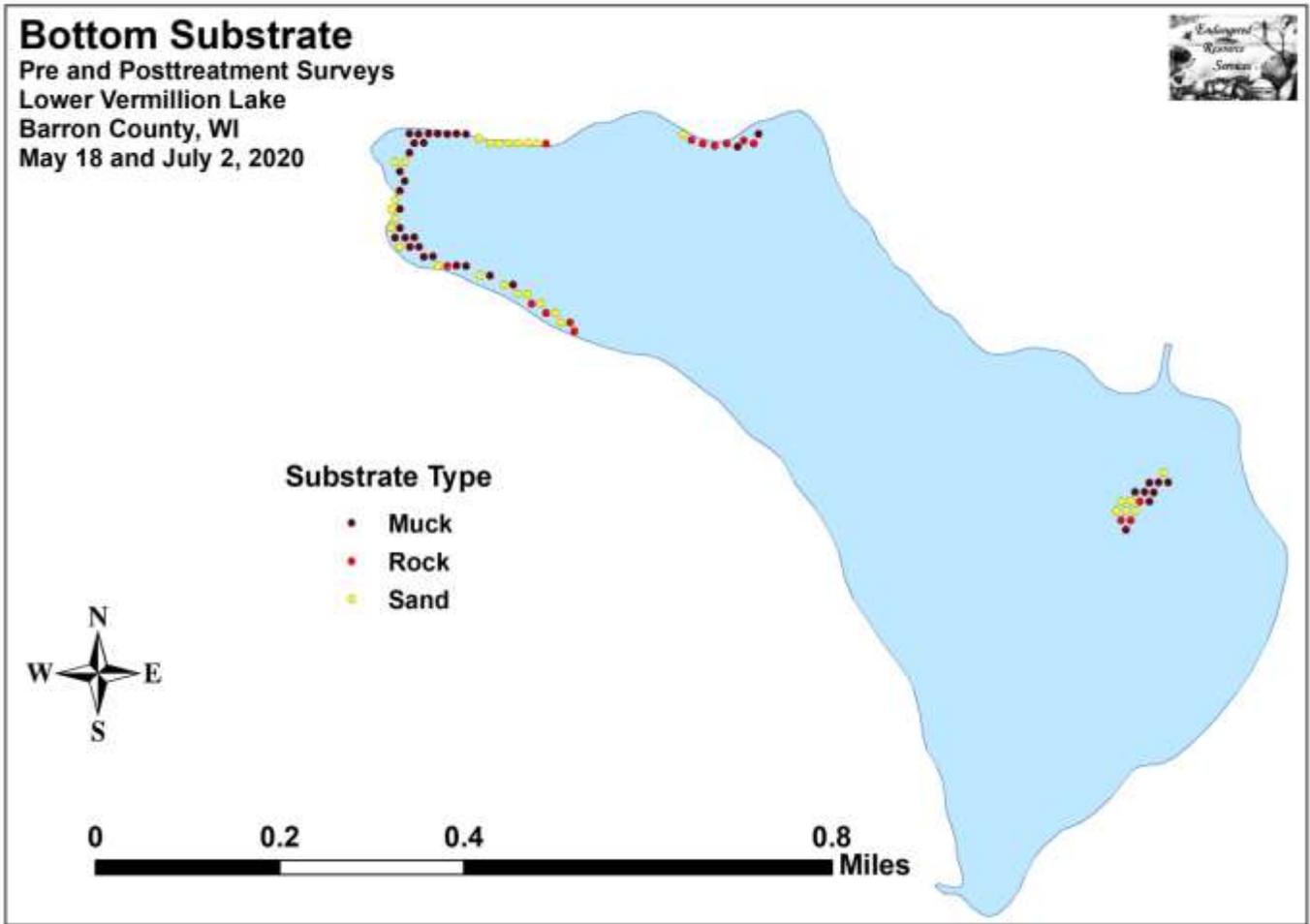


Appendix II: Vegetative Survey Datasheet

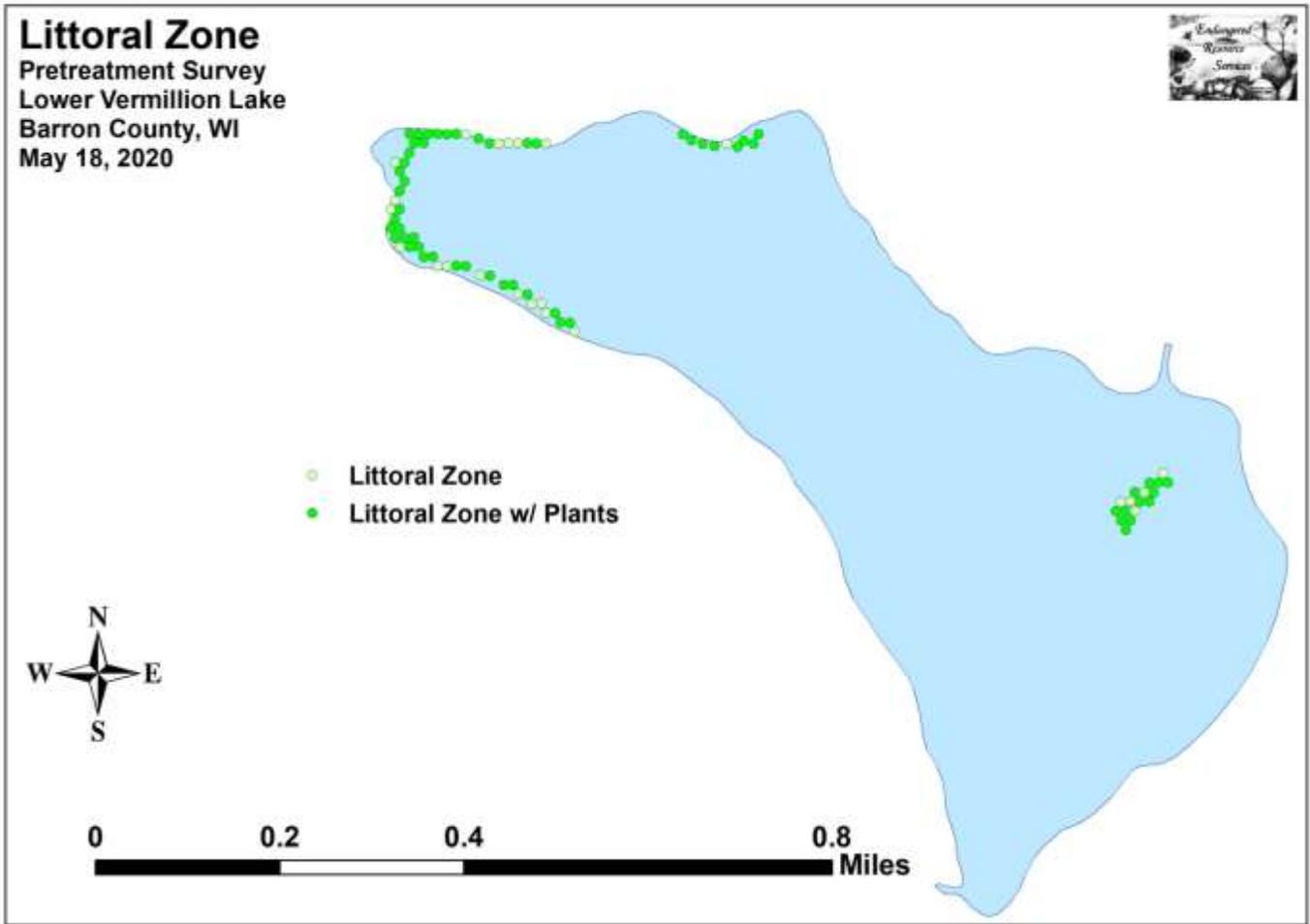
Observers for this lake: names and hours worked by each:																										
Lake:		WBIC														County		Date:								
Site #	Depth (ft)	Muck (M), Sand (S), Rock (R)	Rake pole (P) or rake rope (R)	Total Rake Fullness	EWM	CLP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
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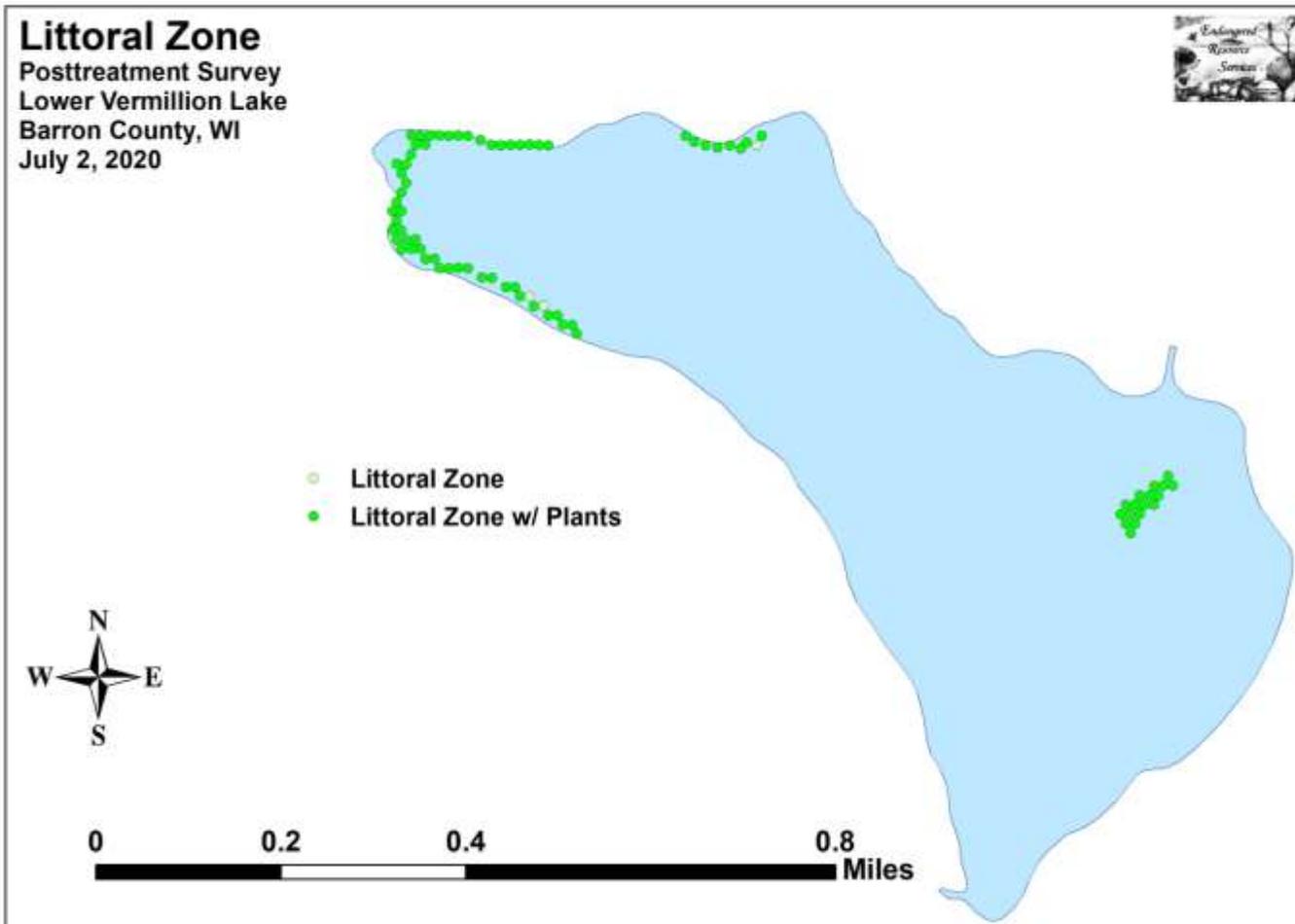
Appendix III: Pre/Post Habitat Variables

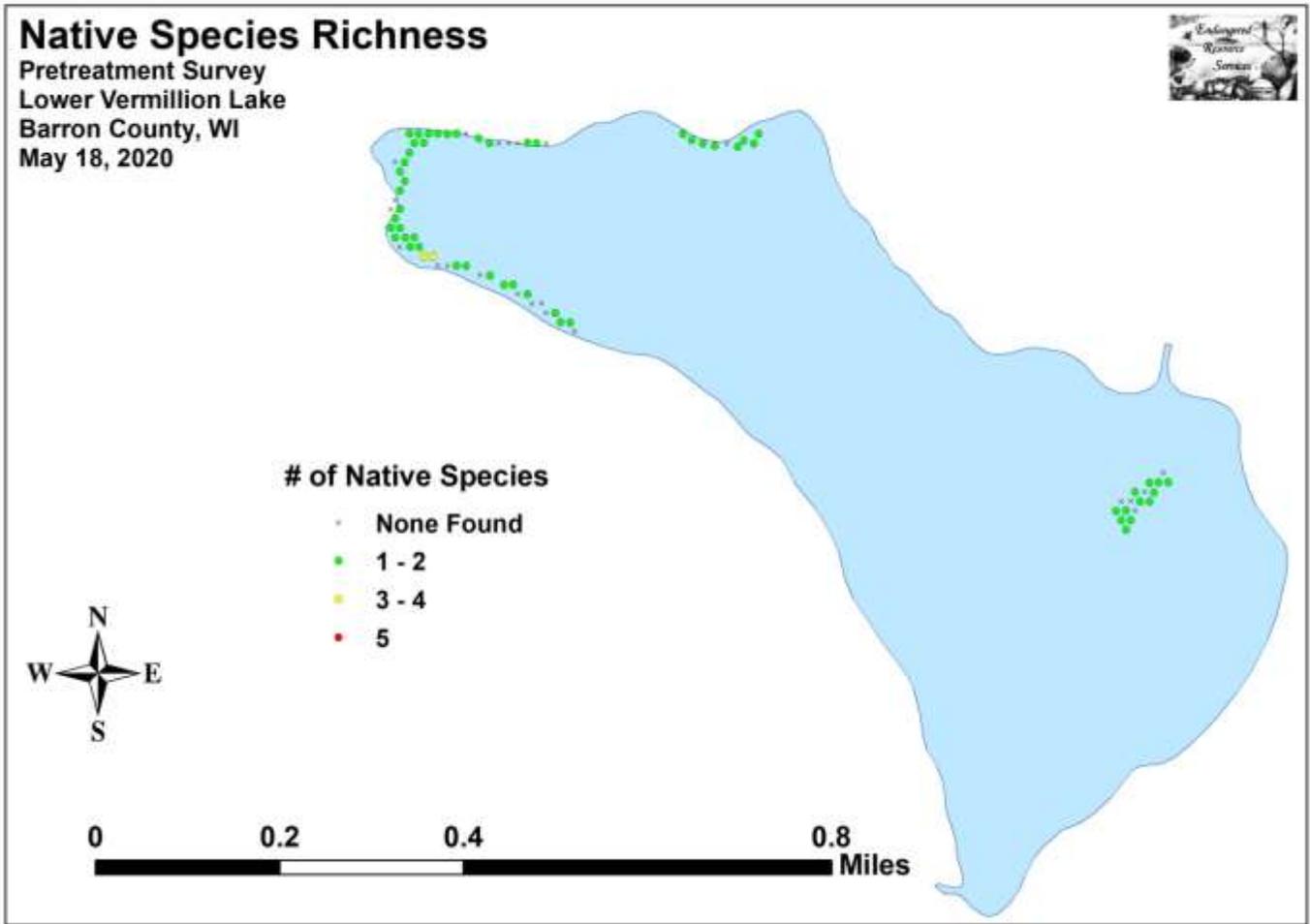


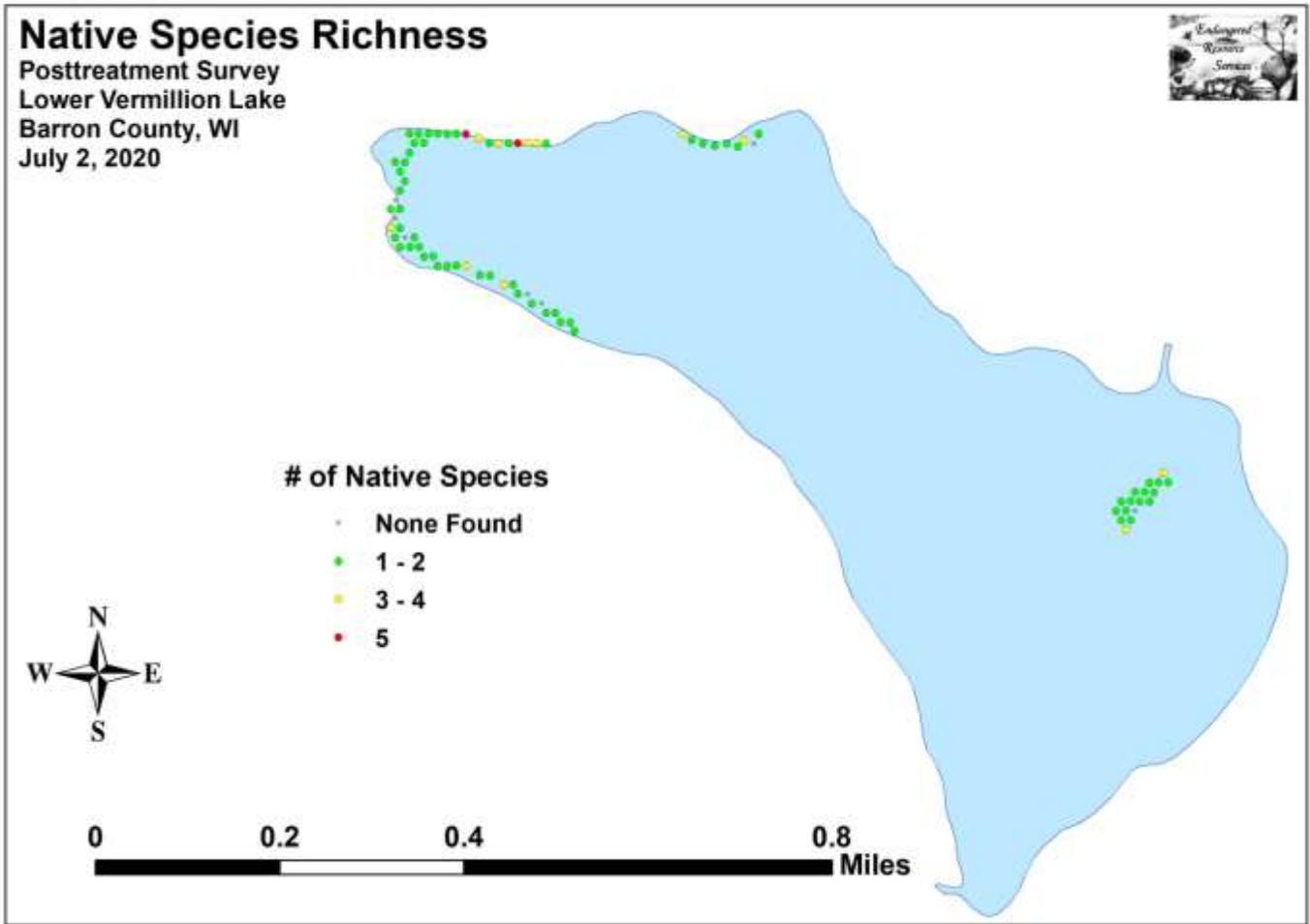


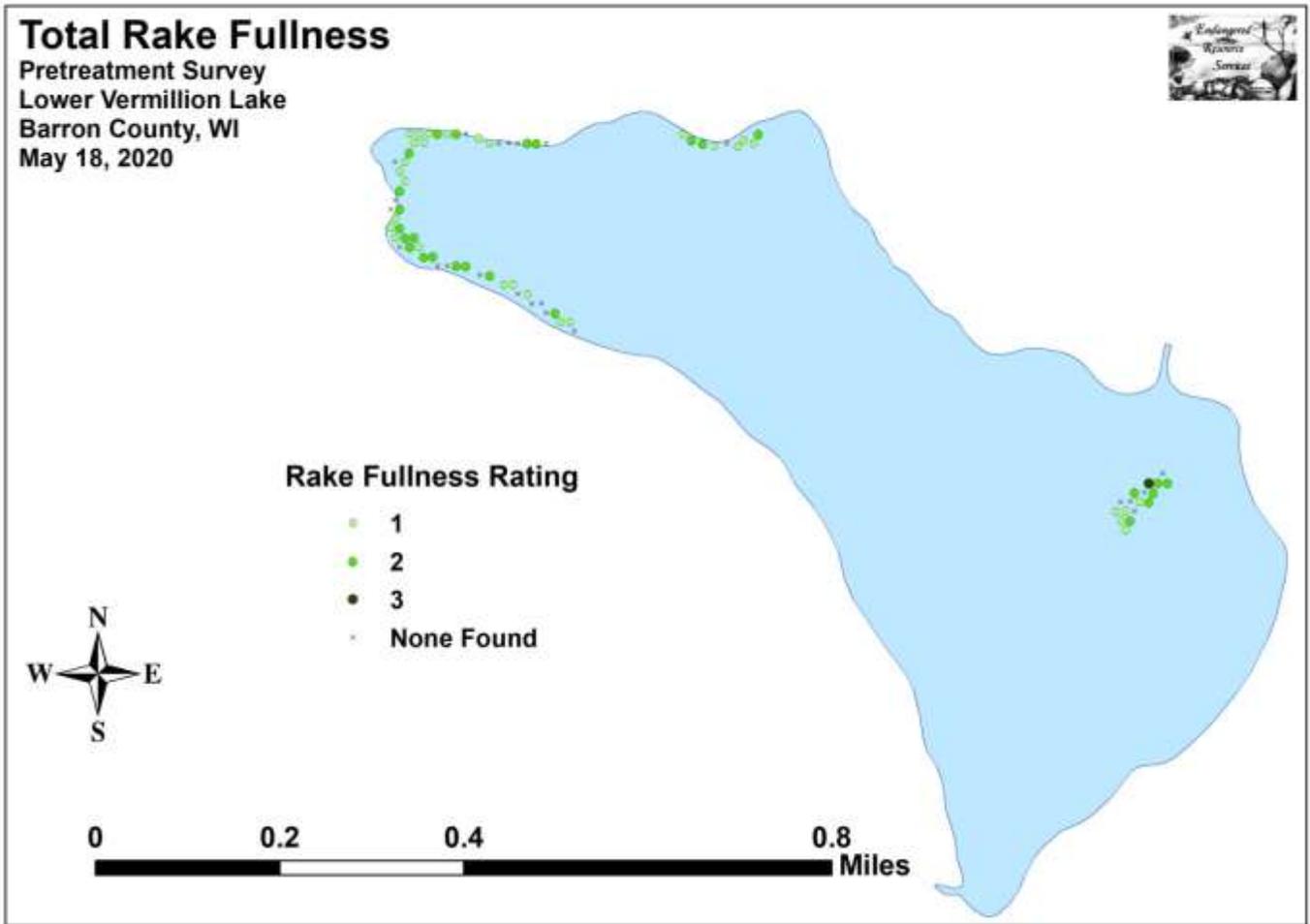
**Appendix IV: Pre/Post Littoral Zone, Native Species Richness and
Total Rake Fullness**

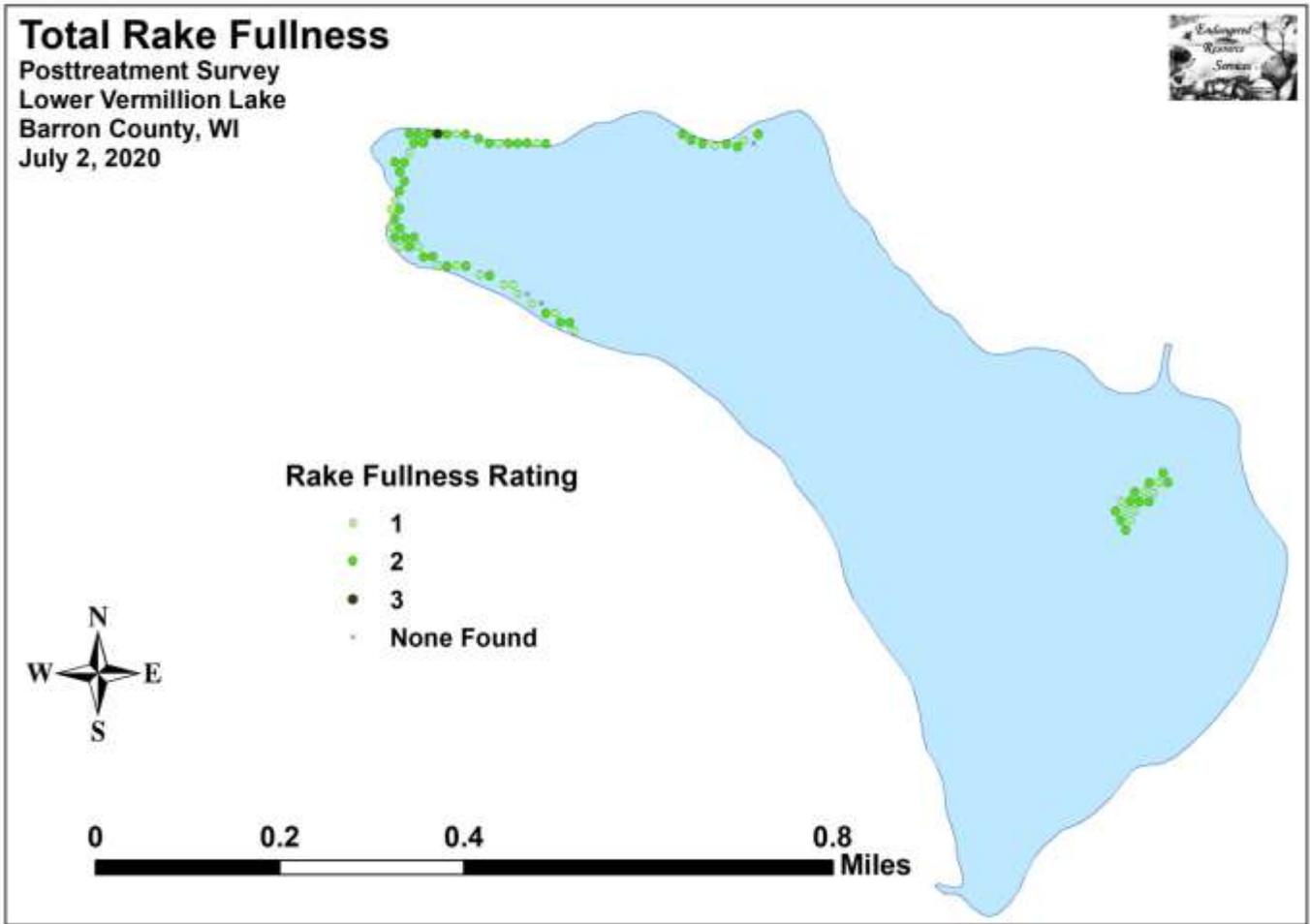




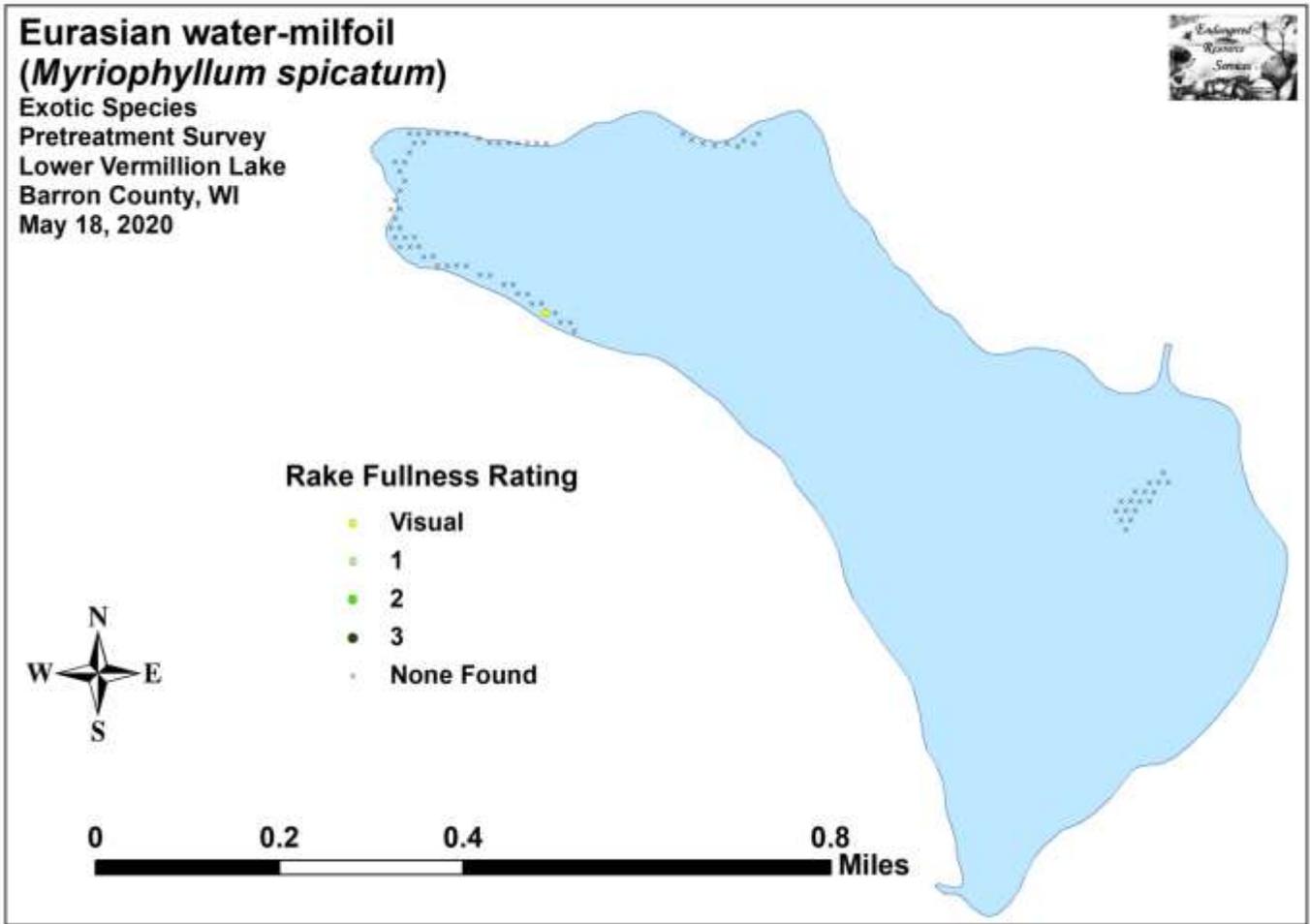


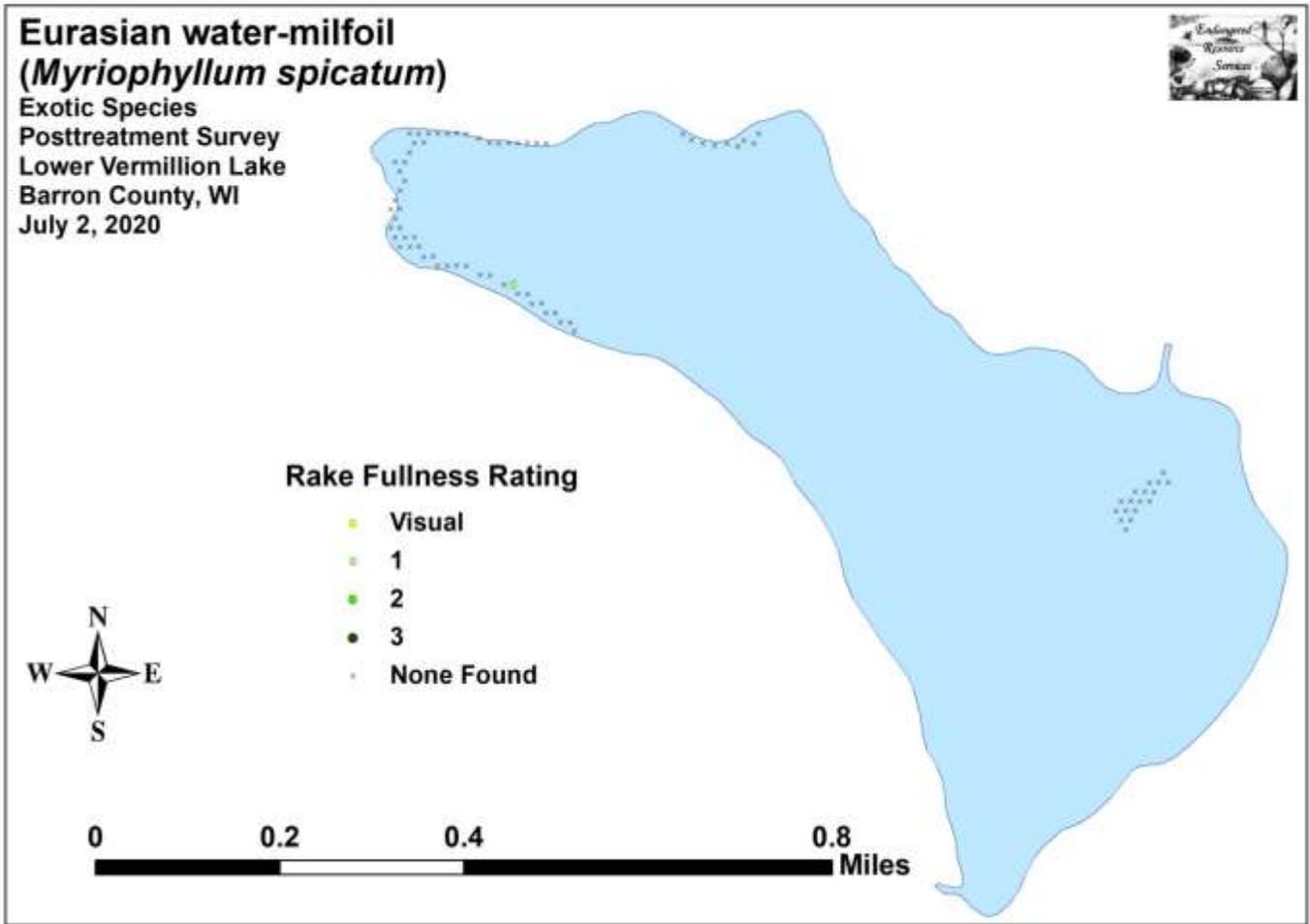


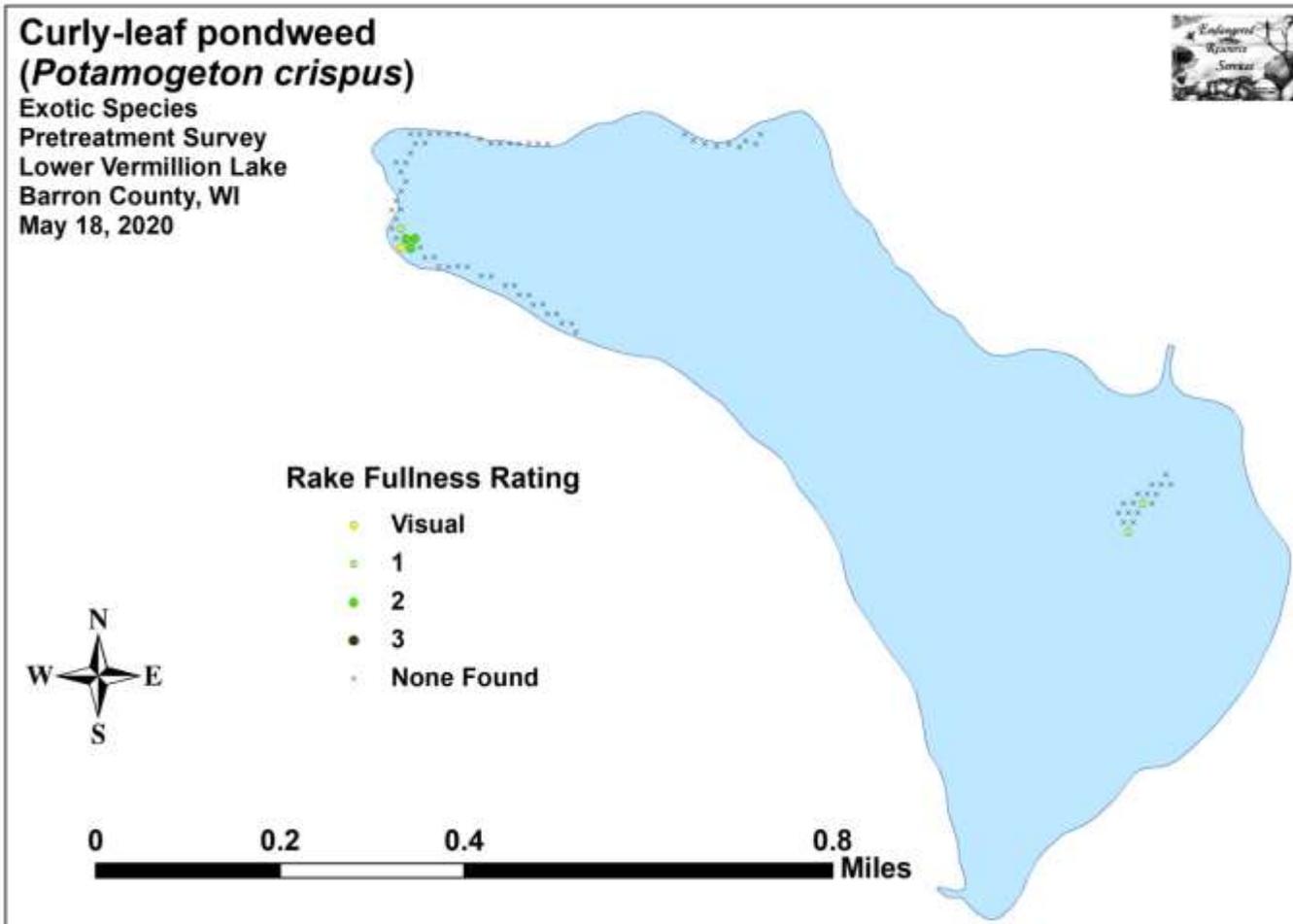


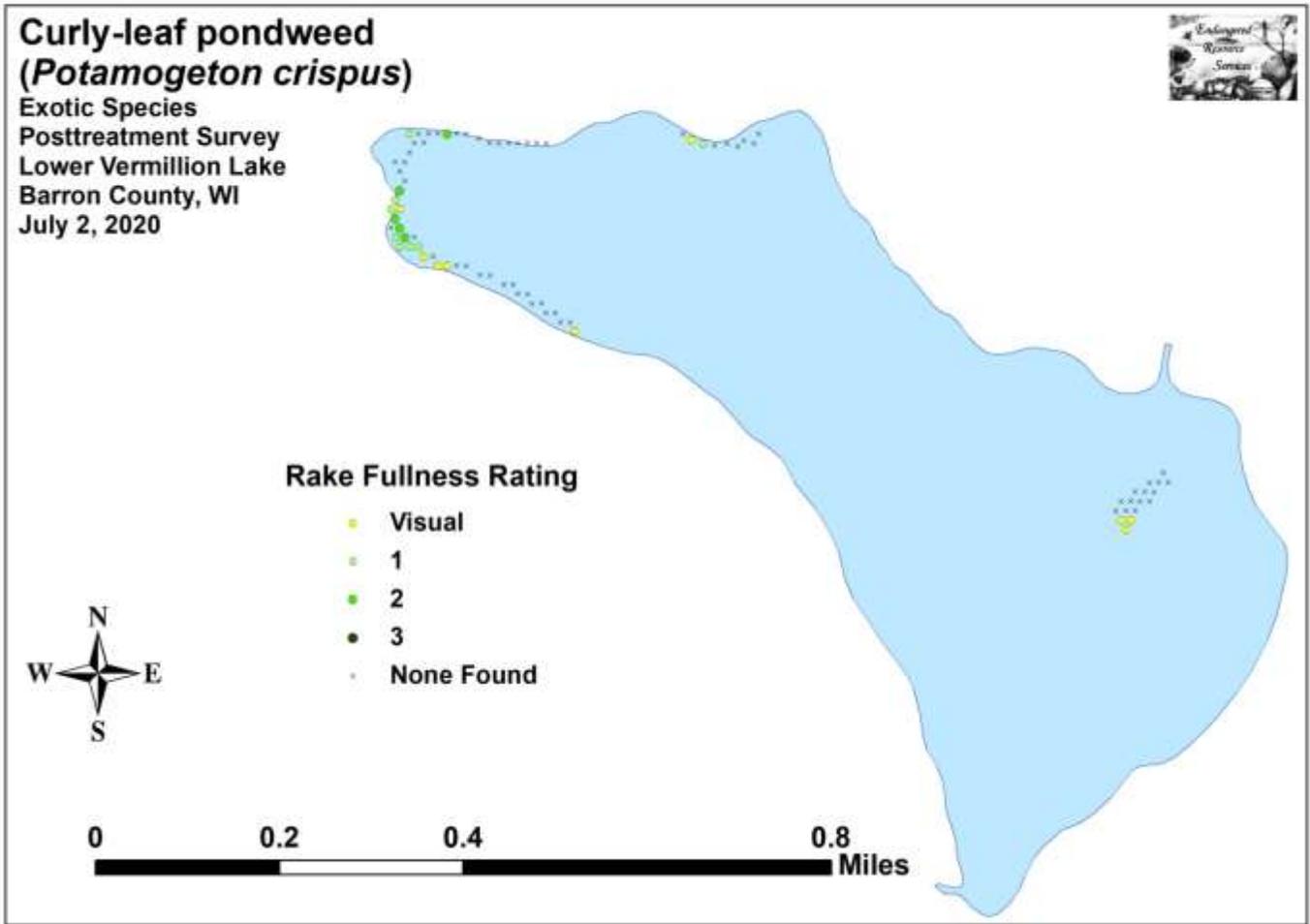


Appendix V: EWM and CLP Pre/Post Density and Distribution

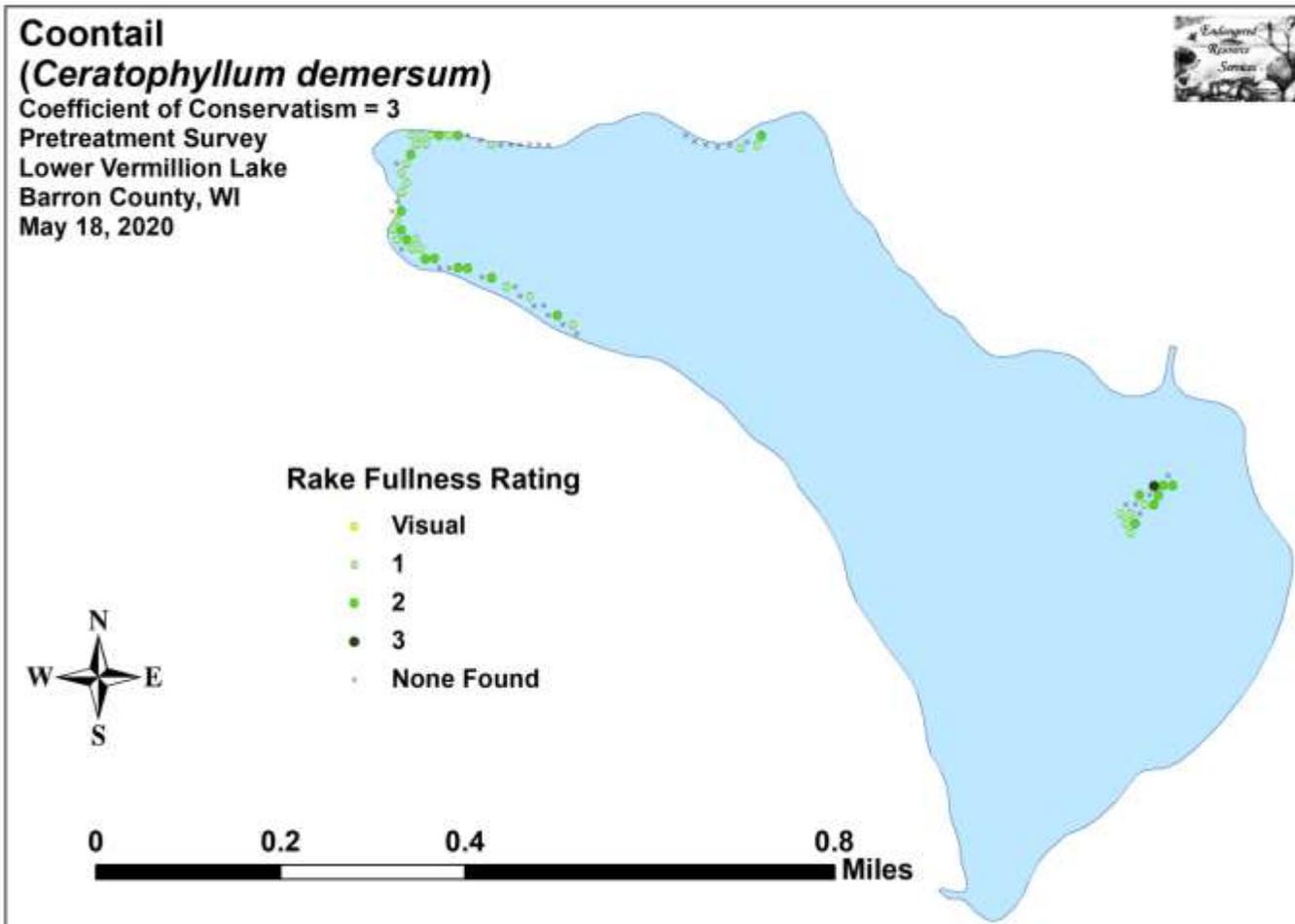


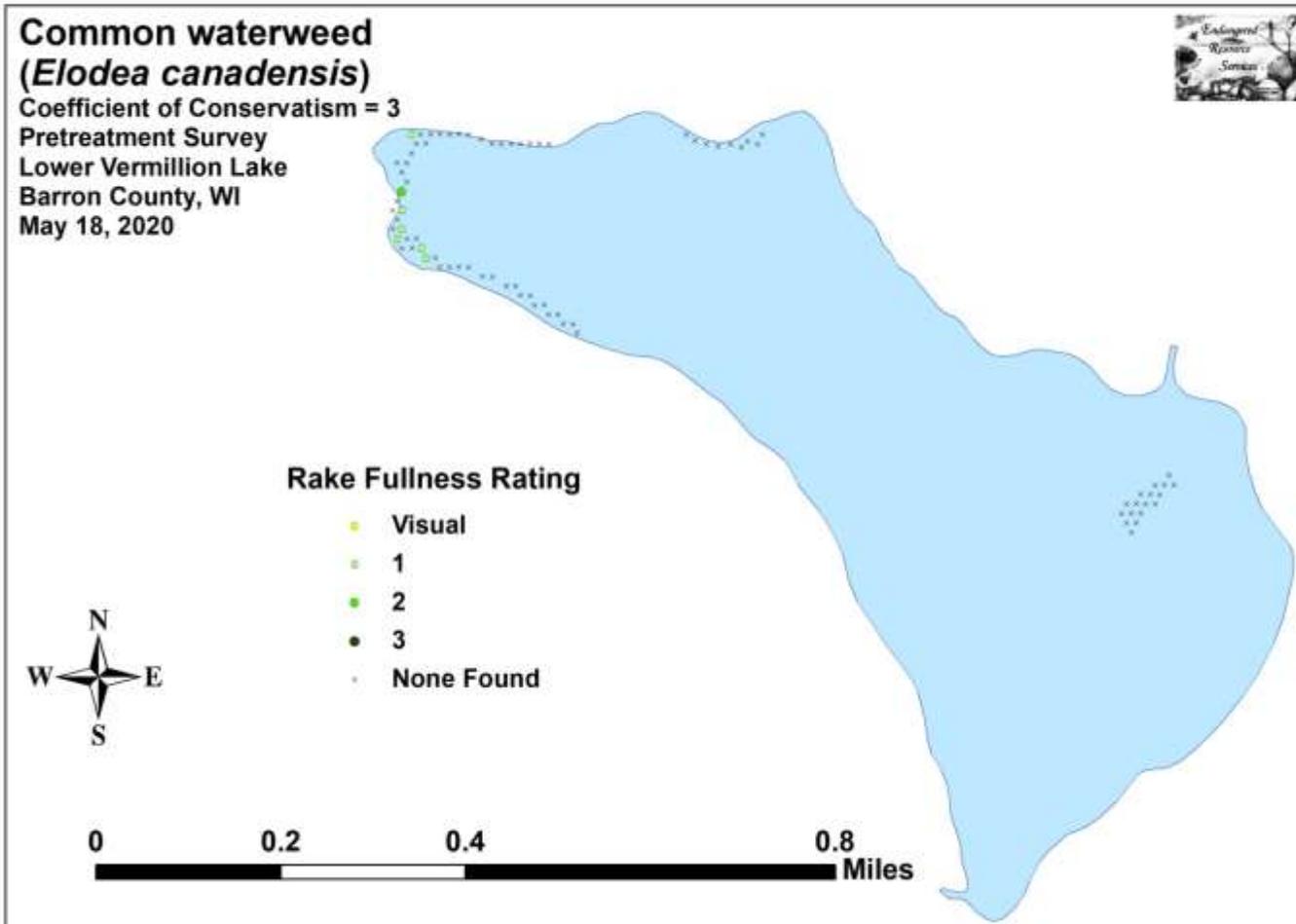


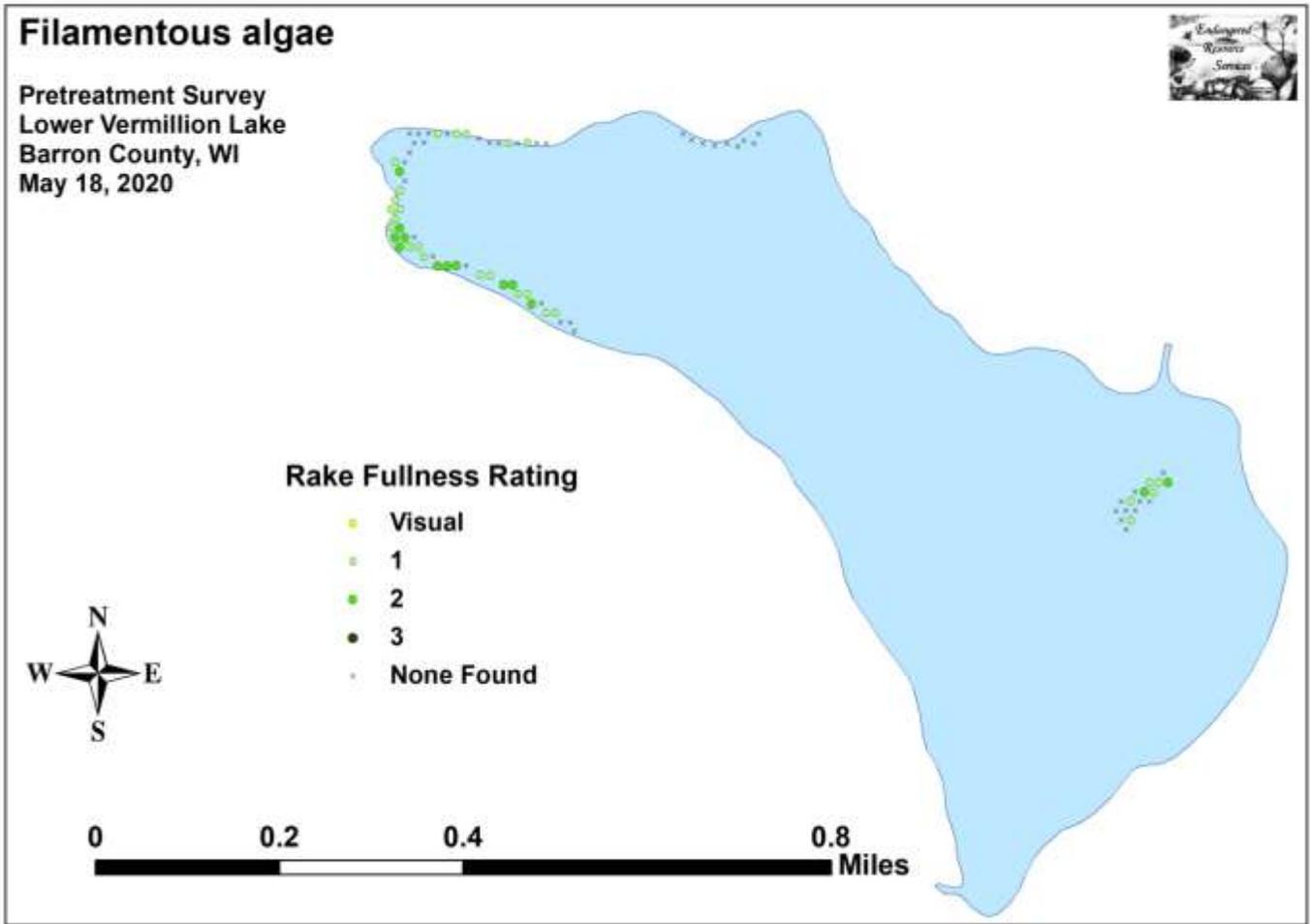


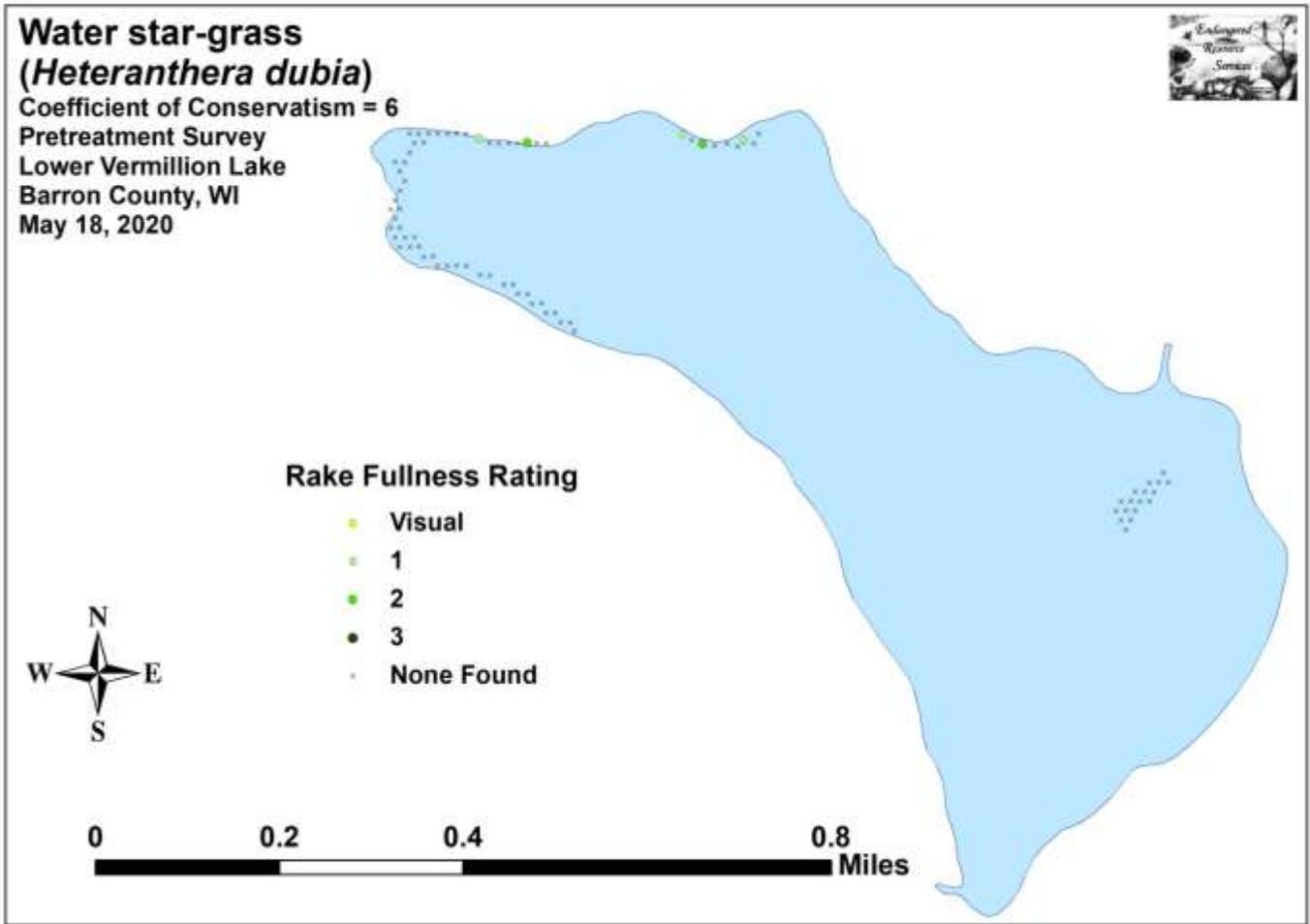


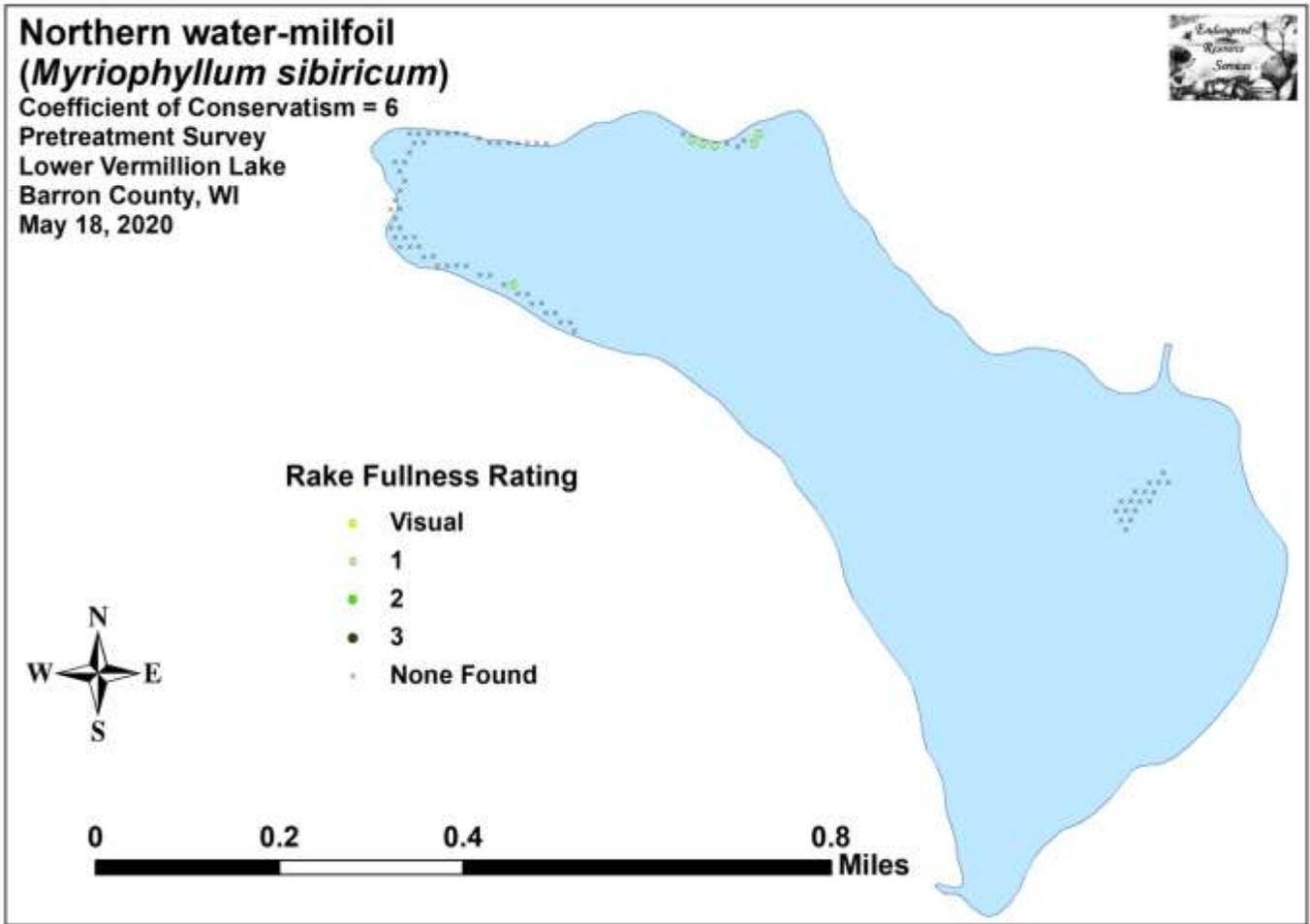
Appendix VI: Pretreatment Native Species Density and Distribution

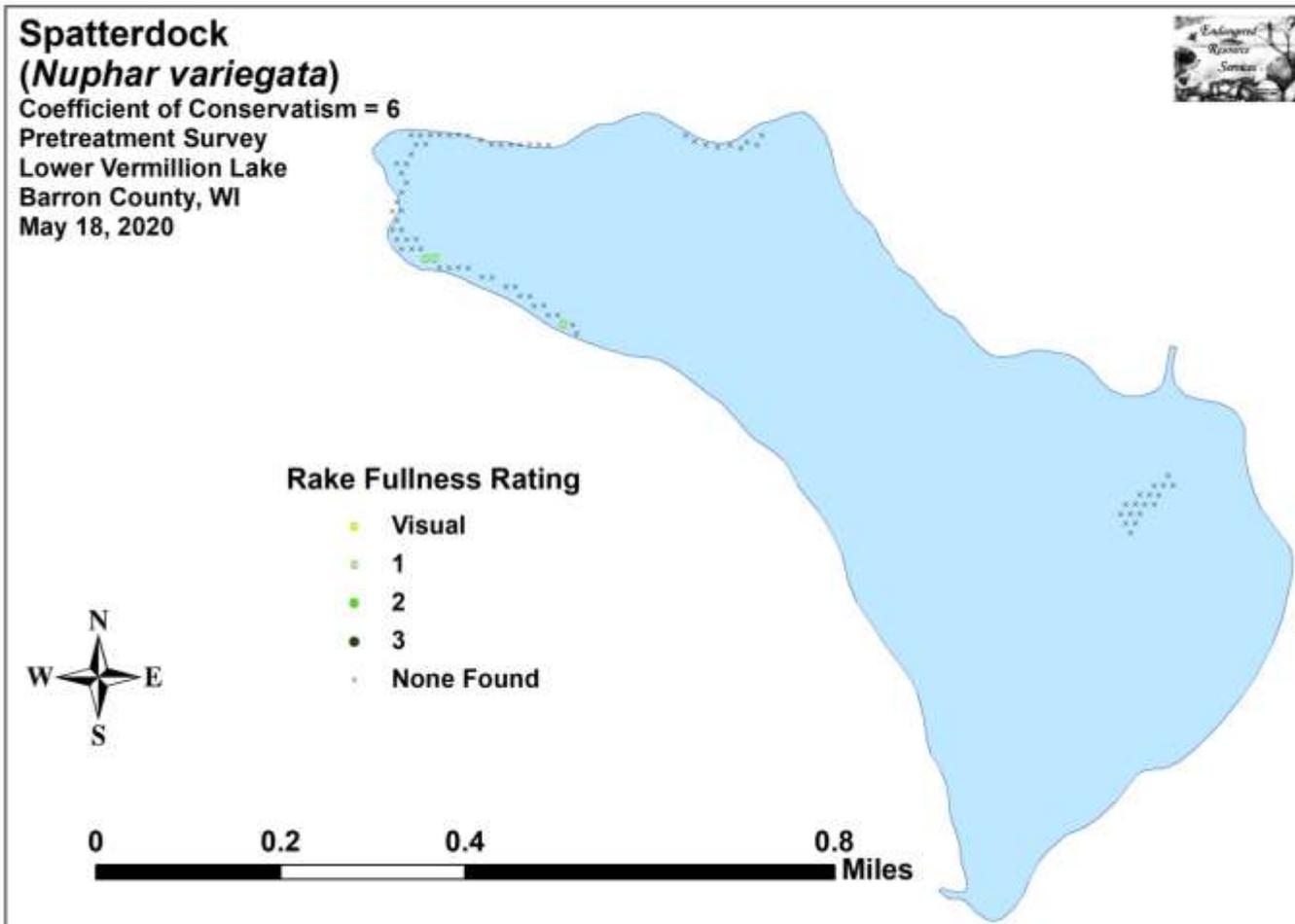


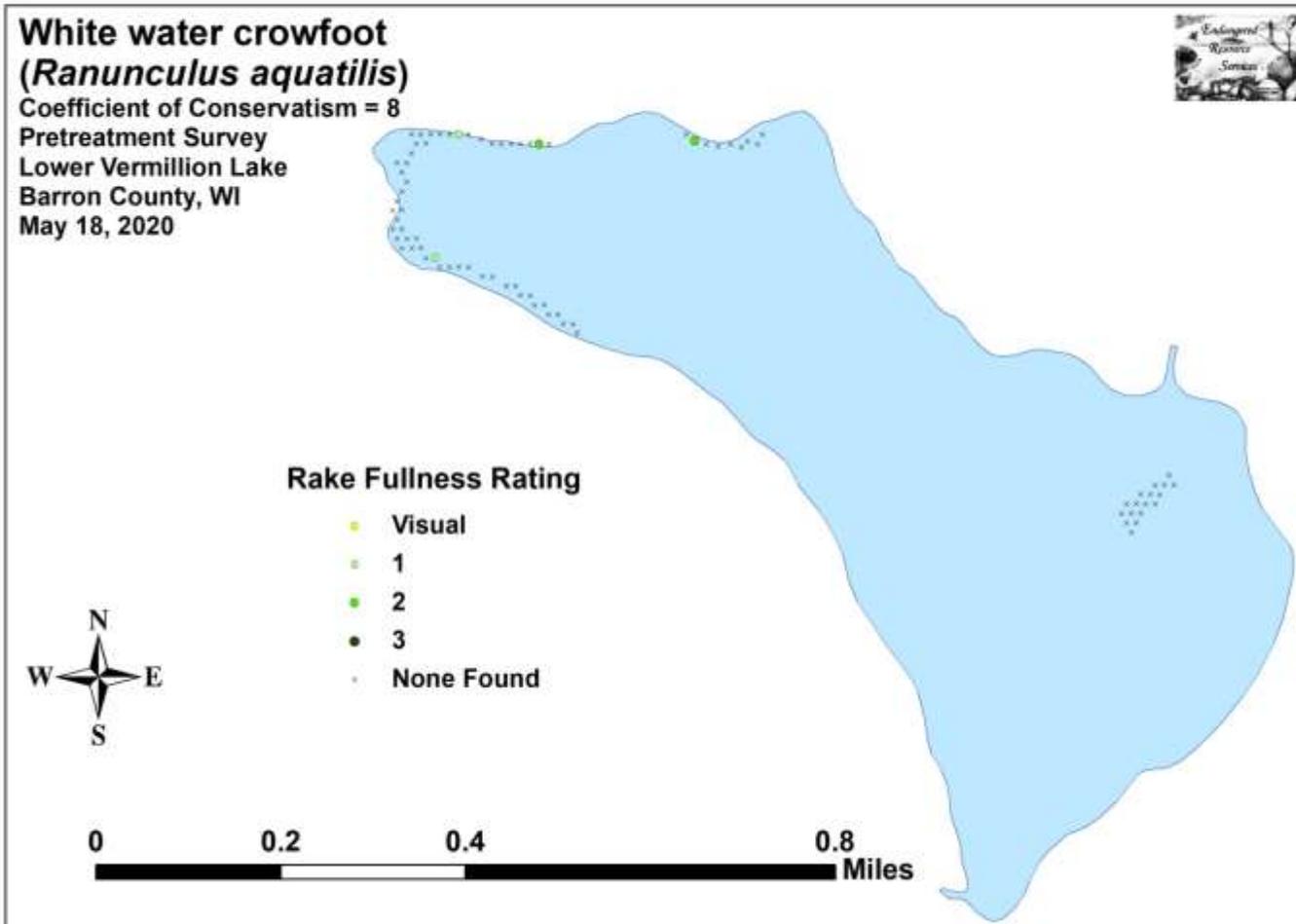








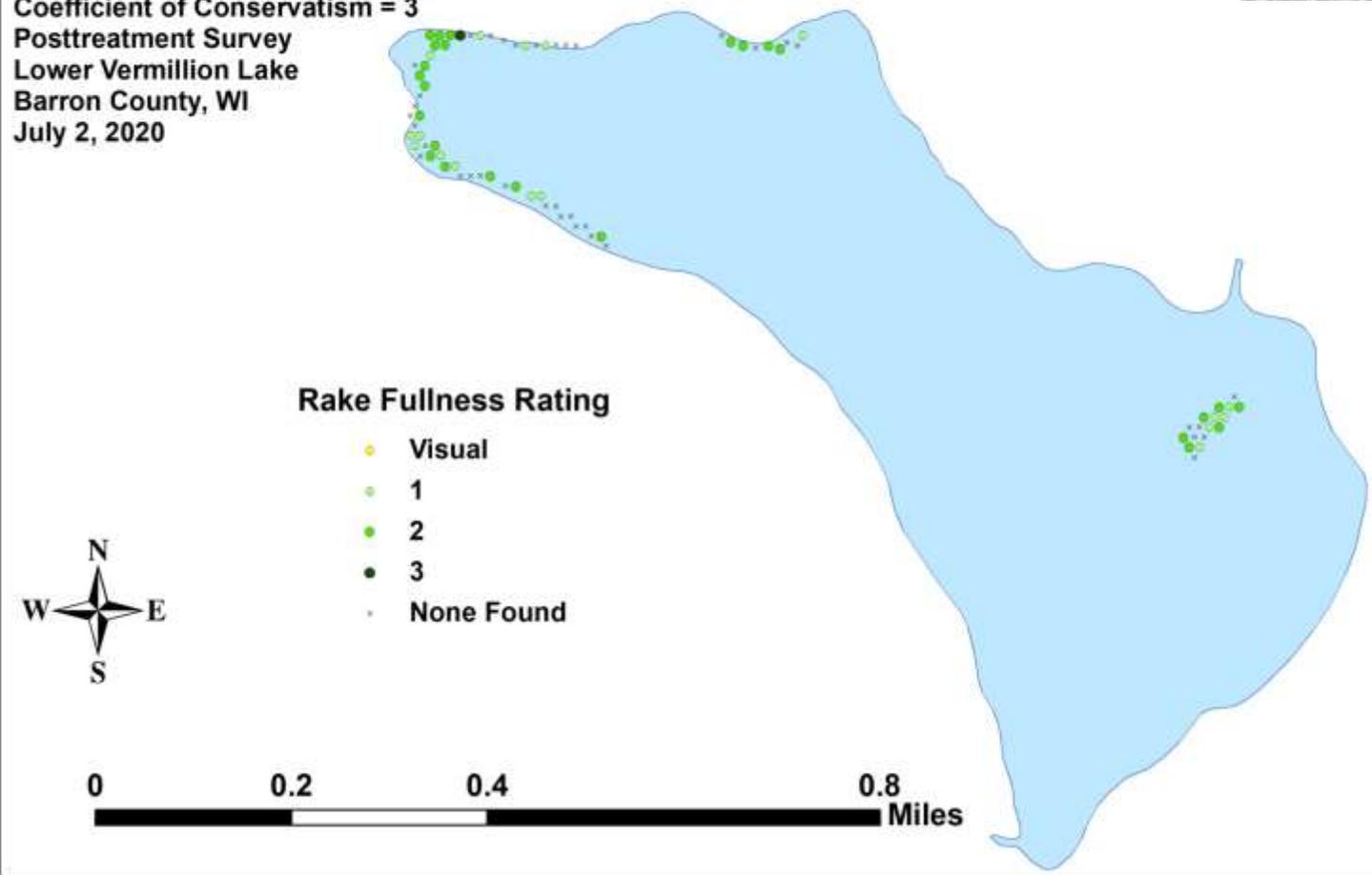


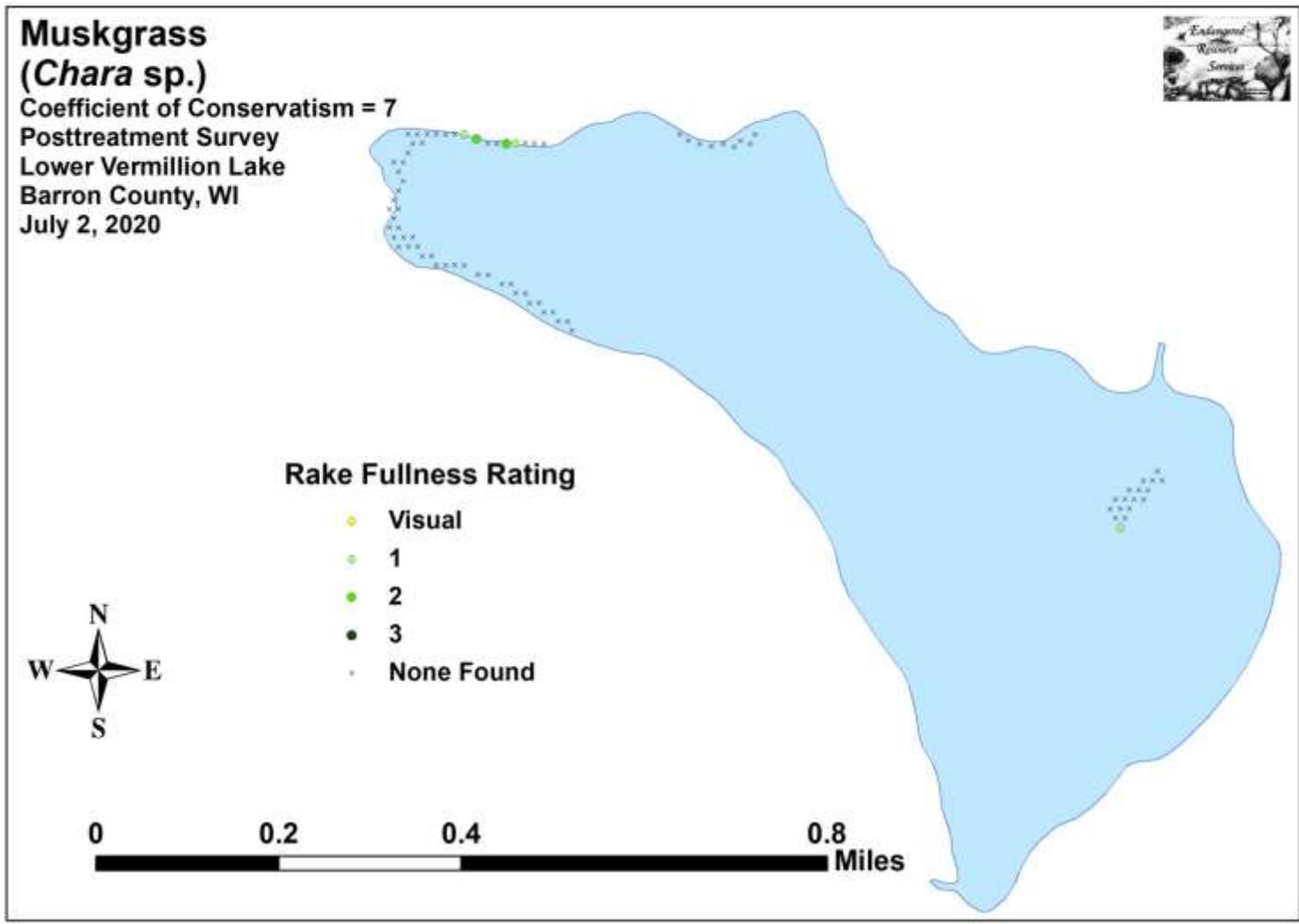


Appendix VII: Posttreatment Native Species Density and Distribution

Coontail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*)

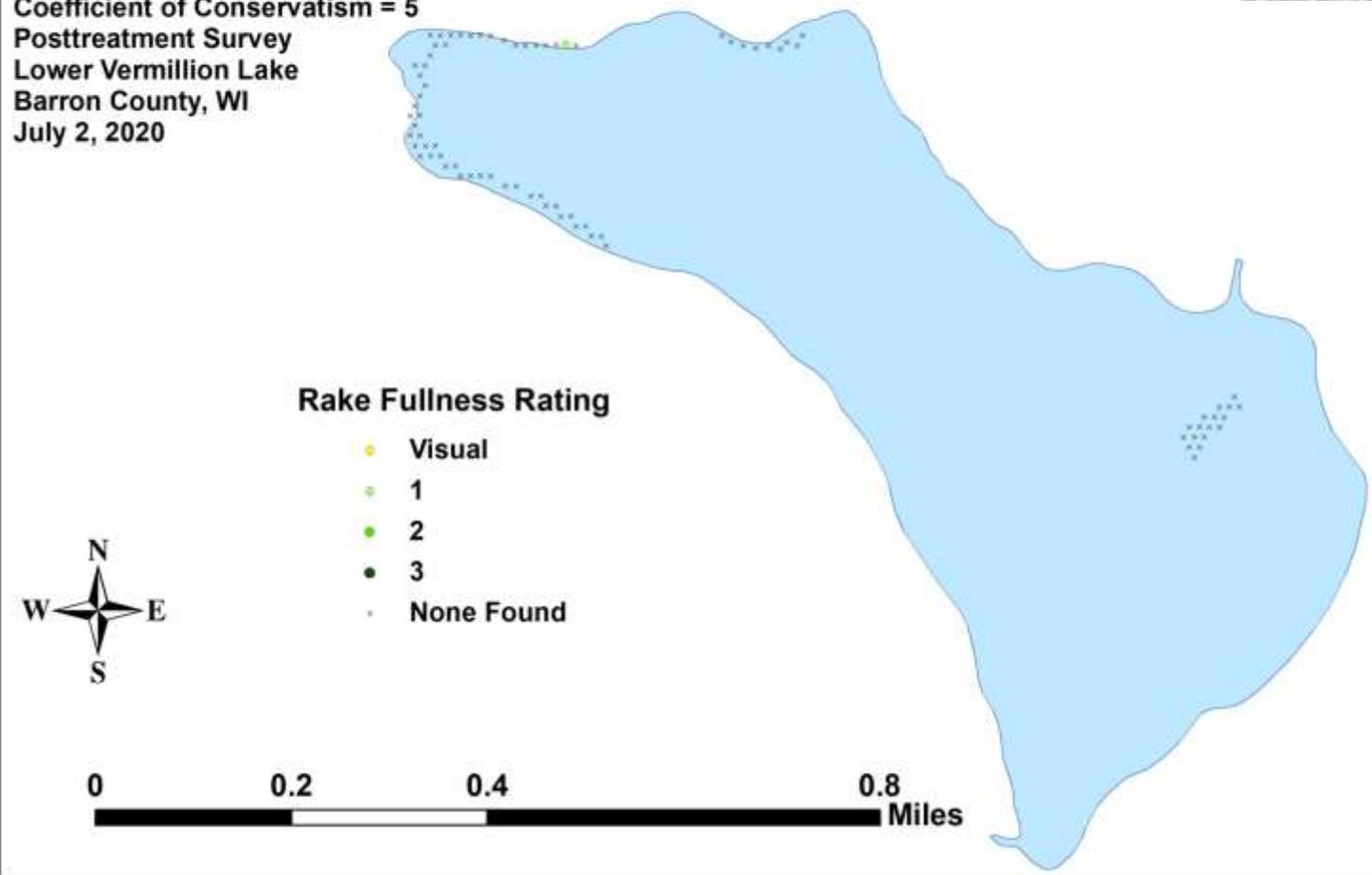
Coefficient of Conservatism = 3
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020





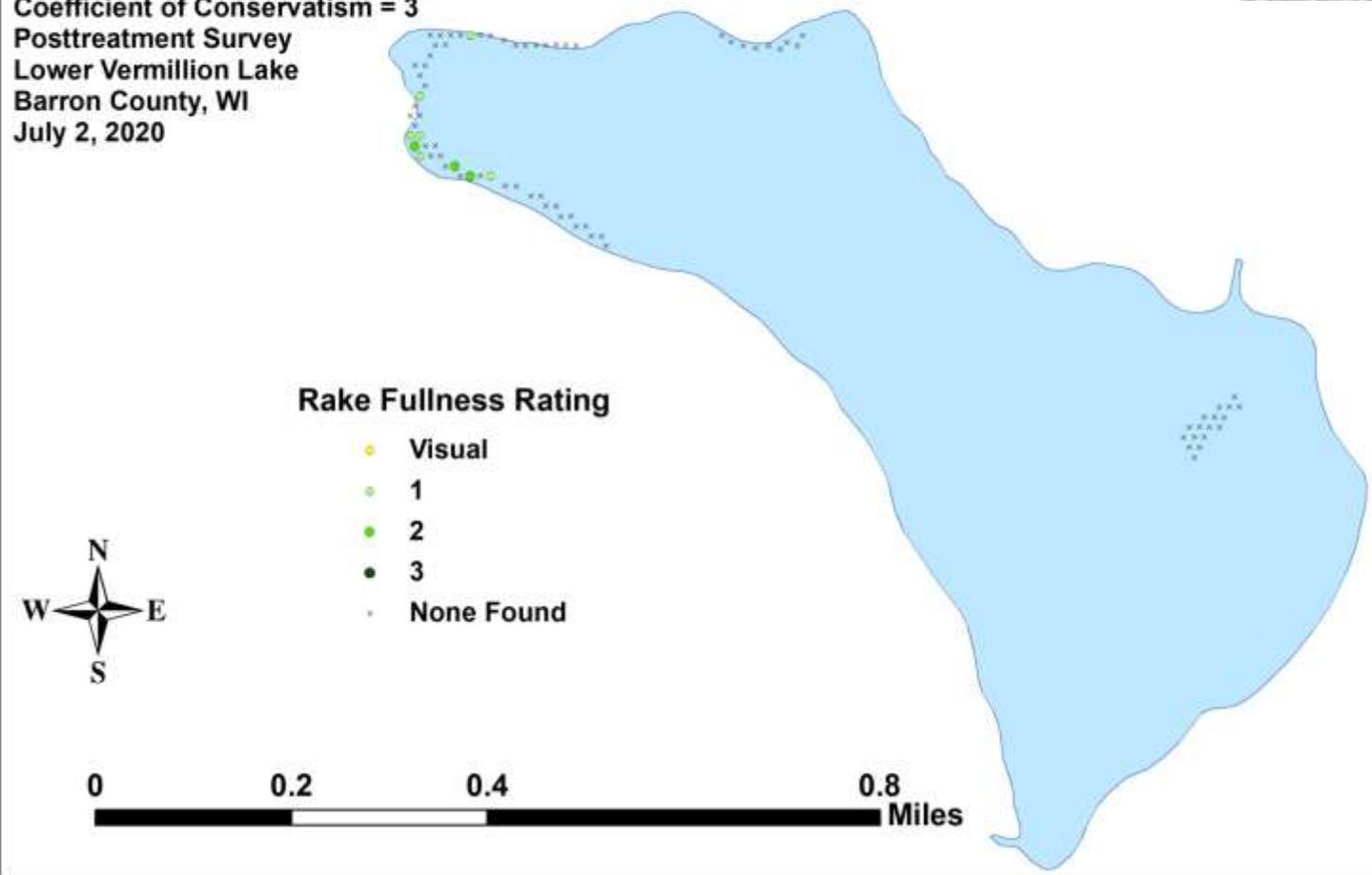
**Needle spikerush
(*Eleocharis acicularis*)**

Coefficient of Conservatism = 5
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020



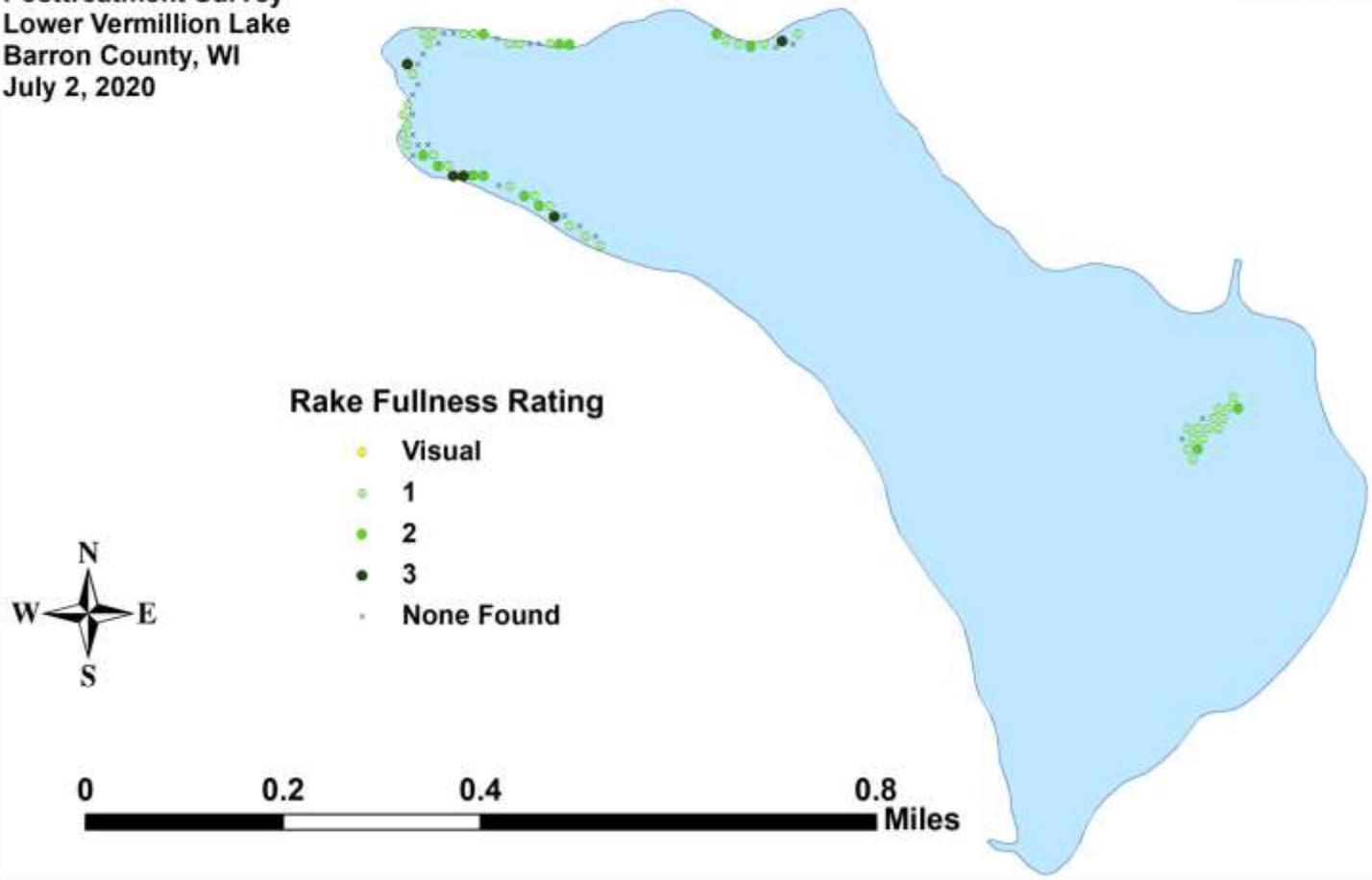
Common waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*)

Coefficient of Conservatism = 3
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020



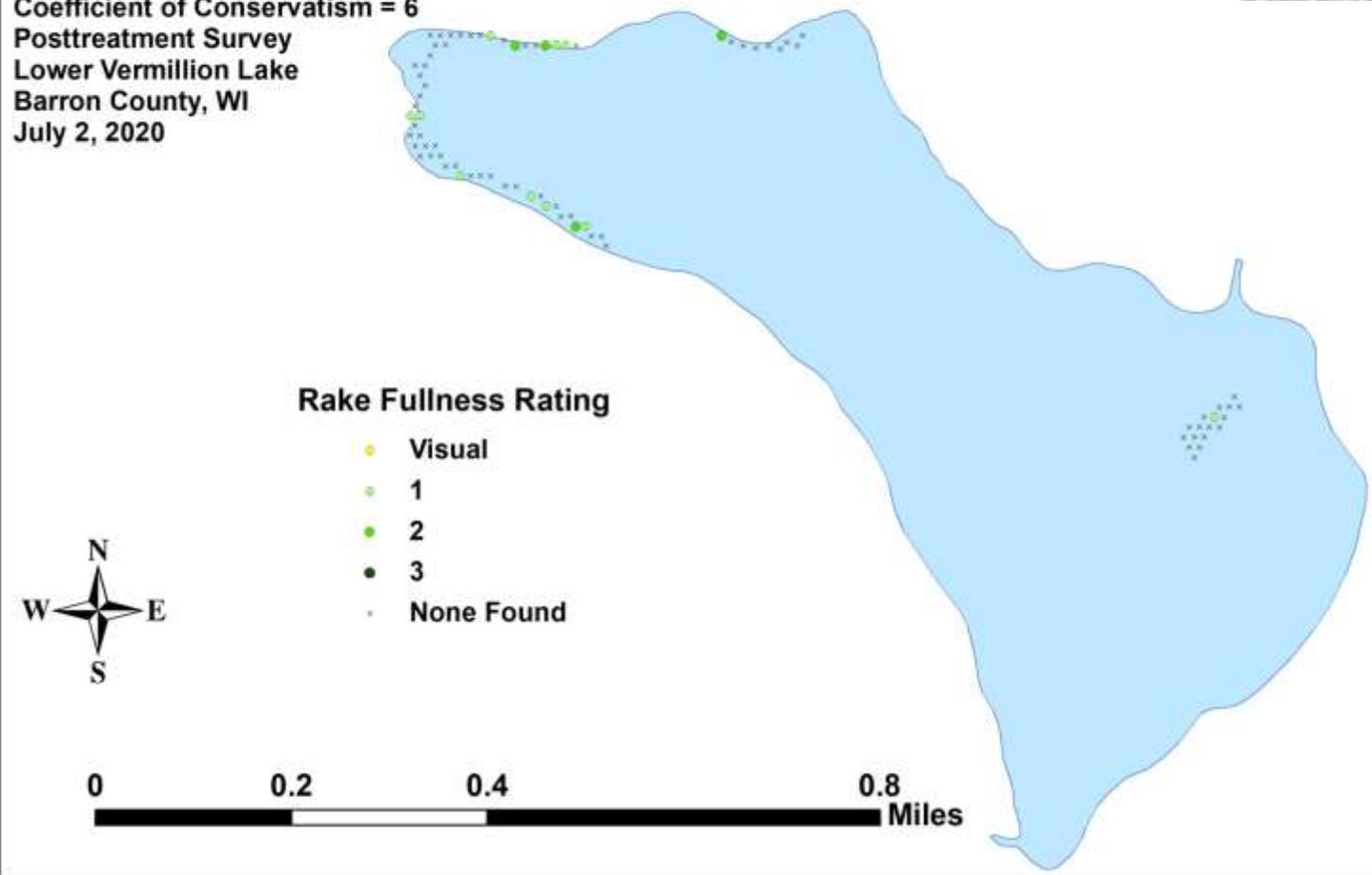
Filamentous algae

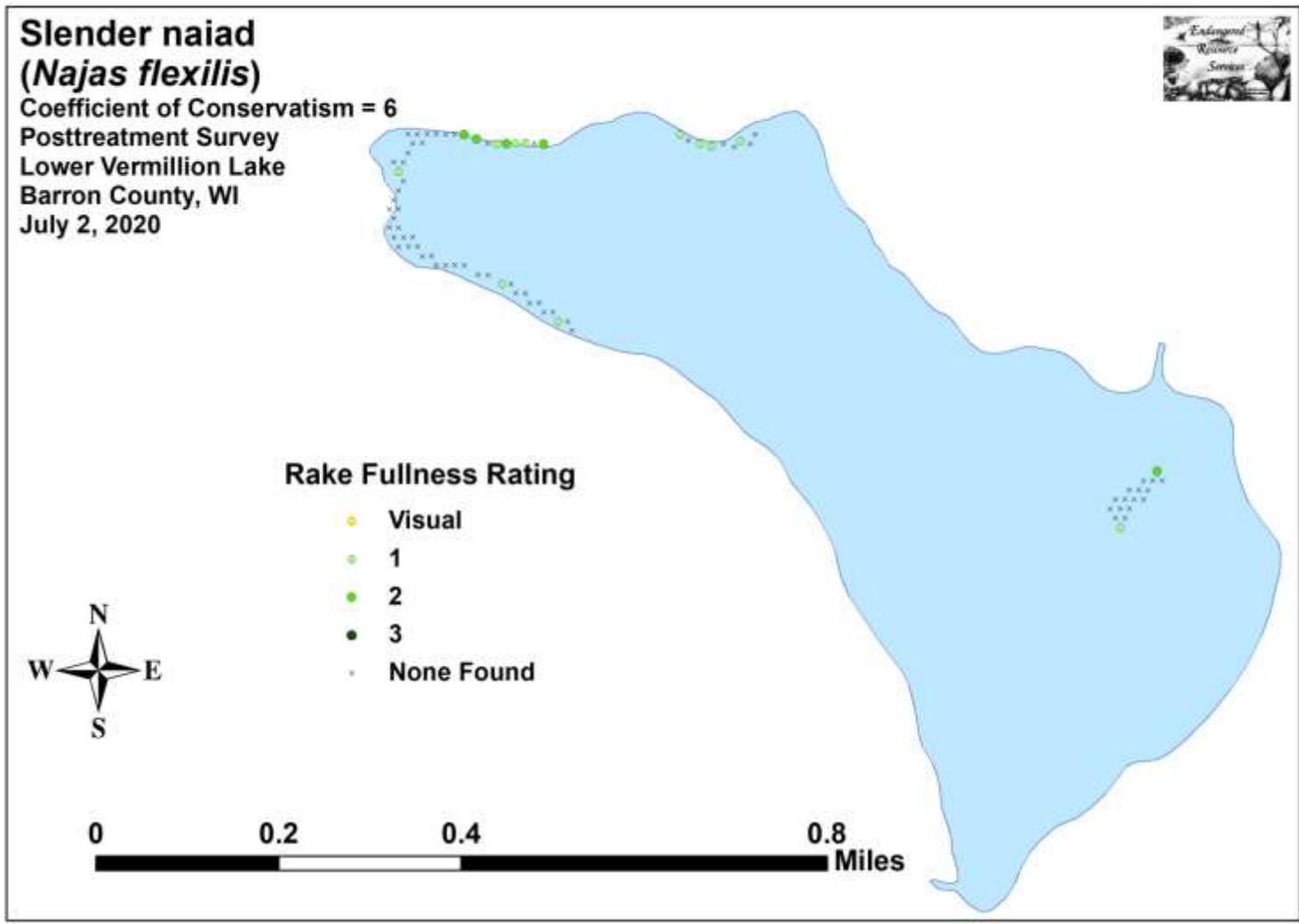
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020

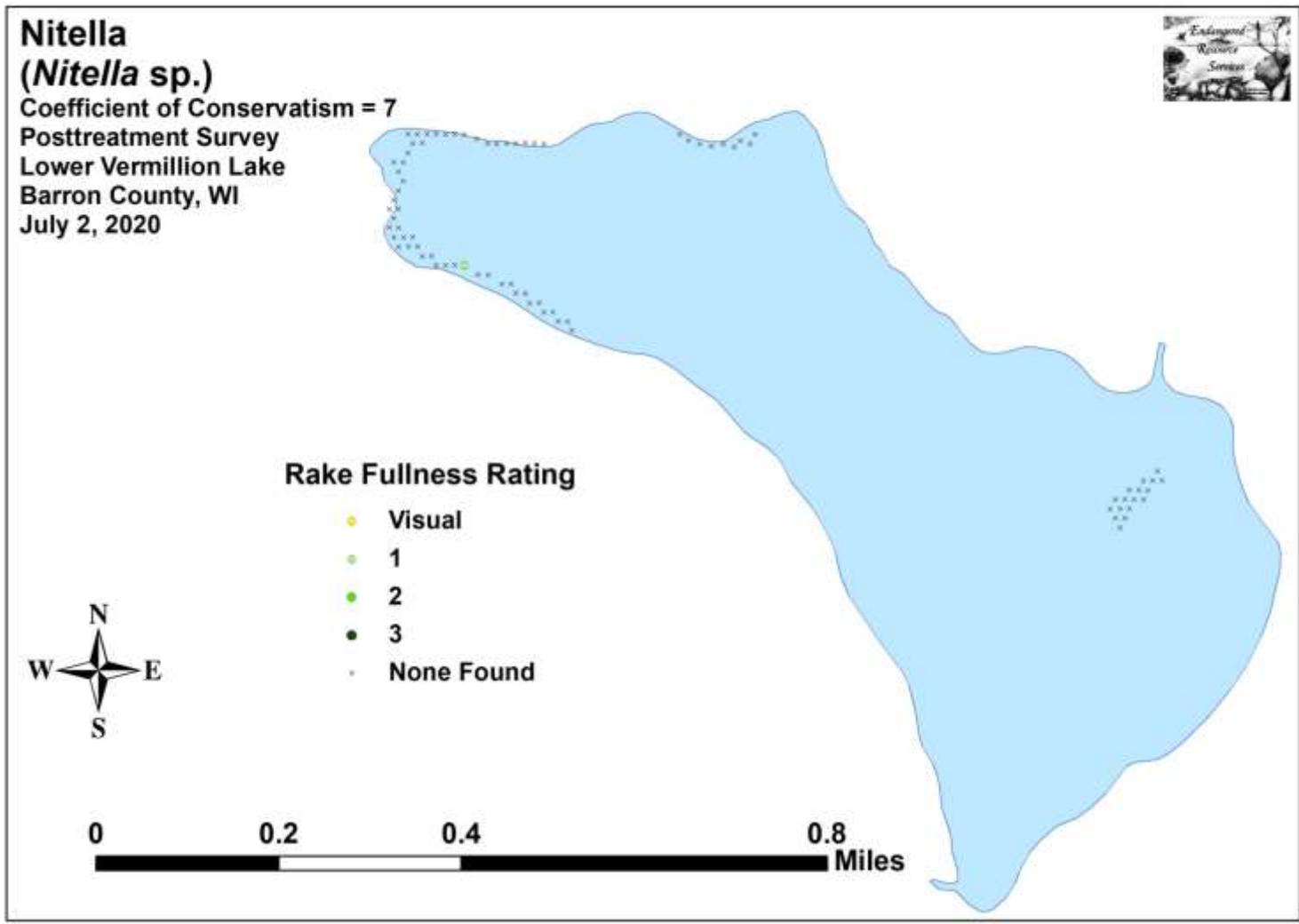


**Water star-grass
(*Heteranthera dubia*)**

Coefficient of Conservatism = 6
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020

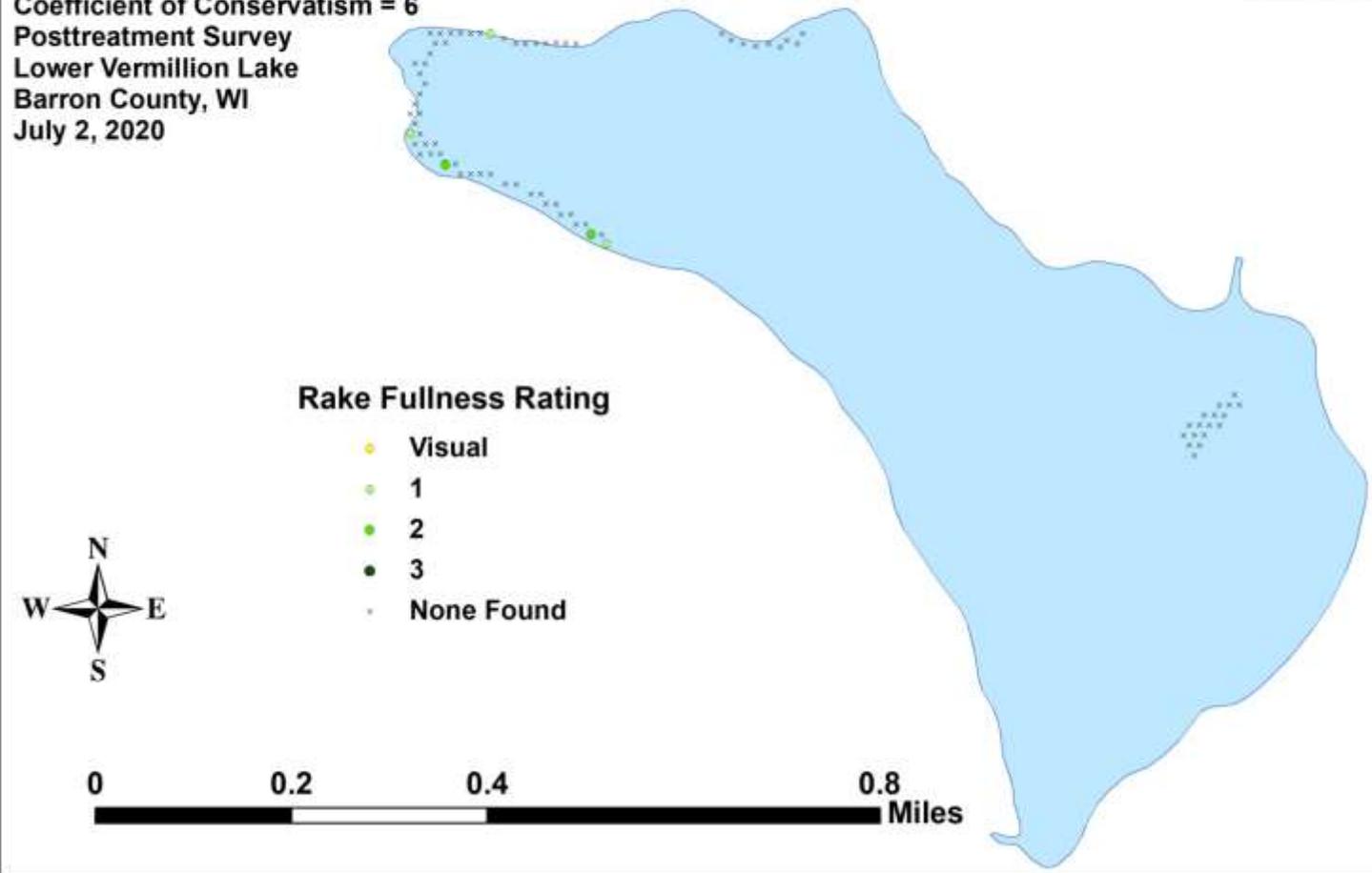






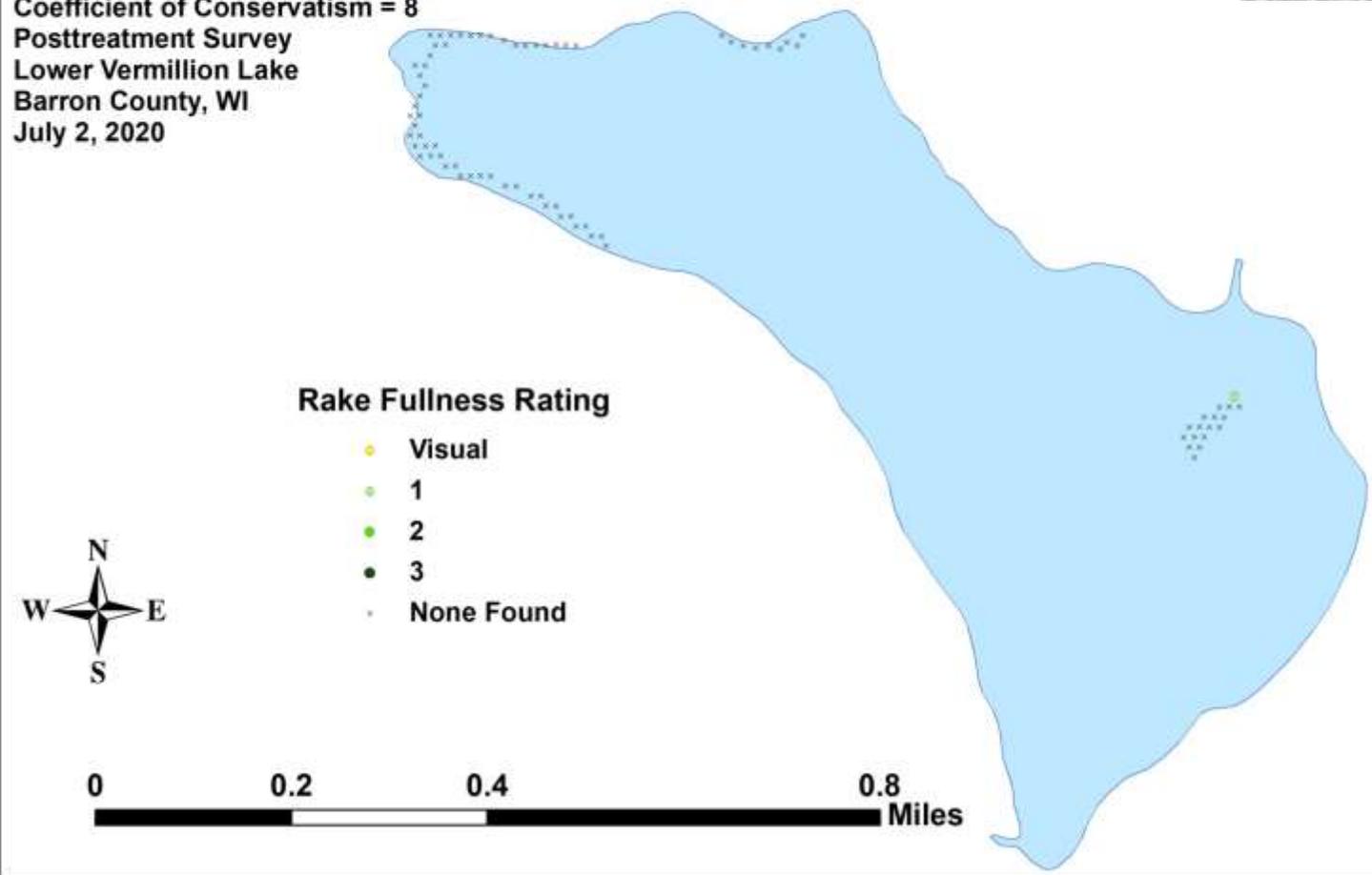
Spatterdock (*Nuphar variegata*)

Coefficient of Conservatism = 6
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020



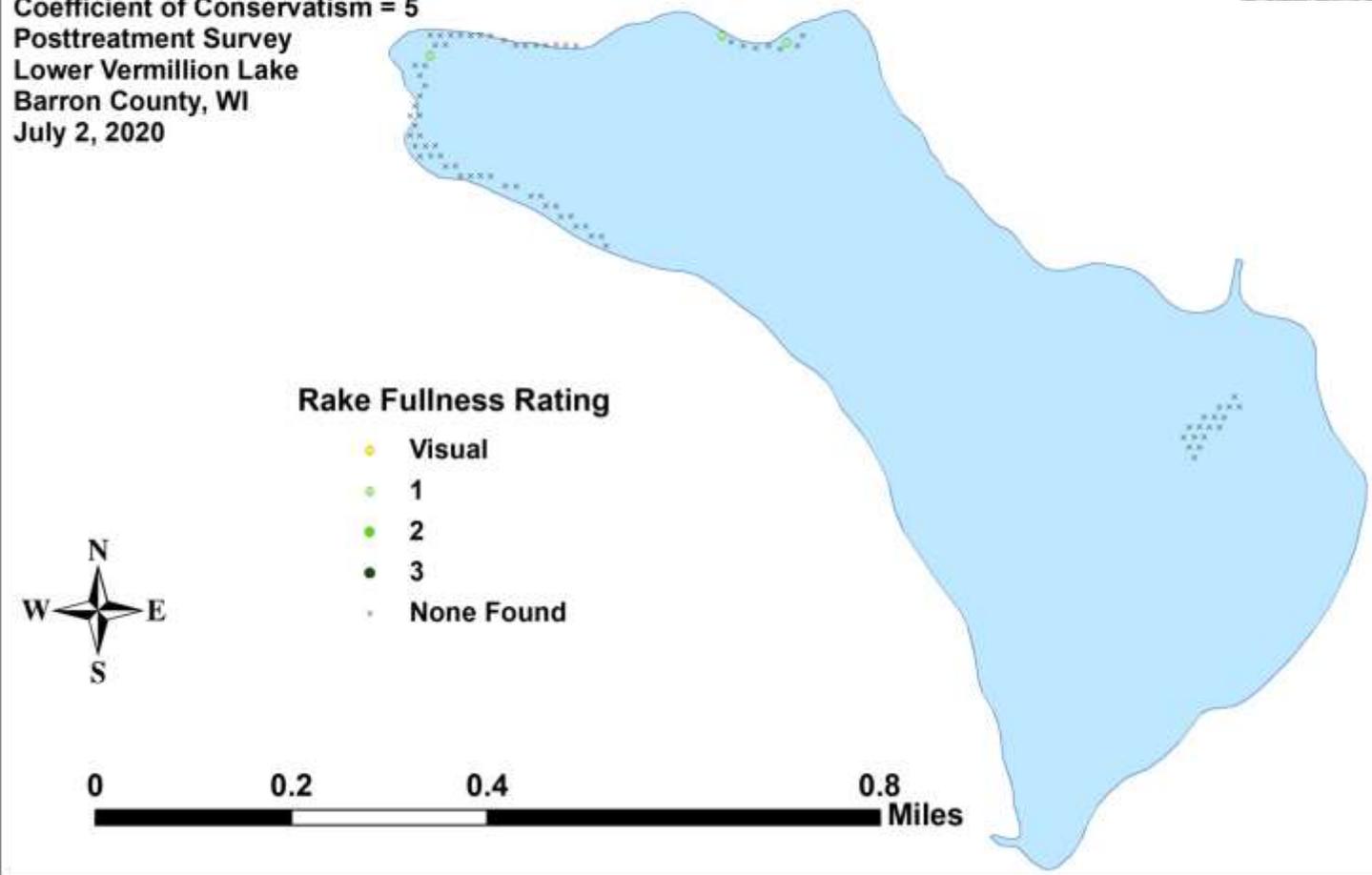
**White-stem pondweed
(*Potamogeton praelongus*)**

Coefficient of Conservatism = 8
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020



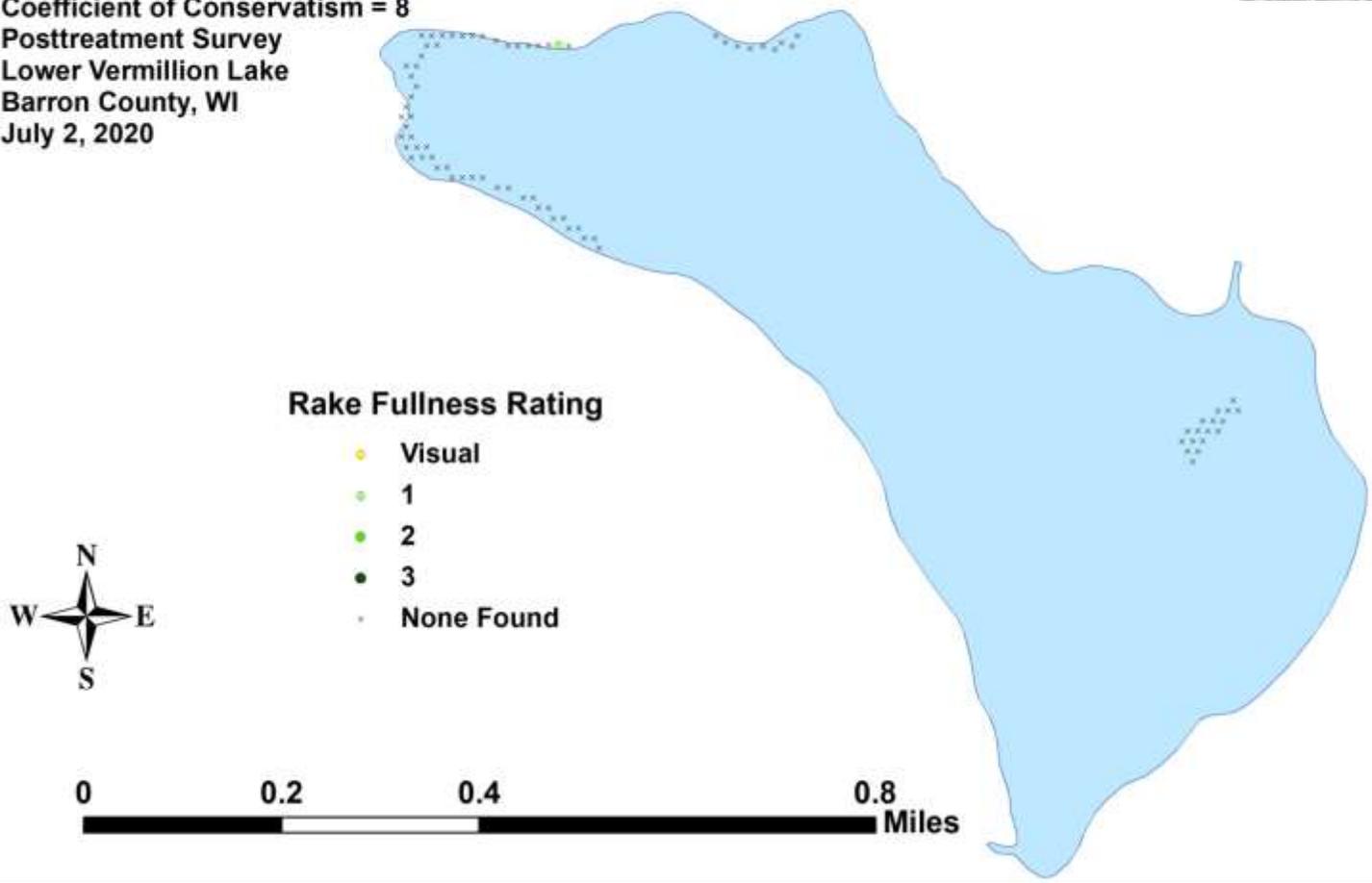
Clasping-leaf pondweed (*Potamogeton richardsonii*)

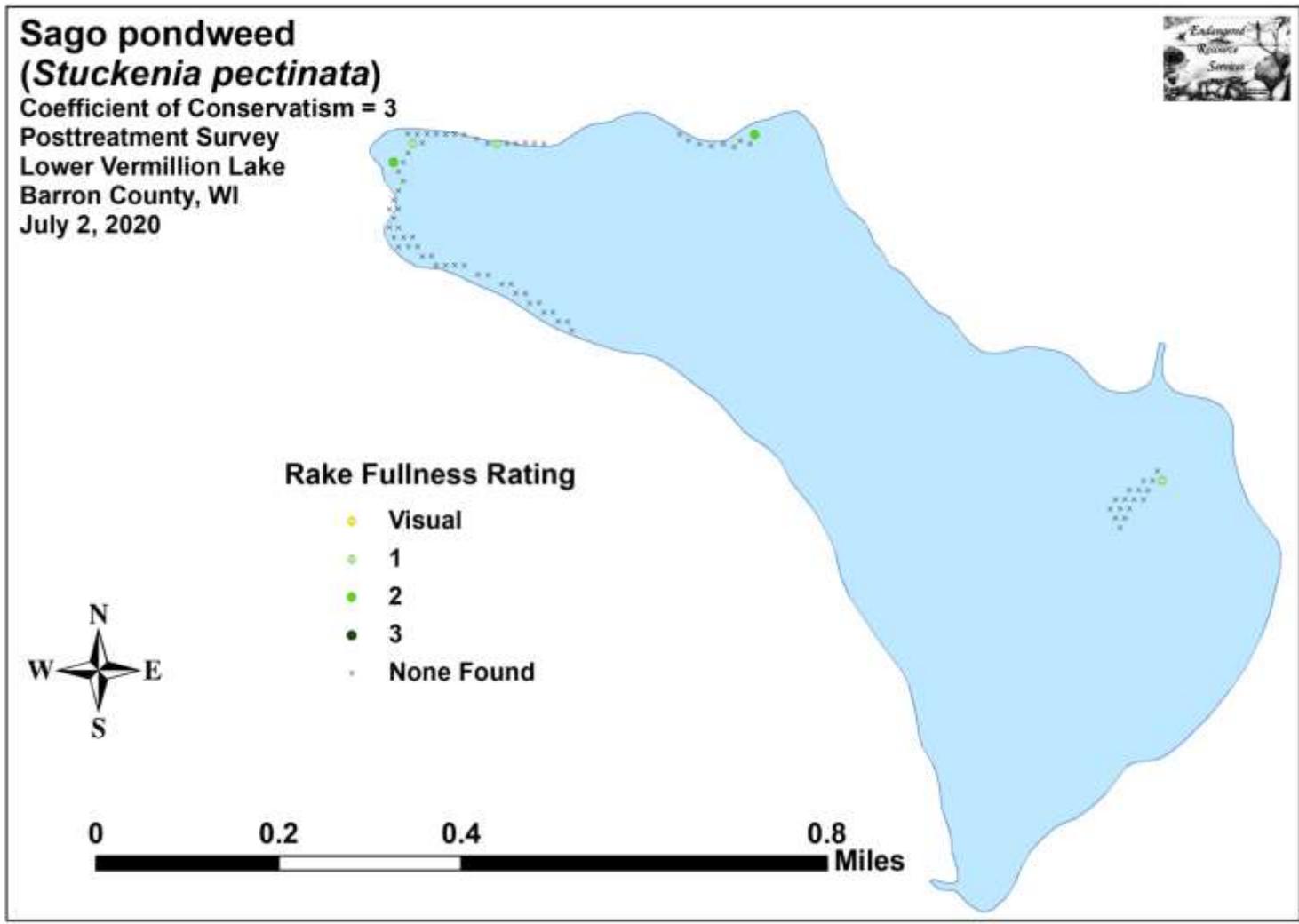
Coefficient of Conservatism = 5
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020



**White water crowfoot
(*Ranunculus aquatilis*)**

Coefficient of Conservatism = 8
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020





Wild celery
(*Vallisneria americana*)

Coefficient of Conservatism = 6
Posttreatment Survey
Lower Vermillion Lake
Barron County, WI
July 2, 2020

