

**AIS Early Detection & Response Grant for City of Madison
Eradication of Invasive Water Celery AIRR28123
Progress Report 2025**

As a recipient of an Aquatic Invasive Species Early Detection and Response Grant, in 2025 the City of Madison continued monitoring and treatments on a known infestation of the novel aquatic invasive plant, Java water dropwort, AKA Vietnamese water celery, AKA water celery (*Oenanthe javanica*). Monitoring is done to document the extent and range of an invasive plant and to help prepare an approach to control of the infestation.

Monitoring

Monitoring was performed by the City's contracted ecological restoration firm, Field & Stream, as well as by City of Madison staff. City of Madison staff monitored in and around known infestation areas on two occasions in August and November.

Monitoring Results

The infestation of water celery along Starkweather Creek continues to appear, at this time, to be located along a section of the creek ranging from about 0.35 miles east and north of the Zeier Rd intersection at the northernmost end, to the intersection of Lien Rd and the creek at the southernmost end. Monitoring did not reveal infestations south of Highway 30 in areas more heavily used for recreation. Monitoring did reveal progress towards control of the infestation located at the intersection of Zeier Rd and Starkweather Creek with the size of the infestation having shrunk greatly and the number of species in the infestation area having increased. Whereas before the water celery formed a monoculture near the culvert under Zeier, by late August 2025 after having undergone two herbicide treatments (one in 2024 and another earlier in August 2025), reed canary grass, burdock, Virginia creeper and other weedy plants were also growing amongst the water celery. Few plants remained east of Zeier Rd, and a few scattered plants remained west of Zeier Rd. A larger infestation east of this intersection, about midway between Zeier Rd and the Interstate 90/94 where Starkweather creek bends to the southeast was still healthy and visible.



The water celery population east of intersection of Zeier Rd and Starkweather Creek was reduced from a monoculture in July 2024 to a stand of mixed weedy vegetation in late August 2025 after having undergone two herbicide treatments.

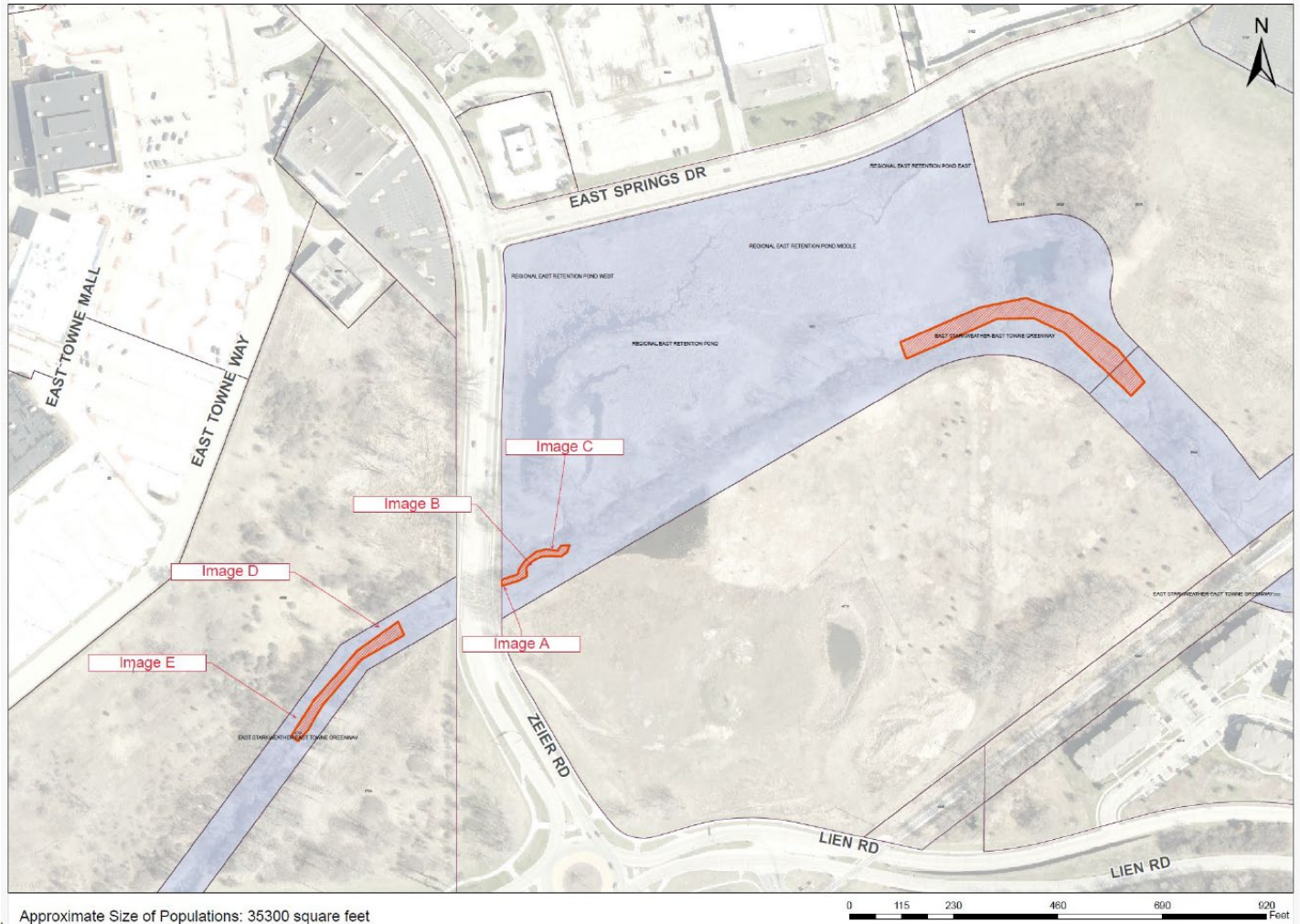


Water celery monoculture E of Zeier/Starkweather intersection in Aug 2023 on left. Fewer water celery plants and greater species diversity in same location in Aug 2025 on right.

Treatment

In 2025 Field & Stream Ecological performed targeted treatments of water celery along Starkweather Creek using the aquatic approved herbicide Imox (a.i. imazamox). Field & Stream pursued two treatments: one in August prior to blooming, and one in late October to follow up on plants that survived the earlier treatment. Notes about the treatment and progress as recorded by Field & Stream field staff are attached to this report as "F&S Summary of Water Celery Control Actions 2025."

Water Celery Populations - Starkweather Creek



Plans for 2026

The plan for 2026 is to continue treatment of the infestation. Field & Stream Restorations will continue the treatments in 2026 and will time the first treatment again for August to coincide with blooming period. A later follow-up treatment will occur in fall.

City staff will perform follow-up inspections and monitoring of all treatment areas. At the end of the growing season 2026 it is expected that control will be substantial enough to allow City staff to pursue reseeding infestation areas. Following reseeding, plans will be made to install emergent plugs in spring of 2027.

Contact information for City Engineering Staff is as follows:

Madeline Dumas
City of Madison Engineering Division
Stormwater Vegetation Coordinator
City-County Building, Room 115
Madison, WI 53703
608-266-9525 (work)
612-227-7671 (cell)
Mdumas2@cityofmadison.com