

St. Louis River Area Of Concern

Projects In Partnership To Restore The River And Revitalize The Community

Restoring Fish Passage Through Culvert Improvement

Purpose

An inventory of fish passage barriers at road crossings was completed in the Wisconsin portions of the St. Louis River Area of Concern (AOC) in fall 2017.

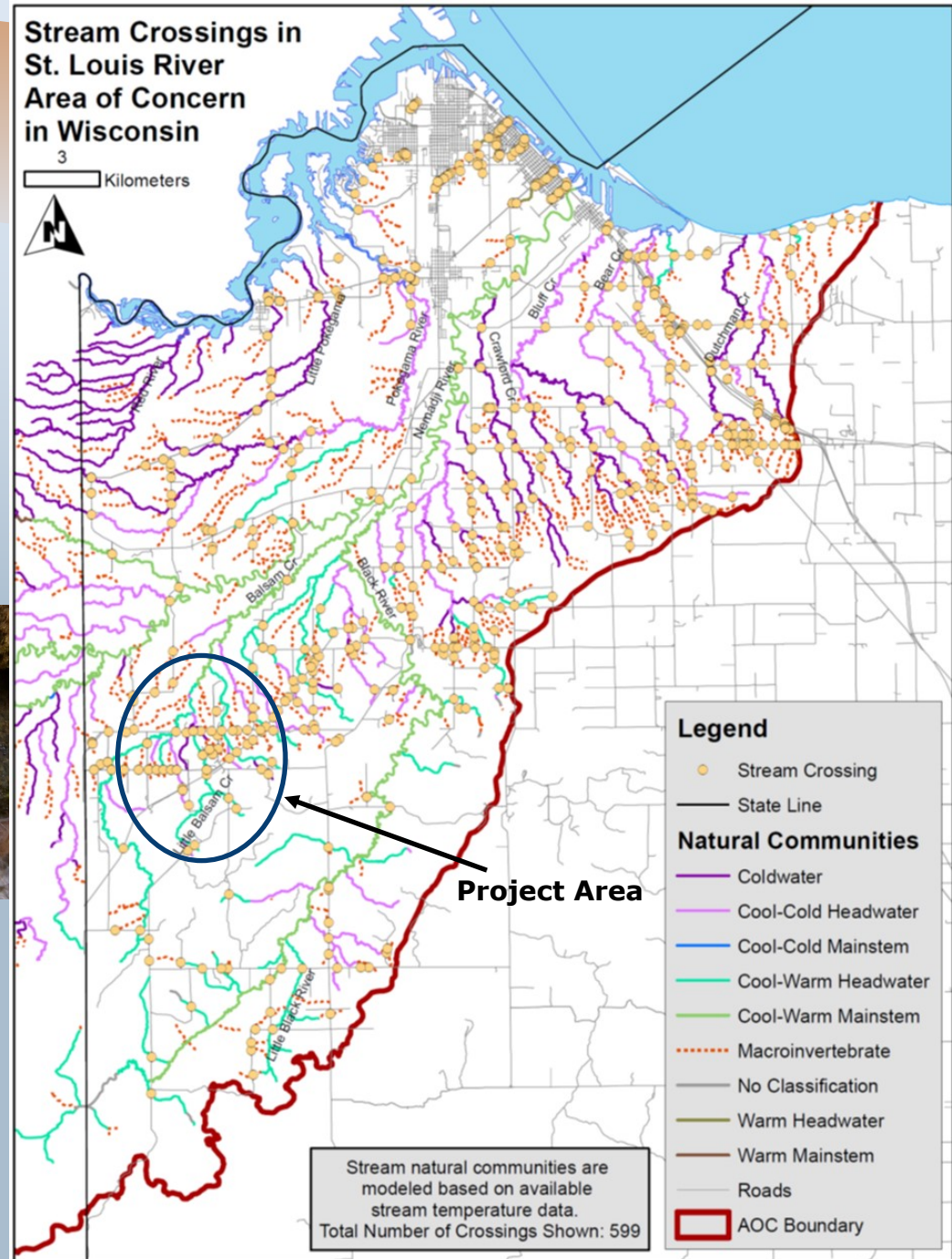
During development of the AOC Remedial Action Plan, stream crossings were identified as likely barriers to fish swimming upstream and contribute to the Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Impairment. This inventory was the first step to understand the status of stream connectivity in the AOC.



Background

Little Balsam Creek in the town of Summit, Douglas County was identified as the highest priority stream for barrier removal. There are four stream crossing barriers on Little Balsam Creek. The AOC program removed all four barriers to reconnect 5.07 miles of class 1 trout waters. This project assisted with addressing the Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Impairment. An initial assessment of all stream crossings in the AOC was conducted by the DNR using Lidar data to identify the highest probability of the crossing being a barrier. Out of 599 crossings, 159 were identified for field inventory (*see map*); then a passability score was calculated for them:

- 0 = Not passable by most species at most flows (42%)
- 0.5 = Not passable by some species/life stages at most flows (46%)
- 0.9 = Not passable at high flows (7%)
- 1.0 = Passable by most species/life stages at most flows (5%)



Culvert Replacements Completed

Status

A June 2018 storm event damaged the crossings on Little Balsam Creek and led to phasing the project.

Phase one of the project completed replacement of the lower three crossings in 2019.

Phase two was replacement of the Gandy Dancer State Trail crossing. Construction was completed in October 2024.



Left: Multiple year classes of brook trout were observed after the June 2018 flood event.



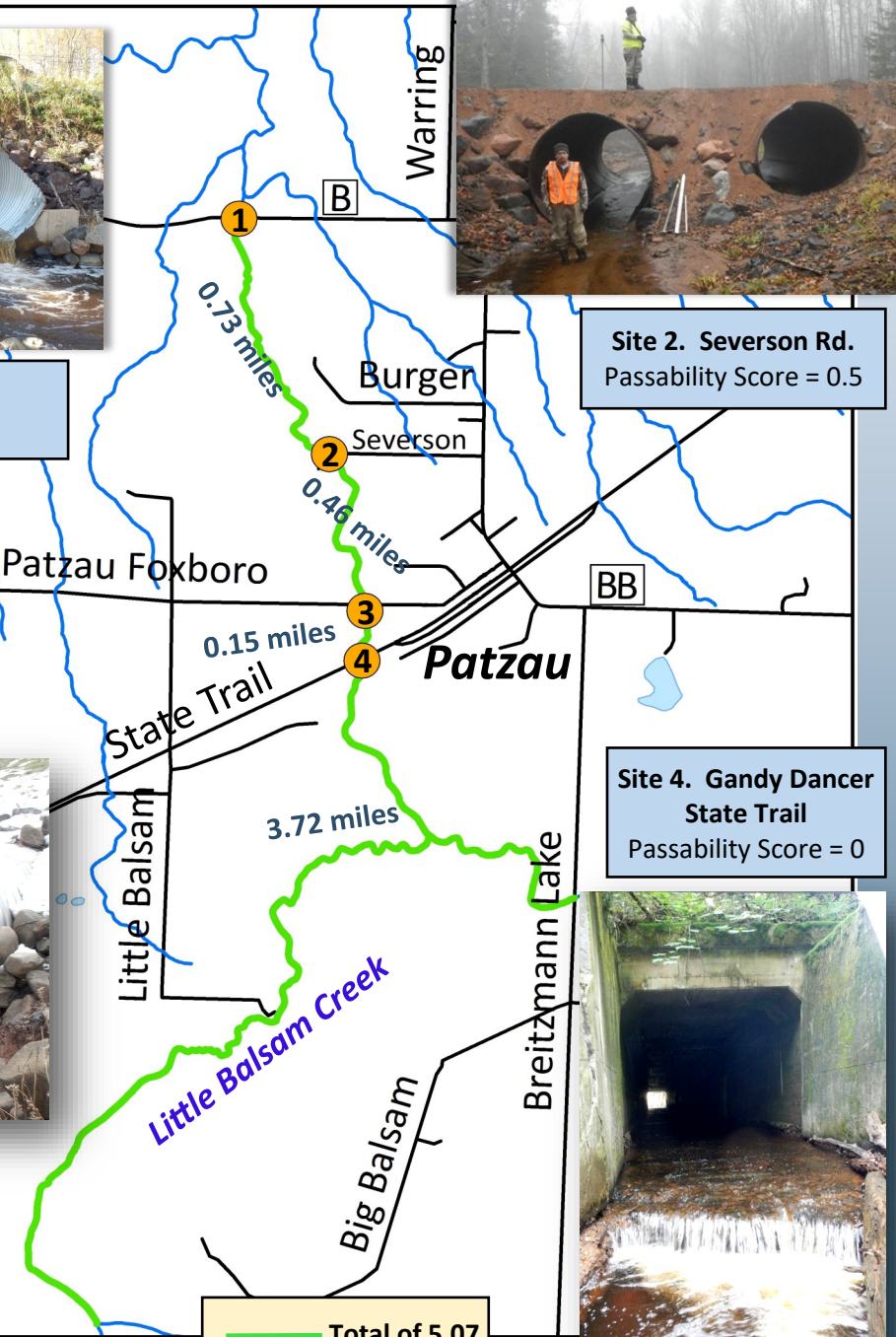
Site 1. Co. Hwy. B
Passability Score = 0



Site 2. Severson Rd.
Passability Score = 0.5



Site 3. E. Patzau Foxboro Rd.
Passability Score = 0



Site 4. Gandy Dancer State Trail
Passability Score = 0

Total of 5.07 miles reconnected



Partners

- Town of Summit
- Douglas County
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Wisconsin Emergency Management
- University of Wisconsin-Superior, Lake Superior Research Institute

To Learn More

Visit the DNR's [St. Louis River Area of Concern webpage](#).



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