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The Cherokee Marsh News

Aug / Sept 2021



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New Zealand mudsnails found in Token Creek

Invasive New Zealand mudsnails have been confirmed in Token Creek in the Cherokee Marsh watershed.

The mudsnails were discovered during routine Water Action Volunteer monitoring by the Rock River Coalition. The site where they were found is on Daentl Rd, just east of I-94/39 and Token Creek County Park. The extent of the population is currently unknown.

New Zealand mudsnails compete with native snails and may alter the food chains in creeks. Densities can reach over 500,000 individuals per square meter.

At less than 1/4 inch in length, with young the size of a grain of sand, the mudsnails spread easily from one site to another. They can survive 25 days out of water, or over 60 days in a damp area.

If you spend time on or at the water, it's important to properly clean and disinfect your watercraft and other gear between sites. The DNR recommends:

BEFORE leaving the water

INSPECT equipment and **REMOVE** attached plants and animals (required by law).

DRAIN all water from equipment (required by law).

SCRUB equipment with a stiff brush, including crevices, to remove all mud and snails.

RINSE equipment with tap water to remove juveniles. Consider keeping a water jug or spray bottle in your car.

Additional disinfection steps include freezing, steam cleaning, or soaking in 120°F water or Virkon solution. [Learn more.](#)

The mudsnails can also spend time out of the water, on the banks. If you visit a streambank, even if you don't go in the water, use a boot brush and rinse with

water to clean any mud or debris off your shoes.

New Zealand mudsnails were first found in Dane County in Black Earth Creek in 2013. They've since been found in Badger Mill Creek, Rowan Creek, Mount Vernon Creek, and now Token Creek.

Learn more:

[River Alliance of Wisconsin](#)

[Wisconsin DNR](#)



Friends submit comments on golf course permit application

Jan Axelson

As part of the proposed plan to renovate the Cherokee Country Club golf course, the US Army Corps of Engineers is considering a permit application to permanently discharge fill material into 9.82 acres of wetland and to convert 1.3 acres of shallow open water to upland.

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh board does not support the permit application. Here is the statement we submitted to the Corps of Engineers:

Re: 2020-02449-SJW (Dane County, WI) Cherokee Country Club Golf Course Renovation Project

The Friends of Cherokee Marsh is a nonprofit organization whose focus is the protection of Cherokee Marsh wetlands and their plant communities and wildlife. It is from that perspective that we are commenting on the application for improvements and a total reconfiguration of the Cherokee Country Club.

We appreciate and applaud the stated intent of Cherokee Park, Inc. (CPI) to replace invasive species with native species and to reduce runoff that harms waterways, wetlands, and shoreline properties as part of the proposed golf course reconfiguration.

For the reasons stated below, we do not support the application for permit to permanently discharge fill material into 9.82 acres of wetland and to convert 1.3 acres of shallow open water to upland.

The Cherokee Marsh wetlands provide crucial flood control and filtering of stormwater for Lake Mendota, the other downstream lakes in the Yahara chain, and their residents. Any loss of wetlands reduces the wetlands' capability to provide these functions. We understand that the proposed 9.82 acres of wetland loss would be offset with wetland mitigation credits, but if the mitigation occurs in another watershed as expected, Cherokee Marsh and its downstream waters receive no benefit to offset the wetland loss.

The application also requests to convert 1.3 acres of shallow open water to upland. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) strongly discourages the conversion of open water to upland as it is likely to be detrimental to the public interests of navigable waterways.

We agree with the WDNR that the proposed modifications of existing shallow, ephemeral flooded marshes and wetlands into deeper ponds with more open and deeper water could negatively impact spawning and nursery areas for northern pike in the project area. Panfish and other species that live only in ephemeral pools could also suffer negative impacts.

To guard against unnecessary, permanent wetland loss, before permitting is considered, CPI should comply with the WDNR's request to evaluate practicable alternatives for each impact.

The WDNR's Endangered Resource Review identified two species potentially present within proximity to the project area and provided required actions to comply with federal/state endangered species laws. Several other special concern, species of concern, and threatened species were identified as potentially being present, and recommended actions were presented to avoid impacts to these species. We urge consideration of these actions when evaluating the permit application.

We are concerned that the public notice for the application for permit received little publicity. The Friends of Cherokee Marsh, who have been involved with protecting the Cherokee Marsh wetlands for 15 years, learned of the permit only by chance from one of our members who lives adjacent to the golf course and received information by postal mail. We request a public hearing with generous advance notice and wide publicity to help ensure that all who would like to comment on the project have a chance to do so.

Project history

Read about the announcement for plans to modernize the Cherokee Golf Course in our [April / May newsletter](#).

Read about the DNR's request for more information for the permit in our [June / July newsletter](#).



Help look for aquatic invasive species on Snapshot Day

Once again this year again the Friends of Cherokee Marsh are sponsoring a site for Snapshot Day, a statewide, one-day event that connects volunteers, water lovers, and local groups in a citizen science search for aquatic invasive species.

You can help protect Wisconsin's rivers and lakes from these invasive plants and animals that negatively impact habitat, wildlife, recreation and health. The event is coordinated in partnership with UW-Madison Division of Extension, River Alliance of Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, local partners, and YOU!

The event is **Saturday, August 21, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm.**

No experience needed. Volunteers will meet at Cherokee Marsh - North Unit for a brief training and will travel in teams to the monitoring sites. Using rakes, nets, waders, plastic bags, and cameras, volunteers will search for problem plants and invertebrates at a variety of sites. On completing the search, volunteers will return to the staging area to drop off equipment and samples.

The sites this year will likely include locations at Cherokee Marsh, Six Mile Creek in Waunakee, Warner Park, Starkweather Creek, and Token Creek.

Specimens gathered by volunteers around the state are sent to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and shared on the Surface Water Integrated Monitoring System (SWIMS) database.

A brief online training will be available, both live and recorded.

Registration is required, and slots are limited. Registration closes Aug 19.

[More information and register](#)



The Prairie Partner interns have completed 10 of their 12 Tuesday workdays with us. In that time, they've cleared enormous quantities of garlic mustard, Japanese hedge parsley, sweet clover, and other invasive plants from the woods and prairies in Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park's three units and Yahara Heights County Park.

Thank you to these additional contributors who have donated to support the Prairie Partners:

Martha and Charles Casey
Mary Regel

[Donate to support the Prairie Partners](#)



Share your Cherokee Marsh memories and favorite things

We are seeking memories and anecdotes and stories about your favorite things or best times at Cherokee Marsh.

2021 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of Conservation Parks in the City of Madison. Following the city's acquiring land at Cherokee Marsh and anticipating the purchase of other conservation lands, the 1971 Parks and Open Space Plan for the first time listed Conservation Park as a category of park. In celebration of this milestone, the Friends of Cherokee Marsh are launching a project we're calling *Conserving Marsh Memories*. We need your help!

Do you have anecdotes and stories about your favorite things or best times spent at the marsh? Do you have photos, documents, or memories about the evolution of Cherokee Marsh public lands to share with us? We would love to include them in our project.

Text, photos, maps, and other images are welcome. You can also record and send a brief audio or video clip telling us why you love Cherokee Marsh or documenting an experience. With your help, we can introduce new audiences to this wetland treasure and conserve memories and history for future generations.

Email submissions to sheila.leary@icloud.com. Mail or drop off hard copy items

to Marsh Memories, 1101 Burning Wood Way, Madison 53704. Please do so by Sept 1, 2021.

We plan to use the responses to document Cherokee Marsh history and favorite things on our website. Maybe make a video. And we'll share items in the Northside News, social media, future newsletters, and the like.

By submitting material for this project, you grant the Friends of Cherokee Marsh the non-exclusive rights to use the material in our educational communications, and you state that you have the consent of any identifiable people in the material for such use.



Thanks to Madison Parks for providing a badly needed (and colorful!) paint job for the gate at the South Unit entrance.



Upcoming events

[Sign up](#) to receive notices about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities including announcements for last-minute events and volunteer opportunities that don't make it into the newsletter.

[See the full calendar](#) for latest information.

Help remove invasive phragmites (giant reed grass)

We will be continuing our ongoing project to keep the high-quality wetlands in the Cherokee Marsh State Natural Area free from phragmites and invasive cattails. We'll have work parties most weeks from mid-August through September. [Sign up to receive notices](#) about these work parties.

Help collect seeds in State Natural Areas

We are partnering with the DNR to collect seeds in nearby State Natural Areas on third Wednesdays and Thursdays in Aug, Sept, and Oct. Most of the sites are a little beyond the Cherokee Marsh watershed, but many of the seeds will be used to restore new prairie at the Westport Drumlin. [Learn more and sign up](#).

Bird and nature adventures

Sun, Aug 1, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, Secret lives of insects with naturalist guide Jeff Steele

AND

Sun, Sept 5, 1:30 pm – 3 pm, Mushrooms and fungi with Master Naturalist Kathleen Wolf

AND

first Sunday of EVERY month, year-round, ALWAYS 1:30 pm – 3 pm

Cherokee Marsh Conservation Park - North Unit, 6098 N Sherman Ave.
Follow N. Sherman Ave. north to the parking area at the end of the gravel road.

Contact: Paul Noeldner, paul_noeldner@hotmail.com, 608-698-0104

[Madison Parks bird and nature adventure page](#)

Northside Farmers Market

Sunday, Aug 8, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

AND

Sunday, Sept 19, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

We'll be tabling at the [Northside Farmers Market](#) on these dates. Stop by and say hi.

PLUS

Volunteer opportunity: help staff our table at the market. The Northside Farmers Market is one of our most effective outreach efforts, where we reach folks who know little or nothing about our group. Come for a 2-hour shift or the whole morning. We can place you along with an experienced volunteer. Contact janaxelson@gmail.com, 608 215 0426.

Northside TownCenter, 1865 Northport Dr, in the parking lot near Willy Street Co-op.

Snapshot Day

Sat, Aug 21, 8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Look for invasive aquatic species. Registration required. See story in this newsletter.

Cherokee Marsh - North Unit

Canoe and kayak events (MSCR)

[Madison School & Community Recreation \(MSCR\)](#) has multiple on-the-water events in August. Canoes / kayaks provided.

Intro to canoe

Wed, Aug 4, 4 - 6 pm

AND

Wed, Aug 11, 4 - 6 pm

\$15 (Resident), \$22.50 (Non-resident)

Cherokee Park

[Learn more and sign up \(Aug 4\)](#)

[Learn more and sign up \(Aug 11\)](#)

Paddling outdoor - discover Cherokee Marsh

Thurs, August 12, 4 - 6 pm

\$20 (Resident), \$30 (Non-resident)

Cherokee Park

[Learn more and sign up](#)

Intro to kayak

Wed, Aug 18, 4 - 6 pm

\$15 (Resident), \$22.50 (Non-resident)

Cherokee Park

[Learn more and sign up](#)

Self-guided nature adventures

Get ideas for your own self-guided nature adventures at Cherokee Marsh and other locations.

tinyurl.com/selfguided-adventures

Board meetings

Wednesday, Aug 18, 5:30 – 7 pm

Wednesday, Sept 15, 5:30 – 7 pm

Our board of directors is responsible for planning, coordinating, communicating, and managing our activities. Everyone is welcome to attend board meetings. We've resumed in-person meetings, usually at the Warner Park rainbow shelter. Contact janaxelson@gmail.com to confirm location.

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