

**Classification:** Conservation Biologist – Advanced

**Working Title:** Aquatic Zoologist

**Location:** Madison or a WDNR service center depending on candidate interest, space availability and program approval

**POSITION SUMMARY:** This position is responsible for the design, development, coordination, and implementation of our statewide Natural Heritage Inventory program for native nongame fish, aquatic insect and freshwater mussel Species of Greatest Conservation Need with a focus on inventory and mapping. Specifically, this position: serves as a nongame aquatic species expert for the department; leads science-based determinations of the status (rarity and trends) of rare native nongame aquatic wildlife; directs and conducts inventory investigations in areas or habitats where information is lacking; data collection and analysis to fill biological data gaps; mapping and spatial analysis in Geographic Information Systems; and prepares publications, guidelines, workshops and policy recommendations for aquatic resource management. This position requires extensive knowledge of nongame aquatic vertebrates or invertebrates native to Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest and the ability to develop and lead internal and external teams in addressing complex environmental and ecological issues related to native nongame aquatic species and their habitats, including climate change impacts and adaptation. Customer and partner groups will include programs in the DNR's Divisions of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks and External Services, and Office of Great Waters, other programs within the DNR, citizens, citizen groups, tribal governments, and governmental, nongovernmental, and educational representatives.

**LOCATION, GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE & TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS:** This position has responsibilities statewide and will be located in Central Office in Madison or in a WDNR service center depending on candidate interest, space availability and program approval. Occasional travel within the state is required, including frequent travel during non-winter months for fieldwork.

**SCOPE OF AUTHORITY:** This position has statewide responsibility for the program areas outlined and works under the general supervision of the Species Management Team Leader within the Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation.

**Goals & Work Activities:**

**40% A. Inventory, monitoring, assessment, and mapping of aquatic Species of Greatest Conservation Need**

- A1** Lead the development, evaluation, and implementation of statewide native nongame aquatic wildlife species inventory, monitoring, status assessment, and mapping programs.
- A2** Lead program efforts to compile, confirm and incorporate in tabular and spatial (GIS) applications (Biotics) aquatic Species of Greatest Conservation Need element occurrences following NatureServe and Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory (NHI) standards.
- A3** Coordinate and conduct fieldwork to support NHI, biotic inventory for department master planning, and species status assessment and conservation projects.
- A4** Review and modify program objectives from results, current literature, and emerging information.
- A5** Write and submit grant proposals to further inventory, monitoring, and recovery projects.

**20 % B. Statewide consultation and coordination**

- B1** Serve as the department's principal expert on rare and declining nongame aquatic wildlife species and their habitats.
- B2** Provide program and policy advice to the department, its administration, external stakeholder groups, and state, regional, and federal agencies.
- B3** Coordinate and provide consultation for the efforts of DNR and partner property managers to implement voluntary conservation actions and avoidance measures for state and federally protected aquatic wildlife species.

**20 % C. Policy, planning, and species recovery**

- C1 Develop, evaluate, and implement guidance related to the management of native nongame aquatic wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need and their habitats.
- C2 Contribute technical expertise in aquatic vertebrate and invertebrate species conservation to the maintenance of the Wisconsin List of Endangered and Threatened Species and Wisconsin Wildlife Action Plan
- C3 Assimilate data analysis and other findings into written reports for planning (including biotic inventory reports and property master plans) and species management purposes demonstrating continued native aquatic vertebrate and invertebrate species conservation in Wisconsin.

**15 % D. Coordination and outreach on Wisconsin’s native nongame aquatic wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need with an emphasis on species status and climate adaptation.**

- D1 Collaboratively lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of statewide native nongame aquatic wildlife species adaptation in response to climate change, including outreach and development of programs or materials for land managers.
- D2 Contribute as an active member of the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts Wildlife Working Group.
- D3 Answer native nongame aquatic wildlife species-related information requests from administration, staff, and stakeholders (internal and external).
- D4 Develop and update information to inform the public on voluntary rare aquatic wildlife species management for landowners using various outreach tools and develop other outreach efforts in collaboration with communications staff.
- D5 Collaborate with biologists at other agencies and organizations, including staff counterparts at other Midwest state natural resource agencies and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, when needed.

**5 % E. Development and maintenance of professional expertise**

- E1 Remain current with advances in aquatic wildlife conservation ecology research and monitoring techniques, statistical analysis, population dynamics, species recovery, rare species regulation, and policy.
- E2 Maintain and expand knowledge of principles and processes related to aquatic ecology and conservation, especially those related to threatened and endangered aquatic wildlife species of Wisconsin.

**SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS** – None

**PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS & ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS:**

Physical requirements include talking in front of and within groups, sitting for long periods, lifting, and carrying 5 to 50 lbs. Environmental factors include working indoors in an office setting, conducting fieldwork in harsh field conditions, and independently traveling to offices and field sites around the state.

**ADDENDUM**

**Knowledge/Skill/Ability (KSA):**

1. Knowledge of all aspects of the Natural Heritage Conservation program in Wisconsin.
2. Knowledge of the Wisconsin Natural Heritage Inventory Program, NatureServe core heritage methodology, and the role of biotic inventory in department master planning and species management.
3. Ability to provide expert knowledge in rare and declining nongame aquatic wildlife species in Wisconsin or the Great Lakes Region, including their natural history, ecological relationships, habitat requirements, and challenges to their survival and recovery.

4. Skill in leading and working collaboratively with teams of professionals to identify priorities, goals, objectives, and implementation strategies for rare and declining nongame aquatic wildlife species.
5. Knowledge of principles of aquatic ecosystems and management, and natural resources planning, including landscape-scale approaches for natural community, critical habitat, and species conservation.
6. Skill in research, monitoring, and conservation of rare and declining aquatic wildlife species.
7. Knowledge of state statutes, administrative rules, policies, and programs applicable to programs within the Species Management section, including but not limited to state and federal endangered species acts.
8. Ability to perform data analysis on large, complex datasets and GIS mapping.
9. Knowledge of the development and implementation of policy and procedures, including monitoring and evaluation, common to the operation of a major program.
10. Skill in securing grants and managing budgets to support nongame aquatic wildlife conservation projects and programs.
11. Skill in communicating scientific information in written and oral forms.

#### **Department Competencies (Department Performance Objectives):**

**Safety:** Ensures a culture of safety within the work unit. Demonstrate responsibility for the safety and health of employees. Monitor effectiveness and ideas for improvement. Ensures that staff is provided safety information and training and ensures that all operations are performed with the utmost regard for safety and health.

**Decision Making:** Able to analyze situations fully and accurately to reach productive decisions. Consults appropriate parties when necessary and identifies the key concerns and/or issues that need to be addressed to make the best decision possible, at the correct level of decision hierarchy. The desired outcomes for this competency include excellence and credibility in decision making.

**Service Excellence:** Makes customer service a top priority and constantly seeks to improve customer service. Is responsive to changes in what customers want and need. Delivers on promises made to customers and follows up appropriately. The desired outcome for this competency is a strong connection to our customers.

**Effective Communications:** Able to express ideas in a clear, concise, and effective manner, whether speaking or in writing. Uses correct grammar and sentence structure in communications. Is a good listener, even when differing viewpoints are being expressed. Openly shares information and keeps all relevant parties updated. The desired outcome for this competency is strategic unity built on trust.

**Interpersonal Relationships:** Builds and maintains effective working relationships with others both internally and outside the organization; takes a positive and productive approach to resolving any conflicts which may arise. Exemplifies the commitment to the DNR's core value of respect; to work with people, to understand each other's views and to carry out the public will, maintain integrity, and treat everyone with fairness, compassion, and dignity. The desired outcome of this competency is a shared mind set and pool of meaning.

**Leadership:** Fosters and encourages support from his/her team to accomplish objectives, follow procedures, and accepts suggestions; inspires confidence and respect; motivates people to achieve agency goals and objectives; promotes respect, honesty, integrity, and fairness to all. Enforces standards/rules fairly and consistently and leads with courage. The desired outcomes for this competency are accountability through ownership of the work, staff alignment with agency direction, and full engagement of all employees.