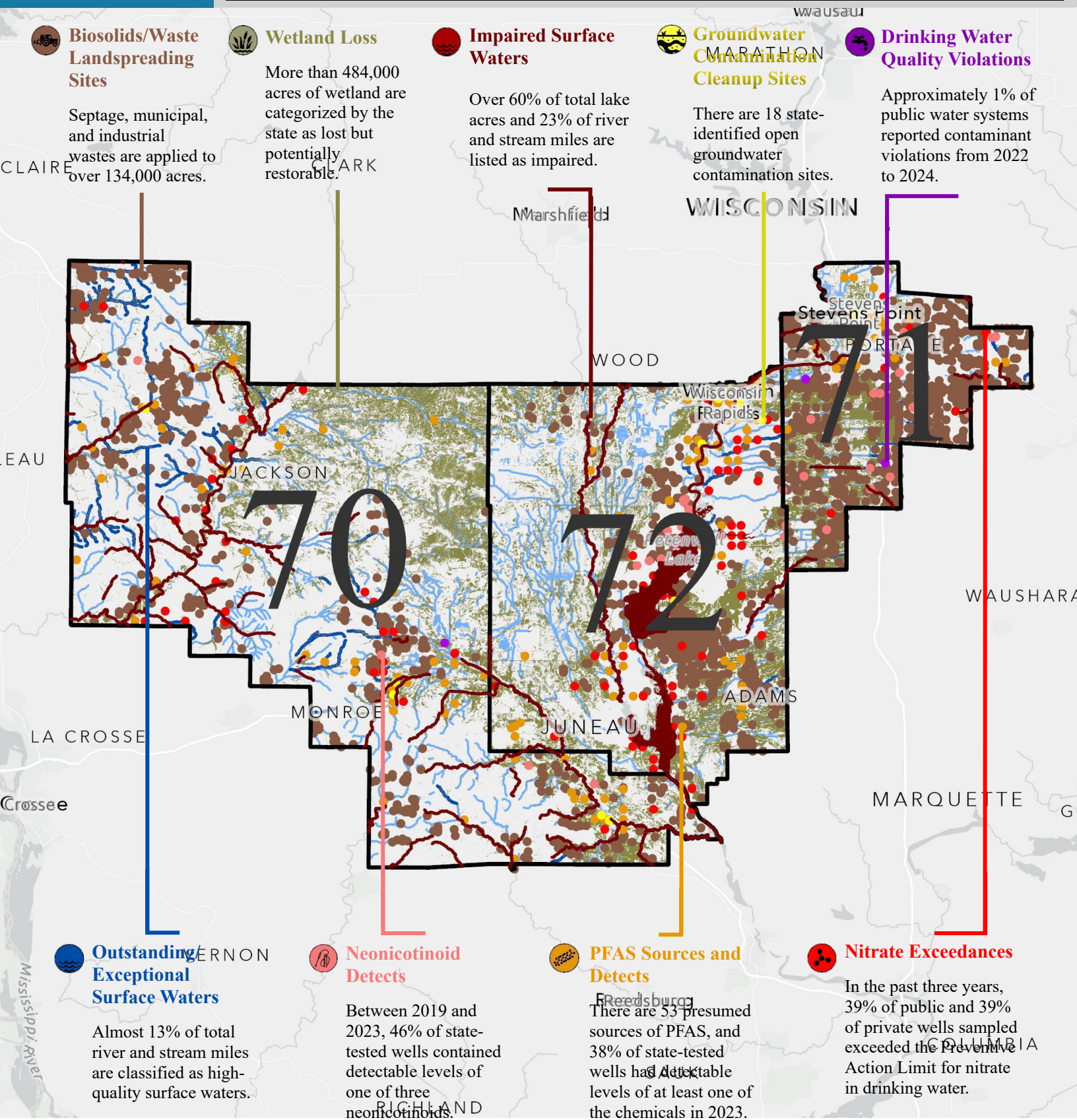


2024* Water Quality Report

177,000 Constituents | 54% Rely on Private Wells for Drinking Water

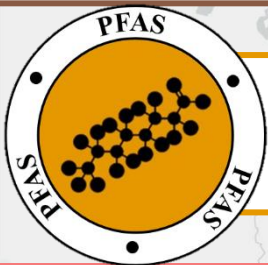




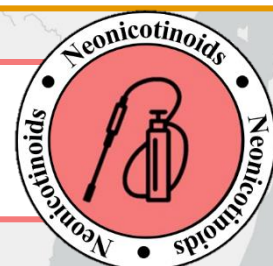
- **Over 140 public* and seven private wells sampled exceeded the Preventative Action Limit from 2022-2024.¹**
- Elevated levels of nitrate are generally due to agricultural runoff and industrial discharges.
- Nitrate has been linked to blue baby syndrome, colon cancer, thyroid disease, and neural tube defects.



- **Current permit holders have applied approximately 1.1 billion gallons of waste to over 3,300 separate fields.²**
- The liquid and solid waste is generated from paper mills, septage operations, and food processing plants.
- Landspreading waste can transport contaminants by contaminating groundwater and food and feed crops in the area.



- **Ten private and 26 municipal wells tested by the state had detectable levels of PFAS in 2023.³**
- The 53 presumed sources include facilities that manufacture, manage, and/or discharge PFAS materials.⁴
- PFAS consumption can cause developmental effects in children, decreased fertility, and some cancers.



- **From 2019-2023, 46 private and monitoring wells sampled contained one of three neonicotinoids.⁵**
- Neonicotinoid insecticides are applied to agricultural crops, lawns and gardens, golf courses, and more.
- Negative impacts to non-target insect species cause food chain issues in fish, birds, and potentially other taxa.



- **Nitrate and nickel violations occurred in three public* water systems from 2022-2024.⁶**
- These contaminants often enter drinking water from agricultural and natural sources.
- Sustained ingestion at high levels can cause cancer and respiratory issues, respectively.



- **Eighteen groundwater sites are contaminated with PCBs, PAHs, heavy metals, solvents, gasoline, and/or VOCs.⁷**
- These chemical mixtures enter water through industrial discharges, storage tank leaks, and landfill leachate.
- If ingested through drinking water, the pollutants pose serious cancer and organ damage health risks.



- **Of the thousands of wetland acres lost, 21% of the total land acreage has the potential for restoration.³**
- Degradation and loss of Wisconsin wetlands is primarily due to invasives, development, and conversion to cropland.
- Wetlands absorb pollutants before they enter water, including drinking water; without them, we lose natural filters.



- **More than 73,700 acres and 585 miles of surface waters are listed as impaired under the Clean Water Act.³**
- The mercury, phosphorus, lead, and/or PCBs throughout are often from agricultural and industrial discharges.
- Ingestion of these pollutants can lead to organ damage, cardiovascular and reproductive issues, cancer, and more.



- **Over 350 miles of surface waters are classified as Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Waters by the state.³**
- These waterbodies support fisheries and wildlife and have high water quality from effective management and protection.
- As some drinking water is sourced from surface water, these are essential public health resources, too.



*Public wells include [municipal, other than municipal, non-transient non-community, and transient non-community systems](#). ¹Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Groundwater Retrieval Network; ²WDNR data request; ³WDNR GIS Open Data Portal; ⁴Adapted from Salvatore et al. (2022); ⁵Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection data request; ⁶Environmental Protection Agency Enforcement and Compliance History Online; ⁷WDNR Bureau for Remediation and Redevelopment Tracking System