



Ghost Lake Visit Summary

8/21/2025

Summary

Craig Pagenkopf, Perry Cowan, and Natalie Erler, Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator for the Sawyer County Zoning & Conservation Department, visited Ghost Lake on Thursday, August 21st, 2025. The purpose of this visit was to look for Eurasian Watermilfoil (EWM) and any other invasive species in the water. Visual observations were made from a pontoon boat that went along the perimeter of the lake.

It was clear there was a very healthy native plant community present throughout the lake, and we did not see any Eurasian watermilfoil or any other invasive species from the boat. There were a couple of native milfoils spotted, various-leaved watermilfoil and northern watermilfoil, seen in the southern channel and near the public boat landing. Large-leaf pondweed (aka “Cabbage”) and clasping-leaf pondweed were also very abundant and found throughout the entire lake. Other common plants seen were Bur-reeds (long green grass-laying on top of the water), Water Celery (have a curly/coil like stem with a little white flower on top), Bulrushes (sticking out of the water along the shoreline), and a large area of fern-leaf pondweed found in the north part of the lake.

We looked carefully at the public boat landing, as this would be a “hot spot” and most likely point of entry for invasive species. Native northern watermilfoil was seen which is a good sign. Just north of the boat landing we also spotted a few colonies of Bryozoan. Bryozoans are very tiny invertebrates that live in colonies. They look like a ball of jelly or an alien brain in the water, and they feed on microscopic organisms. Not to fear though, they are a sign of good water quality!

All in all, we were happy to report no invasive species found, and I was very impressed at the wide variety of plants in the lake. The more variety of plants you have, the healthier the lake! Also, a Big THANK YOU to Boulder Lodge for letting us use one of their pontoon boats to do the survey!

If you have any questions about invasive species or aquatic plants, feel free to contact me.
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