

Red Swamp Scare



A Rapid Response Learning Experience

Shelby Adler - WDNR South Central Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator

April 3rd 2020

Photo Credit: Warden Sean Neverman

Red Swamp Crayfish

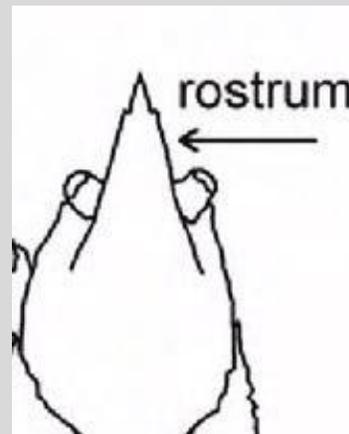
Procambarus clarkii

No gap between curved seams of carapace

Wedge/Needle-shaped rostrum

Indistinct black tail stripe

****Color can vary widely, not a key distinguishing feature****



Mistaken ID: White River Crayfish

Overview of Incident

Friday June 21st 2019



Photo Credit: Warden Sean Neverman

Containment Fencing

Friday June 21st 2019

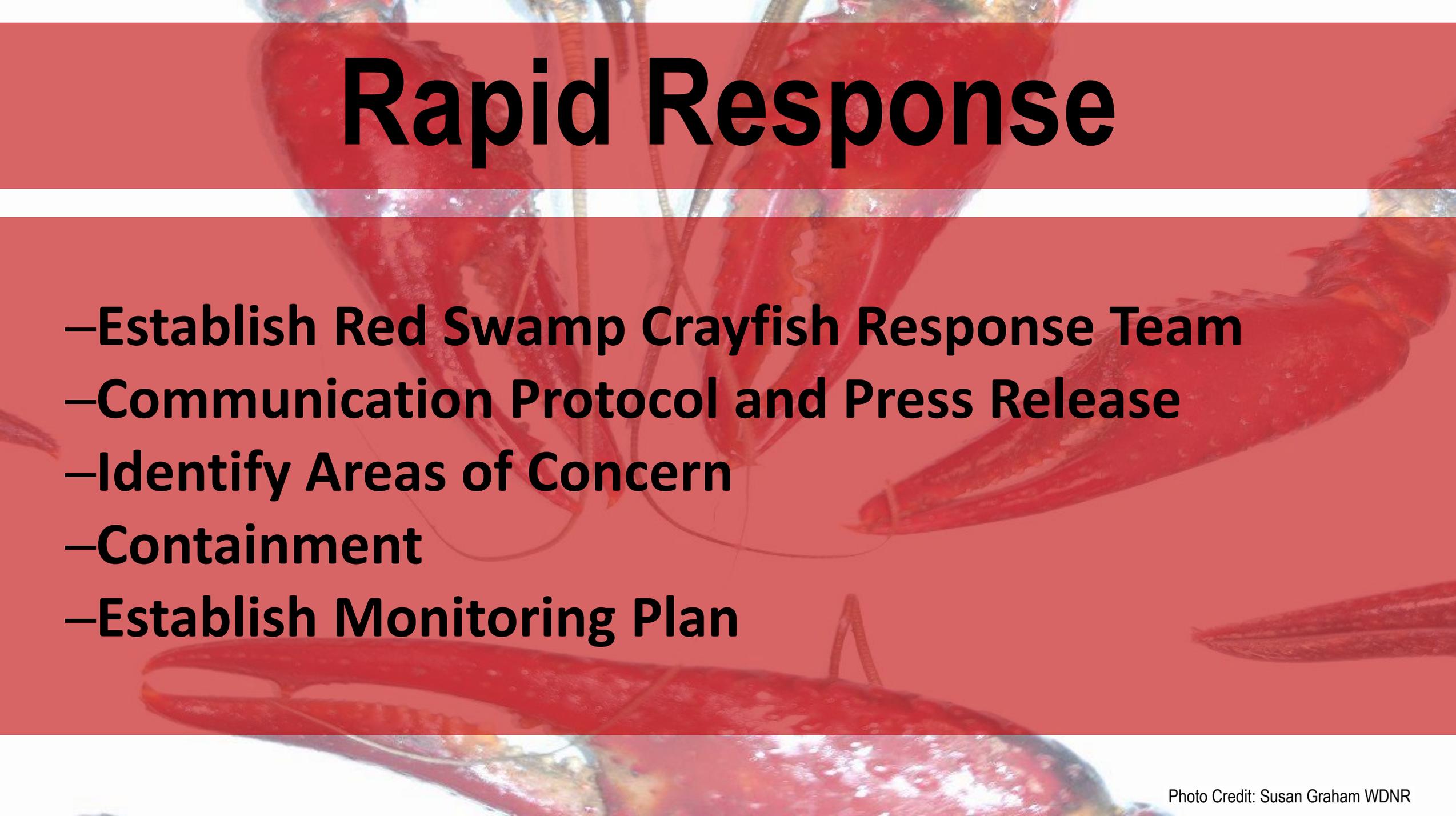


Wisconsin River



Photo Credit: Nathan Nye WDNR

Rapid Response

The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of several red swamp crayfish claws. The claws are bright red and have a textured, segmented appearance. They are arranged in a way that some are in the foreground and others are slightly behind, creating a sense of depth. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture and color of the claws.

- Establish Red Swamp Crayfish Response Team
- Communication Protocol and Press Release
- Identify Areas of Concern
- Containment
- Establish Monitoring Plan

DNR seeks public assistance with investigation into dumping of red swamp crayfish at Sauk County boat launch

Contact(s): Raechelle Belli, public affairs manager, 608-264-8942

July 18, 2019 at 1:45:30 pm



MADISON, Wis. - The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is seeking information from the public about the illegal dumping of red swamp crayfish at a Sauk Prairie canoe landing on June 21. The red swamp crayfish is a prohibited species in Wisconsin, which means that it is illegal to possess, transport and introduce live crayfish into Wisconsin waters. The last known finding of this organism in Wisconsin was in 2009.

The department responded to multiple reports of live crayfish in the parking lot at the canoe landing on the Wisconsin River in Sauk City. Two DNR experts verified the species as prohibited and mitigation efforts ensued. Within 24 hours, department staff gathered as many crayfish as possible, installed 1,000 feet of silt fencing and dug a trench to contain any live crayfish. An additional 900 feet of fencing was installed a week later. Since the red swamp crayfish can travel several miles over dry ground and can burrow into the ground during extended dry periods, this fencing will remain to contain any crayfish not initially captured.

Initial monitoring of the area does not suggest that any of the dumped crayfish reached the Wisconsin River or any other body of water. However, it is still possible and additional monitoring of the site and nearby waterbodies for the crayfish will continue.

Investigators are trying to determine who may have dumped the crayfish and why. Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call the DNR tip line at 1-800-847-9367 or submit a [violation report online](#).

SAUK CITY — **Red swamp crayfish**, which are illegal to possess or transport in Wisconsin because of their potential to threaten other wildlife, were dumped in the parking lot of a Sauk Prairie canoe landing on the Wisconsin River at the end of June.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is asking for the public's help in investigating the incident.

The DNR does not believe any of the crayfish made it into the Wisconsin River or any other bodies of water. Within 24 hours of the June 21 dumping, DNR staff collected as many crayfish as possible and put up fencing and trenches to contain the crayfish.

Red swamp crayfish can host parasites and often carry the crayfish fungus plague, which can lead to a decline in other crayfish species, according to the DNR.

The crayfish are listed on the DNR's **[list of invasive species in Wisconsin](#)**. Red swamp crayfish were last found in Wisconsin in 2009.

“If they establish, they can impact the ecosystem by aggressively competing with native crayfish and other species for food and habitat,” the DNR said.

Rapid Response

The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of several bright red swamp crayfish claws. The claws are positioned in various orientations, some pointing towards the center and others towards the edges. The texture of the crayfish shells is visible, showing small bumps and ridges. The overall color palette is dominated by the vibrant red of the crayfish against a white background.

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Areas of Concern



A close-up photograph of several bright red crayfish claws, likely from a crayfish, set against a white background. The claws are the central focus, showing their textured, segmented structure and sharp tips. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red banner that contains the title and list.

Rapid Response

- Establish Red Swamp Crayfish Response Team**
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Containment Fencing

Friday June 27th 2019



Photo Credit: Nathan Nye WDNR

A close-up photograph of several bright red crayfish claws, likely from a crayfish, set against a white background. The claws are the central focus, showing their textured, segmented structure and sharp tips. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red banner that contains the title and list.

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2019 Monitoring







Honey Creek

Otter Creek

Wisconsin River



2020 Monitoring

- Monthly Monitoring at Sauk Prairie Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Monthly Monitoring of downstream tributaries
 - Increase number of monitoring sites
 - Volunteer Assistance

Lessons Learned

- Communication Protocol Complications
- Rapid Response is not one size fits all
- Restrictions when working with an open investigation
- Important to include those with differing expertise in team

Thank You

Conservation Warden Michael Green

Conservation Warden Sean Neverman

Conservation Warden Richard Maki

Conservation Warden Keith Meverden

Conservation Warden Michael Williams

David Rowe – WDNR Fisheries South Supervisor

Nathan Nye – WDNR Fisheries Biologist

Bradd Sims – WDNR Fisheries Biologist

Justin Haglund – WDNR Fisheries Biologist

Alex Bentz – WDNR Fisheries Technician

Koob Moua – WDNR Fisheries Technician

Jerry Endres – Sauk Prairie Wastewater Treatment Facility

Sauk Prairie Wastewater Treatment Facility Staff

Village of Sauk City – Public Works

Mike Sorge – WDNR Water Resources South Field Supervisor

Susan Graham – WDNR Lakes Biologist

Kimberly Kuber – WDNR Streams Biologist

Heidi Bunk – WDNR Lakes Biologist

Craig Roesler – WDNR Water Quality Biologist

Julie Benzschawel – WDNR Water Resources Specialist

Alyssa Sogge – WDNR Water Resources Specialist

Bob Wakeman – WDNR AIS Statewide Coordinator

Maureen Ferry – WDNR Statewide AIS Monitoring Coordinator

Kyle Mosel – WDNR Statewide AIS Response Coordinator

Matt Seguin – WDNR NR Area Supervisor

Jesse Kellog – WDNR Lower WI Riverway Property Manager

Raechelle Cline – WDNR Communications Specialist

Jeanne Scherer – UW Extension AIS Education Specialist

Tim Campbell - UW Extension AIS Outreach Specialist

Tanner Connors – WDNR Wastewater Engineer

Matt Wallrath – Upper Sugar River Watershed Association

A large, dark-colored metal basket filled with cooked crayfish, likely boiled in a traditional style. The crayfish are bright red and glistening. A white paper liner is visible at the bottom of the basket. In the background, a white bowl contains a red dipping sauce. The basket is placed on a dark, perforated metal stand.

Questions ???