

**American Recreation Coalition
2017 Beacon Award Nomination**



Katherine "Katie" Kassander

**Bureau of Land Management
Eastern States-Northeastern States District
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

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Katherine “Katie” Kassander
Natural Resource Specialist
Bureau of Land Management -Northeastern States District

Introduction

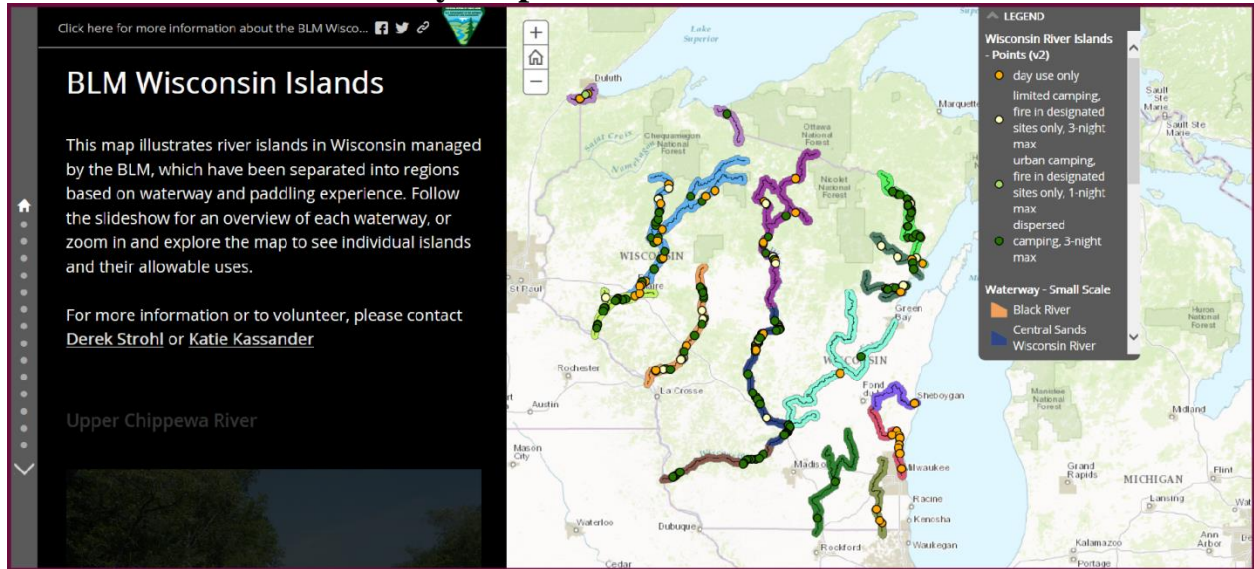
The BLM-Northeastern States District (NSD) nominates Katherine “Katie” Kassander for the 2017 American Recreation Coalition (ARC) Beacon Award. The BLM-NSD manages about 500 river and lake islands in Wisconsin. There are endless opportunities for paddling, camping, nature photography and birdwatching, from a boat or the shore. To expand the public’s awareness of the recreation potential of these islands Katie created the Wisconsin Islands Story Map (WISM). The WISM provides the public with highly accessible information about which islands they can use while recreating on the water, and what the islands’ allowable uses are. This enhances the outdoor experience for the public by giving them the ability to plan their resting and camping stops in advance, while also protecting islands by regulating their use. It is also a way for people interested in volunteering to reach out to BLM-NSD about those opportunities.

It was a partnership between the BLM and a non-profit organization that brought Katie and the NSD together. The American Conservation Experience (ACE) provides volunteer and internship placement for students and recent graduates. Katie participated in ACE’s Professional Internship Corps which gave her BLM direct-hire status. ACE helped place Katie with the NSD as a Natural Resource Specialist (NRS) intern during the summer of 2015, and she was ultimately hired as a permanent BLM NRS in December of 2015. Katie received her degree in Conservation and Environmental Science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in 2015.



Katie is a bundle of energy and a lot of fun to be around! She is very enthusiastic and passionate about outdoor recreation and protecting our resources. Katie grew up in a Milwaukee suburb and has always pursued outdoor activities. She loves paddling, fishing and camping. Katie has a dog, named Porter, and also fosters rescue dogs. She and her fiancé, Chris, will be getting married in June.

BLM Wisconsin Islands Story Map



Screenshot of the WISM home page

- **Access**

The public can access the site from Internet browsers such as Internet Explorer or Google Chrome using computers or mobile devices.

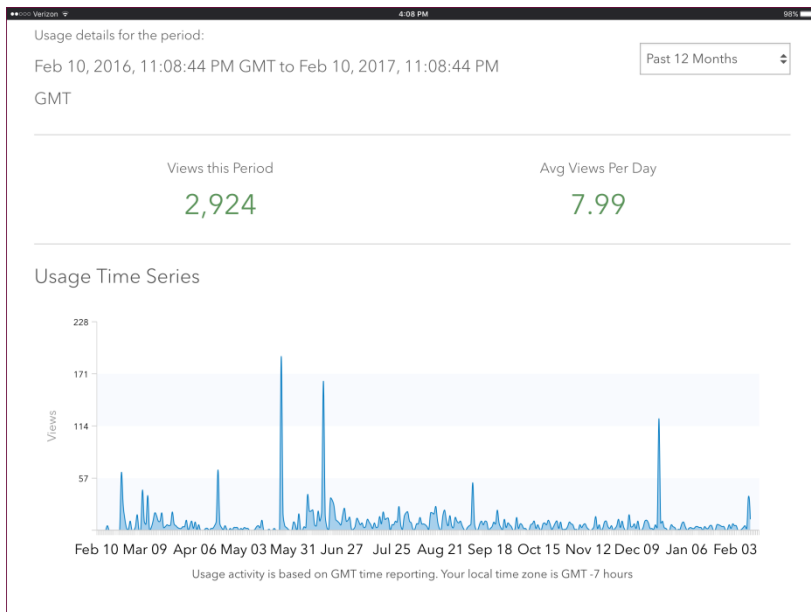
The WISM’s Uniform Resource Locator is:

<https://blm-egis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=dbca78d13b9c400aa848d634fc9a541a#map>

It can also easily be found by Googling “BLM Wisconsin Islands”.

- **Technology**

The WISM is created with information from eGIS Portal, BLM’s system for sharing centrally stored data, and uses ArcGIS software.



- **Users**

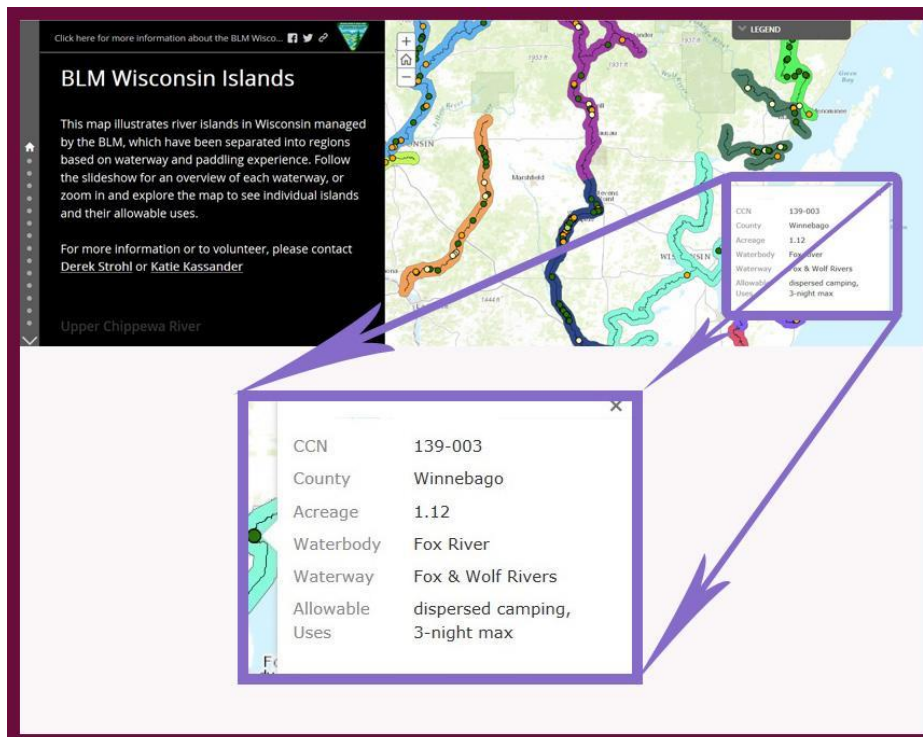
In the last year approximately 3,000 unique users accessed the site.

WISM Content

Users can follow a slideshow to view the waterways or individual islands. Users can zoom in and click on a specific island to see more information such as the size and allowable use. When available, a photograph of the island is included.



The Black River region card



This enlargement details the window of information that appears when an island is selected.

Allowable Uses

- *Day use only.* These are 77 islands that are close to privately developed land and are smaller than 0.2 acres.
- *Limited Camping.* 39 islands provide recreationists with the option of camping for up to 3 nights. Campers are permitted to have a campfire in designated areas. Most of these islands are 0.2 to 0.5 acres in size.
- *Dispersed Camping:* 153 islands allow for dispersed camping with a 3 night maximum. These are islands larger than half an acre.
- *Urban Camping:* 5 islands are located in urban areas but are larger than 5 acres and allow camping for 1 night, with campfires permitted in designated sites only.

The WISM does not show islands that have unresolved conflicting ownership claims or known archaeological sites.

The Future

The BLM is an agency most recognized in the Western half of the country. The creation of the WISM has brought public awareness to the BLM's stewardship role in the East. Promoting family-friendly recreation and the public's involvement with caring for the islands has been a happy result of the WISM. The WISM has been so popular that the NSD is now creating a similar Story Map for BLM islands in Minnesota.



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