

Karner Blue Butterfly Updated Range

WisDOT Guidance

Overview:

- The Karner blue butterfly (KBB) federal species range has recently changed.
- The range layer used by the USFWS Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) to create the Official Species List (OSL) has migrated from a county-based approach to a modeled range.
- The DNR KBB Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) high potential range (HPR) was already a modeled range (2019 version) but it has also been updated.
- It appears that both the IPaC OSL range and the DNR HPR are now in alignment.
- It is unclear how often the KBB range will be updated.

Viewing the new KBB range:

- USFWS webmap: [Species Profile for Karner blue butterfly \(Lycaeides melissa samuelis\)](#). Scroll down to the map. The layer may take several minutes to load in the map (its green/white once it does).
- You can download a copy of the 2025 DNR HPR data here: [Karner Blue Butterfly High Potential Range - 2025 | Wisconsin DNR Open Data Portal](#)

Summary of notable range changes (see attached maps):

- The new 2025 KBB range has contracted compared to the previous OSL county-based range.
 - **Sauk and St. Croix** counties now appear to be completely outside of the new range.
 - Large portions of some other counties are now outside the new range.
- The new 2025 KBB range has overall expanded compared to the 2019 HPR. However, there are some smaller areas that were removed.
- New counties that have some degree of new range overlap (not within OSL county-based range or 2019 HPR previously): **Columbia, Dane, La Crosse, Trempealeau, Marathon, Winnebago**

Action required:

- Evaluate active projects in areas where the KBB range has changed.
- If a project has a new KBB range overlap, a KBB effect determination must be made, and consultation completed as necessary. Request an updated OSL in IPaC. Conduct surveys as needed (see pg. 2). Complete/update the MN-WI Endangered Species determination key.
 - Note: “May affect” results from the determination key require additional informal or formal consultation with USFWS.
- If a project previously had a partial overlap with the KBB range, review areas of new overlap to determine if re-consultation with USFWS is needed due to a change in impacts. Request an updated OSL and conduct surveys as needed (see pg. 2). Update the MN-WI Endangered Species determination key/consultation as appropriate.
- If the new KBB range no longer overlaps a project and KBB is no longer appearing in the project’s OSL, the project can be re-consulted with USFWS to remove species-specific avoidance and

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minimization measures (aka KBB environmental commitments), assuming KBB was not found during any previously completed surveys.

- KBB is protected under the ESA wherever found. If previous surveys documented Karner presence, previous consultation/commitments must remain in place.
- Please note, while KBB is not a state-listed species (considered state special concern), project teams should be updating coordination with the DNR transportation liaison if the project team intends to remove DNR-coordinated commitments pertaining to this species.
- Changes to consultation/commitments need to be included in the environmental document/re-evaluation.
- Reminder: WisDOT's enrollment into the DNR KBB HPC does not remove or fulfill Section 7 consultation requirements for "may affect" determinations on federalized projects.

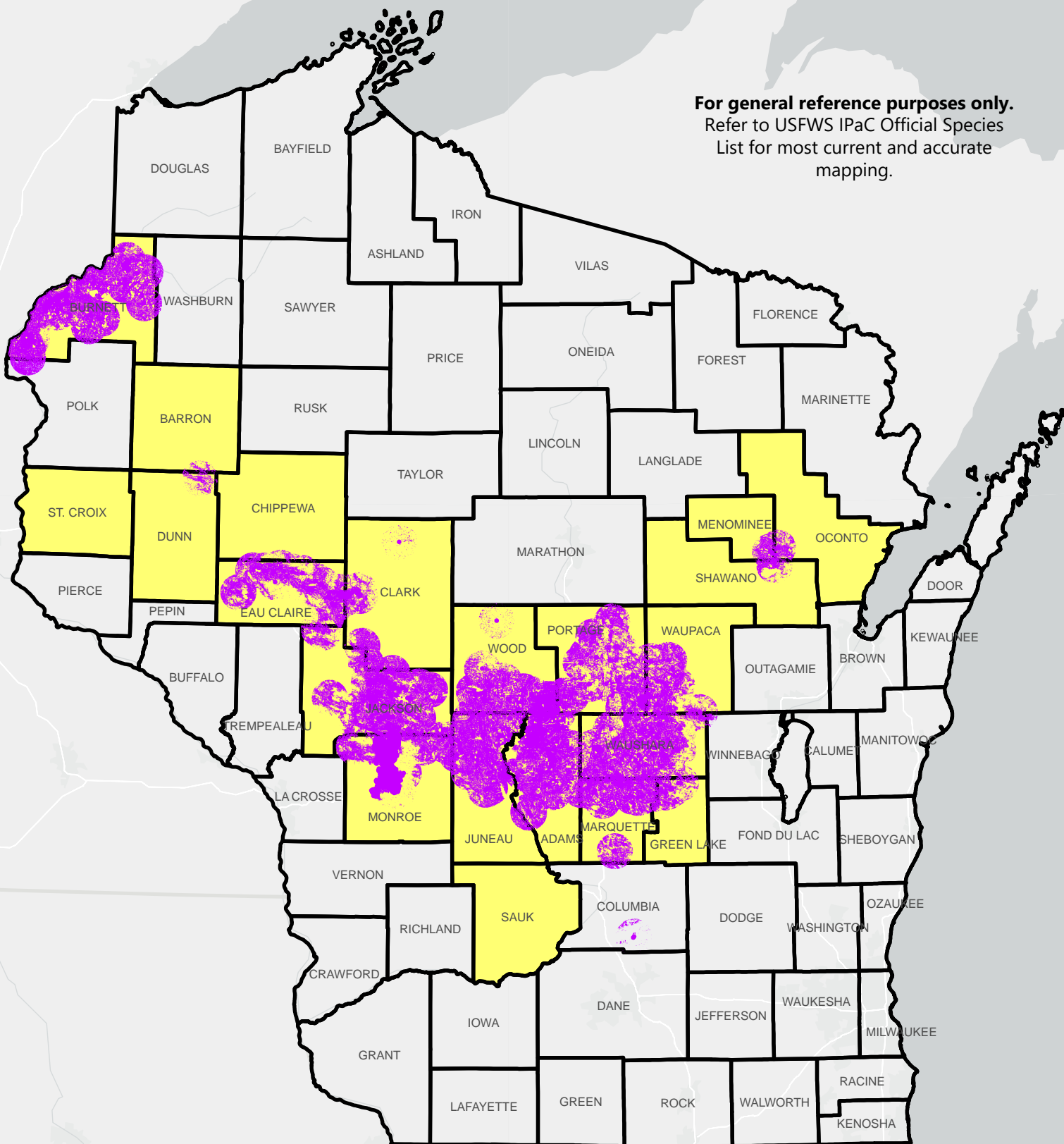
Surveys

- KBB suitable habitat consists of a variety of habitats containing wild lupine (obligate host plant) including oak savanna, oak or pine barrens, openings within oak forest (including rights-of-way), or old fields in association with oak forest.
- Projects within WisDOT's enrolled lands (state, U.S., interstate highways) must follow the KBB HCP required survey process for lupine and butterflies. **Training is required.**
 - See [Resources for HCP partners and non-partners](#) for survey protocols/forms and to submit online training request.
- These survey protocols can also be used outside of the HPR enrolled lands (e.g., local roads/county highways), but those projects cannot be covered by the HCP process unless the local municipality/county has enrolled separately as a partner.
- Surveys must be conducted during the appropriate time of year.
 - **Lupine surveys** are generally conducted May – June and must be completed by July 31.
 - **Butterfly surveys** are generally conducted late May – July, based on the flight periods.
 - Three surveys are required to document probable absence (2 surveys must be completed during the second flight period, with 3-7 day interval between surveys.)
 - Only 1 survey is needed to document presence.
 - Ideally the lupine survey and the first butterfly survey are completed together during the first flight period.
- Surveys are considered valid for 5 years.

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Comparison of Old IPaC OSL Range and 2025 Range

For general reference purposes only.
Refer to USFWS IPaC Official Species
List for most current and accurate
mapping.

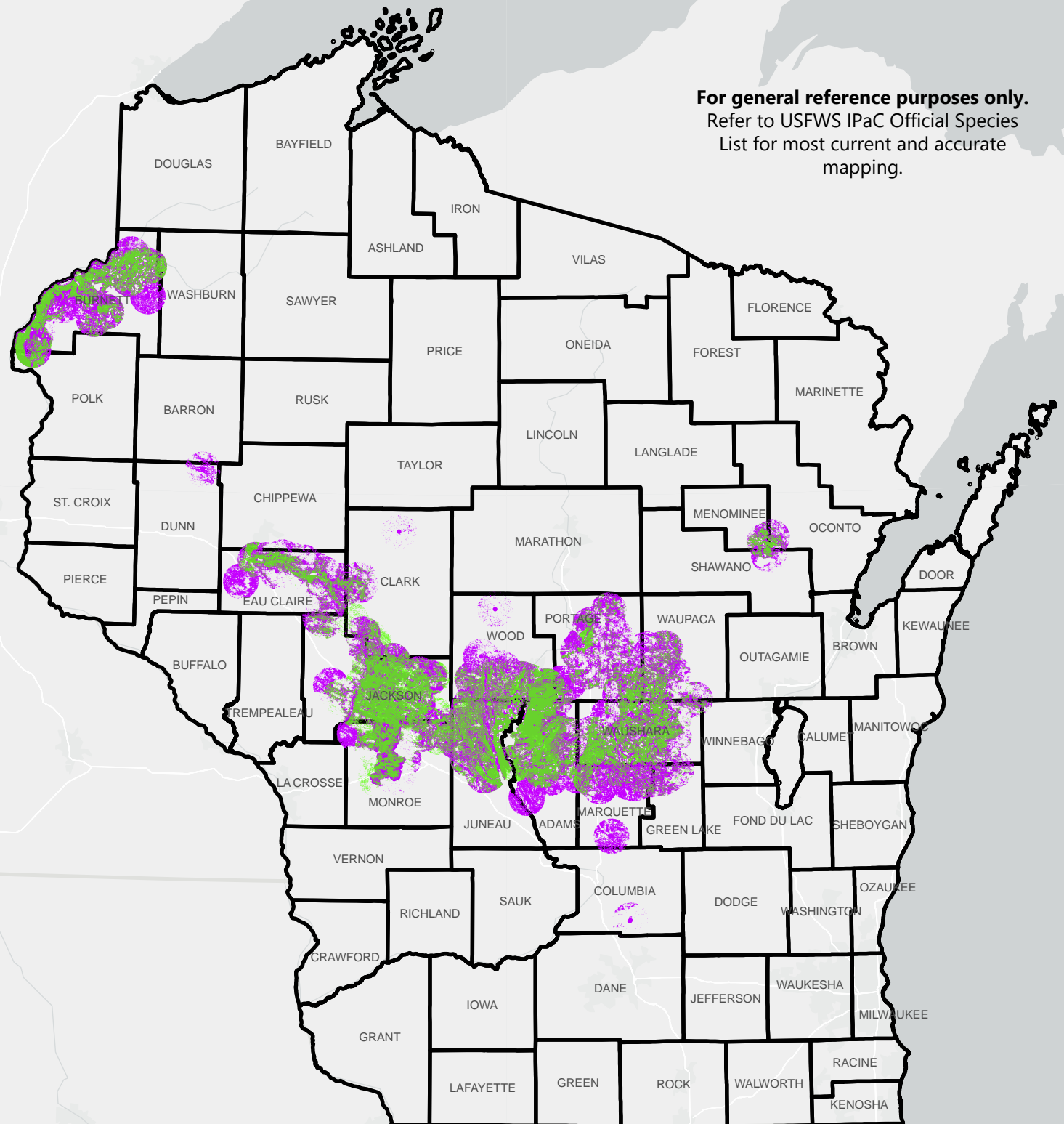


- New 2025 KBB Range
- Old IPaC KBB Range
- Counties

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Comparison of 2019 and 2025 High Potential Ranges

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- Old 2019 KBB HCP High Potential Range
- New 2025 KBB HCP High Potential Range
- Counties