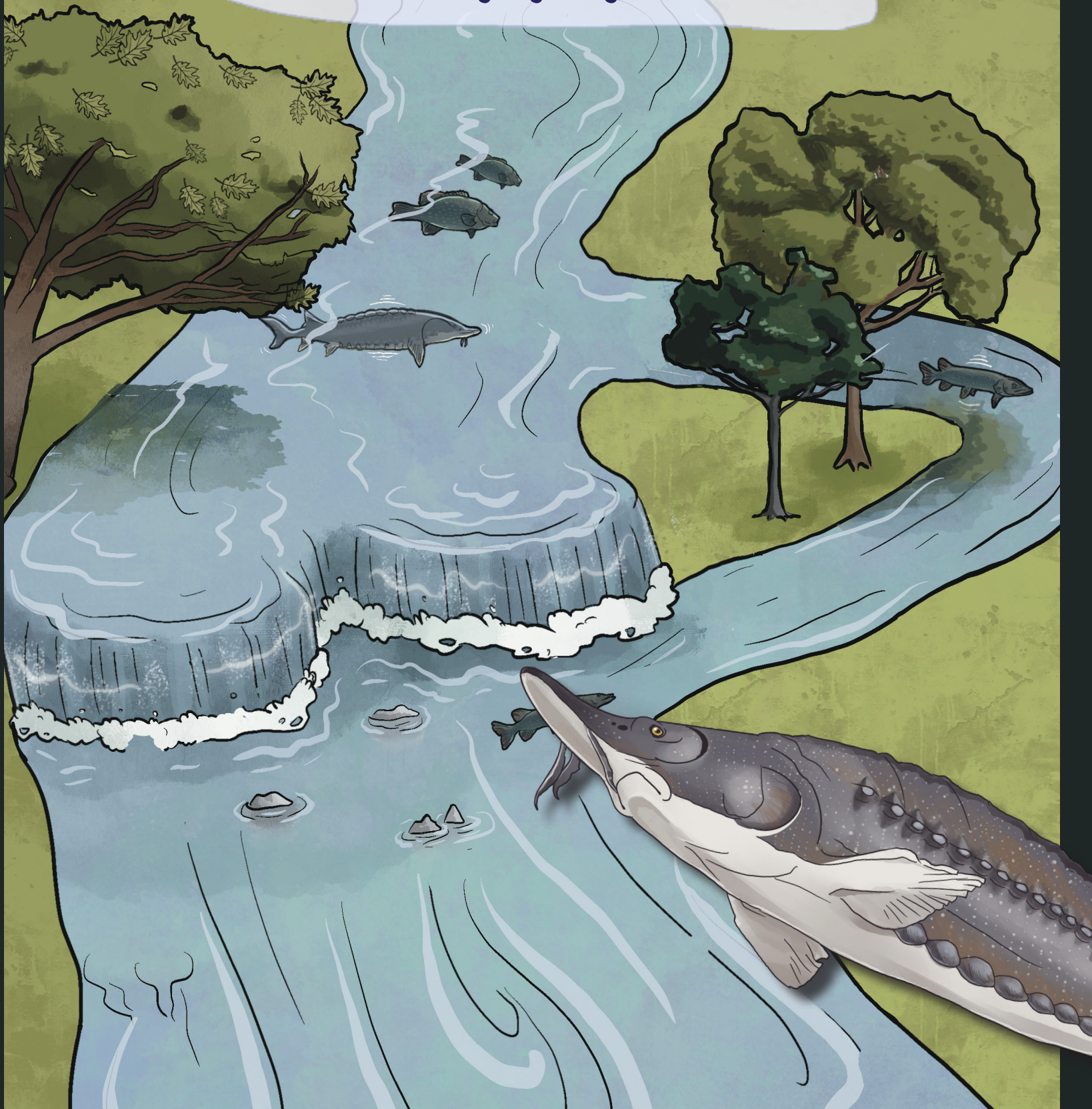



# I AM A RIVER

*Story by Michael Alan Timm  
Illustrated by Sydney Hoffman*

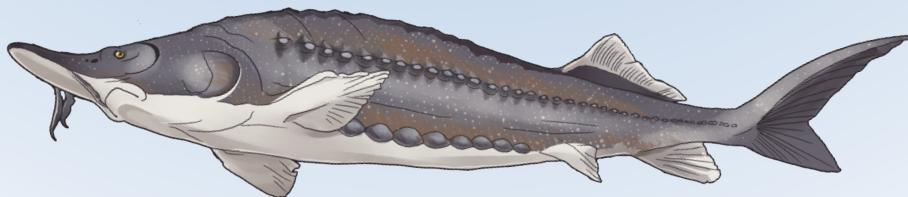


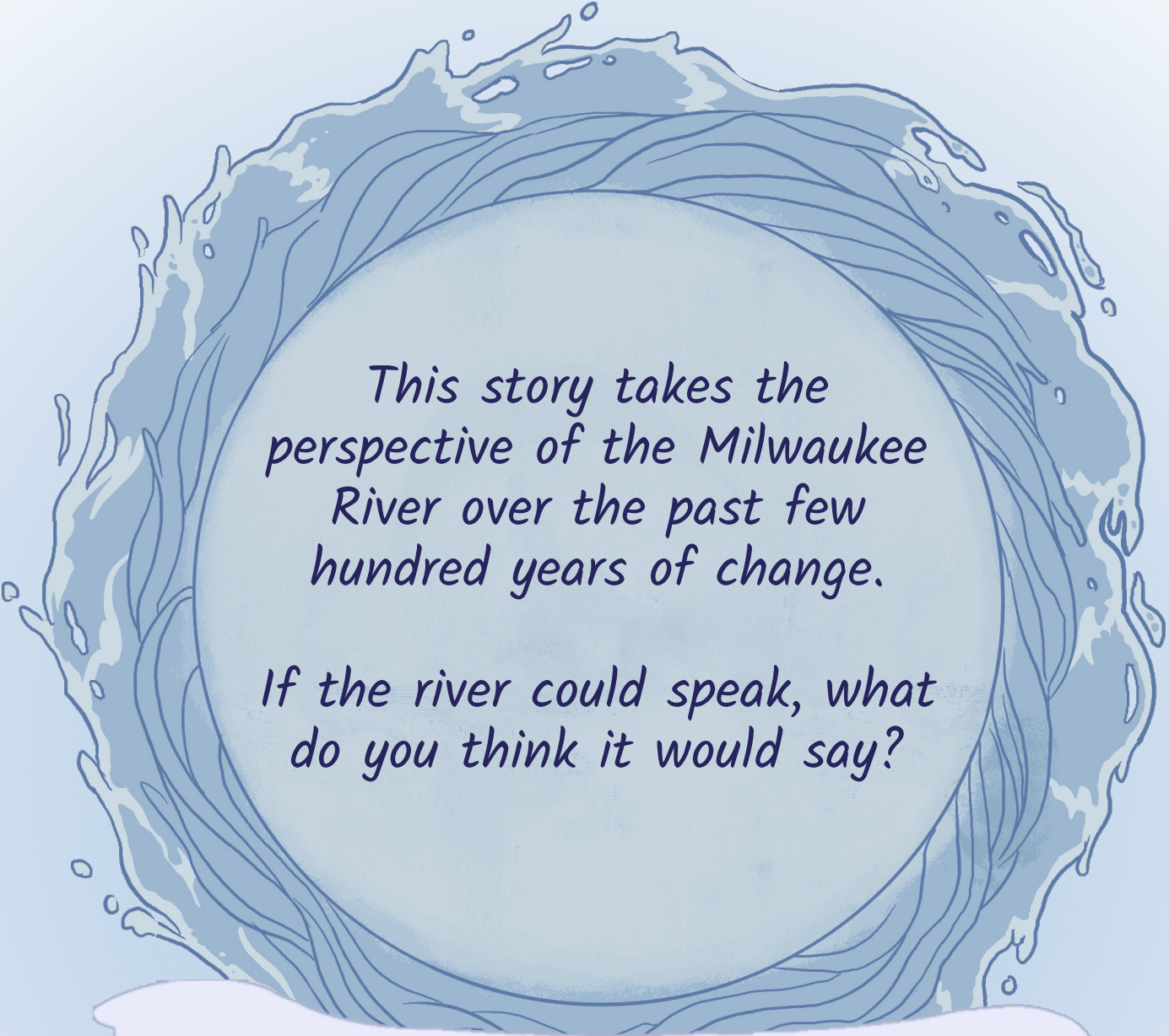




# I AM A RIVER

*The Kletzsch Dam Fishway  
and what it means for our  
relationship with the  
Milwaukee River*






*This story takes the  
perspective of the Milwaukee  
River over the past few  
hundred years of change.*

*If the river could speak, what  
do you think it would say?*

*Story by Michael Alan Timm  
Illustrated by Sydney Hoffman*

**MMXXIII**





**"I am  
a river."**

*The Gathering Place of the Waters  
for generations prior to 1833...*





**American Beaver**  
*Castor canadensis*

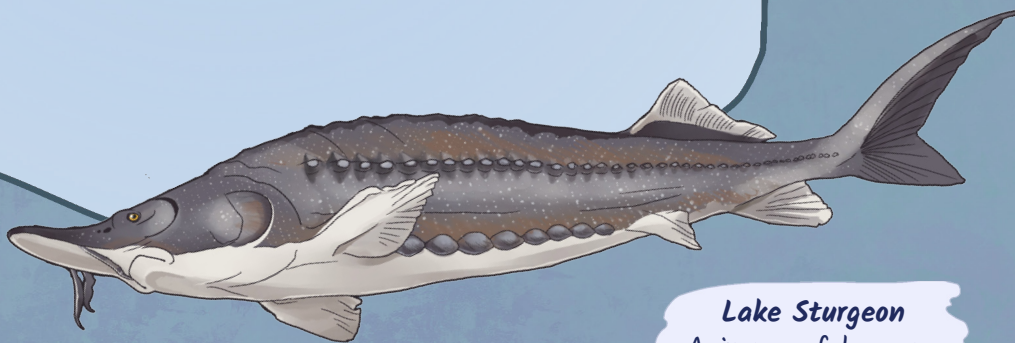


**Great Blue Heron**  
*Ardea herodias*



**Humans**  
*Homo sapiens*

**Wild Rice**  
*Zizania palustris*



**Lake Sturgeon**  
*Acipenser fulvescens*



**Northern Pike**  
*Esox lucius*





**“They  
dammed  
me.”**

***Milwaukee River Basin  
during the 1800s***





**Bridge Street Dam**  
Grafton, 1888

(Beavers locally extirpated)



**Mequon-Thiensville Dam, 1842**

(Fishway Passage added in 2010,  
modified 2021-'22)



**Passenger Pigeon**  
*Ectopistes migratorius*  
(extinct)



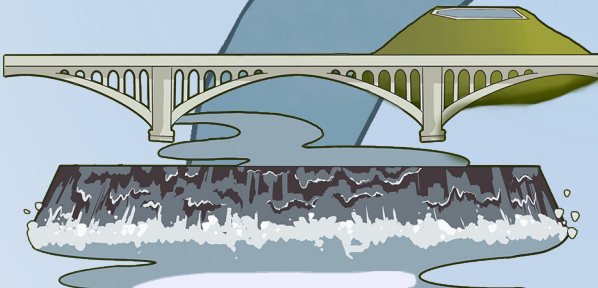
**Kletzsch Dam**  
1934

(Repaired in 2023  
with Fishway Passage)



**Estabrook Dam**  
1937

(Removed in 2018)

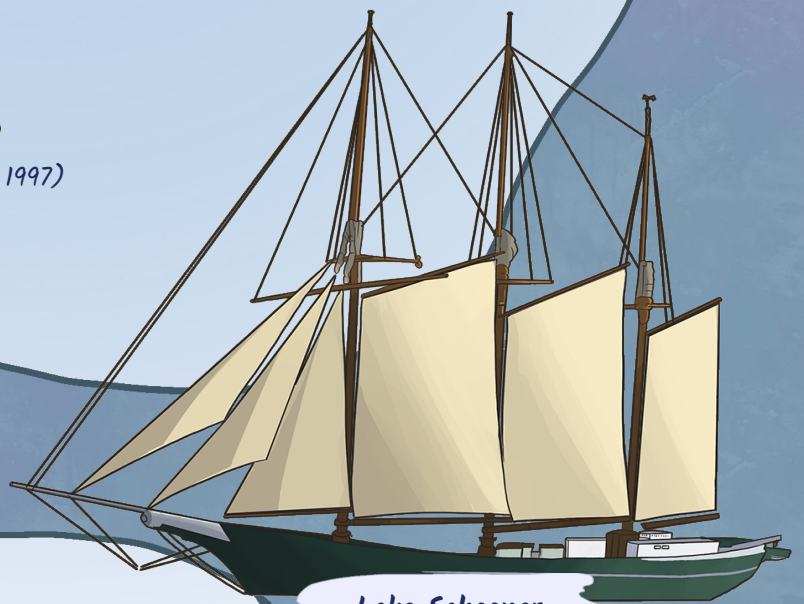


**North Avenue Dam**  
1835

(Removed in 1997)



(Lake Sturgeon  
locally extirpated)



**Lake Schooner**

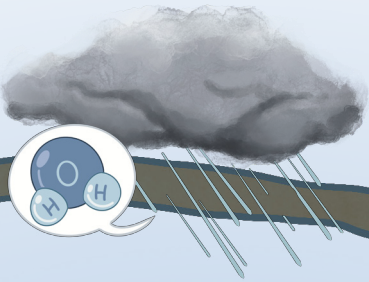




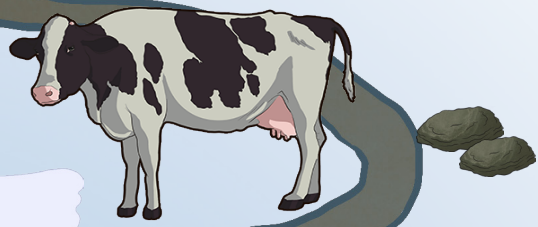
**“They  
almost  
forgot  
me.”**

***Milwaukee River Basin  
in the 20th Century***





**Water Molecule**  
Hydrogen Hydrogen  
Oxygen

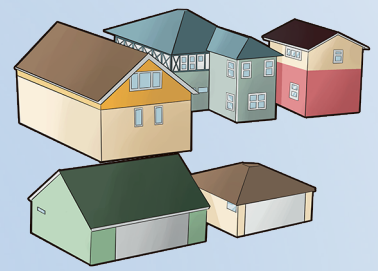


**Cow**  
*Bos taurus*



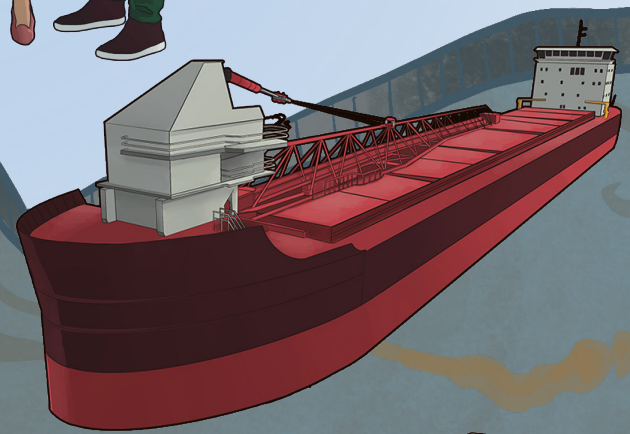
**Corn**  
*Zea mays*

The river watershed has a mix of agricultural, suburban, industrial, and urban land use that all affect the water.

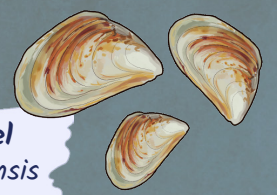


**"Crypto"**  
*Cryptosporidium parvum*


Worst waterborne disease outbreak in US history, Milwaukee 1993



**Quagga Mussel**  
*Dreissena burgensis*



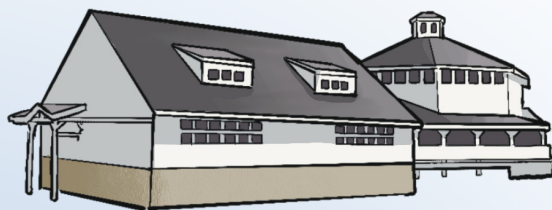
Introduced in ballast water, this invasive species has changed the aquatic food web



**“And  
yet...”**

***Milwaukee River Basin  
in the 21st Century***





**Riveredge Nature Center**  
est. 1968

**UWM School of  
Freshwater Sciences**  
est. 2009



(new building completed in 2014)

**Kletzsch Dam  
Fish Passage**  
2023

**Sturgeon Fest**  
Lake Sturgeon release  
since 2013

**Sturgeon Rearing Facilities**  
Lake Sturgeon rearing since 2006  
(Wisconsin DNR stocking since 2003)

**"I am a river."**





Bridge Street Dam  
in Grafton

**"our relationship  
is changing..."**

Mequon-Thiensville  
Dam Fishway  
Updated 2021-'22

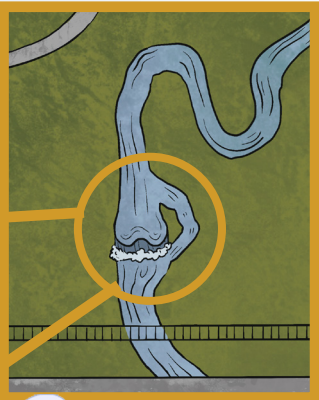
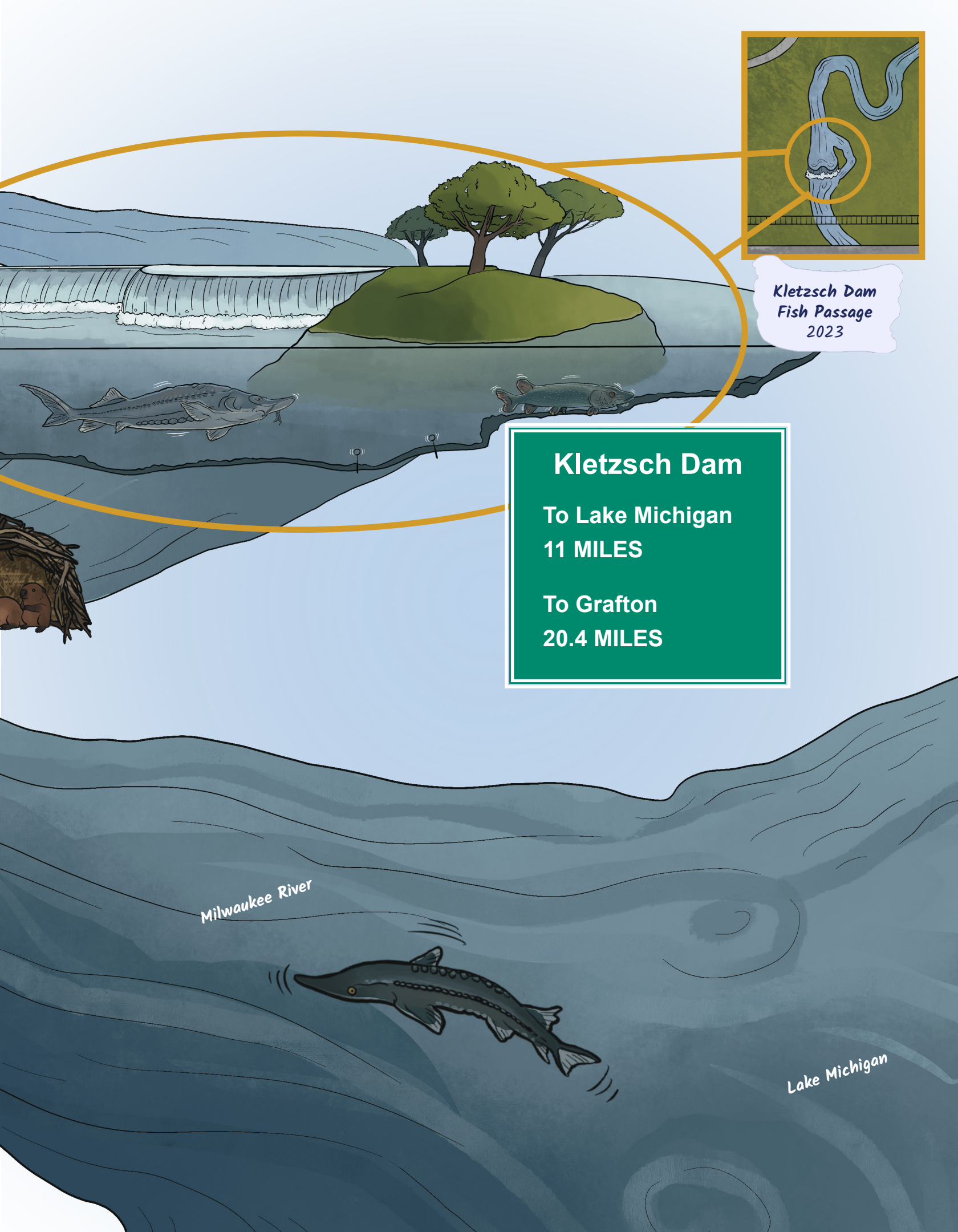
**Urban Ecology  
Center / Riverside**

**To Lake Michigan  
4.7 MILES**

**To Grafton  
26.7 MILES**

Urban Ecology Center Riverside  
Fish Antenna Array, 2022





Kletzsch Dam  
Fish Passage  
2023

**Kletzsch Dam**

To Lake Michigan  
11 MILES

To Grafton  
20.4 MILES

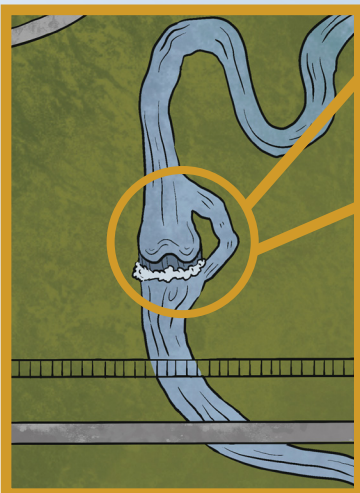
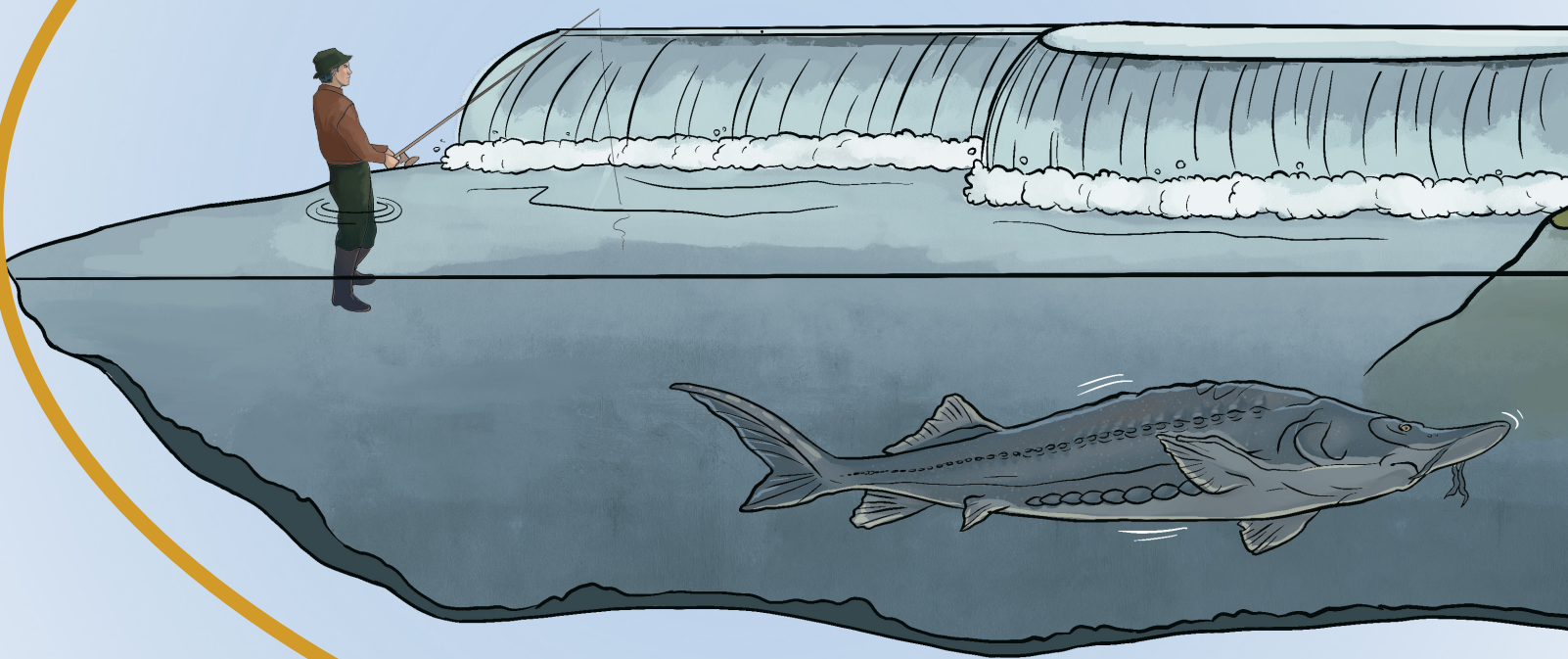
Milwaukee River

Lake Michigan

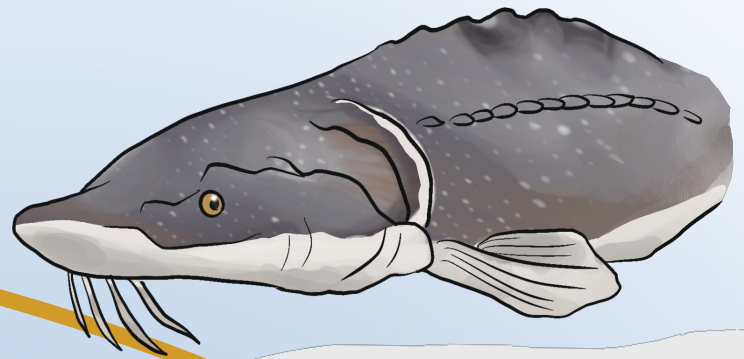


### **Northern Pike**

The Kletzsch Fishway is designed with resting pools to help native fish like Northern Pike swim around the dam's turbulent waters to reach upstream habitat.

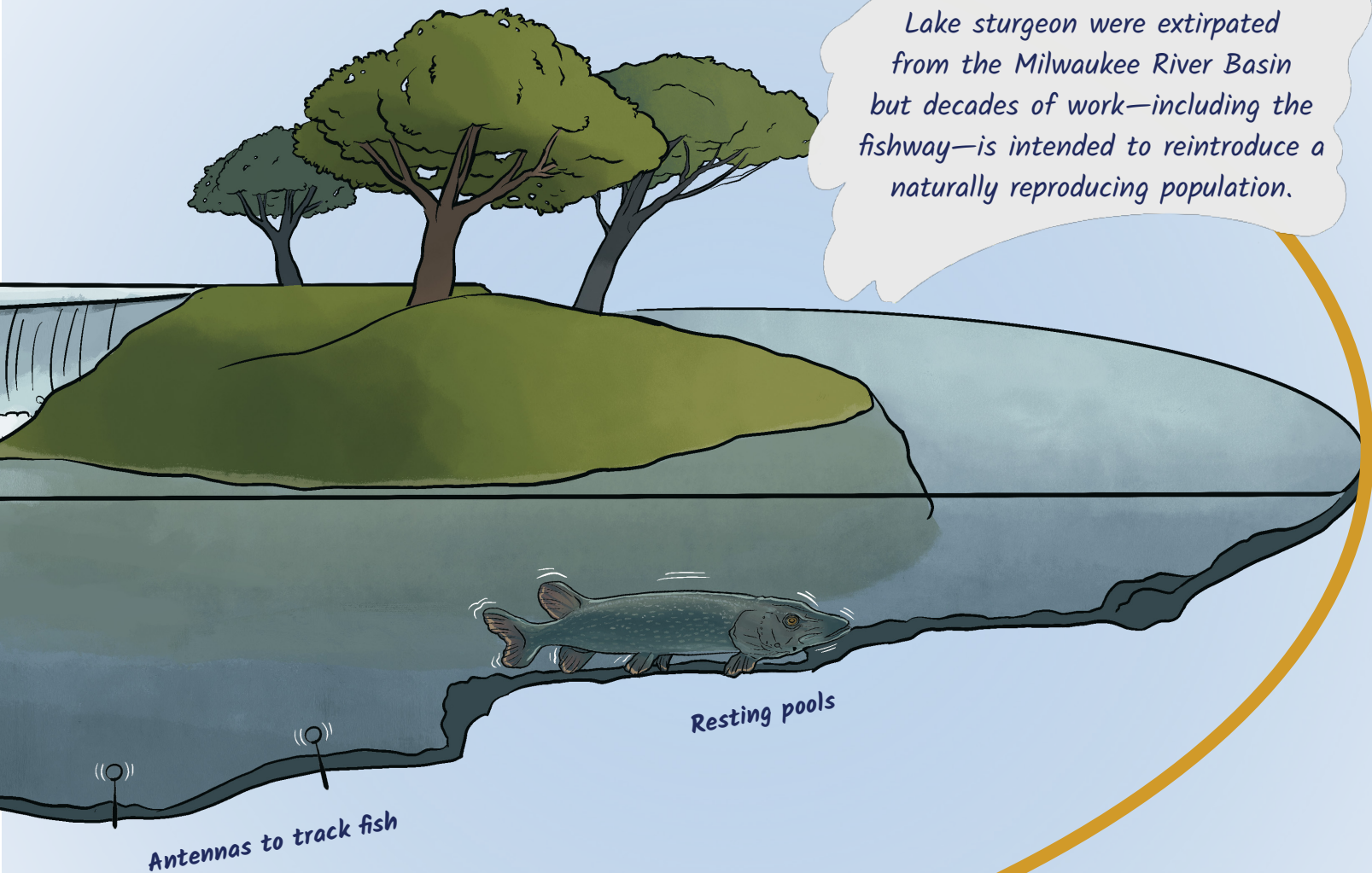






### **Lake Sturgeon**

Lake sturgeon were extirpated from the Milwaukee River Basin but decades of work—including the fishway—is intended to reintroduce a naturally reproducing population.



Antennas to track fish

Resting pools

**Kletzsch Dam Fishway**  
bypass for fish constructed in 2023



**“Aha!  
A new  
way.”**

**Kletzsch Dam Fishway  
bypass for fish constructed in 2023**





Fish Passage

20.4  
Miles  
to  
Grafton  
Dam

11  
Miles  
to  
Lake  
Michigan



**“I am  
a river!”**



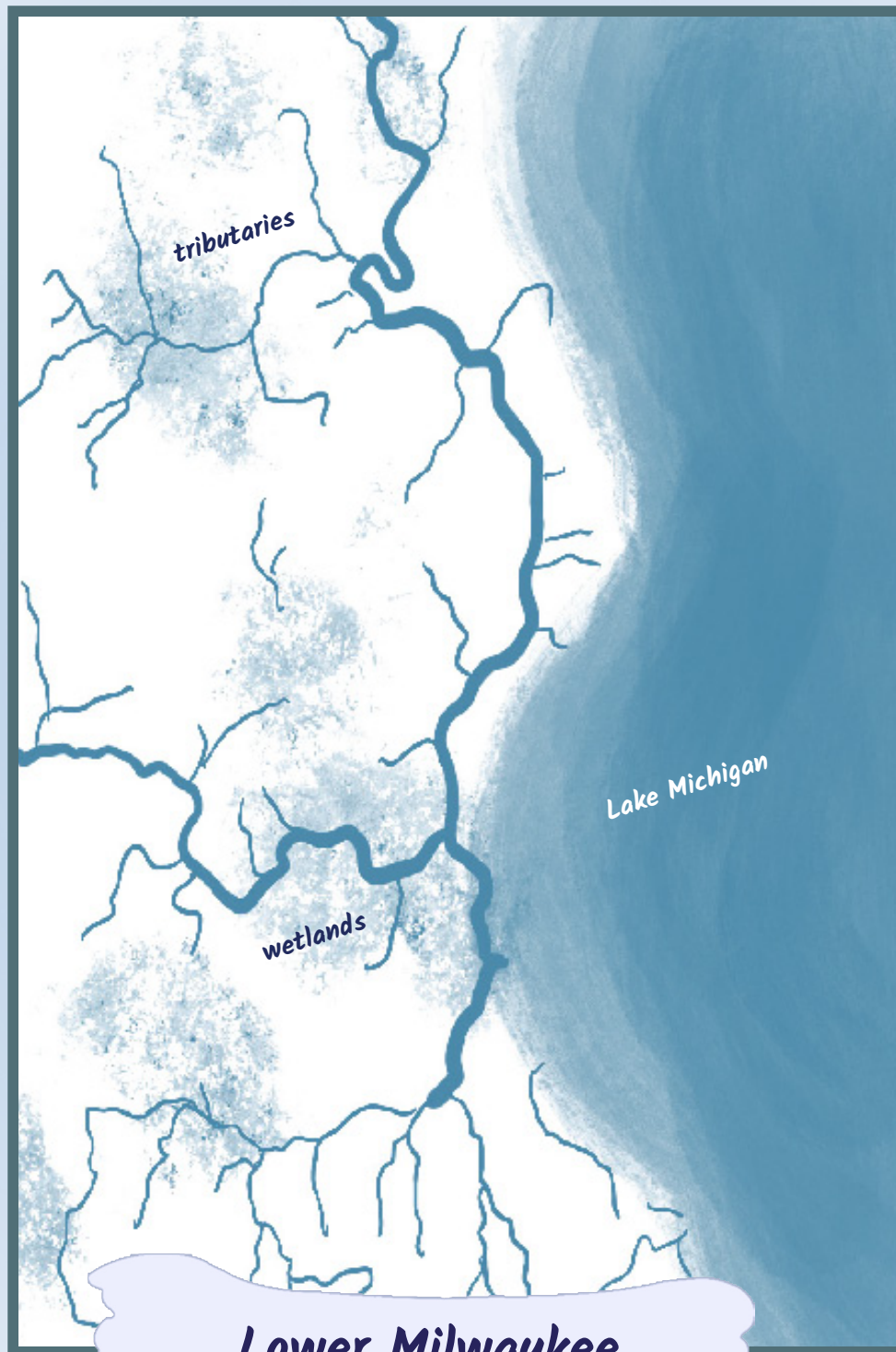




**“You are  
part of me.”**

*The Gathering Place of the Waters  
for generations to come...*

# River & Land: Map

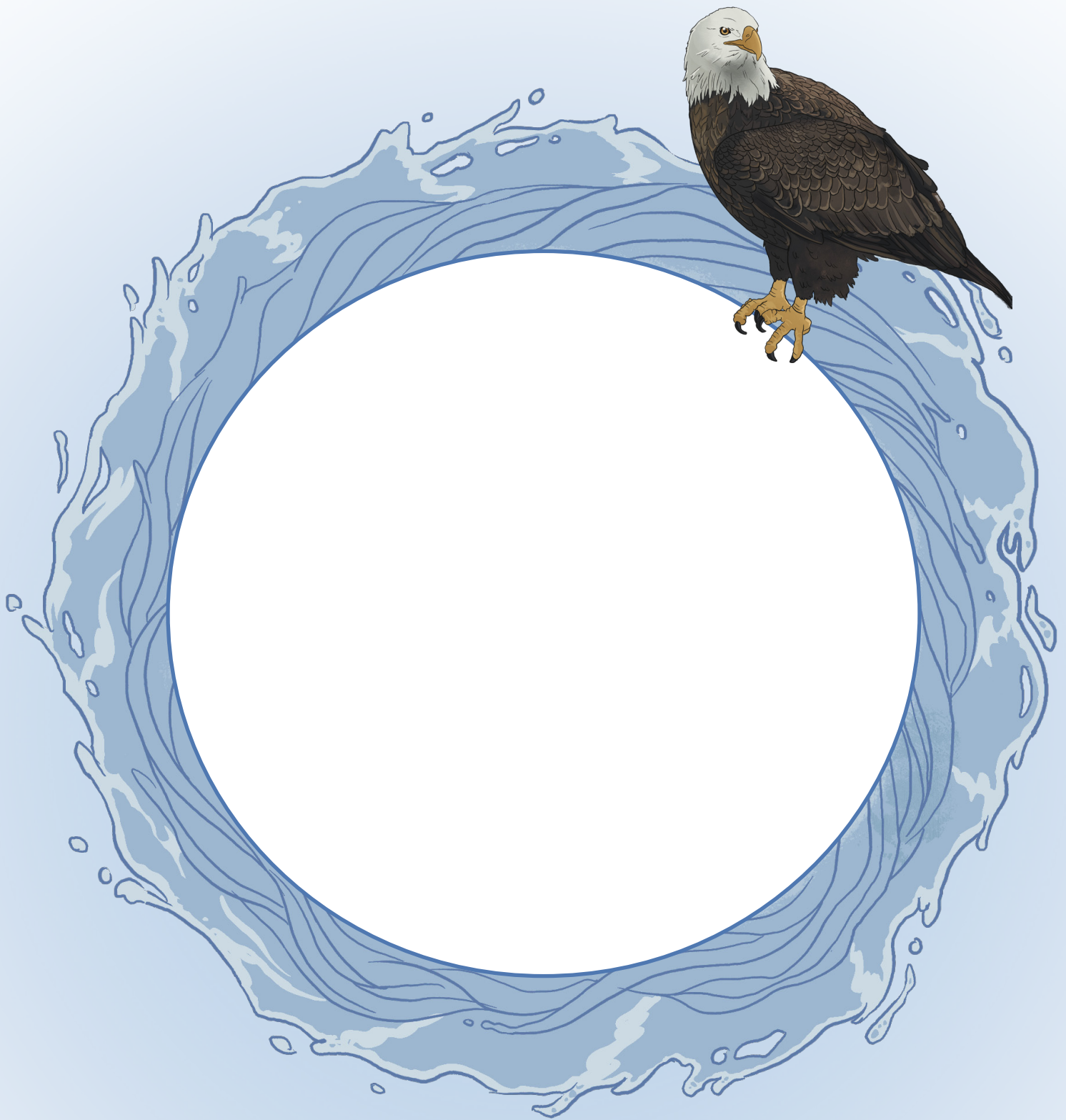


**Lower Milwaukee  
River Basin  
1700s-1800s**



# River & Land: Map

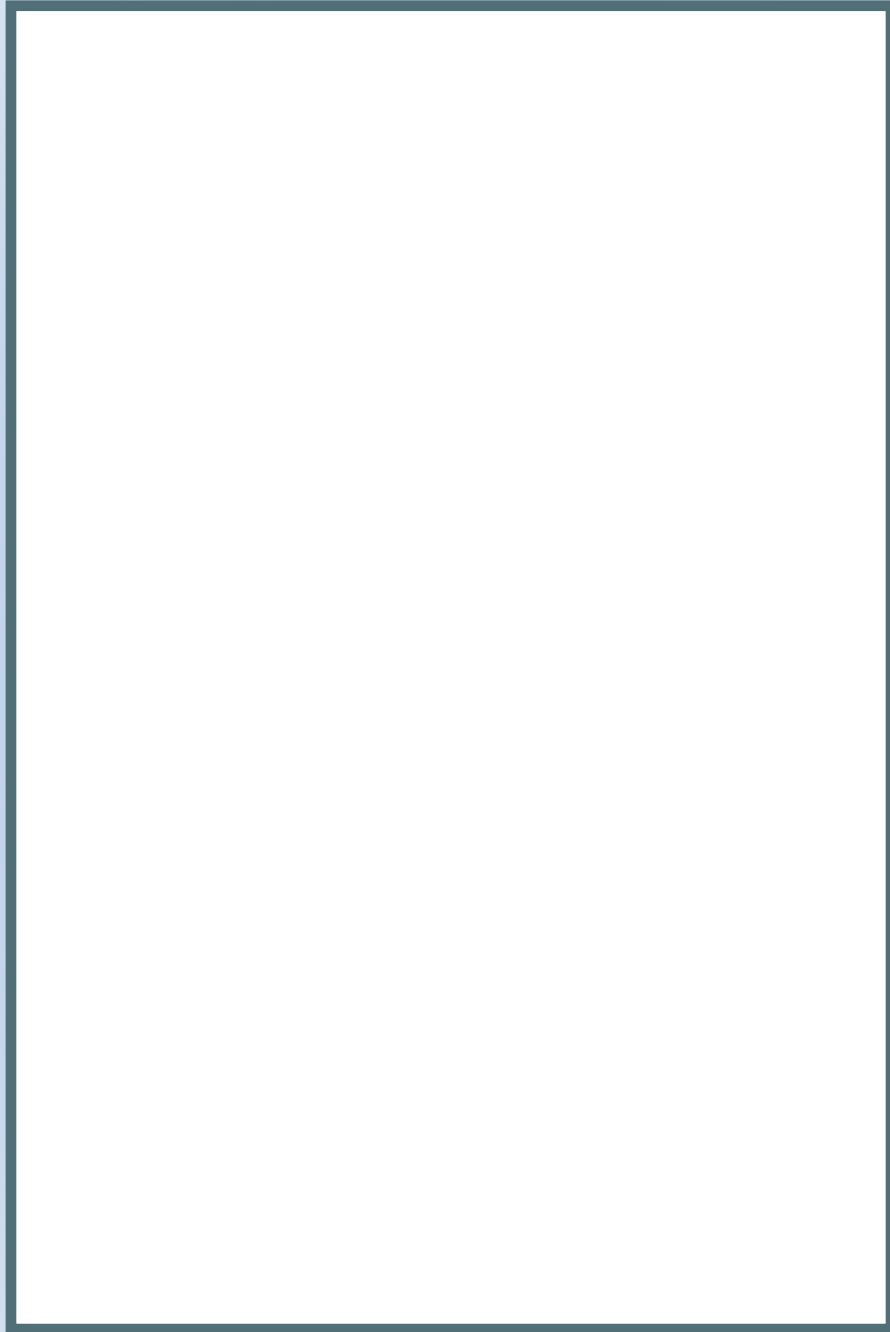




***Draw the next chapter of life  
for your generation & the next...***



# River & Land Map



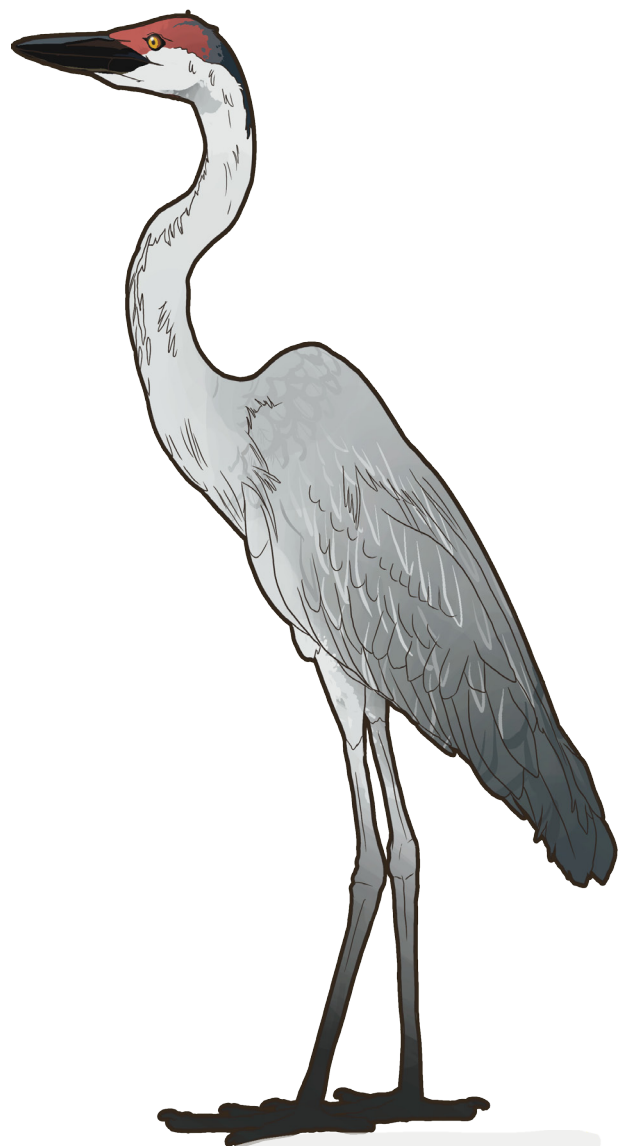
*What does our future look like?  
for your generation & the next...*

*Write the next chapter of our river  
on the pages that follow...*

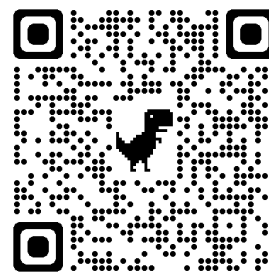


*Sandhill Crane  
Antigone canadensis*





**Sandhill Crane**  
*Antigone canadensis*



*This project is funded by the Wisconsin Department of Administration, Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under the terms and conditions of Wisconsin Coastal Management Program Grant Agreement No. AD239125-024.21.*

*Funded by the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office for Coastal Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act, Grant # NA22NOS4190085.*

*Look for the companion articles originally published online in Urban Milwaukee.*

*The entire series is published by the nonprofit Reflo.*