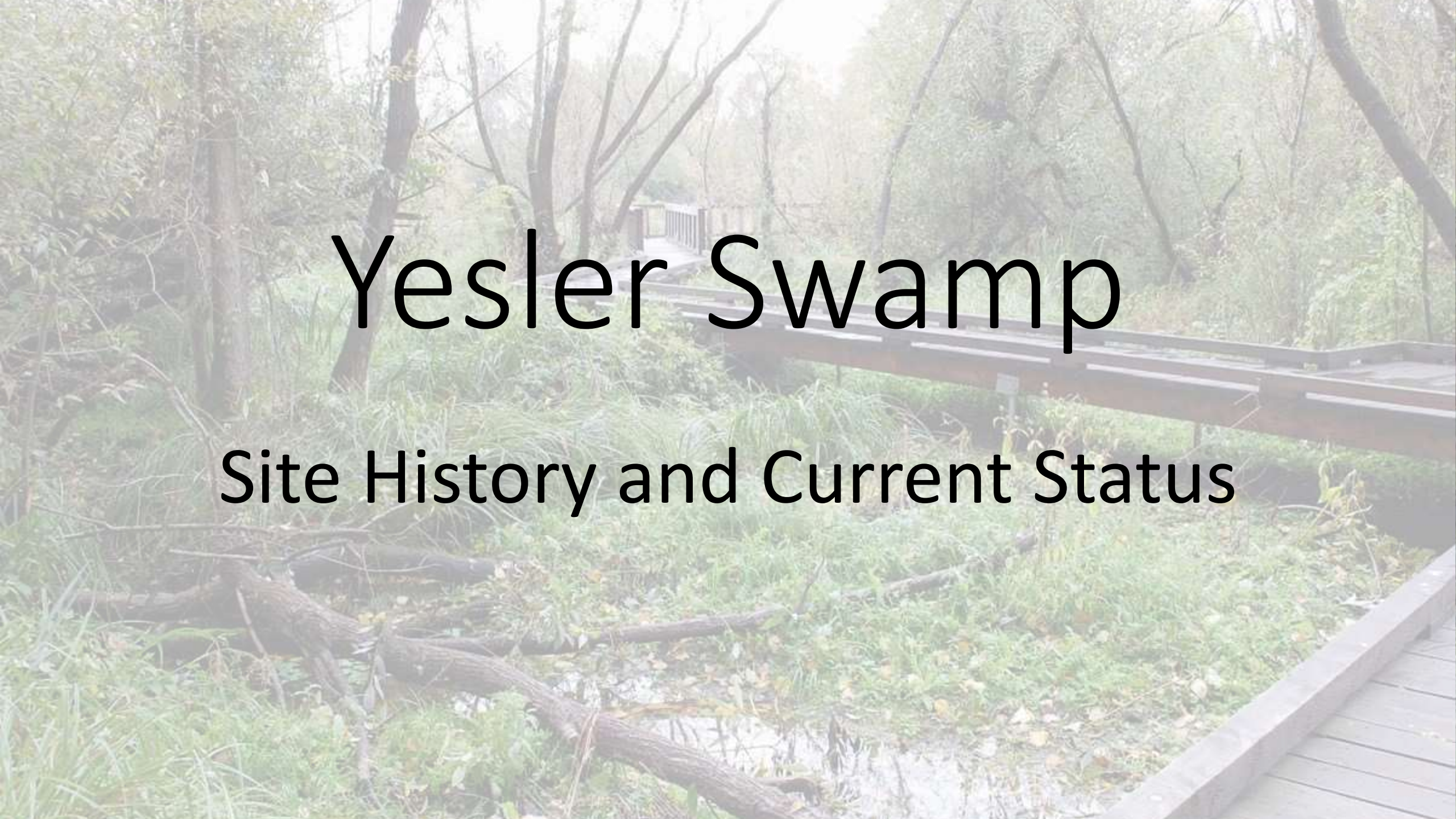
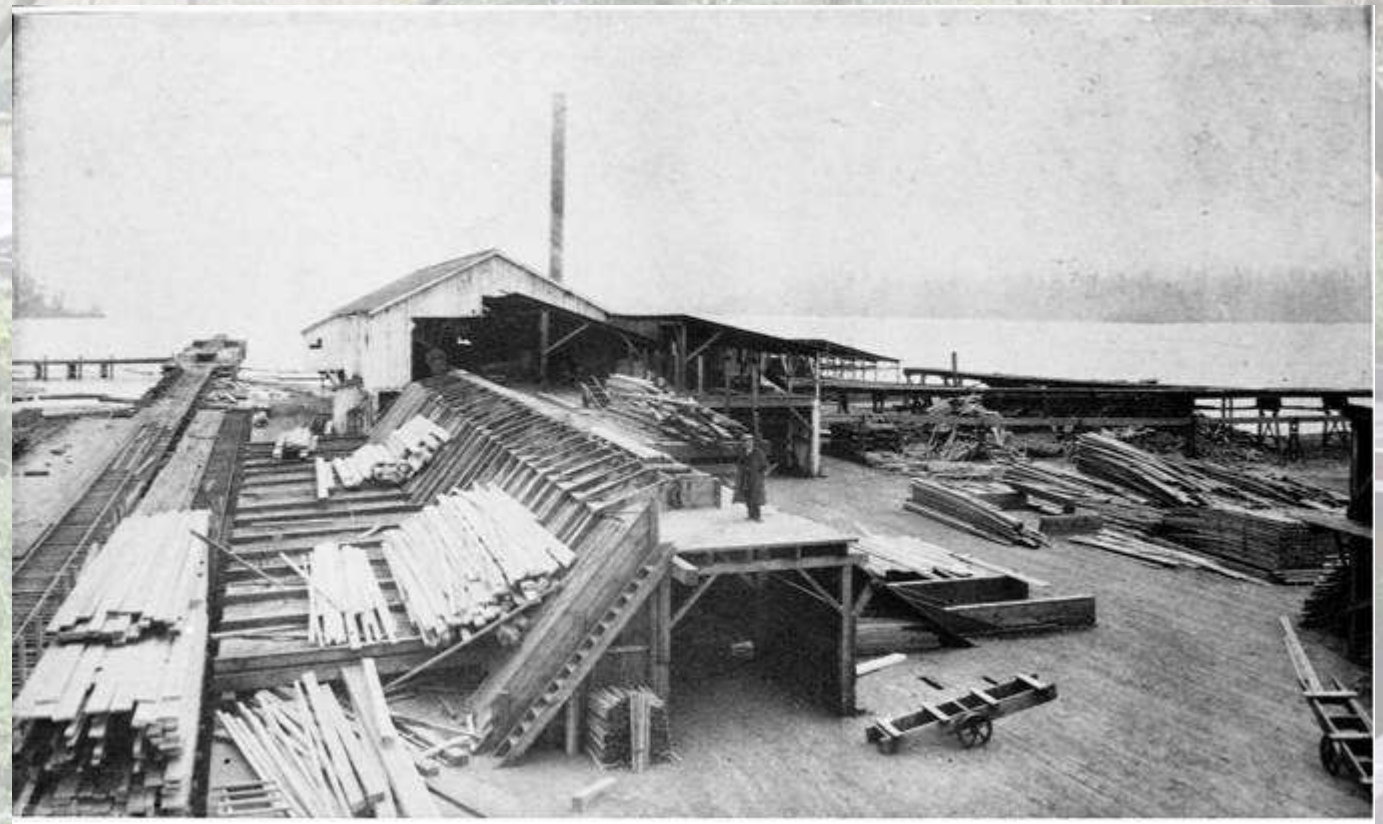


Yesler Swamp

Site History and Current Status

Site History

- Site is 6.4 acres
- Site was underwater
- Duwamish tribe used the area extensively
- 1888 Henry Yesler built a lumber mill on the site



The Union Bay Lumber Mill photo from Paul Dorpat

Site History

- In 1916 the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks opened and the lake level dropped 9 feet exposing Yesler Swamp

"Cutting away the coffer dam at the Montlake Cut," University of Washington, Special Collections

Site History

- In the early 1920s the mill burnt down
- The University of Washington bought the property in 1927
- The bay was dredged in the 1930s

Property of Special Collections, University of Washington Libraries.

Site History

- Victory gardens planted in the 1940s

Photo from Kern Ewing

Site History

- Yesler was fairly unmanaged until Professor Kern Ewing arrived at the University in the 1980s
- He and a graduate student live-staked hundreds of willows

Photo from https://yeslerswamp.weebly.com

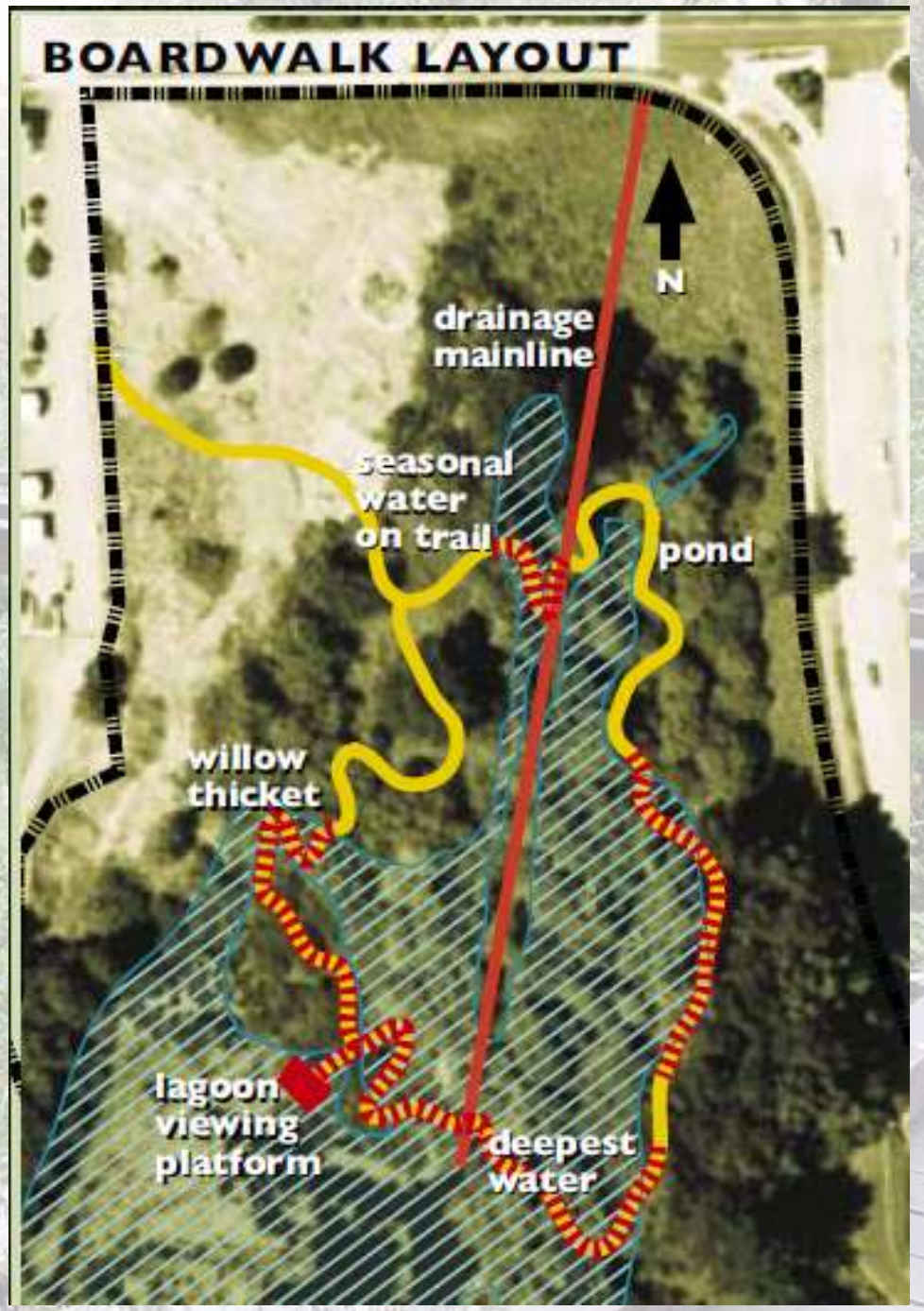
Site History

- Student groups began restoration projects in the swamp beginning in 2000
- Professor Ewing suggested the idea of a raised boardwalk for the site
- In 2010 Friends of Yelser Swamp formed

Photo from https://yeslerswamp.weebly.com

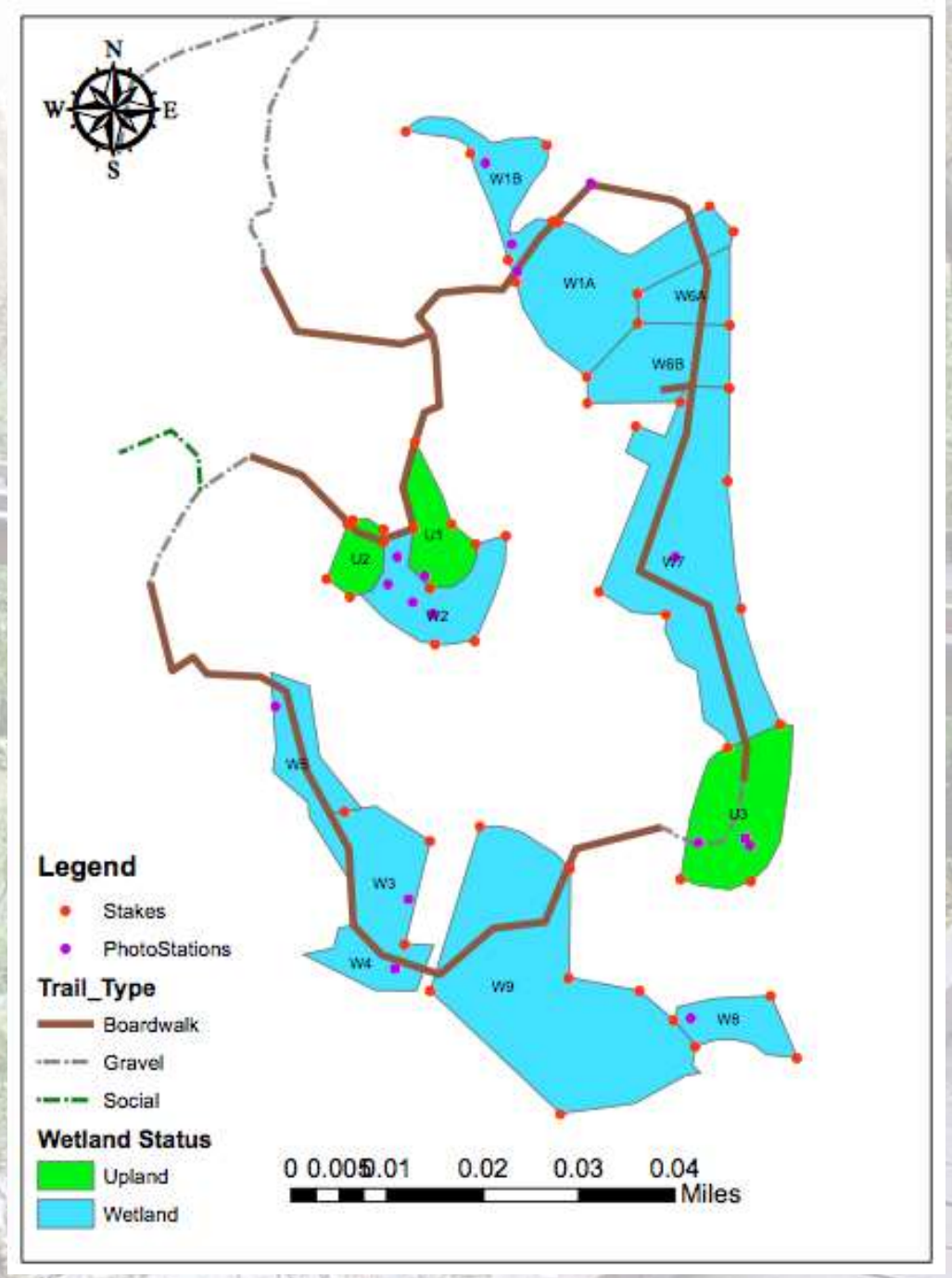
Site History

- The board walk opened in October of 2016
- Because construction of the boardwalk impacted wetlands, the University had to perform mitigation



Site History

- 12 mitigation units were delineated for restoration, 9 wetland units and 3 upland units
- Each unit has specific performance standards to meet each year for 5 years



Current Status

- The first units were restored in 2013 and just completed their fifth year monitoring
- The last units were restored in 2017 and will complete monitoring in 2022

Mitigation Unit	As-Built	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5
W1A	F 13	F 14	F 15	F 16	F 17	F 18
W1B	F 16	F 17	F 18	F 19	F 20	F 21
W2	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20
W3	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20
W4	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20
W5	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20
W6A	F 13	F 14	F 15	F 16	F 17	F 18
W6B	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20	S 21	S 22
W7	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20	S 21	S 22
W8	F 16	F 17	F 18	F 19	F 20	F 21
W9	F 16	F 17	F 18	F 19	F 20	F 21
U1	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20
U2	S 15	S 16	S 17	S 18	S 19	S 20
U3	F 16	F 17	F 18	F 19	F 20	F 21

Current Status

- Performance standards are different for each unit and for each year of monitoring
- These differences are based on the ecosystem category of each unit

Fall 2018 Monitoring for Wetland Unit 1A Year 5

W1A:

- **1-1B** 35-45% native woody plant cover
- **1-1D** at least six native woody species with no species representing >50% cover
- **2-1A** less than 15% invasive cover
- **2-2B** Reed canarygrass shall not be >50% (see appendix A of Mitigation Report)

Current Status: Challenges

- No funding for monitoring
- High turnover of students working on the project
- Reverse hydrology of Lake Washington
- Beavers
- Reed canarygrass
- Boardwalk is slick when wet

Current Status

- The self guided tour will highlight some challenges and successes of the project
- Feel free to ask questions