



Department of
Environmental
Conservation



2024 Pilot Project - CSLAP in Environmental Justice Areas and Disadvantaged CommunitiesCommunities

Presenting: Charles Stoll | Alene Onion

NYSFOLA, 2024

Objectives

The presentation today aims to:

- Summarize historic NYSDEC monitoring practices
- Summarize the general relative condition
- Highlight the CSLAP PEJA/DAC 2024 pilot

Introduction

Potential Environmental Justice Areas (PEJAs) and Disadvantaged Communities (DAC) in NYS.

- Agency Priority
- Management Directive
- Understanding Historical Efforts and General Condition

Potential Environmental Justice Areas (PEJAs)

U.S. Census block groups of 250 to 500 households that had populations that met or exceeded at least one of the following statistical thresholds:

1. At least **52.42% of the population in an urban area** reported themselves to be members of minority groups
2. At least **26.28% of the population in a rural area** reported themselves to be members of minority groups
3. At least **22.82% of the population** in an urban or rural area had household incomes below the federal poverty level

Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)

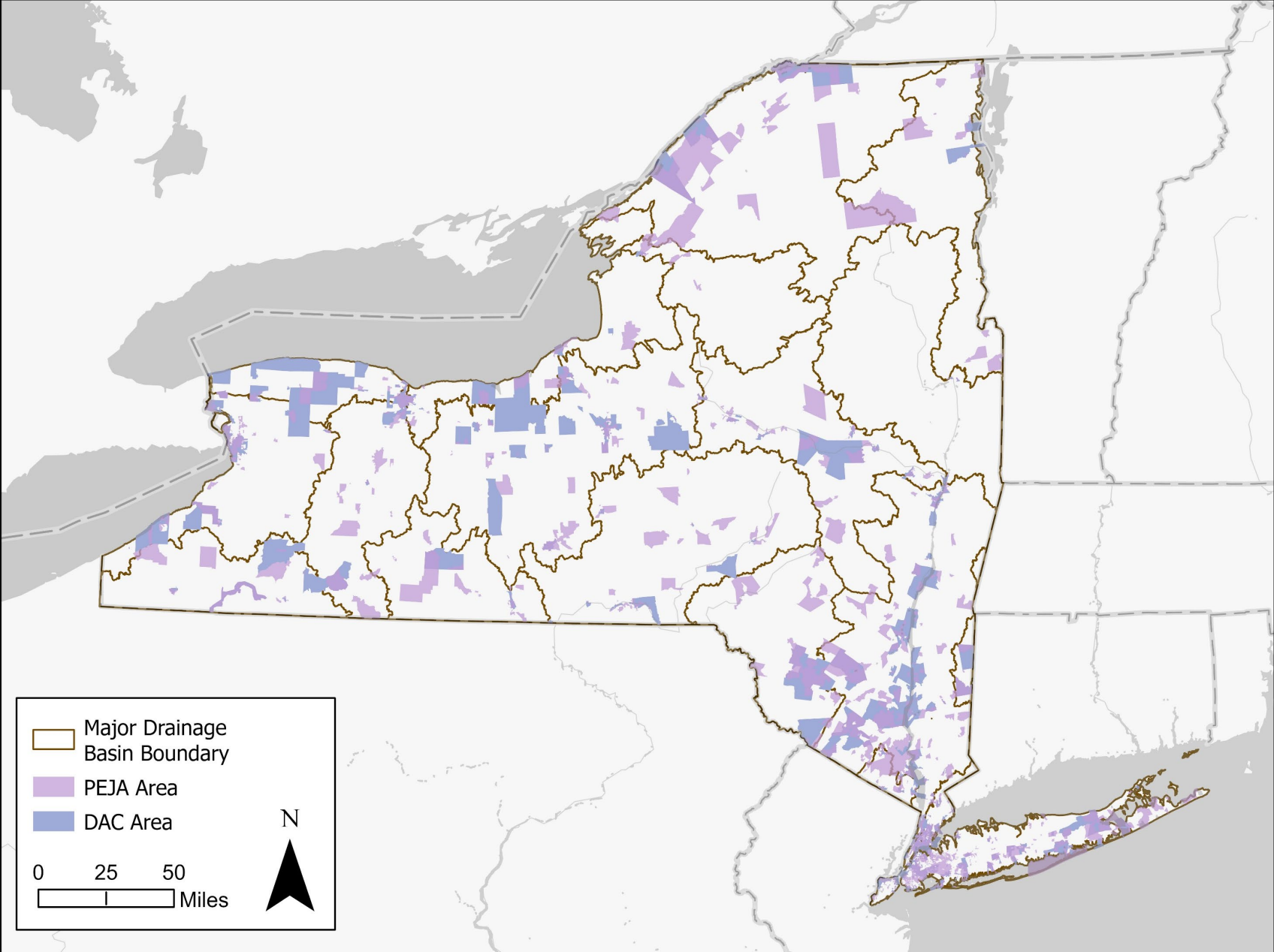
- 2019 Climate Act
- Mandated Allocation of Funds
- NYS Climate Justice Working Group (CJWG) Finalized DAC Criteria

Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)

DAC criteria consist of **45** separate indicators available statewide at the U.S. Census level. Broadly speaking, indicators include considerations such as:

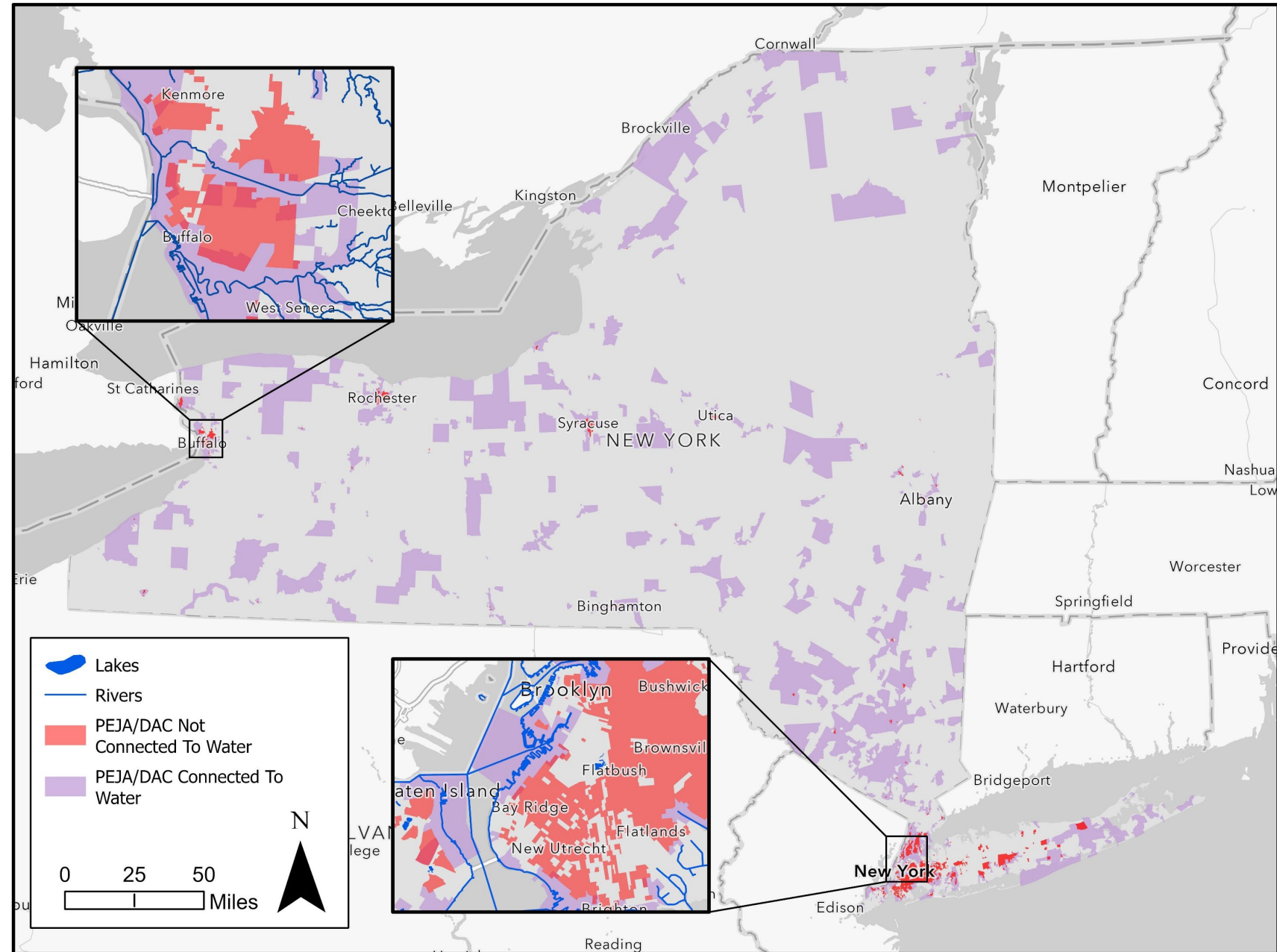
- Environmental burdens and climate change risks
- Sociodemographic factors, such as age, race, and income
- Health vulnerabilities

All indicators are combined and ranked into an overall score.



Selected Areas

- ~1/3 Connect to Water ~ 20% of NYS
- Excluded areas are mostly Urban and small



Historical Sampling

General Lake Sampling Statistics:

- DOW has sampled **~10%** of the total 6,204 lakes statewide.
- **~13%** of the 1,060 lakes situated within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a PEJA/DAC area in the last 10 years.
- **~10%** of the 5,144 lakes that are not within $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of a PEJA/DAC area.

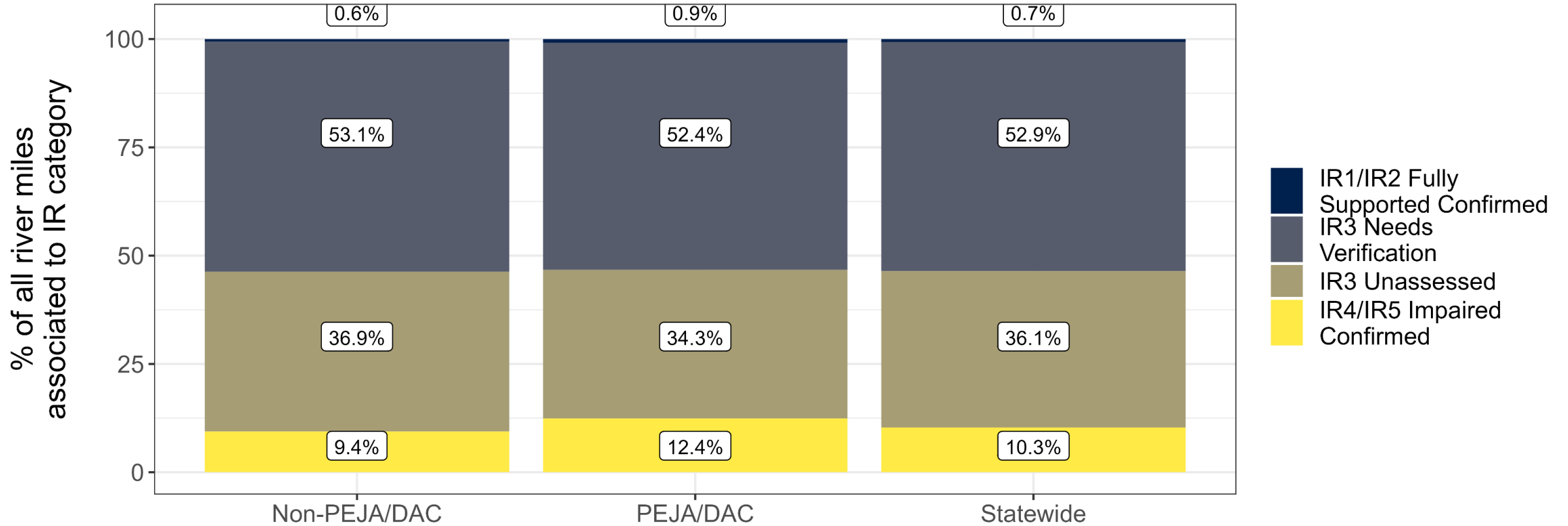
Historical Sampling

General Stream Sampling Statistics:

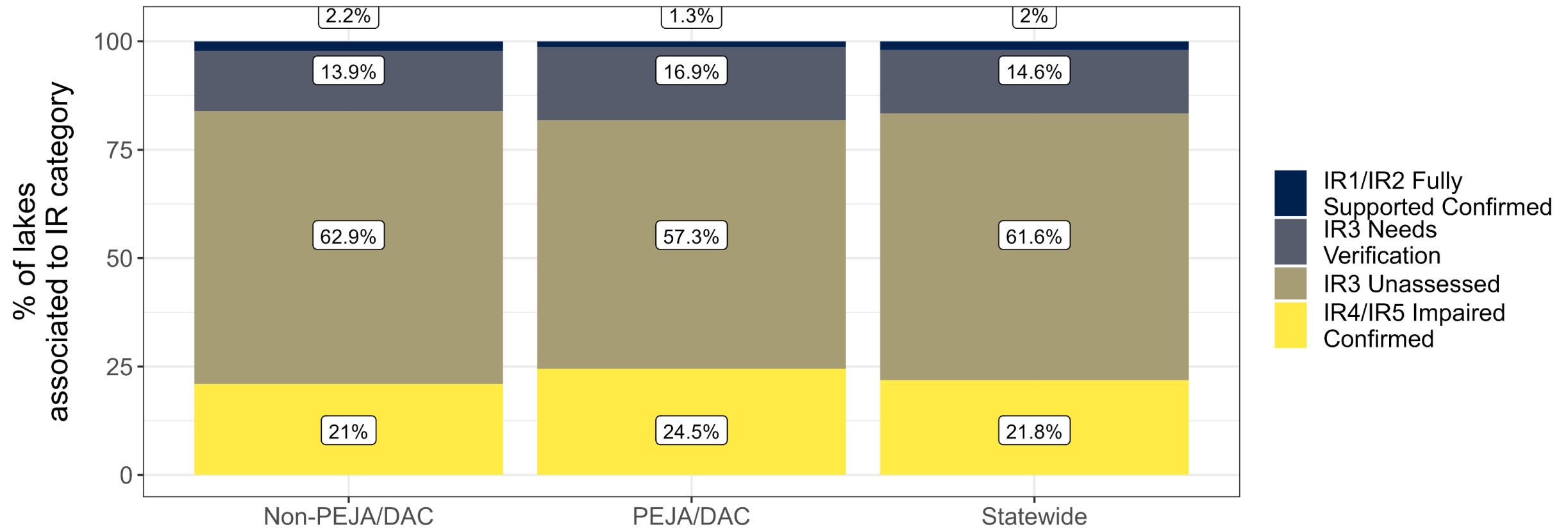
1. There were **1,947** stream sampling locations over the last 10 years.
2. **439** (~23%) of stream sampling locations were situated in PEJA/DAC areas.
3. **1,508** (77%) stream sampling locations were outside PEJA/DAC areas.



Relative Condition



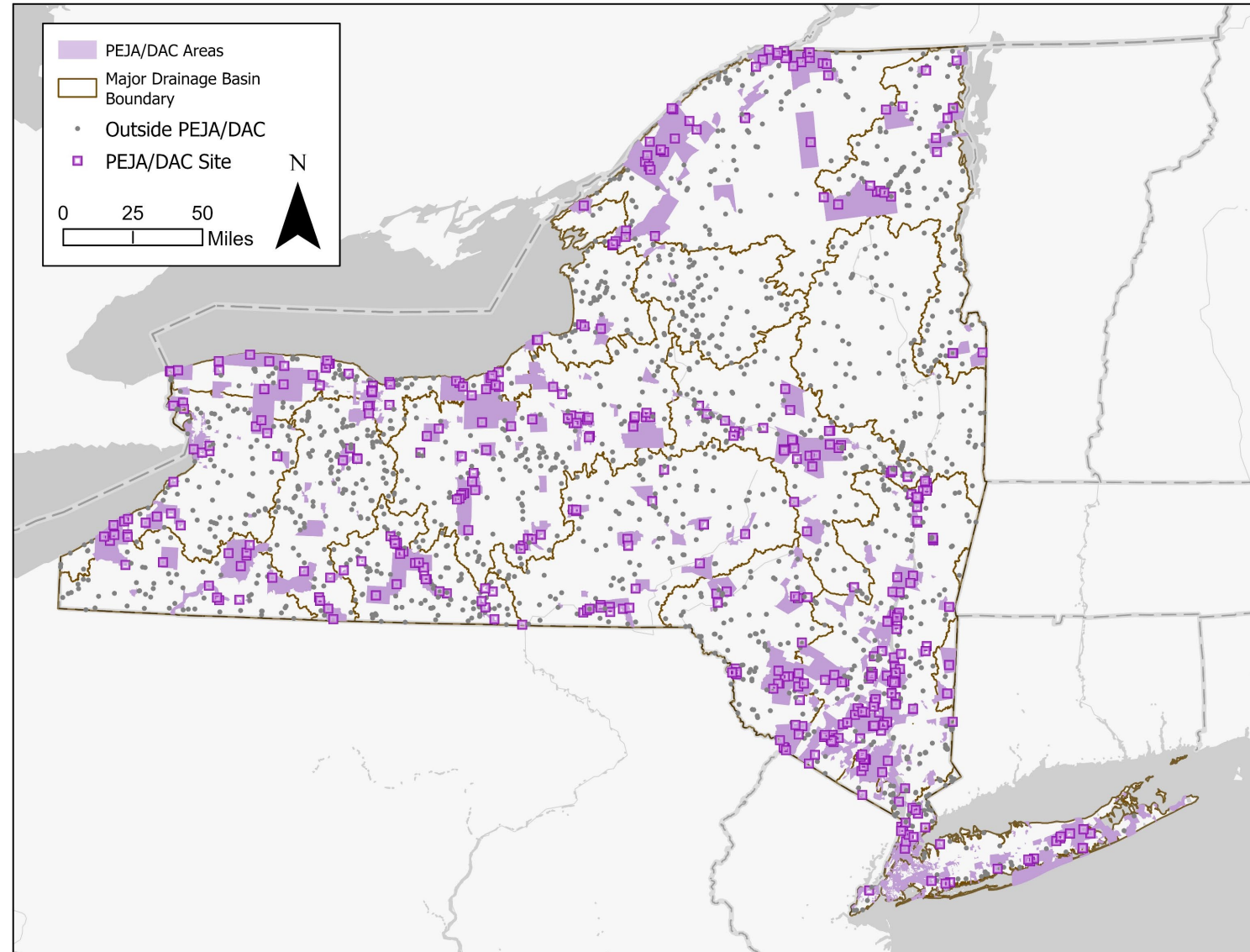
Relative Condition



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87% lakes within ¼ mile of PEJA/DAC areas never been sampled

26% are urban



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SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY ENTRY PROGRAM (STEP)



DEC RESEARCH PROJECTS WITH STEP STUDENTS

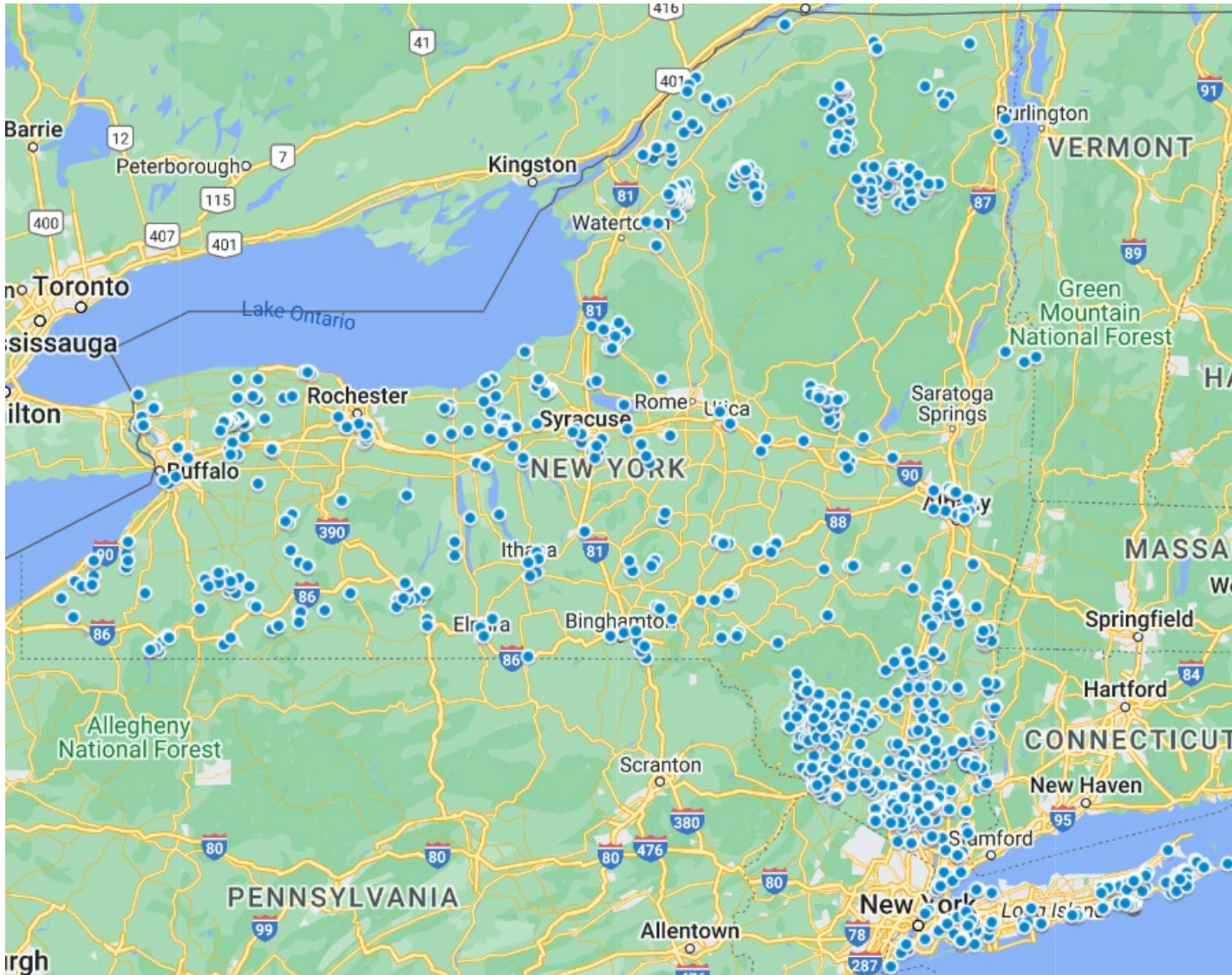
Students assist DEC staff with a specific research project during the STEP College Overview and Research Experience (CORE) summer session. It is a partnership with a shared goal of student success. Students get a hands-on research experience that helps them learn about problem solving and the importance of using science and technology to collect data that informs solutions. DEC staff get to demonstrate the value of civil service and environmental protection. Someday, STEP students may be inspired to join the DEC team.



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PEJA/DAC in your watershed



<https://tinyurl.com/jxnbxr2y>



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Conclusions

- Historical monitoring has sufficiently captured PEJA and DAC water quality condition
- General condition is similar between PEJA and DAC areas comparative to NY state as a whole
- Citizen-science based programs provide unique opportunities to engage with PEJA and DAC
- Please share your knowledge of and/or lived experience with disadvantaged communities in your watershed.



Questions?

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**Monitoring and Assessment
NYS DEC**



"Consider the sea's listless chime: Time's self it is, made audible"

-Dante Alighieri



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