

## 2016 Final Report for Door County Invasive Species

Grant- AEPP48916

Submitted by the Door County Soil and Water Conservation Department



Photos: The DCIST Coordinator works with private landowners, the O'Connells (right), to share management techniques of non-native Phragmites on their property (left) and neighbors' properties around Little Lake on Washington Island.

### 1. DCIST steering committee meetings.

The DCIST organized and held eight meetings with the members of the steering committee during 2016. At the April meeting, the DCIST coordinator invited Jason Granberg from the Wisconsin DNR to speak on invasive species modeling and prioritization happening at the statewide level. In early August, the coordinator also brought together a portion of the steering committee to meet with TNC's summer intern and learn about the newly compiled invasive species database.

For each meeting, the coordinator drafted an agenda based on suggested topics that also included pertinent coordinator updates and new topics (e.g. starry stonewort). In 2016, DCIST partner participation appeared to increase as the year went on. We are now including Annie Deutsch from the UW-Extension, Reena Bowman from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Paul Schumacher from the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council/Clark Lake as a frequent meeting participant. WDNR participation remains low, but State Natural Areas crew lead Justin Nooker has been a more active participant than in the past either attending meetings or communicating information beforehand that can be shared at the meeting.



Photos: Volunteers of the Clark Lake Association remove dead Phragmites stems from a successful 2015 treatment.

## **2. Public educational meetings.**

Aquatic invasive educational efforts were the focus throughout the County in 2016 with targeted public meetings and attendance at various Town or City meetings. Invitations to DCIST-organized meetings offered to applicable, priority groups that included community organizations, property owners' associations, lake associations, private landowners, businesses, and municipalities to build on community involvement in invasive management. In many instances this year, DCIST was invited to speak to other natural resources professionals about the emerging municipality and landowner model to maintain Phragmites work into the future. The following educational presentations for public and/or professionals were conducted in 2016:

- **February 25<sup>th</sup> – Wisconsin Wetlands Conference – Phragmites Working Group Meeting**  
DCIST gave a presentation on the ongoing municipality work to other natural resource professionals during the Phragmites Working Group within the Wisconsin Wetlands Association Conference.
- **May 5<sup>th</sup> – Naseawupee Phragmites Town Hall Meeting**  
DCIST and SWCD held an informational meeting on 2016 Phragmites efforts, awareness of the ordinance and what landowners can do on their own property for Phragmites management. The meeting was offered to shoreline landowners in Naseawupee via mailing sent out by SWCD and was posted in the local paper.
- **May 21<sup>st</sup> – Aquatic Invaders in Door County – Blessing of the Fleet in Bailey's Harbor**  
The DCIST coordinator gave a presentation at the Bailey's Harbor Town Hall as part of the Blessing of the Fleet Festival. The presentation focused on aquatic invasive species in Wisconsin and the Great Lakes and steps that the average citizen can take to stop their spread.
- **May 26<sup>th</sup> – Sturgeon Bay Phragmites Town Hall**  
The town hall was an Informational meeting on Phragmites efforts and ordinances, and what landowners can do on their own property. This meeting was offered to those included in the Sturgeon Bay mailing sent out by SWCD. Meeting last approximately 1-hour and included a 30-

minute presentation by the DCIST coordinator, as well as Q&A time. Five landowners attended this meeting.

- **May 27<sup>nd</sup> – Festival of Nature “Protecting Door County’s Coastal Wetlands from Invasives”**  
 The DCIST coordinator led an invasive species focused hike at the North Bay-Mud Lake State Natural Area as part of the Door County Festival of Nature. The hike discussed Door County’s aquatic and wetland invasive species, how to identify and manage them, how they affect our unique ecosystems, and how they move from one location to the next.
- **May 29<sup>th</sup> – Festival of Nature - My Healthy Wetlands Hike at Koeppsl Property near Sister Bay**  
 The DCIST coordinator led discussions on the hike focused around reed canary grass and other wetland invasives present on the property. Highlighting during the hike how to best prioritize across the landscape when it comes to invasive species management. Landowners on the hike were also informed about what DCIST does countywide to protect these unique wetland habitats.
- **June 1<sup>st</sup> – City of Sturgeon Bay Phragmites Town Hall**  
 The town hall was an Informational meeting on Phragmites efforts and ordinances, coordinated by SWCD and DCIST, and what landowners can do with invasives on their own property. The meeting was offered to the City of Sturgeon Bay landowners whose property is adjacent to shorelines that was a mailing sent out by SWCD. One of the attendees was Laddie Chapman, who filmed the presentation which can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s8xBpCvJ56A>.
- **June 9<sup>th</sup> – Wisconsin Invasive Species Council Meeting at Horicon Marsh**  
 Krista Lutzke and Kari Hagenow jointly presented on the work of DCIST in managing Phragmites in Door County and the model for maintaining this work into the future. This presentation was given to Invasive Species Council members and members of the public in attendance at the council’s meeting. These interactions are important to draw broader support in Wisconsin for our efforts and some of the unique challenges faced by Door County in dealing with aquatic invasive species.
- **October 1<sup>st</sup> – Bay Shore Property Owners Annual Meeting**  
 The Coordinator provided materials and information to Bay Shore Property Owners for a display at their annual meeting. Materials included live plant samples with respective factsheets, Phragmites landowner handout, donation and volunteer hour forms, and more. DCIST also had available our brochures and an informational display on what DCIST is.
- **October 13<sup>th</sup> – Starry Stonewort Information Meeting at Crossroads at Big Creek**  
 DCIST hosted Michelle Nault from the Wisconsin DNR for a 1-hour information presentation on Starry Stonewort, a newly discovered invasive macro-algae, found in the Sturgeon Bay Ship Canal. Michelle provided updates on how to identify this invader, where it’s found, what the next steps are, and what this could mean for the water resources in this area. Six landowners attended this presentation.
- **October 18<sup>th</sup> – Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference**  
 The DCIST coordinator was asked by Conference planners to facilitate a session on Cooperative Weed Management Areas during the 2016 conference held in LaCrosse, Wisconsin. As part of



the session, the DCIST coordinator and Krista Lutzke also presented on DCIST's history, trajectory, and emerging municipality and landowner model for maintaining Phragmites work into the future. Numerous natural resources professionals from around the Midwest attended this session, and more than 650 professionals and practitioners attended the conference as a whole.

- **October 20<sup>th</sup> – Lake Michigan Stakeholders Fall Member Meeting at The Ridges Sanctuary**  
Presentation to offered members of the public and natural resources professionals as part of the Lake Michigan Stakeholders Fall Member Meeting. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting. The DCIST Coordinator presented with Krista Lutzke on Phragmites outreach efforts and what landowners can do to help continue those efforts.
- **October 24<sup>th</sup> – Green Bay Phragmites Advisory Council at WDNR Offices in Green Bay**  
The DCIST Coordinator and Krista Lutzke presented jointly at the meeting of the Green Bay Phragmites Advisory Council. This presentation provided an update to members of the council on the work that DCIST had done in 2016 in terms of both control and outreach with private landowners and municipalities. DCIST continues to participate in this council in order keep informed on Phragmites work happening in adjacent counties and to look for potential areas where DCIST could collaborate with other groups working toward similar goals.



Photos: Participants in the My Healthy Wetlands Festival of Nature Hike at the Koeppsl wetland learn about how to identify reed canary grass from other wetland sedges and grasses (left). The DCIST coordinator captures pictures during the hike for future use to show key traits of invasive plants - like a long, membranous ligule of reed canary grass (right).

### 3. Website management.

The DCIST coordinator maintained the DCIST website by updating materials and links in early 2016. Krista Lutzke and Kari Hagenow worked together to look at the current software that is being used host the webpage and the feasibility of updating the entire website with a new layout and look using this technology. The coordinator believes that the staff time it would take to use the current software and do an overall update of the website (to make it more user-friendly and aesthetically appealing) would be

too great to do at this time and may not be worth the effort. The current outdated software also imposes a learning curve on website editors that is not present in newer software.

To address this, the coordinator and TNC staff explored other options for website hosting, where DCIST could purchase a domain name (e.g. [www.doorinvasives.org](http://www.doorinvasives.org)), which may be more intuitive than our current domain, and pay to have the website hosted by an outside entity. In return, DCIST would have more options available to them for website layout and simplified editing. This website would also have the ability to be more interactive – i.e. calendar, map, control table, etc.

#### **4. Compile/create and distribute informational factsheets.**

During the public meetings, landowner visits, events, and workdays described in this report the coordinator made available brochures and informational factsheets. At a minimum, the coordinator provided the Door County Invasive Species brochure that describes what invasive plants are, why property owners should care, information on the equipment loan program, and who/what DCIST is, as well as the “Keep a Lookout for Invasive Plants in Door County” brochure that pictures our top 15 invaders. Additionally, Volunteer log sheets were also made available in most instances.

The DCIST newsletter that was shared with 800+ local and regional people on our mailing list. The newsletter shared information not only about our volunteer opportunities, but also about local events and actions, statewide invasive species happenings, and relevant activities at a regional scale with the ultimate goal of generating further interest in the natural environment and invasive species management. In 2016, the Door Property Owners also began featuring the DCIST newsletter on their own website

The coordinator also generated a number of factsheets to provide to private landowners, community organizations and other stakeholders. An example of one of the outreach material developed includes a two-sided informational Phragmites handout created for landowners. The SWCD, DCIST coordinator, and partners in 2016 used this handout widely. This handout is provided below. In addition, a letter went out to a number of Door County Towns in regards to a one on one opportunity for Phragmites outreach and management. Upon these visits landowners requested identification of other species on or adjacent to their property.



DCIST\_PhragmitesHandout.pdf

The coordinator also participated in a number of other media opportunities to spread the word about the work of DCIST and provide more information to landowners. In June 2016, an article written by the coordinator titled “Preventing the Introduction and Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species” was included in the Kangaroo Lake Association newsletter. The newsletter for the Invasive Plant Association of Wisconsin featured DCIST in their CISMA spotlight

(<http://ipaw.org/portals/ipaw/documents/newsletters/Newsletter%2050.pdf?ver=2016-11-14-120022-100>). The most recent newsletter of the Bay Shore Property Owners Association (Fall 2016) included an

article from the coordinator titled “Bringing Citizen Science to Your Own Backyard” focused on why inventorying your own property for invasive species is important.

As the coordinator for DCIST, I was also featured in a Q&A with The Nature Conservancy that was featured on TNC’s website and Facebook page

(<http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/wisconsin/explore/team-battles-invasive-species-in-door-county.xml>).

Other media opportunities arose with WDOR, the Peninsula Pulse (<https://doorcountypulse.com/starry-stonewort-found-off-sturgeon-bay/>), and Fox 11

(<http://fox11online.com/news/local/lakeshore/invasive-species-found-in-door-county>) to educate about

starry stonewort, Door County’s newest aquatic invasive species in 2016. DCIST also created display materials, using Forest Service money, (a large freestanding banner) which was and will be used at events throughout the County.



Photos: Impressive and extensive Phragmites rhizome mats observed by the DCIST coordinator and Krista Lutzke during a site visit in the Town of Nasewaupée. Smaller mats were observed on other Lake Michigan properties and highlight the need for continued education.

##### **5. Advise the public on the County’s Early Detection and Rapid Response Plan for aquatic species that may materialize in Door County.**

The Coordinator provided DCIST partners and landowners groups with new handouts on early detection species that were developed in 2015 as part of the plan. The coordinator also worked to inform the public about reporting of early detection species (or any invasive species occurrences) and during trainings and volunteer workdays. The Coordinator instructed participants on the use of the Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN) app for reporting identified species. The coordinator also met with Kelly Kearns and other DCIST non-profit partners at the Ridges Sanctuary to find out about new occurrences of early detection species in and near Door County, and to become more versed on their identification. Through this, and discussions with partners, it has become apparent that DCIST needs to do as much work providing opportunities for natural resource professionals to become familiar with early detection species as they do the public. If able, the coordinator hopes to focus more on both of these objectives in 2017 with the completion of the broader DCIST Comprehensive Plan.

## **6. Draft a new countywide strategic plan for invasive species control work.**

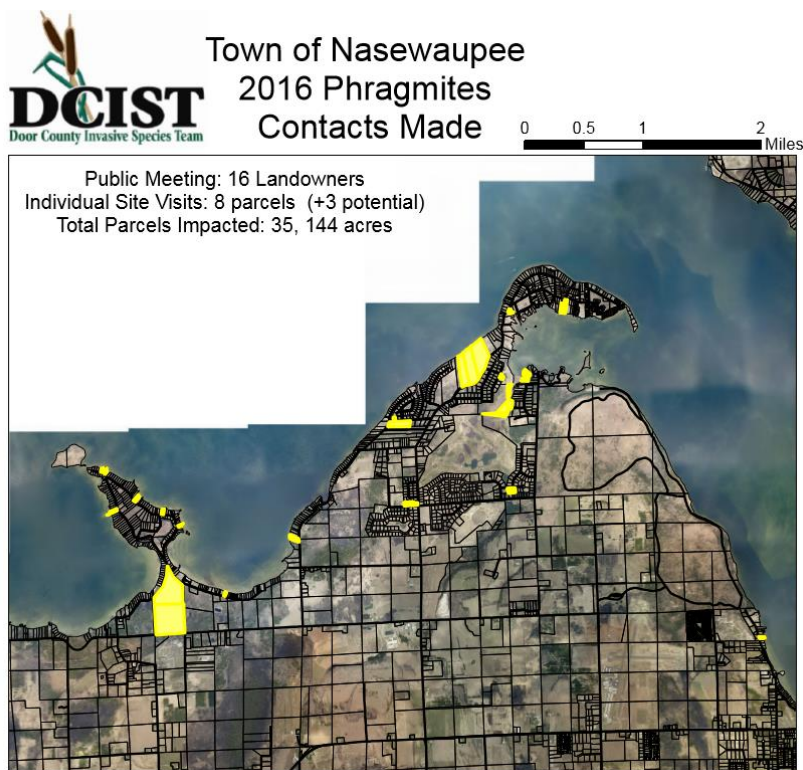
The original strategic plan for the Door County Invasive Species Team was written in 2005 and hasn't been updated since completed. In 2016, the coordinator focused time on generating a more comprehensive, updated invasive species plan for the Door Peninsula and the Door County Invasive Species Team. The need for a larger and more comprehensive plan was identified through TNC's development of a Conservation Action Plan for the Peninsula with partners. Currently, this plan is in a draft format and will be finalized as time and remaining DCIST funding allows. The plan identifies priorities, strategic goals, and tasks in the following: organizational structure and planning, membership and development, mapping and prioritization, early detection and rapid response, established population control and management, education and outreach. The plan captures goals and strategies for aquatic invasive species. The larger plan will need to be vetted by the steering committee, which will occur in early 2017.

Additionally, The Nature Conservancy did extensive work this summer in achieving the already identified task of compiling invasive species data for the County. A summer intern through TNC contributed nearly one-month of time to management of DCIST's historical and current invasive species inventories, ultimately creating a more user-friendly GIS database that can be shared easily with internal and external partners. This database is a first step in getting a better grasp on invasive species distributions in Door County and prioritizing our efforts where they are needed most.

## **7. Inventory and individual landowner outreach**

As previously noted, the DCIST coordinator helped to first draft materials for this effort, including a two-sided flyer geared for landowners, updating of contractor list, and a letter that was mailed to landowners in the selected towns by the SWCD more than one week in advance. The coordinator worked with Krista Lutzke to plan inventory dates and public meetings for each of the following: Town of Sevastopol, Town of Sturgeon bay, City of Sturgeon Bay, and the Town of Nasewaupée. All municipalities, totaling 56.5 miles of shoreline (24 in Nasewaupée, 10 in City of Sturgeon Bay, 8.5 in Town of Sturgeon Bay, and 14 in Sevastopol) were inventoried via walking, driving, or canoe by either the DCIST coordinator or SWCD staff and/or LTE's. Through this effort, 38 landowners were directly engaged and their names and contact information have been provided to the Soil and Water Conservation Department in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Those contacts were then shared with respective municipalities as individuals that are willing to assist with the implementation of an ordinance. Data collected as part of this effort is saved as GIS shapefiles with separate databases for both inventory and contacts made (e.g. shown on following page) that will also be provided to the Soil and Water Conservation Department at the end of the contract period.





**8. Obtain volunteer hours related to aquatic invasive species control.**

Aquatic invasive species volunteer hours in Door County totaled 219 hours for work done. Common aquatic species activities included Eurasian Water Milfoil mapping and control at Kangaroo Lake and Phragmites mapping and control.

**9. Work cooperatively with DCIST Limited Term Employee (LTE)**

The coordinator presented a one-hour Clean Boats, Clean Waters training for two SWCD LTE's, which conducted 200 hours of CBCW activities at boat launches, and informed sea grant and others about their whereabouts while doing CBCW activities (to avoid overlap at launches). The coordinator compiled new Clean Boats, Clean Waters handbooks and materials for the LTE's and staff as needed.

In 2016, the DCIST Coordinator organized Door County's participation in two statewide AIS watercraft inspection events, the "Drain Campaign" weekend June 10-12 and the "Landing Blitz" weekend of July 1-4th. The DCIST Coordinator and the SWCD arranged for the delivery of AIS ice packs (provided by the Wisconsin DNR) that were handed out to boaters during both events. Both of the Door County SWCD's LTEs participated in the Drain Campaign and the Landing Blitz weekend. In Door County, a total of 39 boats were inspected and 59 persons contacted with AIS prevention messages during Landing Blitz weekend (16 hours of effort), down from last year's numbers in part because TNC did not have the ability to contribute with hours at the launches during the effort this year.



While the Soil and Water Department coordinated much of the countywide efforts and planning for *Phragmites australis* (e.g. sending out letters and contractor hiring), the coordinator supported these efforts through public education, landowner follow-up, and mapping efforts. The coordinator continued to support on-the-ground efforts of the Jacksonport Neighborhood Association, Clark Lake Association, and volunteers on Detroit and Washington Islands. During the final months of the contract period, the coordinator is also working to inventory priority areas going into 2017 for Phragmites, including Liberty Grove.



Photos: Phragmites inventory efforts conducted by the DCIST Coordinator and other TNC staff in the Town of Liberty Grove (left) and with SWCD staff in the Town of Nasewaupsee (right).

#### **Additional activities:**

When applicable, these activities, as well as the public meetings previously described, were used as opportunities to distribute information on identification, monitoring, and control techniques for aquatic invasive species relevant to Door County.

- March 29<sup>th</sup> – DSA workday
- April 20-21<sup>st</sup> – Spring AIS Coordinators & CISMA meetings at Mead State Wildlife Area
- May 5-6<sup>th</sup> – Nasewaupsee Inventory and Outreach
- May 25-26<sup>th</sup> – Town of Sturgeon Bay Phragmites inventory
- June 10-12<sup>th</sup> – WDNR Landing Blitz
- June 29<sup>th</sup> – Attended Sturgeon Bay Town Board Meeting with Krista Lutzke
- June 30<sup>th</sup> – City of Sturgeon Bay Phragmites inventory
- July 1<sup>st</sup> – Jacksonport Phragmites inventory training workshop
- July 26<sup>th</sup> – AIS/Wetland invasive species inventory on Kangaroo Lake and surrounding wetlands
- July 27<sup>th</sup> – City of Sturgeon Bay Council Meeting – Ordinance passed
- August 9<sup>th</sup> – Detroit Island Phragmites outreach and inventory with volunteers
- August 23<sup>rd</sup> – Phragmites treatments on State Highway 57 and County Highway Department
- September 14<sup>th</sup> – Meeting with Gibraltar Parks & Lands representative
- September 15<sup>th</sup> – Phragmites volunteer workday – private property in Sevastopol

- September 24<sup>th</sup> – Clark Lake Phragmites Fest volunteer workday
- September 30<sup>th</sup> – Clark Lake Association volunteer Phragmites workday (private properties)
- October 4<sup>th</sup> – Washington Island (Little Lake) Phragmites volunteer workday (private properties)
- October 6<sup>th</sup> – Detroit Island Phragmites volunteer workday
- November 3<sup>rd</sup> – DCIST and WDNR Parks Meeting to inform the parks of DCIST and invite them to be partners/members.
- November 29<sup>th</sup> – Meeting with members of Bay Shore Property Owners board to explore options for working together to achieve invasive species goals on Bay Shore Drive.
- On-going advertising of our public meetings and volunteer opportunities in the Peninsula Pulse, Door County Daily News, and periodically via other media outlets.

The coordinator also participated in the spring, fall AIS Coordinator's meetings, and submitted public comment with the SWCD on proposed changes to the WDNR Surface Water Grant Program.

**Metrics partially met or not met due to reduced funding:**

The Door County Invasive Species Team planned to conduct signage inventory using inventory data sheets, however we were not able to do more than one as the CBCW staff were only at three launches in 2016. One Clean Boats Clean Water workshop was offered as part of the new hire on boarding at Sawyer Harbor. Additionally, the DCIST Coordinator was going to participate in the Bait Dealer Initiative as well as the Bridge Snapshot Day, but again was unable to participate due to time constraints with volunteer management and reduced funding. Tool kits for lake monitoring were planned and the decision was made of what to include in the kits, but elements were not purchased due to limited resources.