



Douglas County
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“Douglas County Butterfly Dock EDRR Project” Brief Field Report and 2022 Final Report for AIRR27021



Douglas County and NCWMA staff assessing the infestation prior to control in 2021. Photo credit: Zach Stewart.

A small patch of *Petasites hybridus* (Butterfly Dock) was identified on private land in the City of Superior. To complete the deliverables of this EDRR grant (AIRR27021) the Douglas County Natural Resources Specialist / AIS Coordinator worked closely with partners at NCWMA and the landowner, who granted permission to control the plant. Main project goals were to collect additional samples of the plant and complete verification, control the existing patch, and conduct targeted monitoring and surveillance of surrounding habitat to investigate whether the plant has escaped cultivation or established populations nearby. All project goals were completed successfully prior to 12/31/2022.

Douglas County staff completed sampling and verification of the ID with Dr. Robert Freckmann of the UW Superior Herbarium, confirming the identity as *Petasites hybridus* or Butterfly Dock. With verification complete, NCWMA was able to make an in-kind donation of time and equipment to conduct chemical

treatment of the infestation by foliar treatment using Milestone August 16, 2021. This first round of treatment resulted in partial control of the infestation, but plants in roughly 50% of the treatment area were observed by Douglas County staff to be resprouting during spring of 2022. NCWMA conducted a second round of foliar treatment during 2022, resulting in effective control across the site. 2022 retreatment was originally scheduled for August 4, 2022,



but had to be rescheduled for August 10, 2022 due to unsafe weather conditions on the 4th. Post treatment checks of the site were conducted by the landowner as well as Douglas County staff, and results appeared to show thorough control of all *P. hybridus* plants at the site.

The *Petasites Hybridus* observed in the city of Superior is the first known instance of this NR40 prohibited Aquatic Invasive Species in Douglas County. Activity 1. a. of this project succeeded in swiftly controlling the population before it could have the opportunity to spread into nearby wetlands or adjacent properties. Targeted surveillance and monitoring of nearby habitat on private lands as well as along Bluff Creek and Bear Creek drainages was conducted under Activity 1. b. and confirmed that the plant has not escaped into the surrounding landscape. No *P. hybridus* individuals were observed during targeted monitoring, so no maps of infestations or control plans for further populations are needed at this time. It is possible that the changing climate conditions and pathway for invasion that allowed this known patch to establish in Superior may enabled other patches to establish in suitable areas nearby in the future, so continued monitoring is recommended for the area.



Pioneering population of NR40 prohibited *P. hybridus* was controlled at this site in Superior, WI as described in Activity 1. a., and adjacent Bear Creek and Bluff Creek were monitored for additional populations as described in Activity 1. b. No additional populations were discovered outside the original infestation targeted for control.