

# The Manitoulin Phragmites Project Results of 2021 Work

compiled by Judith Jones, Project Coordinator, October 2021



Manitoulin Phragmites Project team members Sheila Madahbee K, Nathan Madahbee and Joel Trudeau cutting Phragmites on the west side of South Bay by hand (not brush cutting) to retain native bulrushes.

**Phragmites** (say “frag-MITE-eeze”) is a very tall, invasive grass that has been spreading aggressively on shorelines and in wetlands in our area. Phragmites can quickly grow into dense patches that eventually wipe out all other vegetation. It is a serious threat to property values, recreation, tourism, wildlife and fish habitat, and aesthetics. Southern Ontario has lost hectares and hectares of natural habitat to this highly invasive species. **The Manitoulin Phragmites Project** was started to make sure that does not happen in the Manitoulin region!

**Our Goal:** To reduce Phragmites across our landscape to a low level that can be maintained by ordinary people with a little bit of annual effort. We have just finished our six year of work.

**What's up with Phragmites on Manitoulin?** This letter tells all about our work in 2021. A listing of all Manitoulin Phragmites sites and their control status begins on page 5.

**Heading towards our goal! Phragmites is under control or eradicated at 95 sites** (49 sites with species at risk (SAR) and 46 sites without SAR). In 2021 control and/or maintenance was done at 45 sites, including work (without us!) by partners and volunteers. We assessed new work areas for 2022 north of White's Point (NEMI), around Ned's Island (Burpee-Mills), in Hideaway Cove (Billings), east side of Julia Bay, and the south shore of Barrie Island (Gordon-Barrie Island).

**Major accomplishments:** The northern shore of **South Bay** (formerly 23 ha of Phragmites) is finally under control! This work has been in partnership with Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory and the Invasive Phragmites Control Centre. The entire shoreline of **Michael's Bay** (formerly 19 ha of Phragmites) is under control! as are Leask Bay, Hilly Grove (both Assiginack), and both sides of the Barrie Island causeway. See photos on our Facebook page.

**We still need more Phrag Watchers!** So far, 59 control sites have been turned over to volunteers or partners. If any Phrag comes back, the Phrag Watchers know what to do and will get on it right away. Can you help by taking care of a site? See list on page 5. Get in touch if you can help.

**More from 2021:** The water level in Lake Huron has gone down a bit, which means more dry land exposed and people driving vehicles on the shoreline. This is the number one way Phragmites is spread in our region. With funding from the Gosling Foundation we advertised extensively about the issue, running radio PSAs on every long weekend and newspaper ads every week. There were two main messages: "Learn to recognize Phragmites and don't drive through it." and "If pulling weeds off a boat propeller, throw them into the boat and dispose of them on dry land."

We made no progress at Lake Wolsey in 2021. We surveyed Phrag in May but then had boat trouble all summer and were unable to make any further trips. We attempted to canoe down the creek and portage over the beaver dam but it didn't bring us to the area we needed to work. Add in windy, rainy weather. On the day the Truxor cutting machines arrived, our access road was under water, and I didn't find the key to the driveway gate. After these frustrations, we have now made contact with two more landowners who have offered to help us with access next year.

Boat motor problems really hampered our style. We had to row ourselves back after getting stranded in the middle of Rozell's Bay. Then the motor conked out again and left us floating in South Bay. An eagle flew by and we jokingly suggested it go for help, and sure enough it flew off and came back again with a very friendly neighbour who offered a tow and helped us survey!

**NEW!** We have just received funding from the Invasive Phragmites Control Fund which will allow us to buy a new motor and to upgrade our beater boat so we won't get stranded and won't risk tearing our waders on rusty screws. We're still looking for a 14' aluminum utility boat in better condition (no leaks). I am looking forward to going everywhere next summer that we didn't get to in 2021.

We met a lot of new people in 2021 and also got back to working with many of our most steadfast volunteers (we really missed them during the first part of Covid in 2020). We met four new landowners, two new people who ferried us around in boats for surveys, and installed seven new Phrag watchers to take over finished sites. A total of 43 wonderful volunteers contributed over 250 hours of hard work to making Manitoulin Phrag-free. THANK YOU SO MUCH!!



Coordinator Judith Jones stands atop a large pile of Phragmites cut by the Truxor cutting program of the Invasive Phragmites Control Centre. Most of pile dries up and dies. Piles are monitored and any sprouting stems are removed.

**What's ahead?** Next year, 2022, will be the last year of our three-year government funding. After that, the future project is uncertain, so in 2022 we want to get as many sites as possible into the care of landowners and volunteers. We'll be contacting people to set up times to look at sites.

This fall we surveyed most of Manitoulin's North Channel shorelines and—no surprise—found more Phrag. We will be starting work in some of these areas in 2022. If you have property on the North Channel and have Phragmites on the shoreline, please get in touch.

The Gosling Foundation has extended our use of their funding into next year so we can produce a full size poster with a beautiful photo showing the value of our natural landscape. The message is about how to play responsibly: avoid driving through Phrag, leaving ruts, etc. Watch for this to be hanging up around the Island by mid-summer.

Our 7-minute How-To-Control-Phrag YouTube video has been very successful. We've received feedback from as far away as Vermont. The video doesn't give much background on Phrag and why it's a threat because I had assumed that information was widely available. However, there is a need for it, so this winter one of our detailed Zoom/Powerpoint presentations will be posted on YouTube to fill that gap.

### **Help make Manitoulin Island Phrag-free!**

- ◆ **DON'T DRIVE THROUGH PHRAGMITES!** Learn to recognize it. If you do drive through it, clean your ATV or vehicle in the yard before going out again.
- ◆ **WHEN PULLING WEEDS OFF THE BOAT PROP,** throw them in the boat for disposal on dry land.
- ◆ **READ OUR SIMPLE INFO PAMPHLET** available on our Facebook page (@manitoulinphrag) to find out about methods of control or **WATCH** our YouTube video (search Manitoulin Phrag).
- ◆ **KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR PHRAGMITES AT HOME.** Contact us if you have some. We'll help you figure out what to do and get you started.
- ◆ **REPORT PHRAGMITES LOCATIONS TO US.** Tell us if you find it so we can take action.
- ◆ **JOIN US for Manitoulin Phragmites Week, July 16-22, 2022.** Ask us to host a work bee in your area or to make a house call to your property.
- ◆ **HIRE SUMMER STUDENTS** and make Phragmites control part of their job. We'll be happy to show them what to do.

### **The Manitoulin Phragmites Project, 2021, is sponsored by:**

The Habitat Stewardship Program (Environment and Climate Change Canada)  
Ontario Species at Risk Stewardship Program  
Manitoulin Transport  
The Gosling Foundation  
Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy  
Canada Summer Jobs  
The Invasive Phragmites Control Centre  
Manitoulin Streams  
Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory  
Municipality of Gordon-Barrie Island  
Township of Tehkummah  
The Manitoulin Expositor  
And a host of private donors and local volunteers

**THANK YOU!**

**The Manitoulin Phragmites Project, P.O. Box 278, Manitowaning, ON P0P 1N0 (705) 859-1027  
manitoulinphrag@yahoo.com Facebook.com/manitoulinphrag**

## JUST ONE OF MANY SUCCESS STORIES



Mouth of Blue Jay Creek, 2016, before control, looking south.



Beach south of Blue Jay Creek, looking north towards mouth, 2021. The last major patch of Phragmites (distance; left of centre) was controlled this year.

List of sites where Phragmites is or has been present, control status, whether control (C), maintenance (M) or a survey (S) was done in 2021, and what is still needed. Please report Phragmites locations not listed here to us by email. \*Species at Risk habitat.

SITE NAME (alphabetical by municipality and First Nation)	Work or Survey in 2021	STATUS 2021	COMMENTS
<b>Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation</b>			
Highway 540 ditches		Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2019; not killed
Lake Road		Present	Ditches; could maybe be sprayed.
<b>Assiginack</b>			
Bidwell Rd ditch by Scotch Line	<b>M</b>	Present	Mowed 2016, 2019, 2021. Appears under control
Clover Valley* & Leask Bay Shores		Under Control	Landowners are watching the site.
Corbett's Beach Road		Eradicated	No further work needed
Highway 6 south and north of Manitowaning		Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2018 & 2019; not killed; patches south of Bidwell corner, north of Hilly Grove, etc.
Manitowaning Arena ditch	<b>S</b>	Present	Permission to spray granted; too wet in 2021
Manitowaning dump	<b>S</b>	Present	Permission to spray granted; needs action in 2022
Manitowaning public works year		Under control	Needs follow up in 2022.
Manitowaning Bay, off Cardwell	<b>M</b>	Under control	A few stems; adjacent landowners maintaining site.
McLennen's Creek mouth*	<b>C</b>	Under control	Adjacent landowners are maintaining the site.
Rogers Creek mouth and interior wetlands*	<b>C</b>	Under control	Volunteers are maintaining the site.
Turtle Lake south		Present	Surveyed 2016. Extensive patches and no public access; control probably impossible without machinery and long-term plan.
<b>Billings</b>			
Hideaway Lodge and Cove	<b>M</b>	Partially under control	Lodge shoreline is under control; shoreline north of lodge requires work in 2022.
Inspiration Point road ditches	<b>C</b>	Present	Control begun in 2021.
Maple Point Road		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check on site.</i>
Mud Creek Road*	<b>M</b>	Under control	Volunteer is maintaining the site.
<b>Burpee-Mills</b>			
Campbell Bay		Under control	Volunteers are maintaining the site.
Campbell Road ditch		Eradicated	No further work needed. Municipality watching site.
East of Portage Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Portage Bay—East*		Eradicated	No further work needed. Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Portage Bay—West*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check on site.</i>
Lake Wolsey Causeway S		Eradicated	No further work needed; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Mac's Bay*	<b>M</b>	Under control	Adjacent landowners are maintaining the site.
Marsh Lake	<b>S</b>	Present	Assessed in 2021. Large patches, restricted access.
Misery Bay*		Under control	Ontario Parks managing site. Phrag still present on west side of bay in 2021.
Murphy Harbour*	<b>M</b>	Under control	No further work needed. Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Ned Island	<b>S</b>	Present	Surveyed in 2021; large patches; boat access.
Tasker Shoreline East*		Eradicated	No further work needed. Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Twilight Isle Marsh	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
<b>Central Manitoulin</b>			
Dean Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Dominion Bay*	<b>M</b>	Under control	Landowners maintaining site.

Hwy 542 ditch W of Spring Bay		Present	Sprayed by MTO 2019; reduced but not fully killed
Hughson Bay		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Ketchankookem Trail ditch		Under control	Landowner mows area; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to monitor site.</i>
Lake Mindemoya water treatment plant	<b>M</b>	Under control	A few stems were spaded in 2021.
Lake Mindemoya Hwy 551 rest area	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Lonely Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. Landowner is watching site
Lougheed's Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Mud Lake Fen	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>A group of Phrag Watchers needed to maintain large natural habitat.</i>
Providence Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
East of Providence Bay		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Rathburn Bay		Present	Reported to us in 2020; needs survey
The Sand Lakes	<b>M</b>	Under control	Landowner is maintaining the site
Lake Huron Dr & 14th Conc. Rd	<b>C</b>	Under control	Sprayed 2021; will require follow up in 2022.
Square Bay*		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
East of Timber Bay		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
<b>Cockburn Island</b>			
Small sandy bay east of Sand Bay		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers watching site
SW side of point S of small sandy bay		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers watching site
Sand Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers watching site
Sand Lake		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Doc Hewson Bay*		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Lakeshore Road (14th) shoreline		Eradicated	No further work needed.
Mud Bay, Cockburn Island		Under control	NCC managing site.
Cranberry Bog		Present	NCC managing site.
Crossover Road ditches		Under control	Sprayed by NCC in 2020.
Pitman Point wetland		Present	NCC managing site.
Ricketts Harbour*		Eradicated	No further work needed. NCC managing site.
Robb Lake			NCC managing site.
Robinson Bay		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Tolsmaville hydro corridor		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Tolsmaville: Otter Bay		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers are watching the site
Wagosh Lake		Present	NCC managing site.
Little Wagosh Lake		Present	NCC managing site.
Wagosh North Fen		Present	NCC managing site.
Wagosh Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
9th Conc. ditches		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers watching site
10th Side Road ditch		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers watching site
12th Conc. ditch west of airstrip		Eradicated	No further work needed. Volunteers watching site
<b>Dawson</b>			
East Belanger Bay*		Under control	Needs follow up; Ontario Parks managing site.
West Belanger Bay*		Under control	Needs checking; Ontario Parks managing site.
Maple Lake		Present	NCC managing site.
Twin Lakes*		Present	Large patches; remote location; Ontario Parks managing site.; Project may assist in 2022.

Vidal Bay	<b>M</b>	Under control	NCC managing site.
<b>Gordon-Barrie Island</b>			
10th Line ditches*	<b>C</b>	Present	Control begun; roadside patches could be sprayed.
Barrie Island causeway (Julia Bay boat launch; Rozell's Bay)*	<b>C</b>	Under control	Area within sight of the causeway on both sides under control; farther shorelines of Julia Bay and Rozell's Bay still require work in 2022.
Campbell Bay at end of Conc. 4		Under control	Needs to be checked. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Goose Cap old boat access	<b>C</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Goose Cap Crescent		Present	Large patch, inland, private property. Needs work.
Julia Bay swimming beach	<b>M</b>	Under control	Volunteer is maintaining site.
Julia Bay	<b>S</b>	Present	Surveyed in 2021. Large patches will require major work effort and machine cutting. Boat access only.
Ice Lake Causeway*		Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2019; not killed.
Lake Wolsey Causeway N		Eradicated	No further work needed; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Lake Wolsey North*	<b>S</b>	Present	Surveyed 2021 and machine cutting planned for 2022. Marshy shoreline with large patches.
Rozell's Bay	<b>C</b>	Present	Control in progress
Salmon Bay off Whitetail Dr.*		Under control	Adjacent landowners maintaining site; follow up work still needed.
<b>Town of Gore Bay</b>			
Manitoulin Golf Course		Present	Discussed with golf course staff; requested they spray it.
Stream course on 540B east of Wright St.		Present	Made contact with adjacent landowner; requires spading
<b>M'Chigeeng First Nation</b>			
Highway 540 roadside west of M.S.S.		Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2019; not killed. Large patches still present.
Highway 551 pedestrian trail		Present	Large patches at edge of trail; could be sprayed; too wet in 2021.
Lake Mindemoya off Lakeshore Rd	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Lagoon outflow, north of M.S.S.		Present	Large patches; needs work.
<b>Northeastern Manitoulin and Islands</b>			
Bass Lake on Town Line Road	<b>C</b>	Under control	Permission to spray granted in 2021 but too wet. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Freer Point & western shoreline *	<b>S</b>	Present	Patches at far west end still need control work
Highway 6 across Great Cloche Island*		Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2019 & 2020; most was killed.
Highway 6 ditch on Ferguson's Hill		Present	Late season spraying by MTO in 2019 and 2020.
Honora shoreline (Freer Point to M'Chigeeng)	<b>M</b>	Under control	Landowners are maintaining some areas. <i>Additional Phrag Watchers needed.</i>
Low Island		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Strawberry Channel: White's Point to Sheguiandah FN	<b>M</b>	Under control	Landowners are maintaining some areas. <i>Additional Phrag Watchers needed.</i>
Trotter's Side Road beside Rolston Quarry		Present	Ditch patch; needs assessment
Turtle Lake North		Present	Surveyed 2016. Extensive patches and no public access; control probably impossible without machinery and long-term plan.
North Channel Drive ditch		Present	Needs assessment
Strawberry Island W shoreline*		Present	Ontario Parks managing site.
Ten Mile Point Road ditch	<b>C</b>	Present	Sprayed 2021; will require follow up in 2022.
White's Point*	<b>M</b>	Under control	Landowners are maintaining the site.
Horseshoe Bay, Great Duck Is.*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Old harbour, Great Duck Island		Present	Reported to us; needs assessment

<b>Robinson</b>			
Beaver Meadows*		Present	Large patches; difficult access. Requires planning with Ontario Parks and NCC.
E of Black Point*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Burnt Island Bay	<b>M</b>	Under control	Landowners are maintaining the site. Still additional work needed.
Burnt Island Harbour east	<b>C</b>	Under control	Control not quite complete (hornets stopped us).
Carroll Wood Bay*		Under control	Needs to be checked in 2022. Landowners are watching the site.
Christina Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
West of Cooks Dock		Present	Reported to us. Needs survey in 2022.
Fisher Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Ivan Point*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Maple Lake	?		NCC is managing the site.
Misery Bay west of Ironside Beach*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Sand (Hensley) Bay*		Under control	Needs to be checked in 2022. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Highway 540 Silver Water ditch		Present	3 large patches; 2 were reduced but not killed by MTO spraying in 2019. All three still require work.
Vidal Bay		Under control	NCC is managing the site.
<b>Sheguiandah First Nation</b>			
Highway 6 south of Ogimaa Miikan corner		Present	Sprayed by MTO 2020; only a small amount was killed; requires major work effort.
Pow-wow Grounds (part of Sheg Bay site listed in NEMI)	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Ogimaa Miikan and other roadside ditches in community		Present	Could be sprayed; needs discussion with community.
<b>Tehkummah</b>			
Frood Harbour*	<b>M</b>	Under control	Volunteers watching site.
Highway 6 south of Lakeshore Road		Present	On dry land on private property; requires landowner contact. Eradicated from highway ditch.
Lakeshore Road North	<b>C</b>	Present	Ditch sprayed in 2021; still present on private property. Requires landowner contact.
McKim Bay	<b>C</b>	Under control	Volunteer is maintaining site.
Michael's Bay Manitou R. to Blue Jay Cr.*	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>A group of Phrag Watchers needed to maintain site.</i>
Michael's Bay South of Blue Jay Creek*	<b>C</b>	Under control	<i>A group of Phrag Watchers needed to maintain site. Scattered stems still expected in one area in 2022</i>
Royal Michael's Bay area		Under control	Volunteer is maintaining site.
South Baymouth sewage lagoon	<b>C</b>	Present	Sprayed in 2021. Needs a small amount of follow up
<b>Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory</b>			
Andrew's Place beach	<b>C</b>	Present	Large patches; control started by landowners
Beach Road	<b>M</b>	Present	New patches have started where road was ditched. Control is urgent to prevent spread back into lake. Shoreline is under control. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain shore.</i>
Big Burnt Island; south shore		Present	At least three large patches
Buzwah savannahs above 2 O'clock		Present	Remote area needs several days of work; requires ATV to access
Cape Smith Georgian Bay and Wiky Bay shorelines		Present	Many large patches; accessible only by boat
Jacko Bay*	<b>S</b>	Present	Patch has shrunk and some has died. Requires manual control ASAP to take advantage of reduced patch size.
Kaboni Beach*	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>

Kaboni & South Bay Rd ditches		Present	Dry land patches; needs coordination with Public Works
King's Bay roadside ditches	<b>M</b>	Present	Dry land patches were spaded; require on-going maintenance or spraying to prevent spread.
M'nishensing*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Prairie Point*	<b>C</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Small bays south of Prairie Point		Present	Numerous small patches and a few large ones; boat access only
South Bay: Head of bay: Clover Valley to Pheasant's Creek*	<b>C</b>	Under control	Requires several days of manual control work in 2022.
South Bay Road at Pheasant's Creek*	<b>M</b>	Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
South Bay at the Narrows	<b>M</b>	Under control	Volunteer maintaining site.
Wiky (Smith) Bay mouth of Mebine Creek to water treatment plant	<b>C</b>	Partially under control	Excluding water treatment plant itself, shoreline is under control from marina to Smith Creek. Remaining area will require machinery and a long-term management plan
Tamarack Harbour*		Under control	Patches on roadside still need work; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Thomas Bay*		Eradicated	No further work needed. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Little Thomas Bay*	<b>C &amp; S</b>	Partially under control	Eastern half of bay under control. Remainder was assessed to plan access for Truxor cutting for 2022.