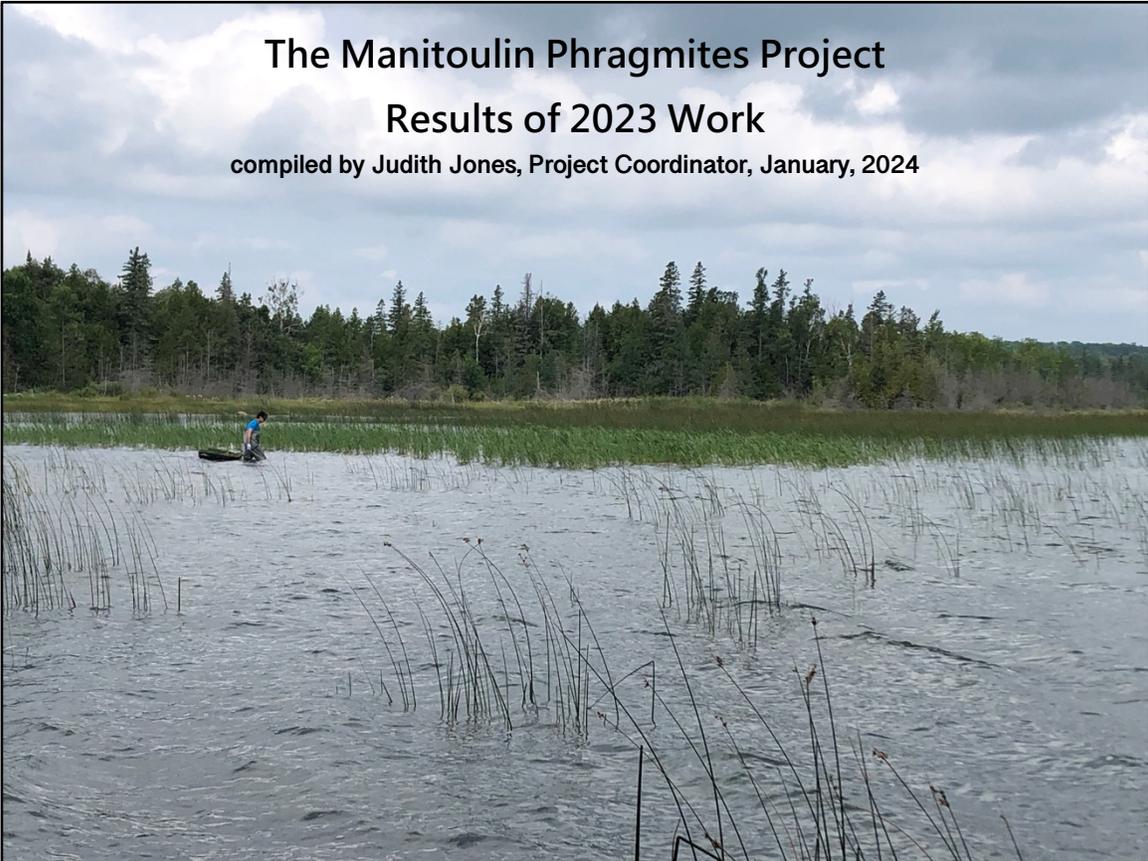


The Manitoulin Phragmites Project

Results of 2023 Work

compiled by Judith Jones, Project Coordinator, January, 2024



A volunteer doing the third summer of cutting to control Phragmites at Leask Bay/Hilly Grove.

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 grows into dense patches that can eventually wipe out all other vegetation. It is a serious threat to wildlife and fish habitat, recreation, tourism, property values, and aesthetics. Southern Ontario has lost thousands of hectares of natural habitat to this highly invasive species. **The Manitoulin Phragmites Project** was started to make sure this does not happen on Manitoulin Island. The Project has just finished its 8th year of work.

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. **This letter tells all about our work in 2023** toward that goal. A list of all Manitoulin Phragmites sites and their control status begins on page 5.

A scaled-back Project in 2023. We didn't get Ontario funding (the fund's 2023 priorities didn't fit our project well). We did get notice of federal funding in July but didn't get signed paperwork until December. We were able to work thanks to invaluable support from Manitoulin Transport, Manitoulin Streams, and many dedicated volunteers. We didn't have a full time field team, but veteran phraggers Rad Mroz and Sheila Madahbee worked "casual" (which is the wrong word given how hard they worked).

With no team, I focused on work I could do alone, mainly working on sites where herbicide was appropriate (dry ground, ditches, finished sites with a few remaining stems). When there were other people working, we concentrated on maintaining sites in progress to not lose the gains made last year. Given the challenges, I'm happy to say we had a very successful year!

2023 statistics

- 23 sites worked (9 species-at-risk [SAR] habitats, 7 roadside ditches, 2 other shorelines)
- 59.4 hectares of habitat controlled or maintained (52 ha in SAR habitat with 40 ha at Lake Wolsey).
- 122 km of roadside ditches surveyed
- 88 km of shoreline surveyed (all of Lake Manitou plus Jacko Bay and Sims Bay)
- 7 ha of inland wetland surveyed
- 2 additional new sites surveyed for Phragmites work planning
- 2 surveys done to monitor SAR
- 2 house calls made to check sites—no phrag found!

Manitoulin Phragmites Week went ahead. I reminded our 47 Phrag Watchers to check their sites. Almost everyone responded! Newspaper ads urged people to look for Phrag and to report it to us. We made a few house calls to follow up. I presented to 83 enthusiastic people at the Lake Manitou Area Association. This led to many new contacts and a new volunteer who took us by boat to survey all of the Lake Manitou shoreline!

Don't Drive Through Phrag! Phrag is mainly spread by ATVs and machinery. Phrag may spread back into our control sites because the water in Lake Huron continues to drop, and people can drive on the shore again. We continue to advertise (newspaper, radio) the Don't Drive message. Working with Fuel the Fire TV and with extra funding from the Canadian Wildlife Service, we also filmed a more general 30 second commercial about responsible ATV riding. You can see it on the Project's YouTube channel or on FTFTV.



Phrag Watcher shows off after annual clean up at Mac's Bay. Photo: Donna Haynes.

Herbicide is a tough issue. It takes some soul searching to accept that we sometimes have to use a small amount of herbicide or we will lose natural habitats. A lot of effort this year went into getting this message out there, and to work towards approval to use herbicide in Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory.

Herbicide in Wiikwemkoong? With the help of the WUT Department of Lands and Natural Resources, I presented the proposal for herbicide use to the community. I posted a presentation on our YouTube channel (it's still there if you want to watch it) and the link on the WUT events page. At the WUT open house I spoke with over 150 people about Phrag and herbicide and was interviewed on the community's live feed. Having covered the bases, I presented to chief and council who were receptive. They asked for comment by Wiky Health, a detailed spraying plan, people to do monitoring and oversight, and a survey of medicinal plants in advance—all good ideas. The proposal will likely go back to C & C in early spring.

Work at Lake Wolsey in 2023 was full steam ahead! We contracted the Invasive Phragmites Control Centre's two person spray crew to spray all the patches of Phrag standing on dry ground on the municipal shoreline. I thought this would be a multi-year task, but they were able to get to all the dry-land Phrag in our entire work area! Our people maintained the in-water areas worked in 2022. If all goes as planned, we hope to have the entire 60+ ha shoreline under control when the Project ends in 2025. Yay!!!

Looking ahead Travel time is a significant issue for the Project. This is a big Island and we work all over it, so in each 8 hour day we lose a lot of work time to driving. In 2024, we're going to try a different strategy and work on one half of the Island, leaving the other half for 2025. Depending on the outcome of

the WUT herbicide proposal, 2024 may see us mainly in WUT and 2025 may see us based out of western Manitoulin. We'll see how it goes.

We are hiring! We are looking for some new team members to start in mid-May, especially if you want to work in Wiikwemkoong. Phragging is hard work but very rewarding, and we go to some nice places. If you are interested, email a resume. Because of the travel challenges, our team members must be living on Manitoulin Island during the summer and must have a valid driver's licence.

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) or WATCH our YouTube channel (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 where you find it so we can take action.
- ◆JOIN US for **Manitoulin Phragmites Week, July 16-21, 2024**. We can host a work bee in your area or make a house call to your property.
- ◆HIRE SUMMER STUDENTS and make Phrag control part of their job. We'll be happy to train them.

The Manitoulin Phragmites Project, 2023-2024, is sponsored by ❤️
The Habitat Stewardship Program (Environment and Climate Change Canada)
Manitoulin Transport
The Invasive Phragmites Control Centre
Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association
Nature Conservancy Canada
Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory
White's Shell
And a host of local volunteers
THANK YOU!

Phragmites and ATV tracks.

Don't drive through Phrag!
Phrag is spread from pieces of plant stuck to vehicles and machinery.

If you drive through Phrag, you help it travel to new places.



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List of sites where Phragmites is or has been present; control (**C**), maintenance (**M**) or a survey (**S**) done in 2023; control status; work still needed. Please email us about any Phragmites locations not listed here.

*Species at Risk habitat

SITE NAME (alphabetical by municipality and First Nation)	Work or Survey in 2023	STATUS 2023	COMMENTS
Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation			
Highway 540 ditches	S	Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2019; not killed
Lake Road		Present	Ditches; could maybe be sprayed.
Assiginack			
Bidwell Rd ditch by Scotch Line		Present	Mowed 2016, 2019, 2021. Under control; American race?
Clover Valley* & Leask Bay Shores		Under Control	Landowners are watching the site.
Corbett's Beach Road	C	Under control	Sprayed
Highway 6 south and north of Manitowaning	S	Present	Sprayed by MTO in 2022; a few small patches remain that should be controlled before they grow
Lake Manitou near Queen's Lane	S	Present	Needs landowner contact
Manitowaning Arena ditch	C	Eradicated	Follow-up spraying; a few stems left from 2022
Manitowaning dump		Eradicated	
Manitowaning Meredith St ditch		Present	
Manitowaning Michael's Bay Rd	C	Eradicated	Follow-up spraying; a few stems left from 2022
Manitowaning public works yard	C	Under control	Sprayed; some still remains where too wet to spray
Manitowaning Bay, off Cardwell	C	Under control	Follow-up spraying; a few stems left from 2022; still a few more to do where too wet to spray
McLennen's Creek mouth* to Black Rock*	C	Under control	Landowners are maintaining part of site. Area near Cowan SR cut but still needs follow up.
Hilly Grove* – Leask Bay*	C	Under control	Cutting; spraying; needs follow up in 2024.
Rogers Creek mouth and interior wetlands* (partly in Tehkummah)		Under control	Volunteers are maintaining the site.
Sim's Island and adjacent bay	S	Present	Surveyed to plan work for 2024.
Turtle Lake south		Present	Surveyed 2016. Extensive patches and no public access; control probably impossible without machinery and long-term plan.
Billings			
Hideaway Lodge and Cove		Partially under control	Lodge shoreline is under control; shoreline north of lodge needs work
Grandor Rd & Windjammer Rd		Under control	One small cluster of stems needs follow up
Maple Point Road		Eradicated	Volunteers are maintaining the site.
Mud Creek Road*	M	Under control	Volunteer is maintaining the site.
Newburn Road ditches / wetland*	C	Present	Dry areas sprayed; needs more work; needs survey for Black Ash
Burpee-Mills			
Campbell Bay		Under control	Volunteers are maintaining the site.
Campbell Road ditch		Eradicated	Municipality watching site.
East of Portage Bay*		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Portage Bay – Eastern*		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Portage Bay – Western*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check on site.</i>
Lake Wolsey Causeway S		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check on site.</i>
Mac's Bay*	C	Under control	Adjacent landowners are maintaining the site.
Marsh Lake		Present	Assessed 2021. Large patches, restricted access. May be American race. Needs genotyping.

Misery Bay*	C	Under control	Patches on western alvar sprayed by Ontario Parks
Murphy Harbour*		Under control	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Ned Island, bay and shoreline		Present	Surveyed in 2022; large patches; boat access.
Tasker Shoreline East*		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Twilight Isle Marsh		Under control	Last worked 2022; needs checking. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Central Manitoulin			
Dean Bay*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Dominion Bay*		Under control	Landowners maintaining site.
Hwy 542 ditch W of Gilchrist SR		Present	Partially sprayed by MTO in 2022 but a lot not killed
Hughson Bay		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Ketchankookem Trail ditch		Present	Landowner mows area; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to monitor site.</i>
Lake Huron Dr & 14th Conc. Rd		Eradicated	Landowner is watching the site
Lake Huron Dr. ditches	M	Under control	A few remaining stems were sprayed. Landowner is watching the site
Lake Manitou at Reggie Lane		Present	Needs survey and landowner contact.
Lake Manitou Bell Bay	S	Present	May be American race; needs genotyping
Lake Manitou Ben's Bay	S	Present	May be American race; needs genotyping
Lake Manitou Moody Bay	S	Present	May be American race; needs genotyping
Mindemoya water treatment plant	C	Under control	Ditch sprayed
Lake Mindemoya Hwy 551 rest area	M	Under control	Volunteer is maintaining the site.
Lonely Bay*		Eradicated	Landowner is watching site
Lougheed's Bay*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Mud Lake Fen		Under control	<i>A few Phrag Watchers needed for occasional maintenance in large natural habitat.</i>
Providence Bay*		Eradicated	Volunteer is watching the site.
East of Providence Bay		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Rathburn Bay		Present	Reported to us in 2020; needs survey
Rockville Road near Lucar Pt Rd	S	Present	Ditch. Needs work
The Sand Lakes		Under control	Landowner is maintaining the site
Silver Bay Road ditch	C	Under control	Follow-up spraying; volunteer is watching the site.
Square Bay*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check on site.</i>
East of Timber Bay		Eradicated	Adjacent landowners are watching the site.
Cockburn Island			
Note: Project staff have not worked on Cockburn Island since 2019, but volunteers continue to check sites.			
Weatherbee Bay		Eradicated	Volunteers watching site
SW side of point S of Weatherbee Bay		Eradicated	Volunteers watching site
Sand Bay*		Eradicated	Volunteers watching site
Sand Lake		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Doc Hewson Bay*		Under control	NCC managing site.
Lakeshore Road (14th) shoreline		Eradicated	NCC managing site.
Mud Bay, Cockburn Island		Under control	NCC managing site.
Cranberry Bog		Present	NCC managing site.
Crossover Road ditches		Under control	NCC managing site.
Pitman Point wetland		Present	NCC managing site.
Ricketts Harbour*		Eradicated	NCC managing site.
Robb Lake			NCC managing site.
Robinson Bay		Eradicated	<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	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	NCC managing site.
9th Conc. ditches		Eradicated	Volunteers watching site
10th Side Road ditch		Eradicated	Volunteers watching site
12th Conc. ditch west of airstrip		Eradicated	Volunteers watching site
Dawson			
East Belanger Bay*		Present	Needs follow up from 2019
West Belanger Bay*		Under control	Needs checking.
Maple Lake		Under control	NCC managing site.
Twin Lakes*		Present	Large patches; remote location; Ontario Parks managing site.
Vidal Bay	C	Under control	NCC managing site.
Gordon-Barrie Island			
10th Line ditches*		Present	Ditches adjacent to wetland. Some patches on dry land. Volunteer is watching the site.
Barrie Island south shore L17 Con 2?		Present	Needs work; needs landowner contact
Campbell Bay at end of Conc. 4		Under control	Needs to be checked. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Goose Cap Crescent		Present	Large patch, inland, private property. Needs work.
Julia Bay & Comfort Cove	M	Partially under control	Volunteers maintained the causeway, swim beach, part of eastern shore. From west to east, ¾ under control.
Ice Lake Causeway*		Under control	Sprayed by MTO.
Lake Wolsey Causeway N		Under control	A few stems; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Lake Wolsey northern shoreline	C	Present	Large area. All on-land patches sprayed in 2023. In water work planned for 2024.
Rozell's Bay/Bayfield Sound	C	Partially under control	In progress: on-land patches near the airport were sprayed. Still requires in-water work.
Salmon Bay off Whitetail Dr.*		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Sturgeon Bay		Partially under control	Several patches in very shallow water and on land.
Town of Gore Bay			
Manitoulin Golf Course		Present	Needs to be checked. Discussed with golf course staff; requested they spray it.
Stream course on 540B east of Wright St.		Present	Needs landowner contact. Needs survey.
M'Chigeeng First Nation			
Highway 540 roadside west of M.S.S.		Present	Not sprayed by MTO because supposedly a natural, native species. Needs genotyping.
Highway 551 pedestrian trail		Present	On land; Waiting for MFN approval for spraying
Lagoon outflow, north of M.S.S.		Present	Large on-land patches; needs survey.
Lake Mindemoya off Lakeshore Rd		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Northeastern Manitoulin and Islands			
Bass Lake on Town Line Road		Present	Spraying in 2022 approved but not done. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Freer Point western shoreline *		Present	Boat access. Needs work.
Highway 6 across Great Cloche Island*		Present	Extensive patches; control promised in 2022 construction zone but no actions done.
Highway 6 ditch on Ferguson's		Eradicated	Sprayed by MTO

Hill			
Honora shoreline (Freer Point to M'Chigeeng)		Under control	Landowners are maintaining some areas. <i>Additional Phrag Watchers needed.</i>
Ironside Road, Sheguiandah		Under control	A few stems on remain on private property
Little Cloche Island at Dinner Point Depot		Present	Reported with photo. Needs survey.
Little Current / Harbour View at beacon	C	Present	Requires follow up <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Low Island		Under control	A few stems still need follow up. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Strawberry Channel: White's Point to Sheguiandah FN	M	Under control	Assisted landowner of one area; Landowners maintaining some areas. <i>Phrag Watchers needed.</i>
Trotter's Side Road beside Rolston Quarry		Present	On private property. Landowner contact needed.
Turtle Lake North		Present	Surveyed 2016. Large patches; no public access.
Strawberry Island W shoreline*		Present	Ontario Parks managing site.
Ten Mile Point Road ditch		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
White's Point*		Under control	Landowners are maintaining the site.
Horseshoe Bay, Great Duck Is.*		Eradicated	Not checked recently. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Old harbour, Great Duck Island		Present	Reported to us; needs survey
Robinson			
Beaver Meadows*		Present	Large patches; difficult access. American race?? NCC and Ontario Parks manage sites.
E of Black (Green) Point*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Burnt Island Bay	C	Under control	Sprayed. Landowners are maintaining the site.
Burnt Island Harbour east	C	Under control	Sprayed <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Carroll Wood Bay*		Under control	Needs to be checked. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Christina Bay*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Cooks Dock		Present?	Needs survey; seen with binoculars
West of Cooks Dock		Present	Reported to us with photo. Needs survey.
Falls Lake and Young Lake		Present?	Reported to us. Needs survey.
Fisher Bay*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Ivan Point*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Maple Lake		Present	NCC is managing the site.
Misery Bay W of Ironside Beach*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to check site.</i>
Misery Bay western alvar area		Under control	Sprayed by Ontario Parks
Portage Point*		Under control	Needs follow up; Landowners are maintaining site.
Sand (Hensley) Bay*		Under control	Needs to be checked. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Highway 540 Silver Water ditch		Under control	Sprayed by MTO in 2022.
Vidal Bay	C	Under control	NCC is managing the site.
Sheguiandah First Nation			
Highway 6 south of Ogimaa Miikan corner		Under control	Sprayed by MTO 2022
Pow-wow Grounds (part of Sheg Bay site listed in NEMI)		Under control	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Ogimaa Miikan and other roadside ditches in community		Present	Could be sprayed; needs approval of community.
Sheshegwaning First Nation			
Zhiibaahaasing Road ditches	C	Partially under control	Several patches; some were spaded; needs follow up

Tehkummah			
Frood Harbour*		Eradicated	Phrag Watchers are watching site.
Highway 6 south of Lakeshore Road	S	Present	Surveyed for 2024. Dry land on private property; have landowner consent & approval for herbicide.
Lakeshore Road North		Under control	Ditch sprayed in 2021; still present on private property. Requires landowner contact.
McKim Bay	C	Under control	Sprayed; one small patch remains on private prop.
Michael's Bay Manitou R. to Blue Jay Cr.*	M	Under control	A few stems left on shore. Phrag Watchers are maintaining the site. Patch present in inland fen.
Michael's Bay south of Blue Jay Creek*	C	Under control	Sprayed; a few stems still remain.
Rogers Creek mouth and interior wetlands* (partly in Assiginack)		Under control	Volunteers are maintaining the site.
Royal Michael's Bay area		Under control	Volunteer is maintaining site.
South Baymouth sewage lagoon		Under control	Volunteer is maintaining site.
Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory			
Ambulance base corner		Present	Large patch in ditch
Andrew's Place beach		Present	Large patches; control started by landowners
Beach Road		Partially under control	New patches in roadside ditch. Shoreline is under control. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain shore.</i>
Big Burnt Island; south shore		Present	At least three large patches; boat access only
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; boat access only?
Jacko Bay*	S	Present	Very large area with multiple patches in water and on land. Requires detailed work plan.
Kaboni Beach*	M	Under control	On land patch: one afternoon of work by the team <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Kaboni Rd, South Bay Rd* & Wiky Way ditches		Present	Dry land patches; needs coordination with Public Works
King's Bay roadside ditches		Present	On land patch <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site</i>
Manitowaning Bay shore near old Eshkibok farm*		Present	Needs survey
M'nishensing*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to monitor site.</i>
Prairie Point*		Partially under control	On-land patches still require work. <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*		Partially under control	Needs follow-up control from work in 2021.
South Bay Road at Pheasant's Creek*		Under control	One on-land patch still present at south side. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
South Bay at the Narrows		Under control	Volunteer maintaining site.
South Bay Community Centre shore	M	Under control	A few stems only. <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain site.</i>
Tamarack Harbour*		Not checked recently	Patches on roadside need work; <i>Phrag Watcher needed to maintain shoreline.</i>
Thomas Bay*		Eradicated	<i>Phrag Watcher needed to monitor site.</i>
Little Thomas Bay*	M	Partially under control	In water area at west side maintained. Large site with big patches both in water and on land.
Water Treatment Plant (marina)		Present	On-land patch in high-traffic area. Needs coordination with Public Works
Wiky (Smith) Bay mouth of Mebine Creek to water treatment plant		Partially under control	Other than water plant, shoreline is under control from marina to "School" Creek. Rest of area needs machinery and long-term management plan