

**Benzie County Resolution of a County wide effort
to identify, treat and monitor the invasive species, .51
*Phragmites Australis***

Be it resolved that the Benzie County Board of Commissioners understand the threat of invasive, non-native *Phragmites Australis* and the need for immediate action to effectively and efficiently identify, control, eradicate and monitor phragmites along inland lakes, streams, creeks, wetlands, dry ground and drainage ditches, including Lake Michigan shoreline, and anywhere else Phragmites can be found, for all of Benzie County.

It is the Board's desire that county residents understand that *Phragmites Australis* is an invasive species, the spreading of which is not halted by traditional legal or jurisdictional boundaries between land parcels. Although phragmites seeds can cause limited spreading, most reproduction is accomplished through runners growing along the ground. A single strand of phragmites can spread 30-50 ft. per year through these runners. When left unchecked, dense phragmites stands can change the native ecosystem by causing the loss of wildlife and native plant habitat and can block access to lakes, streams, and creeks, thereby negatively impacting tourism, property values, and recreational opportunities. This, in turn, can impair the county's economic base. In addition, the spread of phragmites, by driving out native plant and wildlife species, can affect water levels and other changes to water bodies, creating fire hazards, impeding view sheds and potentially creating a loss of agricultural and recreational activities. Phragmites left unchecked is a threat to the healthy stewardship of Benzie County's natural resources and economic viability.

The **Benzie County Board of Commissioners** encourages the following steps to standardize the process of identification, provide local resources for education and treatment for all Benzie County groups, organizations, citizens and private property owners concerned with phragmites:

PHRAGMITES IDENTIFICATION, MAPPING and EDUCATION

- Utilizing local resources to clearly identify possible invasive phragmites infestations such as the Benzie Conservation District (BCD), the Northwest Michigan Cooperative Weed Management Area (NM CWMA), the Benzie Watersheds Coalition (BWC), Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), or other trained resources
- Contact BCD, NM CWMA, BWC, MDNR or other trained resources for appropriate mapping of the confirmed phragmites infestation
- Report mapped infestation(s) to BCD, NM CWMA, BWC, or the MDNR for their recording purposes (see Resources for contact information)
- Identify property owners for notification, in person or through appropriate written communication, of phragmites infestation through the Benzie County's Equalization Department (See Resources)

PHRAGMITES PERMIT PROCESS*

* Note: The type of permit needed is determined by the location of the phragmites infestation: **Great Lakes Shoreline OR Inland Lakes**

- Permit information (See Addendum A, Resources): Permit requests are due by August 15th for Inland Lakes (Great Lakes are covered under a General Permit with no deadline)
- Contact Michigan Licensed Aquatic Herbicide Companies (see Addendum A, Resources)
- Participating Benzie County organizations, groups, citizens and private property owners must fulfill any permit reporting requirements such as "permission to treat property" notifications, with supporting written permission, GPS or ArcGIS or other appropriate mapping of phragmites, or arrange for the approved herbicide company to do so

CONDUCT TREATMENT

- Once permit is approved, treatment will likely occur in the September through October time period
- Each year, application for a new permit must be made

MONITOR IMPACTS of TREATMENT

- Each permit holder will be responsible for the regular monitoring of the phragmites treatment area, as defined in the permit, and should submit a brief written account to BCD, NM CWMA, or local MDNR for their ongoing monitoring purposes
- Each treatment area must be prepared for and willing, to repeat the process in future years to ensure proper controls

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Benzie County Board of Commissioners encourages the Benzie Conservation District, NW Michigan Cooperative Weed Management Area, the Benzie Watersheds Coalition, MDNR Wildlife Biologist, Cadillac Office, and all county watershed, lake and river associations as well as other local groups and property owners in their efforts to control and eradicate phragmites as outlined here.

Board Member Signature

Date

***Note: Adopted unanimously by the Benzie Co. Commissioners on August 2, 2011**