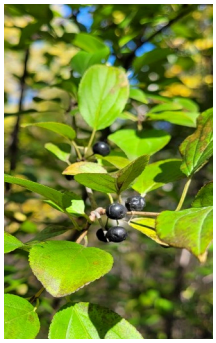
2024 Highlights

OFFICE OF GREAT WATERS
LAKE SUPERIOR TEAM

OUR PROJECTS

INVASIVE SPECIES

CLOUGH ISLAND INVASIVE CONTROL AND CONIFER RESTORATION



Clough Island has high-quality coastal wetlands and habitat including cedar stands and wet meadows. The goal of this project is to control invasive plants and restore native trees to enhance habitat. As of 2024, 256 acres of common buckthorn, bush honeysuckle and ornamental barberry were controlled. Additionally, multiple acres of native tree seedlings have been planted to help restore conifer in the understory. Planning for additional field work in 2025 is underway. Project partners include Douglas County, WDNR NHI and the Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area.

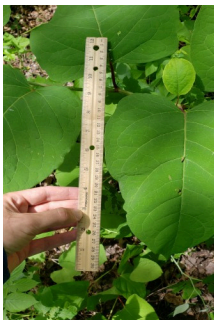
ST LOUIS RIVER ISLAND ASH TREE RESILIENCY

A project led by the Lake Superior National Estuarine Research Reserve is underway to mitigate impacts to ash stands related to Emerald ash borer (EAB) damage to black ash stands on many of the St. Louis River's islands. Work includes buckthorn and honeysuckle control, underplanting of 80,000 trees across five islands and looking at water hydrology and seedling survival. As of 2024, 55.5 acres have been treated for various non-native species, and 50 acres of trees have been planted.

WISCONSIN GREAT LAKES PHRAGMITES MAPPING AND CONTROL

Systematic monitoring, mapping and control of non-native Phragmites is underway throughout the Lake Superior, Lake Michigan and St. Croix River watersheds. In the Lake Superior basin, many locations were visited in 2024 to ground-truth past occurrences of non-native Phragmites, and to follow up on tips from partners and sites found while doing other fieldwork. Communication and control plans are underway with GLIFWC to improve prioritization of monitoring and control sites in priority basins.

INVASIVE KNOTWEED MAPPING AND CONTROL



Through a partnership with the Northwoods Cooperative Weed Management Area, this project is monitoring and controlling the knotweed complex at nearly 350 sites across the Lake Superior Basin. In 2024 a total of 146 sites were treated or re-treated, covering nearly 23 acres, for a total of over 36 acres treated since the project started in 2021. Restoration using native shrubs and seed will be completed on approximately 10% of sites. Most sites require 3-5 years of treatment before restoration can begin.

LAKE SUPERIOR COASTAL WETLAND AIS MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENATION

This project is implementing management actions to remove invasive species and protect the biodiverse quality of 15 Lake Superior coastal wetlands. Invasives control work has been implemented at several sites, with a focus on common buckthorn, thistle, reed canary grass, beach rose, queen of the meadow and non-native cattail. In 2024, 3.5 acres of invasives were treated at the Michele Wheeler Wetland/Flag River Estuary and one acre of beach rose and queen of the meadow was controlled at the Port Wing State Natural Area. Monitoring and control efforts are planned to continue into 2025.