

# **Clay Township Phragmites Management Program 2010 Year-end Report**

December 20, 2010



By Clay Township Phragmites Management Advisory Board

# Problems caused by Phragmites



Blocks Views



- Reduces native plant and animal population and diversity
- Limits access for recreation
- Fills in canals, rivers and streams
- Reduces water flow capacity
- Clogs water intakes
- Dries out wetlands
- Reduces property values
- Navigation hazard on roads and waterways

# Fire Hazard



# *“State agency scolded for inaction on a persistent fire danger”*

- **Published: Tuesday, December 14, 2010**
- **STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- Before going to bed, the residents of Kissam Avenue peer anxiously out their windows to make sure there’s no smoke. Sometimes they check twice. Or three times.**



**When the phone rings, they jump, thinking a frantic neighbor might be on the other end of the line, calling for them to evacuate.**

The community of Oakwood Beach is jumpy for good reason: Brush fires frequently erupt near homes, and neighbors have seen whole houses engulfed.

Standing in the way of their safety are **hundreds upon hundreds of quick-to-burn, environmentally useless Phragmites**, causing a “tremendous drag” on local firehouses.

# Initiation of the Program

- In February 2010 Clay Township citizens and government representatives began to discuss a Township wide program to address Phragmites Management.
- Over the next four months more than 50 property owners and government representatives were involved in the development of the Clay Township Phragmites Management Plan and Program 2010.

# The Problems Identified

## Property owners needed

- To be educated in the safe and effective methods of controlling Phragmites
- Easier access to the proper chemicals and equipment needed for safe and effective control.
- Assistance in obtaining the required permits, retaining qualified contractors and in some cases actually treating their Phragmites.

# Clay Township Phragmites Management Plan and Program 2010

- Adopted June 7, 2010 by the Township Board included
  - Creating a coordinator and a volunteer organization
  - Surveying the infestations (using GIS)
  - Establishing priority treatment areas
  - Communicating with and educating property owners
  - Assisting with permits and treatment
  - Making chemicals and equipment easily available
  - Explore sources of funding

# Clay Township Phragmites Management Education and Communications with the Public

During 2010 we

- Initiated and maintained a website at [www.clayTownship.org/Phragmites](http://www.clayTownship.org/Phragmites)
- Conducted 5 Phragmites Management Workshops and trained 186 people in Phragmites Management
- Initiated and maintained a Phragmites Management phone hotline to answer questions for the public
- Printed flyers explaining the program
- Arranged for a sign at St. John's Marsh to publicize the program

# Clay Township Spraying Permits Procedure

In 2010 we procured spraying permits for 161 properties

- Property owners applied to be in the program
- Volunteers inspected each site, consulted with the property owners and noted infestation area and conditions
- Applicants attended a Phragmites Management Workshop
- The Township applied to the State for a permit where required
- The Township received a single season permit from the State
- The Township issued individual single season approvals to participants to proceed along with the needed posting signs and treatment report forms
- The property owner completed the treatment and filed a treatment report with the Township.
- The Township filed a treatment report with the State.

# Clay Township Mowing Permits Procedure

In 2010 the Township procured mowing permits for 94 properties.

- Property owners applied to be in the program
- Volunteers inspected each site, consulted with the property owners and noted infestation area and conditions
- The Township applied to the State for a mowing permit where required and submitted a Phragmites management control plan.
- Applicants attended a Phragmites Management Workshop
- The Township received a five year mowing permit from the State
- The Township issued individual five year mowing approvals to property owners.

# Clay Township Herbicide Distribution

During 2010 the Township distributed enough chemical to allow property owners to self-treat over 330 acres of Phragmites.

- Property owners applied to be in the program
- Participants attended a Phragmites Management Workshop
- Participants ordered and paid for chemicals at the Township
- The Township ordered chemicals at special government prices.
- Purchasers picked up herbicides from the Township

# Clay Township Phragmites Volunteer assistance program

In 2010 we had

- 11 Volunteers who assisted with education, inspections, consultation, chemical distribution, spraying and cutting.
- 124 Properties were treated by volunteers representing approximately 177 Acres (85% of the permitted amount).
- A 15 foot outboard runabout and a 24 foot pontoon boat were donated to the Township by participants for use in the effort.
- The HISCFA donated \$1000 to the PAB program. The money was used to purchase needed equipment and chemicals.

# Clay Township assistance with Contractor Procurement

- The Township obtained a list of contractors certified by the State of Michigan to treat Phragmites.
- The Township prepared a list of recommended contractors based on certification, experience with Phragmites control and interest in working in this area.
- The list was made available to all property owners.
- The Township coordinated groups of property owners to establish larger contiguous areas which could be treated by helicopter.
- The Township arranged for the MDNRE to treat some State owned properties adjacent to those being treated by individual property owners.
- The Township obtained the necessary permits and filed the required reports following treatment, reducing the amount of work needed by the contractors and thereby the cost to the property owners.

# Local contractor, Bobby Bryson purchases Marshmaster



# Clay Township Coordination with other agencies

During 2010 we coordinated Phragmites control efforts with representatives from the following agencies:

- State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Environment
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
- Lake St. Clair Protection and Restoration Partnership
- St. Clair County Planning Commission, Road Commission and Drain Commission
- City of Algonac
- Cottrellville Township
- Ira Township

# View Enhancement



before



after

# Ecosystem Restoration

after



before



# Recreational Access



before

after



# Fire Safety



before

after



For further information

[ClayTownship.org/Phragmites](http://ClayTownship.org/Phragmites)