

**BAY COUNTY GYPSY MOTH  
SUPPRESSION PROGRAM**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**National Public Lands Day  
Bay County Phragmites Educational Walk & Weed Pull in Pinconning Park**

National Public Lands Day is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy. In 2008 approximately 120,000 volunteers built trails and bridges, removed trash and invasive plants, and planted over 1.6 million trees.

This year, in conjunction with National Public Lands Day, Bay County's Environmental Affairs & Community Development Department will host a free educational program at the Bay County Pinconning Park on Saturday, September 26, 2009. The main topic of the day will be "Phragmites and other invasive species that effect our beachfront". Informative walks will be lead by a Gypsy Moth Suppression Program naturalist at 11:00 a.m. and again at 12:30 p.m. in which participants will get hands on experience with Phragmites: how to identify it, how it grows and learn why the invasive plant is a problem, especially along our shoreline.

Many people are concerned about the rapid increase and Invasion of Phragmites because this 15 foot tall grass takes over and degrades wetland areas. Phragmites lives in wet areas like marshes, riverbanks, lake shores, and ditches. The plant crowds out native plants due to its rapid, dense growth which uses up all the available nutrients and sun light. This reduces the bio-diversity of the area degrading fish and wildlife habitat, increasing the potential for brush fires and blocking visual access of the Bay.

Much like the Gypsy Moth or Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) this invasive plant is having a negative impact on the lands within our county. For more information please contact Alicia Wallace of the Bay County Gypsy Moth Suppression Program at 989-895-4195.

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