Mowing *Phragmites* to remove biomass helps the existing marsh to recover.

Look-Alikes

While the Phragmites you see covering acres of wetlands throughout the U.S. is considered invasive, there is a less aggressive desirable strain of Phragmites that is sometimes found in small patches on wetland fringes.

There are also other grasses, some native (Big Cordgrass, *Spartina cynosuroides*) and some exotic (Giant Reed, *Arondo donax* and Chinese Silver Grass, *Miscanthus sinensis)* that have many physical similarities to Phragmites.

Big Cordgrass, *Spartina cynosuroides*

It is important to carefully identify these grasses before beginning any eradication efforts.

Invasive Plants

Invasive exotic or non-native species were brought to the U.S. from other regions with similar climatic conditions to our region. They have many characteristics that allow them to out-compete our native species, taking the place of native species throughout natural areas and degrading the habitat value for local wildlife.

A dense stand of *Phragmites australis*, common reed.

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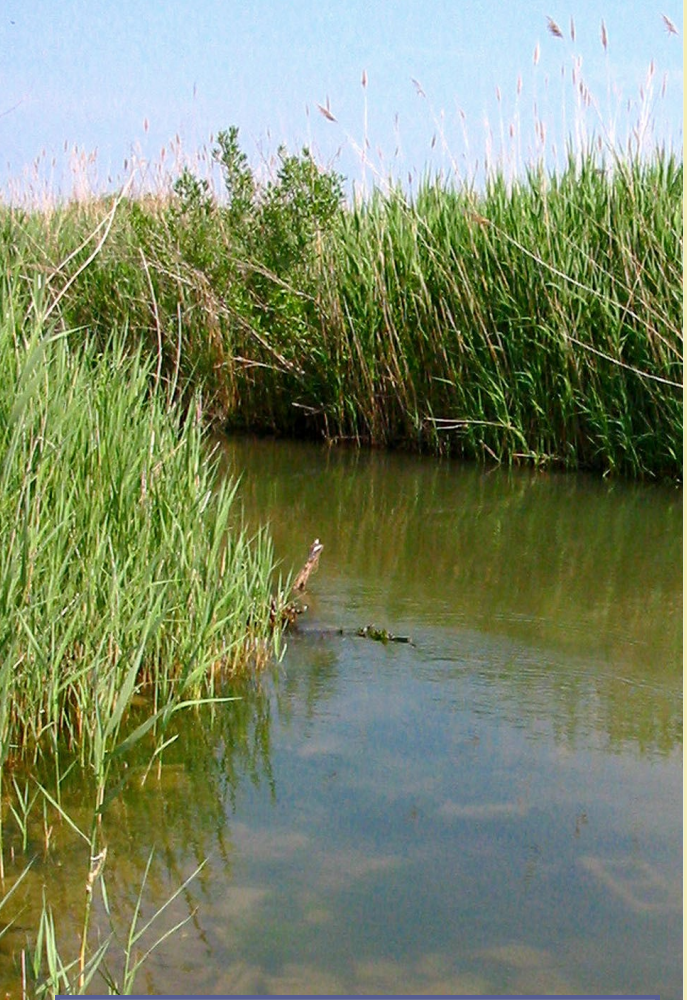
Managing Phragmites

Restoring the Bay…

one wetland at a time.

Environmental Concern



Phragmites australis, also known as Common Reed, is a large, coarse, perennial grass found in wetlands. It occurs in every continent on earth except Antartica. In the United States, it is considered one of the most invasive plants in wetland communities. It has a thick stalk with a hollow stem that can reach 13+ feet in height with a large plume like flower that persists throughout the winter. It spreads by seed or by creeping rhizomes and surface runners to form a dense mat of roots up to several feet thick. A single plant can spread up to 30 feet in one year!

MANAGING PHRAGMITES

Based on our years of experience, the most efficient method for controlling Phragmites combines chemical (herbicide) and physical (mowing) treatments.

Herbicide Treatment - of Phragmites is accomplished in the fall (August through October), when the foliage is green, the plants are actively growing, and at mid to full-bloom. When sprayed at this time, the herbicide is rapidly absorbed and transported throughout the plant tissues, killing the entire plant, including the rhizomes. After the application of herbicide, the Phragmites dies within 6 - 8 weeks.

Cutting or Mowing - of Phragmites takes place in the winter (December through March). Cutting Phragmites is beneficial as it allows the sunlight to reach the plants and seeds that require light to grow and germinate. Light encourages germination of existing seeds lying dormant in the soil and in many cases desirable plants will recolonize the wetland quickly.

Even with a successful initial treatment, some re-growth of Phragmites is expected due to unconnected rhizomes and new seed germination. For best results, the area is treated for at least two consecutive years and is re-planted with native grasses as needed. Future spot treatments may be necessary to prevent re-establishment.

Early Summer before the first treatment. The current year's growth is not yet flowering, and previous years stalks are still visible.

After two years of Fall herbicide treatment and Winter mowing, native wetland plants are rebounding. Structures that were hidden are revealed.

HERBICIDE USE IN WETLANDS

Environmental Concern Inc. is licensed by the Maryland Department of Agriculture to apply herbicide. Environmental Concern uses herbicide that is specially formulated to break down quickly in the environment. It does not harm fish, insects or other wildlife. We use a formulation that has been approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for use in wetlands. Care should be taken to spray only targeted plants with the herbicide. This is best done by professionals.