Threatened and Endangered Species in Forests of Wisconsin

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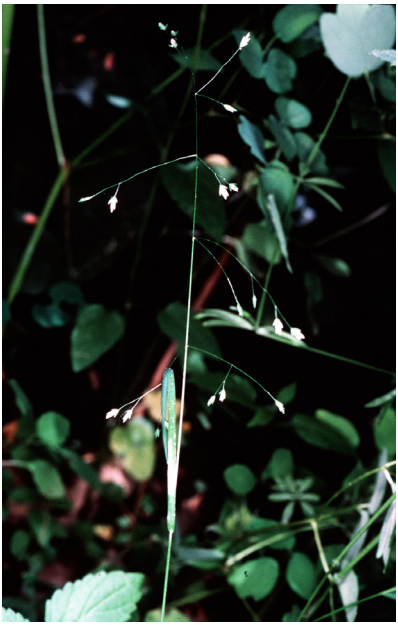
WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES

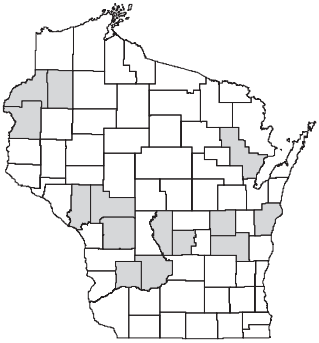
Bog Bluegrass

(Poa paludigena)

Federal Status: Not Listed
State Status: Threatened



Description: Bog bluegrass has slender, weak stems from 10 to 20 inches tall that are round and hollow, and have nodes where the leaves are attached. The leaves are slender, measuring about $^{1}/_{16}$ inch wide and 4 inches long. The flowers are small and inconspicuous; a hand lens is required for accurate identification. The little scales called lemmas that surround the even smaller flowers, are webbed at their bases and have hairs on them. Bog bluegrass grows in clumps; it does not have underground stems or runners from which new plants grow.

Habitat: Sometimes called marsh bluegrass because of its affinity for wet places, bog bluegrass is found in wet, mossy woods, along springs and in tamarack bogs. At such places the soil is soggy and "springy." In addition to tamarack, bog bluegrass often is found with black ash, yellow birch, poison sumac, cinnamon fern and/or skunk cabbage.

Forestry Considerations: This plant is particularly sensitive to alterations in soil hydrology. Any change in water level, including either flooding or drainage, should be avoided. Forestry activities should include leaving enough of the surrounding swamp forest for shade and natural regeneration. Following the recommendations in *Wisconsin's Forestry Best Management Practices for Water Quality* is advisable.