

# ESTUARIES & COASTAL WETLANDS OF LAKE SUPERIOR

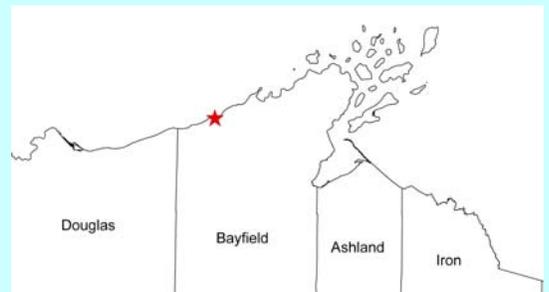
## Port Wing

Approximate Size: 830 (wetland area: 530 acres)\*

Ownership: WDNR/Private

Year Last Surveyed by WDNR/NHI: 1997

GLCWC Classification: Barred Drowned River Mouth



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### *Site Description*

This large complex of wetlands, forested sand ridges, beach, and open dune occurs at the mouth of the Flag River adjacent to the Village of Port Wing. A large slough, Bibon Lake, is situated within the southwestern portion of the site. Significant communities include coastal fen, coastal bog, Great Lakes dune, tamarack swamp, and several stands of dry pine forest with a strong boreal flavor. Overall quality of the natural communities is good to excellent. At least twelve species of rare plants and animals have been documented here including Wisconsin's only known population of the plant, fly honeysuckle.

The fen community consists of a floating mat of sedges, dominated by woolly sedge. Important associates are twig rush, sweet gale, and buckbean. The coastal bog fringes the margins of the uplands, with a mat of Sphagnum mosses, ericaceous shrubs, and sedges. This community contains species not typically found in truly ombrotrophic bogs. Small tamarack are scattered unevenly through this community. The tamarack swamp consists of three stands, each with an even-aged canopy of mature tamarack, a dense tall shrub layer of speckled alder, and a diverse low shrub/herb/bryophyte flora. The biota includes many rare species.

\*Acreages are rough estimates based on GIS and aerial photographs and do not reflect ownership or management boundaries.

### *Additional Comments*

Partially protected via a State Natural Area designation, management and protection of the site's natural features will present many challenges. Potential problems include: spread of narrow-leaved cattail and the aggressive common reed grass; diminished water quality due to discharge of effluent from the village sewage ponds into Bibon Lake; encroachment of developments into sensitive areas; disruption of coastal processes including longshore sediment transport by the jetties at the mouth of the river; and successional changes to the fire-dependent pine forests. A more comprehensive management and monitoring plan is needed, with participation from appropriate agency personnel, local governments, conservation organizations, and private citizens.

### *Abbreviations and Helpful References*

GLCWC - Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Classification.- [http://glc.org/wetlands/pdf/wetlands-class\\_rev1.pdf](http://glc.org/wetlands/pdf/wetlands-class_rev1.pdf)

Lake Superior Binational Program - <http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/lakesuperior/>

WDNR Coastal Wetlands webpages - <http://dnr.wi.gov>, Keyword: "coastal wetlands"

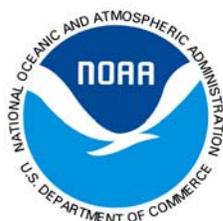
WDNR/NHI - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Natural Heritage Inventory Program.  
<http://dnr.wi.gov> , Keyword: "natural heritage"

"Managing Woodlands on Lake Superior's Red Clay Plain" - WDNR publication #PUB-FR-385 2007.  
<http://dnr.wi.gov>, Keyword: "bmp landowner guides"

Text describing this site was published previously in a 2002 WDNR publication entitled "A Data Compilation and Assessment of Coastal Wetlands of Wisconsin's Great Lakes" by E.J. Epstein, A. Galvin and W.A. Smith. To view this information within the context of the full report, go to <http://dnr.wi.gov> and enter the keywords "coastal wetlands."

### *Suggested Citation*

E.J. Epstein, A. Galvin and W.A. Smith. 2002. Site Description for Port Wing. In: "A Data Compilation and Assessment of Coastal Wetlands of Wisconsin's Great Lakes." PUBL ER-803 2002. <http://dnr.wi.gov>, Keyword: "coastal wetlands port wing"



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