

ESTUARIES & COASTAL WETLANDS OF LAKE SUPERIOR

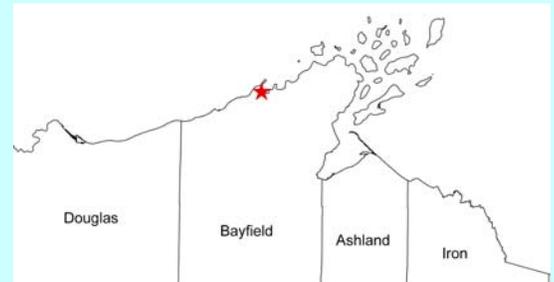
Bark Bay

Approximate Size: 770 (wetland area: 700 acres)*

Ownership: WDNR/Private

Year Last Surveyed by WDNR/NHI: 1997

GLCWC Classification: Barrier Beach Lagoon



E. J. Epstein



E. J. Epstein

Site Description

This large complex of coastal barrier spit, lagoon, springs, and wetlands occupies an embayment between two rocky headlands. The wetlands are extensive and include two major types: coastal fen and coastal bog. The fen dominants are typical of Lake Superior stands (i.e. woolly sedge, twig rush, sweet gale, water horsetail and buckbean). The coastal bog is composed of a mat of sphagnum mosses, ericaceous shrubs, sedges, and scattered small tamarack trees. Both communities are floristically diverse, in excellent condition, and support many rare species that include plants, birds and butterflies. A large lagoon occupies the center of the site and supports submergent and floating-leaved aquatic macrophytes. A forested interior spit parallel to the outer spit breaks the wetlands into two major sections. Communities are similar on both sides of the interior spit but the interior wetlands lack a central lagoon. Other significant features include a narrow strip of dry pine forest on the coastal spit, springs associated with the mouth of the Bark River on the eastern edge of the site, and small stands of tamarack and tall shrubs. The unnamed inlet stream on the west side of the site is bordered by several large clones of the invasive common reed grass.

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

Additional Comments

This site is a protection priority as its wetlands are extensive, in excellent condition, and support many rare, uncommon, and representative species. The common reed grass clone should be monitored and controlled, if necessary. A portion of the site is designated as a State Natural Area, but the boundary is not adequate to prevent negative impacts associated with increased development in the area. A broader view of the local watershed and the land uses therein is desirable to assess and better anticipate/address threats and protection needs.

Abbreviations and Helpful References

GLCWC - Great Lakes Coastal Wetland Classification.- 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 Bark Bay. 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 bark bay"



This project was funded by the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act.