

# ESTUARIES & COASTAL WETLANDS OF LAKE SUPERIOR

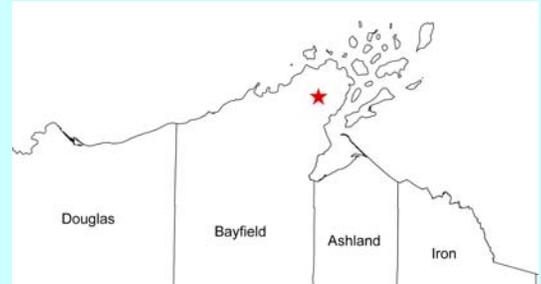
## Sultz Swamp

Approximate Size: 276 (wetland area: 276 acres)\*

Ownership: Bayfield County

Year Last Surveyed by WDNR/NHI: 1997

GLCWC Classification: N.A.



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### *Site Description*

This acid peatland occupies a depression high on the Bayfield Peninsula approximately six miles inland from the Lake Superior coast. Although there are other similar wetlands in this part of the basin, Sultz Swamp is the largest and is embedded within vast stretches of county-owned forest. The major features of this insular peatland include a mature swamp forest of black spruce, an extensive muskeg/open bog, and large populations of several rare species. Disturbances to the interior of the site have been minimal, with the exception of a maintained power line corridor, which crosses the area east-west. White cedar logs were removed from the more minerotrophic margins of the wetland in the distant past.

Underneath its closed canopy, the black spruce swamp is very open and park-like. The understory plants are typical of this community type and include ericaceous shrubs, and a few herbs: three-leaved false Solomon's-seal, moccasin flower, and native sedges (poor and three-sedge sedge). A level carpet of Sphagnum mosses covers the surface. Canopy gaps are filled with thickets of young black spruce or tamarack.

Where sphagnum has accumulated and formed deep, hummocky layers of peat, the spruce and tamarack become scattered and stunted, resulting in a more open community type called "muskeg." The understory is dominated by ericaceous shrubs such as leatherleaf, bog laurel, bog rosemary, and small cranberry. The presence of dense patches of blueberries and gnarly jack pine hint at a history of fire. Common graminoids of the open bog and muskeg include the tussock sedge and tawny cotton grasses, plus few-seeded and poor sedges. Boreal birds and butterflies were noted at this site, and rare plants occur here.

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

### *Additional Comments*

Acid peatlands are uncommon in the coastal zone, and this site supports one of the better developed and least disturbed complexes of the type in the southwestern Lake Superior coastal region.

### *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 1997 WDNR publication entitled "Priority Wetland Sites of Wisconsin's Lake Superior Basin" by Eric J. Epstein, Emmet J. Judziewicz 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, E.J. Judziewicz and W.A. Smith. 1997. Site Description for Sultz Swamp.  
In: "Priority Wetland Sites of Wisconsin's Lake Superior Basin." PUBL ER-096 99.  
<http://dnr.wi.gov>, Keyword: "coastal wetlands sultz swamp"



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