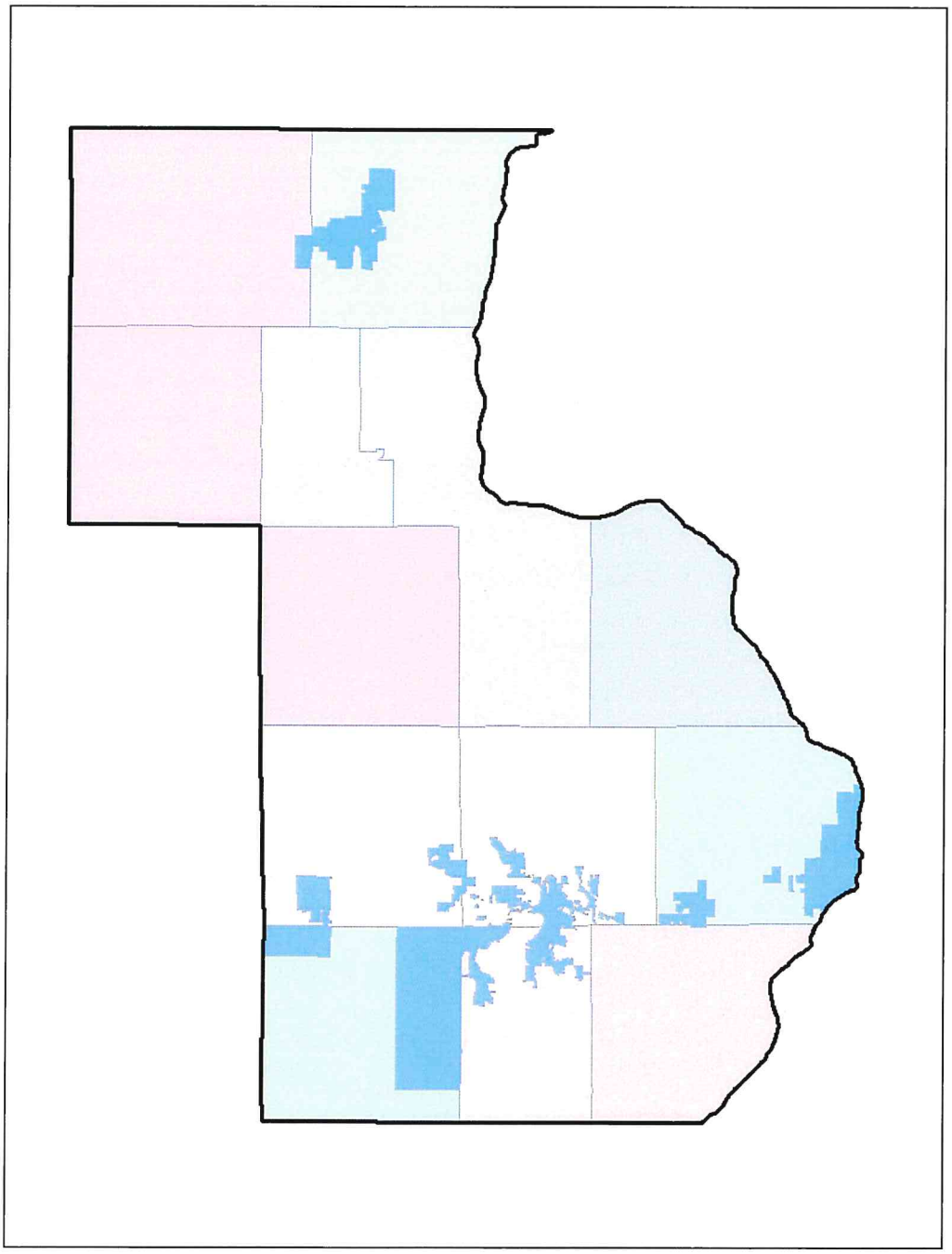
# Chisago County Cooperative Weed Management Area Management Plan

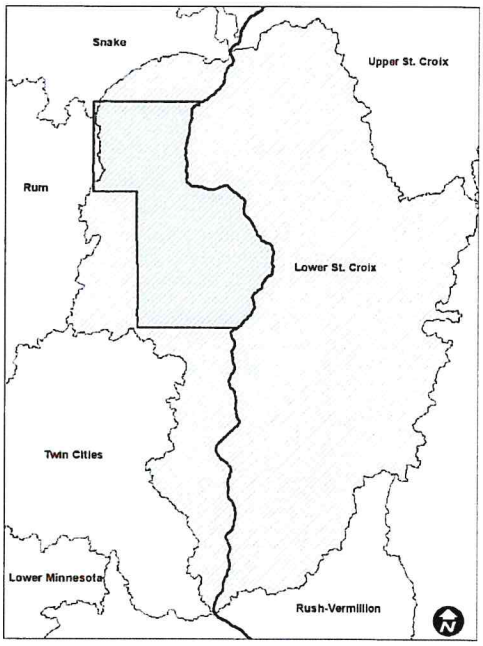
2021



## Description of CWMA

The Chisago County CWMA includes all the land within Chisago County. Almost the entire county is within the Lower St. Croix watershed, with very small portions in the Rum and Snake watersheds. The major rivers include the St. Croix and the Sunrise Rivers. Lakes are abundant in the region.

Legal jurisdiction of public lands includes the U.S. National Park Service and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Private lands include farms, cropland, forests, and suburban homesites. The major land uses within Chisago County are agriculture and forest.




The topography was shaped by the last glaciation and the St. Croix River on the eastern border of the county. An escarpment parallels the St. Croix River along most of the border. Glacial deposits of gravel and sand are present. Bedrock can be found at or very near the surface in the Taylors Falls area.

The pre-settlement vegetation of the area was mostly forest, with some small pockets of savannah or prairie. Much of the land has since been cleared for agricultural use. The white pine trees that once covered the area were nearly entirely logged off. The forests are now mostly dominated by hardwood species.

The Chisago Lakes Chain of Lakes, in the southern portion of the county, is impacted by tourism related to lake recreation and fishing. Interstate 35 bisects the county, running north and south. Road authority is divided between the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Chisago County, and various townships.

## Purpose of CWMA Management Plan

This management plan is established to serve as a coordinated approach to management of noxious and invasive weeds in the county. It is intended to concentrate available resources and capital towards eradication and control of the noxious weed populations within Chisago County.

## CWMA Objectives

1. Objective 1: Develop and maintain an inventory.

   Initial mapping of known populations of noxious weeds will be focus of early work. In particular, mapping along County highways will be completed. Adding additional infestations as they are found will be important to maintaining an up-to-date database. Reporting locations of infestations will be a shared responsibility among all members of the CWMA.

2. Objective 2: Priority noxious weeds on County-owned lands.

a) Wild Parsnip

Wild parsnip is a Minnesota prohibited-control species, meaning that the plant must be controlled by preventing the spread and reproduction of the species. Wild parsnip can cause blistering of the skin when the plant sap is exposed to sunlight. In the past several years, wild parsnip has spread rapidly throughout the county, especially along roadways. The focus will be to eradicate or control wild parsnip on all County-owned properties and along all County highways.
Public education handout: Attachment A

b) Non-native Phragmites

Non-native phragmites is a Minnesota restricted species, which means it is widely distributed throughout the state and are detrimental to human or environmental health, the environment, public roads, crops, livestock or other property, but can only be controlled by preventing their spread. Non-native phragmites, in Chisago county, is concentrated in the Chisago Lakes Chain of Lakes watershed. It is much more aggressive than its native cousin and is known for taking over shorelines and displacing native phragmites. This species is a secondary focus for the CWMA as it is not dangerous to human health but negatively affects native semi-aquatic habitat.
Public education handout: Attachment B

c) Other species that become a concern in the county

Weeds listed on the Minnesota Noxious Weed list by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture will be the weeds of concern for the Chisago County CWMA. Of highest concern are the Eradicate species, and then the Control species.

3. Objective 3: Improvement to the weed inspector process.

The first individuals to receive reports of noxious weeds is the township weed inspectors. These individuals receive annual training on identification of noxious weeds. However, there has been almost no participation by township weed inspectors in reporting, citing, or controlling noxious weeds. Meetings will be held to determine how to improve the current process and what is needed to make the weed inspectors comfortable with their responsibility. The Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District will serve as a technical resource for weed inspectors and landowners to help restore sites with infestations. Public education will also be important to future identification and control of noxious weeds.

4. Objective 4: Gravel Pits

Several gravel pits have known infestations of noxious weeds. An inventory of public and private gravel pits will be conducted by County staff to identify what weeds are present and if they are likely to spread through movement of gravel. Priority will be set on the public gravel pit inventory. Weed management plans will be established for individual pits that are found to have noxious weeds present.

5. Objective 5: Transition to private land education and control.

   After wild parsnip and other noxious weeds are being treated on County-owned lands, and the weed inspector process has been improved, focus will shift to notifying private landowners of populations of wild parsnip and other noxious weeds on their property. Citations will be issued by the township weed inspectors. Enforcement, as needed, is the responsibility of the County Ag Inspector(s). Technical assistance for landowners is available through the Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District.

## Weeds of Concern

Noxious weeds have been introduced to Chisago County from a variety of sources. Transportation routes are a common location throughout the county where noxious weed populations are discovered. Plant seeds can be spread by mowing, which often results in populations found along roadways. Seed can also be transported in gravel, delivering new populations wherever the gravel is dumped. Disturbed areas, including timber landings, rights-of-ways, roadside ditches, and agricultural lands are likely locations for the establishment of noxious weed populations.

The weeds listed on the Minnesota Noxious Weed list by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture will be the weeds of concern for the Chisago County CWMA. Of highest concern are the Eradicate species, and then the Control species, particularly wild parsnip for its dangers to human health and safety. Any changes to the Minnesota Noxious Weed List will be adopted by the CWMA.

The only known infestation of a prohibited-eradicate species in Chisago County is oriental bittersweet and has been treated.

## CWMA Policy

1. Commitment to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

   Principals of the IPM system will be followed for management of noxious weeds. Each infestation will be evaluated based on location, species, impact non-target plants and animals, season, safety, and any other factors of importance. The actual control method to be used on each infestation will be determined based on recommendations from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and the University of Minnesota.

   Pesticide application will be in accordance with label instructions and all safety precautions specified in the material safety data sheets (MSDS) will be followed.

2. Chisago County is a pollinator-friendly county

   The affect of treatments to pollinator species will be considered when determining the action plan for a noxious weed infestation. When possible, measures will be taken to minimize impacts to pollinator species.

3. Management priority

The first priority for time and funding will be the eradication of prohibited eradicate noxious weeds. The second priority will be the control and eradication of wild parsnip. Next is the control and eradication of other species on the prohibited control list. If new species that are a threat to human safety are identified, high priority will be given to the management of the species, as determined by the CWMA.

Management priorities may be updated as wild parsnip populations decline.

# Chisago County Cooperative Weed Management Area Action Plan

## 2021

This action plan will remain in affect until terminated by mutual consent of the agencies involved. A meeting of the involved agencies will be held annually, during the first three months of the calendar year, to develop and modify the action plan.

### CWMA Participants

- Chisago County
- Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District

Future potential participants:

- Township weed inspectors
- MN Department of Transportation
- MN Department of Natural Resources
- City officials
- National Park Service
- Chisago Lakes LID

### Responsibility and Funding

The following agencies agree to provide:

1. Chisago County Ag Inspectors
    a. Administration associated with their assigned duties as County Ag Inspectors through the Minnesota Department of Agriculture.
    b. Biennial reporting and mapping (began in 2018) of wild parsnip and other noxious weeds for the following townships in the county: Wyoming, Franconia, Shafer, Chisago Lake (North and South), Lent, Amador and Sunrise South.
    c. Coordination of inspection of gravel pits to determine the presence of noxious weeds.
2. Chisago County Public Works Department
    a. Management of wild parsnip along county highways and other county-owned land, including herbicide application, mowing, and other methods as determined by the CWMA.
    b. Herbicide for treatment of wild parsnip and other noxious weeds on county-owned property.
3. Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District
    a. Biennial reporting and mapping (began in 2018) of wild parsnip and other noxious weeds for the following townships in the county: Nessel, Rushseba, Fish Lake, Harris, North Branch, and Sunrise North.
    b. Technical assistance to the County and to landowners for restoration of noxious weed sites.
    c. Application for grant funding from various sources.

d. Compiling and managing map and records of wild parsnip populations and other noxious weed locations.

## Proposed Actions

1. Objective 1: Develop and maintain an inventory
    a. Complete survey and inventory of all county-owned land and county roadside ditches specifically for wild parsnip, and noting any other noxious weeds encountered during survey.
    b. Report results of inventory to the online invasive species database, EDDMaps.

2. Objective 2: Wild Parsnip on County-owned lands.
    a. Identify all county-owned properties and county roads.
    b. Herbicide treatment of wild parsnip populations with metsulfuron-methyl or 2, 4-D during the months of September and October. Follow all label instructions for application rates. Utilize targeted spraying during still conditions to minimize non-target impacts. Early morning and late afternoon applications are best to avoid affecting pollinator species.
    c. Wear protective clothing and gloves to prevent phytophotodermatitis.
    d. Do not mow once plants have gone to seed; this will only spread seed.

3. Objective 3: Improvement to the weed inspector process.
    a. Formal action may be taken on this objective in 2021.

4. Objective 4: Gravel Pits
    a. Identify all gravel pits within Chisago County.
    b. Contact owners of gravel pits to schedule a site assessment.
    c. Conduct inventory of noxious weeds at gravel pits.
        i. Inventory public gravel pits in 2021
        ii. Inventory private gravel pits in 2022
    d. Report results of inventory to the online invasive species database, EDDMaps.
    e. Create weed management plan(s) for gravel pits where noxious weeds are present.

5. Objective 5: Transition to private land education and control.
    a. No formal action will be taken on this objective in 2021.

This Management Plan and 2021 Action Plan are adopted by the following agencies involved in the Chisago County Coordinated Weed Management Area:

Chisago County Board — Date: 7/9/21

Chisago County – Ag Inspector — Date: 7/12/21

Chisago County – Public Works Director — Date: 7/12/21

Chisago Soil and Water Conservation District — Date: 7-13-21

CHISAGO COUNTY
JUL - 7 2021
BOARD APPROVED

**How to identify Wild Parsnip:**

- Grows 4 – 6 feet tall
- Leaves alternate along the stem, and consist of egg-shaped leaflets having saw toothed edges
- Leaflets are yellowish-green, shiny, and oblong
- Bolted stems are erect, and terminate in flat-topped compound flower umbels.
- Umbels are generally 2 – 6 inches wide and contain many small 5-petaled yellow flowers
- Flowers will appear May through late August

Not to be confused with the native look alike plant called the "Golden Alexander" which has distinctively different smooth leaves with fine serrations and flowers in a more loosely and unevenly cluster.

## Questions:

**Contact Us**


Jeff Fertig, Weed Inspector

Phone: 651-213-8378
Email: jeff.fertig@chisagocounty.us

OR

Joe Triplett, County Highway Director

Phone: 651-213-8708
Email: joe.triplett@chisagocounty.us

Website: www.chisagocounty.us

Environmental Services Department
313 N. Main St., Ste. 240
Center City, MN 55012


# WILD PARSNIP

*Control and Safety Protocols*

*Always wear protective clothing!*

## Prevention & Management

- Protective clothing and gloves should always be worn to avoid skin contact with the toxic plant sap.
- Hand pulling is NOT recommended.
- Rosettes and bolted stems may be killed by using a sharp spade or shovel to sever the tap root 1 to 2 inches below the soil surface.
- Mowing or cutting the base of stands prior to flowering in June will kill a majority of plants and reduce seed production.
- Use a broadleaf herbicide in the early spring or late fall to target plants prior to flowering.

### Where is wild parsnip most commonly found?

Wild parsnip is often located in undisturbed areas, including along roadways, pastures, ditches, abandoned fields, and forest edges in areas of sunlight.

---

***"If sap comes in contact with skin, avoid exposure to sunlight, immediately wash skin with soap and water, and seek medical attention."***

---

### Help stop the spread!

- Clean your gardening or farm equipment and clothing after each use.
- Always rinse down equipment before entering and leaving a recreation site.
- Stay on designated roads and trails.
- Do not remove weeds from an infested area when possible.

*Skins reaction to contact with plant sap.*

### Phytophotodermatitis:

When skin comes in contact with plant sap in the presence of sunlight, it can cause severe rashes, blisters, and discoloration of skin. Symptoms may present within 48 hours of exposure.

***Do not touch contaminated clothing or equipment without gloves.**

***Sap can be transferred to skin through contact.**

***Immediately wash skin with soap and water, and seek medical attention if exposed.**

# Invasive Phragmites in the Chisago Lakes Chain of Lakes Watershed

## WHAT IS INVASIVE PHRAGMITES?

(PRONOUNCED FRAG-MI-TEZ)

The Chisago Lakes Area has both native and non-native phragmites. Invasive phragmites is a non-native, semi-aquatic perennial grass. It is known as "Invasive Common Reed." It is tall (reaching up to 15 feet) and densely growing. It is found in wetlands, river bank areas, on shorelines, and in roadside ditches.

## WHY IS INVASIVE PHRAGMITES A CONCERN?

Invasive phragmites in the Chisago Lakes Area grows fast and can take over shoreland and wetland areas, push out native vegetation, reduce habitat quality for wildlife, obstruct lake views and block water access. North and South Center Lakes, and Chisago and South Lindstrom Lakes are highly infested with invasive phragmites.

## HOW IS INVASIVE PHRAGMITES CURRENTLY CONTROLLED?

Local lake associations are working with the MN Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC), the Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District and Chisago Soil & Water Conservation District to identify and map occurrences of invasive phragmites and determine long-term ways to treat infestations along shorelines, and in wetland and upland areas in the Chisago Lakes area.

Center Lakes Association and Chisago-Lindstrom Lakes Association are actively working with lakeshore owners to cut stands of invasive phragmites on shorelines and treat with an approved herbicide.

## WHAT IF I HAVE INVASIVE PHRAGMITES ON MY SHORELINE?

Contact your local lake association and a representative will visit your lakeshore property, map the location and take a sample to send to MAISRC to confirm if it is native or invasive phragmites. If found to be invasive, the lake association will contact you on how to best treat invasive phragmites. Visit www.maisrc.umn.edu/phragmites-map to see if your property has been identified as infested.

*Information obtained from www.maisrc.umn.edu/phragmites, www.mda.state.mn.us/plants/pestmanagement/weedcontrol/noxiouslist/commonreed, and www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phragmites.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

- Center Lakes Association
  info@centerlakes.org
- Chisago County Aquatic Invasive Species
  susanna.wilson@chisagocounty.us
  651-213-8380
- Chisago County Soil & Water Conservation District
  casey.thiel@mn.nacdnet.net
  651-674-2333
- Chisago Lakes Lake Improvement District
  jerry.spetzman@chisagocounty.us
  651-213-8383
- Chisago-Lindstrom Lakes Association
  www.clla-lakes.com
- Green Lake Association
  www.greenlakechisago.com

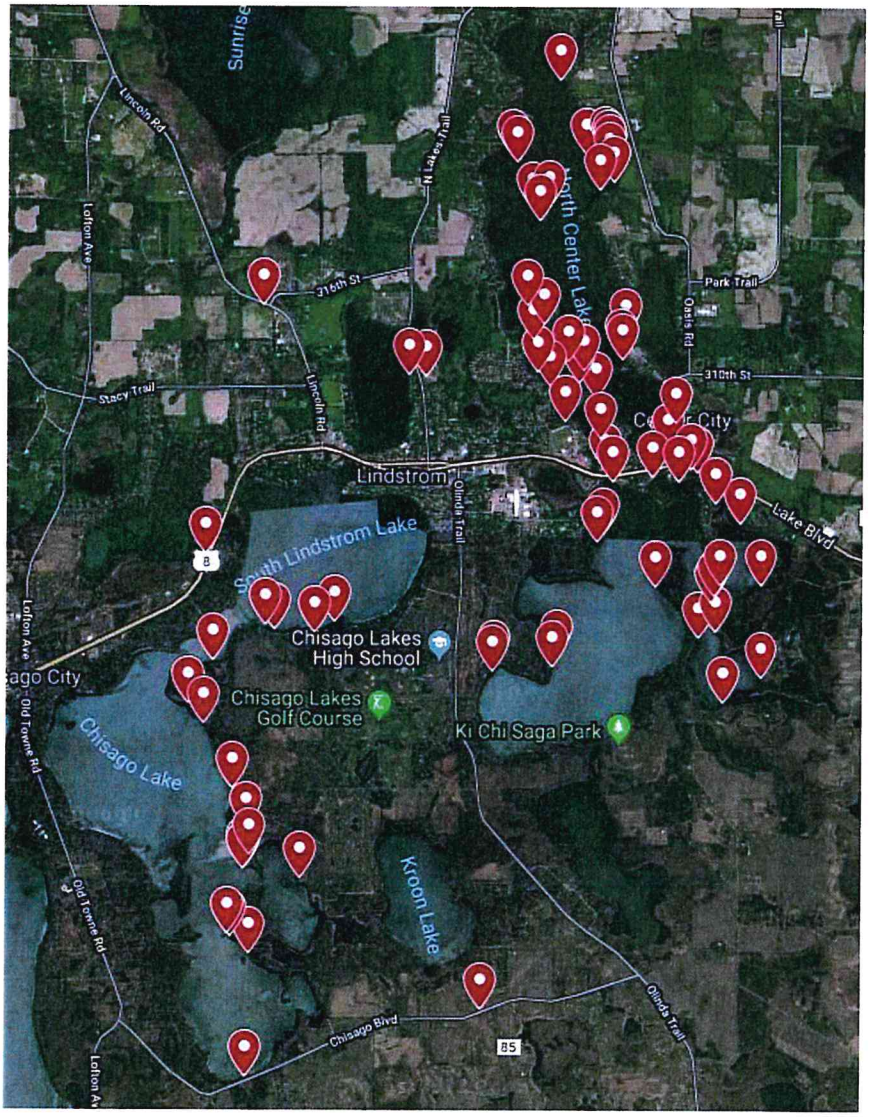
Phragmites Seedhead
Caleb Slemmons, National Ecological Observatory Network, www.bugwood.org

# INVASIVE PHRAGMITES INFESTATIONS IN THE CHISAGO LAKES CHAIN OF LAKES WATERSHED

This map shows where infestations of invasive phragmites are located in the Chisago Lakes area, as identified by members of the Center Lakes Association and Chisago—Lindstrom Lakes Association.

For more information on these specific locations, visit the interactive map at www.maisrc.umn.edu/

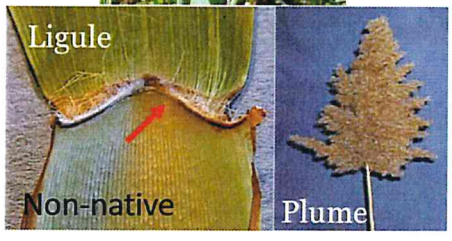

Phragmites, Caleb Slemmons, National Ecological Observatory Network, www.bugwood.org




For more information, or for help on how to identify invasive phragmites, visit the University of Minnesota at www.maisrc.umn.edu/identifying-phragmites.

U of M, MAISRC, www.maisrc.umn.edu/about-phragmites

# IDENTIFYING INVASIVE PHRAGMITES


We can identify invasive phragmites by the plant stem (color and texture), ligule (area where the leaf blade joins the leaf sheath), and plume (seedhead or the plant flowers).

### STEMS

Stems are hollow, ridged, and rough. They lack fungal spots (common on native phragmites). They are green with yellow nodes during the growing season and tan/yellow in the winter.

Blades (or leaves) are blue-green, 15 - 20 inches long, and 1 - 1.5 inches wide. They are arranged one side of the stem.

### LIGULES

In summer and fall, the ligule looks like a thin, brown to black fine line.

### PLUMES

Purple flowers form in early August, golden in late season/winter producing thousands of grayish seeds.