

PHRAGMITES

AT A GLANCE



FFSL is the executive management authority of approximately 1.5 million acres of lakebed that includes critical wetlands of hemispheric importance. Invasive vegetation is actively managed by FFSL to enhance and maintain the crucial functions of these wetlands.

Background

Phragmites australis (Common Reed), or Phragmites, is an invasive grass-like plant that has taken over wetlands across North America.

Phragmites invasion can cause numerous negative impacts, including:

Alteration of hydrology and sediment transport

Conversion of diverse native wetland or riparian habitats into homogeneous, fire-prone lands – decimating migratory bird habitat

Significant impediment to access to recreation and rescue



In 2011, Phragmites covered approximately 23,000 acres of Great Salt Lake Wetlands. Utah Lake wetlands and the Jordan River riparian area have also been heavily invaded.



Scan this QR code to visit our StoryMap of the Phragmites removal success at Utah Lake.

Phragmites Control

Phragmites can be controlled with integrated treatments of herbicide, mowing or trampling, prescribed fire, grazing, water control, and re-vegetation over 3+ years

Herbicide use has been shown to be the most effective and crucial component of an integrated treatment approach because it is the only way kill the plant's root system.

The USU Wetland Ecology Lab has produced numerous research studies to develop well-established best management practices for controlling Phragmites.



Treatments on Sovereign Lands

(as of 2023)

As the manager of the beds of the State's navigable waters, FFSL has been working collaboratively to control Phragmites over the past 10 years.

Great Salt Lake – over 15,600 acres have been treated by FFSL, plus many more by DWR, TNC, and BRMBR.

Utah Lake – over 10,000 acres have been treated, resulting in over 70% reduction in Phragmites cover.

Jordan River – many pilot projects are currently underway to establish best management practices for controlling Phragmites on the river.

Bear Lake – Pro-active control efforts have kept Phragmites cover limited to a few small patches.