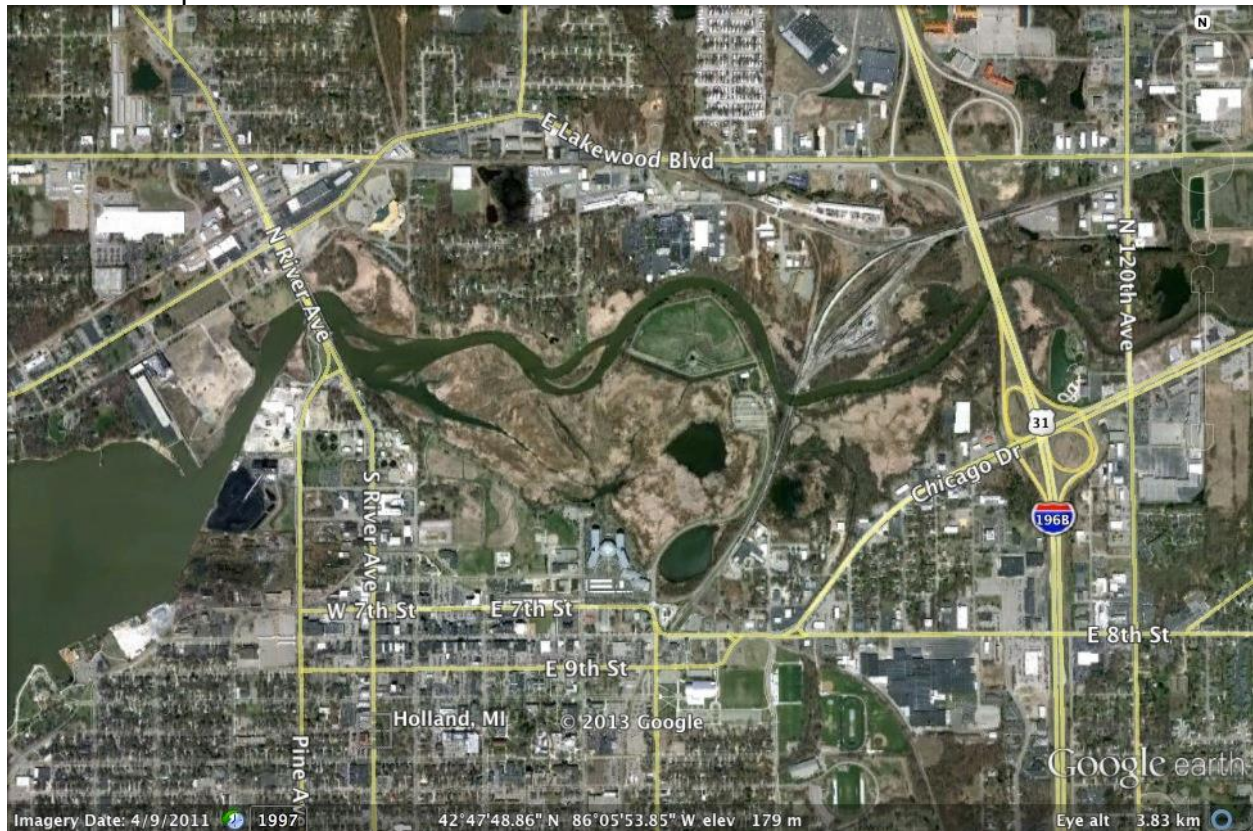


Lake Macatawa Marsh Prescribed Burn

During the afternoon hours of Wednesday, April 23rd, six forecasters from NWS Grand Rapids attended a prescribed burn that occurred in the Marsh area of Lake Macatawa near Windmill Island in Holland. This visit by the forecasters served two purposes. One of the purposes was to provide weather support to the Holland Fire Department for the burn to keep everyone on the burn and the general public safe, and to keep property and structures safe around the burn, including the famous Windmill. The other purpose was for this to serve as a familiarization visit for the forecasters that provide fire weather forecasting to see the process and behavior of a prescribed burn.

Here is a map of the burn area:



The purpose of the burn was one of the final steps in eradicating an invasive species to the Great Lakes area called Phragmites. The link below from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality goes into more detail about the eradication of the Phragmites: [Info on the Invasive Species of Phragmites In the Great Lakes](#)

Preparation and coordination of this burn, and the NWS role in the support has been ongoing for over a year. Conditions have not been favorable for one reason or another to conduct the burn until recently. Once it was determined that the burn would try to be conducted on Wednesday, April 23rd, multiple forecasts and briefings were produced and conducted by NWS Grand Rapids beginning on Monday, April 21st, and continuing into the morning of the burn on the morning of Wednesday, April 23rd. These forecasts provided

weather support to the Holland Fire Department and command personnel for the burn, as to whether the burn would take place, or not due to safety considerations.

The forecasters arrived at the burn site in time for the operations briefing for everyone involved in the burn. The plan for initiating the burn, the layout of the land, the safety plan, traffic flow, and weather were all a part of the briefing. After the briefing, all personnel dispersed to their assigned locations. The fire was started around the perimeter of the marsh. The fire then crept into the thicker vegetation of the Phragmites.

The forecasters and command personnel at the burn discussed the weather parameters at different times throughout the burn as the fire progressed.

Below are a few pictures that were taken at the prescribed burn by NWS Grand Rapids staff:



Flames in the marsh area just south of the parking lot at Windmill Island



A view of the marsh as the burn is started



Some of the burning taking place near the Windmill



Smoke plumes of the fire from a distance