



The Municipality of West Elgin

22413 Hoskins Line, Rodney Ontario N0L 2C0

May 14, 2021

At the Regular Meeting of Council on May 13, 2021 the Council of the Municipality of West Elgin passed the following Resolution:

Resolution No. 2021- 147

Moved: Councillor Rowe

Seconded: Deputy Mayor Leatham

Whereas *Phragmites australis* (*Phragmites*) is an invasive perennial grass that continues to cause severe damage to wetlands and beaches in areas around the Great Lakes; and

Whereas *Phragmites australis* grows and spreads rapidly, allowing the plant to invade new areas and grow into large monoculture stands in a short amount of time, and is an allelopathic plant that secretes toxins from its roots into the soil which impede the growth of neighbouring plant species; and

Whereas *Phragmites australis* results in loss of biodiversity and species richness, loss of habitat, changes in hydrology due to its high metabolic rate, changes in nutrient cycling as it is slow to decompose, and increased fire hazard due to the combustibility of its dead stalks, and can have an adverse impact on agriculture, particularly in drainage ditches; and

Whereas invasive *Phragmites* has been identified as Canada's worst invasive plant species by Agriculture and AgriFood Canada;

Whereas the Ontario government has made it illegal to import, deposit, release, breed/grow, buy, sell, lease or trade invasive *Phragmites* under the Invasive Species Act; and

Whereas volunteers, non-governmental organizations and various municipalities have invested hundreds of dollars in investments and labour annually for more than eight years in executing management plans to control invasive *Phragmites* on roads, shorelines and in wetlands; and

Whereas roads and highways where *Phragmites* that are left untreated become spread vectors that continually risk new and treated wetlands and shoreline areas; and

Whereas according to “Invasive Phragmites Best Management Practices” by the Ontario Phragmites Working Group, best roadside management practices for Phragmites australis include detection, herbicide application, cutting, and re-treatment of re-growth as necessary; and

Whereas these best management practices are most effective when used in a multi-pronged approach as opposed to when used as stand-alone control measures; and

Whereas mother nature does not recognize political boundaries. Therefore, it is imperative that Municipalities, Districts, the Province and the Federal government work together in collaboration to eradicate Canada’s worst invasive plant species Phragmites australis;

Whereas the Municipality of West Elgin has been implementing measures for eradication of Phragmites over the past 3 years, including mapping of cells along Municipal and County Roadways, applying herbicide, cutting and monitoring re-growth; and ensuring clean equipment protocols for appropriate contract tenders; and

Whereas the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has carried out some Phragmites eradication along Provincial highways, however this process has not been successful because the process has not included a program to deal with surviving plants, and also has not dealt with growth beyond the road allowance, therefore enabling fast re-growth; and

Whereas in the past there has been no approved herbicide for use in wet sites; however, in 2020 a product (Habitat Aqua) has been approved for use in areas of lying water and along waterways in Ontario;

Now Therefore be it Resolved that the Municipality of West Elgin request the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) to map, treat, monitor, and eradicate re-growth of invasive Phragmites annually on all Provincial highways, including areas beyond the road allowances, where Phragmites cells extend; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) communicates that strategy on mapping (detecting sites) and controlling invasive Phragmites on provincial highways, the specific highway management plans and results by each MTO region and each highway in the region and work in coordination with the Municipality of West Elgin; and

Be it Further Resolved that the Province of Ontario designate Phragmites australis as a noxious weed under the Noxious Weed Act; and in collaboration with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Phragmites Working Group, and Ontario Municipalities, carry out a public education campaign regarding best practices in

eradicating Phragmites; and if possible, develop a system of grants to support the uptake of these best practices by citizens; and

Be it Further Resolved that the Council for the Corporation of the Municipality of West Elgin directs staff to send this resolution to all Municipalities in Ontario; Honourable Omar Alhabra, Minister of Transportation (Canada); Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Ontario Minister of Transport; James Corcoran, General Services Coordinator, vegetation, MTO West Region; Honourable Ernie Hardeman, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs; Jeff Yurek, MPP; and Karen Vecchio MP.

Carried

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jana Nethercott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jana Nethercott
Clerk