

ACTION ITEM: At the past meeting the working group suggested each member should create a list of issues facing the member's department/organization due to *Phragmites*, as well as a list of management efforts that would assist in mitigating the issues. Please send Linda McDougall (lmcDouga@London.ca) your priority issue(s) and management action(s) for your department/organization prior to the next meeting on Thursday, October 12, 2017.

How do we prioritize efforts of controlling *Phragmites*? By Suba Sivakumar (EEPAC)

1. Mapping and ranking areas for *Phragmites* management

At the London *Phragmites* Working Group (LPWG) meeting we discussed about mapping *Phragmites* in London, ON. As we are documenting a "static map" of *Phragmites* distribution in London, it would be useful if we could also initiate and continue to build a *Phragmites* distribution modeling (SDM) system. A very simplified SDM could be built using *Phragmites* distribution with environmental and topographic characteristics of associated locations. We could get input from St. Thomas *Phragmites* management strategy, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (*Phragmites* control has already taken place in ESAs) and using Janice Gilbert's expertise to identify *Phragmites* dispersal mechanisms, environmental predictors for *Phragmites* dispersal, close-range dispersal and habitat suitability for locations in London.

As discussed at LPWG, general ranking determining how to prioritize areas as follows:

- I. Human Life
- II. Natural Heritage System
- III. Aesthetic

We could consider this ranking as our short term (immediate) goals.

But at the same time as this is a "race" between highly invasive species and our strategies to control the same. If we can rank areas from a "*Phragmites* prospective" for dispersal ability and habitat suitability, and incorporate this in our long term (or housekeeping) plan that would help us to become *Phragmites* free eventually.

Exemplar 1: If there is a patch of *Phragmites* which is only affecting Aesthetics, in our short term priority, it will get rank 3. But this patch is near a water body with tides, topology facilitates wind currents and near by new land developments are occurring. Thus this patch will have ranking 1 for dispersal and *Phragmites* habitability (in near by disturbed area).

Exemplar 2: *Phragmites* control has already taken place in ESAs, LPWG wants to expand these efforts" (discussed at the meeting). As great effort and resources have been used to control *Phragmites* in ESAs, we need to focus on areas adjacent ESAs, that may potentially deliver *Phragmites* propagules to ESAs where habitability for *Phragmites* is proven but it is controlled now.

2. Coordinated response and designated task force for *Phragmites* management

City of London is working on developing "Report a *Phragmites*" mapping tool on the City website. The City should develop a coordinated intake and response to *Phragmites*, regardless of where it is (ESA, park, roadside, etc).

3. Proactive measures

EEPAC has already suggested that road projects include funding for invasive species control, particularly those in areas where there is *Phragmites* along the roadside (Sunningdale Road for example) in ditches.

St. Thomas *Phragmites* management strategy have achieved great success. Janice's guidance, David Collins's (Chair of the St. Thomas *Phragmites* Control Committee) and his team's commitment have played great role in their success. It is a great strategy for London to provide precedence for *Phragmites* control, create a document for *Phragmites* management & implementation process and a *Phragmites* Management task force is needed with great commitment which is very pivotal for success.

Three other suggestions:

- A. At the meeting it was suggested that "Ideally, the strategy could prioritize sites based on going after the "low hanging fruit" first". At times going after "low hanging fruits" can be very inefficient and can cause confusion and frustration to few parties involved in the team. So it would be great if we could specifically define what is implied by "low hanging fruit"; list such sites and inform all parties involved about the criteria used for selecting such sites, rationale about this process and the outcome (list of sites/locations).
- B. There are several active researches reported about how invasive *Phragmites* could change soil ecology. It would be good if we could look into soil ecology changes in London, collect data and incorporate soil preservation as our long term strategy. If any effective strategy is proposed based on soil ecology in the future, London will be in a better position to implement such strategy.
- C. Implement and/or monitor proper training and special permit requirements to apply pesticides to water bodies or near water where it is likely that there is drift or runoff into water bodies.