

Communication and Notification Plan for Phragmites Control in Long Point

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
Aylmer District

August 2018



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1. Communication Plan

1.1. Background

Phragmites (*Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. Ex Steud) has been described as Canada's worst invasive plant. It is a perennial grass that is causing damage to coastal wetlands in Ontario. Phragmites invasion and subsequent rapid expansion has been documented as contributing to the decline of at least 25% of Ontario's species at risk. Studies on the control of Phragmites conducted in Ontario and the United States, suggest that the most effective control methods include a combination of herbicide application and mechanical control (cutting/rolling and prescribed burning). As such, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry ('the ministry') will be using these combined methods to control/eradicate Phragmites within the Long Point Region.

To address the continued and exponential growth of Phragmites in the Long Point Region, the ministry initiated a project in March 2015 to compile an application for an Emergency Registration (ER) to Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency.

In June 2015, a presentation was given at the Long Point Ratepayers' Association Annual General Meeting to advise members of the public about the EUR application. Subsequent to that meeting the Long Point Ratepayers' Association held a fundraising event in support of Phragmites control efforts in the Long Point Crown Marsh. An additional community information session was held in July 2015, organized by the Long Point Phragmites Action Alliance to share information on the impacts of Phragmites, future control plans and opportunities for the public to become engaged. Overwhelming support for the project was received at all of these events.

Following the public information sessions, the ministry issued a Class Environmental Assessment for Resource Stewardship and Facility Development, which included a public review period (July-August 2015). The Class Environmental Assessment identified the herbicide application project plan – notification of this review was posted in 16 prominent locations in Long Point and Port Rowan communities. During this period, no comments were received.

The ministry submitted the application for an Emergency Registration in January 2016. This request for an Emergency Registration for the Long Point Region was based on

the observed exponential growth of Phragmites in these coastal marshes. Local biologists and scientists have advised that the health of these coastal marshes is at a critical tipping point. If immediate action is not taken, the provincial, national and globally significant natural heritage values (for example: species at risk and habitats) for which these areas are recognized may be permanently lost.

The Emergency Registration application included aerial and ground application of an herbicide (active ingredient glyphosate) to control Phragmites in shoreline and wetland areas as a pilot project at three areas: 1) the Long Point Crown Marsh; 2) the tip of Long Point; and 3) the Long Point Company private marsh.

The Emergency Registration application was approved by Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency in June 2016.

In 2017, a subsequent application was made to PMRA for an ER and approved again for the Long Point Region. In 2017, additional areas were targeted in Turkey Point and the Lower Big Creek Watershed to further control Phragmites in shoreline and wetland areas of the Long Point Bay region.

A Revised Notice of Completion for a Category B Class Environmental Assessment was posted on July 3rd, 2017 to address the project expansion areas and has allowed for the opportunity for public review for a minimum of 30 days. On January 5th, 2018, the public notice period closed for the proposal to control Phragmites and Turkey Point Provincial Park as part of requirements under the Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves.

1.2. Meeting with the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change met with the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit regarding project details and the Notification Plan found below. The Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit will be notified 48 hours prior to project commencement and will be provided with key messages to support any inquires they may receive.

1.3. Public Information Session

A public information session, led by the Long Point Phragmites Action Alliance, was held in the Long Point Area on July 20th, 2018 to provide updated information on the herbicide application project to local residents. The ministry was present to answer

project questions including specific requirements for landowners and anticipated treatment timing windows.

2. Notification Plan

2.1. Introduction

This pesticide use notification plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Pesticides Act, 1990.

The purpose of this plan is to meet the public's general right to know about herbicide applications made to outdoor public places that are owned or controlled by public authorities. The plan allows members of the public to take action to avoid potential contact with herbicides, if they wish. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry ('the ministry') ensures that herbicides are applied to public places in a safe, responsible manner, minimizing harm to the community and the environment.

This plan sets out how the ministry will notify members of the public of herbicide applications made for the purpose of controlling Phragmites in aquatic areas in the Long Point Crown Marsh and the tip of Long Point between August 15th and October 31, 2018.

The plan describes:

- What places are covered by the plan;
- How and when the ministry will provide the public and other stakeholders with information about the herbicide application (what notification arrangements will be used);
- How the public and other stakeholders can access this plan and get more information about the ministry's notification arrangements; and
- Contact details for anyone wishing to discuss this plan or the overall project with the ministry.

The ministry will be using glyphosate as the active ingredient to control Phragmites at locations within the Long Point Region (includes Turkey Point, Long Point Crown Marsh and the tip of Long Point). In 2018, the ministry will be applying the majority of herbicide within the more remote marsh habitats using a variety of methods which may include a

helicopter, air boat and ground application methods. It is anticipated that ground application will be initiated as early as August 15th, using a variety of specially-adapted equipment and people on foot with backpack sprayers. It is also anticipated that aerial application will be initiated between September 4th and October 31st, 2018. Further information on the project and herbicide use can be obtained by contacting the Project Supervisor, at 519-200-2276 or longpointphragproject@ontario.ca or by visiting the Ontario Invasive Plant Council website [<http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>].

2.2. Places Covered by Notification Plan

Work related to the 2018 Emergency Registration project for control of Phragmites in the Long Point Region will be occurring within the regulated Crown Land boundary with the appropriate buffers to adjacent property as outlined in the herbicide label. A total of 95 hectares have been allocated for aquatic herbicide application on Crown Lands in Long Point. A combination of aerial and ground treatment will be applied on Crown Lands in this area. (Figure 1 and 2).



Figure 1: Phragmites Treatment Sites, Long Point Crown Marsh, to occur from September 4th to October 31st, 2018.

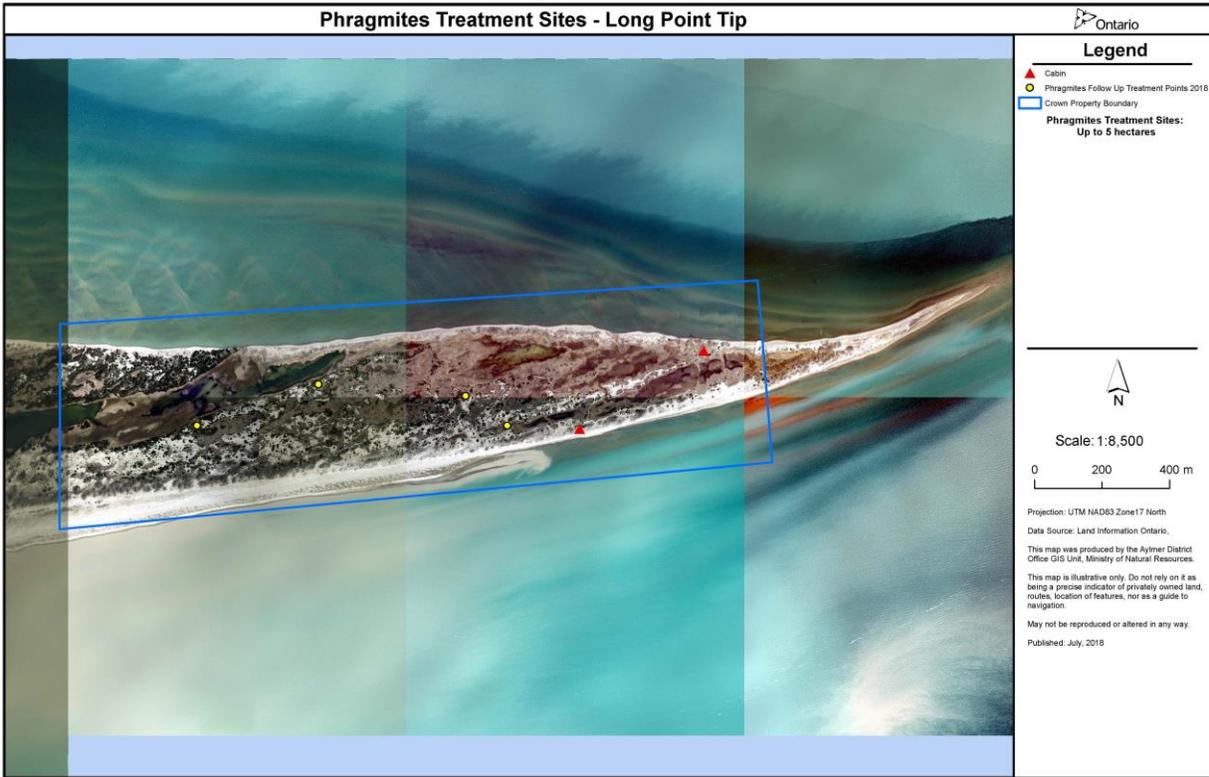


Figure 2: Potential Ground Treatment Sites, Tip of Long Point, to occur after mid-September 2018.

Residents or business owners in the community of Turkey Point may be affected by both aerial and ground treatment occurring on lands in Turkey Point. There is a maximum of 125 hectares being treated in this area. Signs will be posted at nearby boat-launches and common points of access.

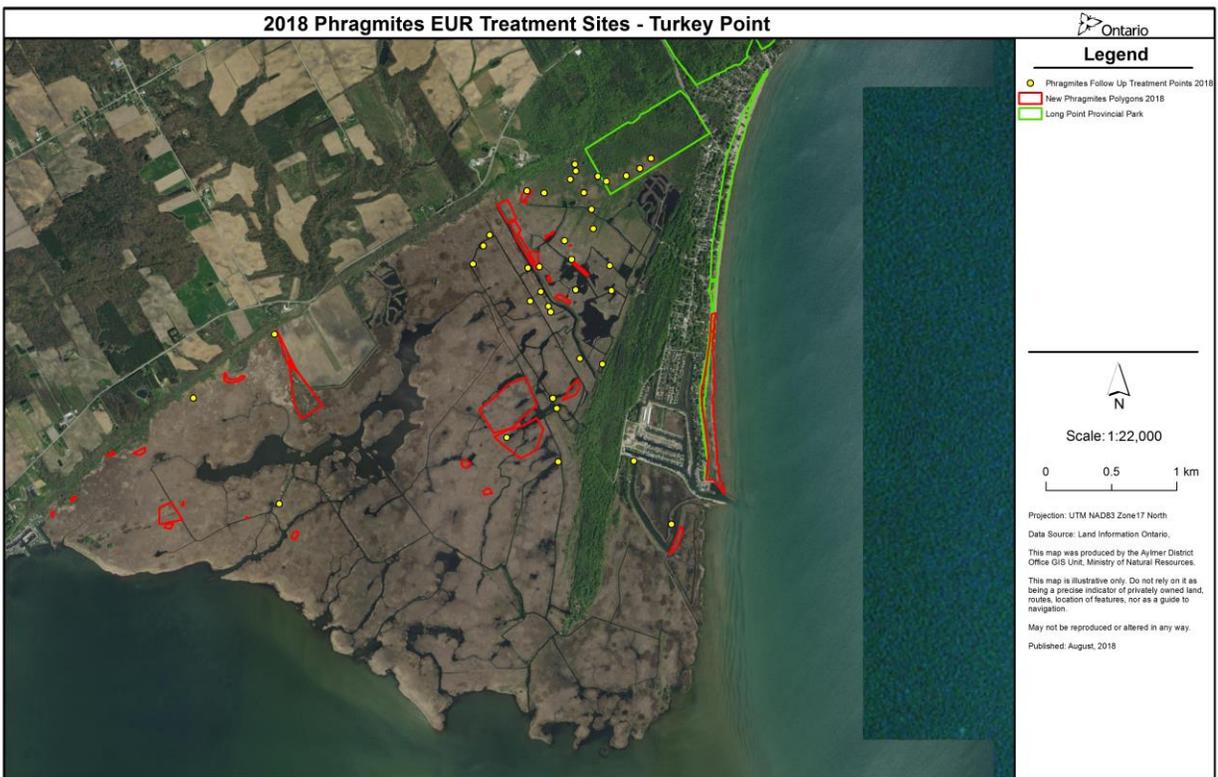


Figure 3: Potential treatment sites of Phragmites in the Turkey Point area, to occur between September 4th and October 31st, 2018.

In the Lower Big Creek area, signs will be posted at common access points and boat launches to notify boaters, paddlers, and waterfowl hunters of the treatment. Letters will be hand-delivered to residents within 800 m of treatment sites on the Long Point Causeway a minimum of 48 hours in advance of treatment occurring. See below for a map of treatment sites in this area.

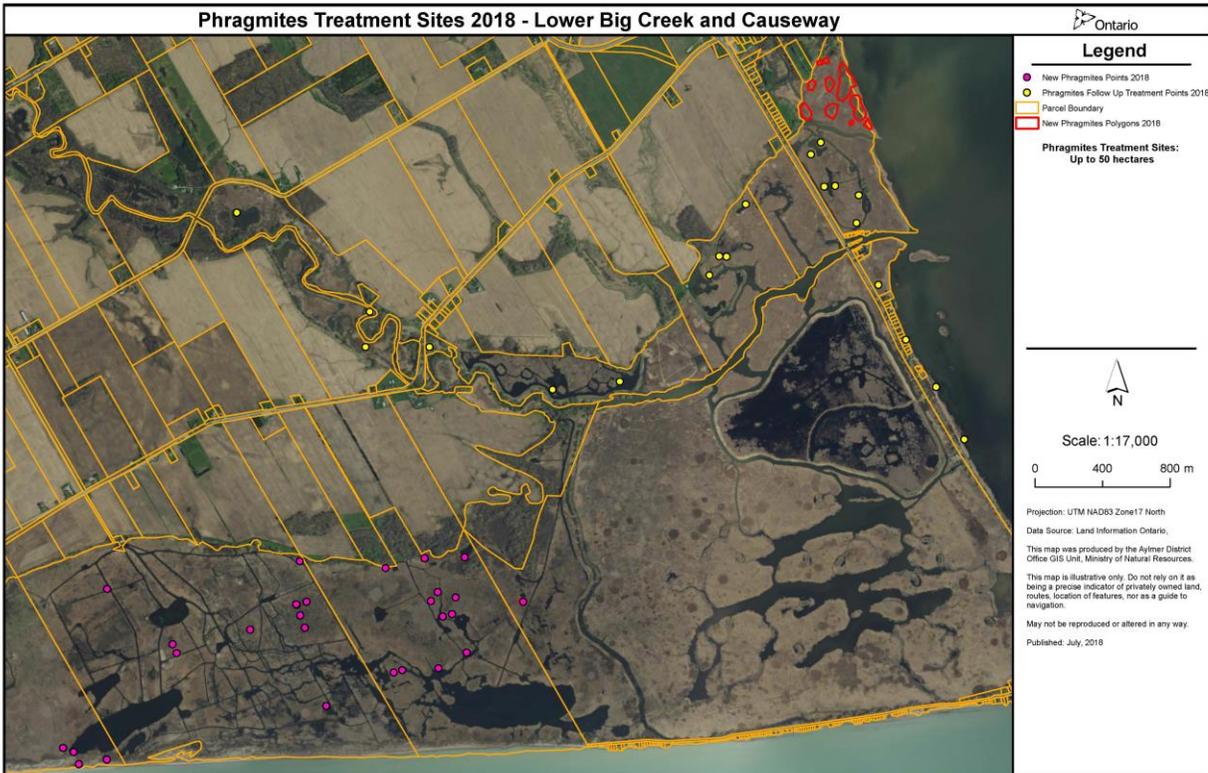


Figure 4: Potential ground treatment sites (up to 50ha) in the Lower Big Creek and causeway area, to occur from mid-September to October 31, 2018.

2.3. Stakeholder and User Group Summary

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's estimate on stakeholder groups and the level of stakeholder use is summarized in the following paragraphs:

2.3.1. Residents of Long Point, Turkey Point, and Lower Big Creek

It is estimated that most of the cottagers will not be using their cottage during the mid-week aerial application timeframe of September. All residences in Long Point and the Long Point Causeway will receive a hand delivered letter (see Appendix I) with information about the aerial project, including requirements for potable drinking water systems from surface water sources, and proposed timing once the specific date is selected, a minimum of 48 hours in advance of project commencement. This letter will also provide contact information for the Project Supervisor, an email address for the project and a link to the website where the project plan will be posted.

2.3.2. Long Point Ratepayers' Association

The Long Point Ratepayers' Association was established in 1961 for the purpose of promoting the general interest and welfare of the Long Point Community. As an Association, they are also concerned with preserving Long Point's unique and fragile environment. A large number of the residents of Long Point are members of this Association; the ministry has partnered with the Long Point Ratepayers' Association on Phragmites control activities in the past with great success. This project is expected to have low to no impact on the Long Point Ratepayers' Association or any of its members. The Long Point Ratepayers' Association has led the establishment of a local concerned citizens group, the Long Point Phragmites Action Alliance. This group has been advocating for the Emergency Registration project and as result it is expected that strong support from Long Point Ratepayers' Association and the Long Point Phragmites Action Alliance will be received. This notification plan and project contact information will be posted on the LPRA website which is publicly accessible.

2.3.3 Turkey Point Property Owner's Association

This notification plan and project contact information will be shared and distributed to members of the Turkey Point Property Owner's Association. Members of this association are generally supportive of Phragmites control and have expressed great interest for treatment of Phragmites to occur in this area, in particular Ordnance Beach.

2.3.4. Boaters

The ministry will have information regarding the project posted at all boat launches and marinas in Long Point, Turkey Point and Port Rowan. Due to proposed timing and location of the project no impacts to recreational boaters are anticipated.

2.3.5. Waterfowl Hunters

The Long Point Waterfowlers' Association operates the regulated Waterfowl Hunting Unit within the Long Point Crown Marsh in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Opening day for waterfowl hunting in 2018 is September 22nd and application in the Crown Marsh will occur on non-hunting days. The Long Point Waterfowlers' Association is in full support of Phragmites management projects within the Long Point Crown Marsh and have led several large control projects in terrestrial areas in the last two years in partnership with the ministry. The Long Point Waterfowlers' Association is a significant partner contributing a large portion of funding for the project and strong support from this organization is confirmed.

2.3.6. Municipality, Health Unit, OPP, Fire Department

The ministry will notify the following: Norfolk County, Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit, the Ontario Provincial Police and the local fire department(s), when commencing the 2018 Emergency Registration Phragmites control project. The ministry has prepared, and will share, an 'Implementation Plan' to ensure the correct information is communicated in the case of inquiries from local area residents. It is common that these service groups will receive calls from the public for information or reporting a concern. It is anticipated that this project will have a low level of concern from these service groups given the existing working relationships in place.

2.3.7. Local Hospitals

Prior to the Emergency Registration project commencing, local hospitals will be sent toxicological information about glyphosate (from the [Extension Toxicology Network](#)) along with the 'Implementation Plan' to ensure the correct information is shared in the case of local area residents visiting the hospital with health concerns.

2.3.8. Bird Studies Canada

Bird Studies Canada is the ministry's sole partner at the tip of Long Point. They have been involved in project planning and will be kept up-to-date about project plans as things progress. The ministry will notify Bird Studies Canada when commencing the 2018 Emergency Registration Phragmites control project.

2.3.9 Park Staff

All park staff at Long Point Provincial Park (LPPP) and Turkey Point Provincial Park (TPPP) will be fully aware of the project; however, all questions and inquiries related to the project will be directed to the Park Superintendent. After Labour Day, the number of park staff is approximately 15. The park will have sufficient staff available to assist with implementation of the project.

2.3.10 Campers

Located south of the treatment areas, the Long Point New Park campground remains open for camping through August to October each season. The campground will likely be fully booked. All campers will be provided with written and verbal information regarding the project upon arrival and registration at the park. It is anticipated the project will have little impact on campers.

2.3.11 Day Users

It is anticipated that the park, both LPPP and TPPP, will see an average of 1000 daily vehicle passes sold for average weekends in August, with less than 50 sold mid-weekdays in the month of September. The park will see an average of 20 additional vehicles each day that will have a seasonal or annual vehicle pass. Information for day users will be available at the front entrance in signage, information letter, and verbally from park staff.

2.4. Notification Arrangements

This section of the plan describes how and when the ministry will provide notice of herbicide use as part of the 2018 Phragmites control project at the Long Point Crown Marsh. These notification arrangements are based on the ministry's assessment of:

- The level of usage of the areas during the project timeline where herbicide may be used

- The extent to which activities generally undertaken in these areas could lead to some direct contact with herbicides

Notice of herbicide use will be provided by a combination of methods, the details of which are outlined immediately below:

2.4.1. Signage

Signs will be posted at various locations (see Appendix II) around the project area. Signs will be posted at least 48 hours prior to herbicide application and will remain for at least 48 hours after application. Signs will be of a standardized design that will be easily recognizable to the public (see Appendix III).

Signs will be posted on or adjacent to barriers placed at all access points to the application area. Signs will also be posted at general information areas such as the main gatehouse at the Long Point Provincial Park, and Turkey Point Provincial Park (inside and outside the building). Ground application signs will be posted at least 48 hours prior to ground application, and will remain for at least 48 hours after ground application. Signs will be of a standardized design that will be easily recognizable to both park users and park staff. See below for examples of sign notification.

2.4.2. Roadside Signage

At least 48 hours before the start of the herbicide application, a large electronic roadside sign with notification messaging will be placed at the entrance to the Long Point causeway – the only point of vehicular and pedestrian access to the project area and the community of Long Point. All persons entering Long Point must cross this causeway and will be exposed to this sign. The purpose of the sign is to inform anyone entering the project area about the upcoming project and to provide contact information should they have questions. The sign will read: Control of Invasive Phragmites, Spray program, Starts September 4th, for more information contact the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry: 519-670-3834.

2.4.3. Letters

Hard copy letters (see Appendix I) will be hand-delivered to residences within 800 metres of the treatment areas along with any other residences east of Hastings Drive in Long Point. If no one is home when the letters are hand-delivered, the letters will be taped to the front door.

The Long Point Ratepayers' Association, Turkey Point Property Owners, Norfolk County, Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit, the Ontario Provincial Police and the local fire department(s) will also be notified directly at this time. Letters will be hand delivered to ensure they are received a minimum of 48 hours prior to initiation of the project. These letters will request residents – with a potable drinking water intake from surface water sources only (e.g., directly taking water from the boating channel or inner Long Point Bay) – shut down their water system as a precautionary measure at the commencement of the project until 48 hours following project completion and then before using again, flush their water system for 20 minutes. Residents who are affected by this potential loss of drinking water will be offered bottled water during this time period. The locations where drinking water will be provided will be identified in the letter and ministry staff will be on hand to distribute it.

There is a private water intake system serving the majority of residents in the Turkey Point Area. MNRF will have a plan in place to provide a potable water source should there be need (based on glyphosate levels found during monitoring - see monitoring plan).

In the Long Point Provincial Park, letters will be hand-delivered to campers, day users, and Long Point Provincial Park staff; see below for the draft notification letter. Letters or notification signs will be distributed so that they are received upon entry prior to initiation of the project.

In Turkey Point Provincial Park signage will be posted at all day use access points and parks staff will be available to answer any questions.

2.4.4 Verbal Information Relay

Ontario Parks' staff will relay project information verbally to all persons entering the park immediately prior to or during ground herbicide treatment, in addition to providing a copy of the notification letter and associated mapping. Gate staff are already in place to achieve this level of notification.

Where trails or other access points into the treatment area must be closed to foot traffic, park staff will be placed strategically in order to ensure any unauthorized access is prevented and information on the project can be relayed verbally.

2.4.5. Email

The ministry may use email as a means of notification, if specific stakeholders express interest in receiving digital notice or for greater ease in contacting specific staff within Norfolk County, Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit, the Ontario Provincial Police and the local fire department(s). An email account has been created specifically for the purpose of the project: longpointphragproject@ontario.ca.

2.4.6. Phone Contact

Where requests for additional information are received, or other means of contact are not possible, phone contact will be undertaken by the ministry, to ensure all stakeholder groups identified above have been notified. The following phone number will be used for all contacts regarding the project – Project Supervisor: 519-200-2276.

2.4.7. Information on Websites

The ministry will be posting regular updates related to proposed treatment dates within the identified treatment window, as well as copies of the project implementation plan, and monitoring plan on the following websites: Ontario Invasive Plant Council, Long Point Ratepayers' Association and the Long Point Waterfowlers' Association.

2.5. What information will be provided

In accordance with the Pesticides Act, notices of herbicide use must include all of the following information:

- The full product name of the herbicide to be used
- The purpose of the use, clearly setting out what pest will be treated
- The range of dates within which the herbicide use will occur and, if possible, the proposed date of aerial and ground treatment
- A map depicting the area the herbicide will be applied to
- Contact information, including phone number and email address for a ministry contact person whom people can contact to discuss the notice
- Any warnings regarding re-entry prior to use of the place of herbicide application specified on the product label

2.6. How will the public and stakeholders be informed of the notification plan

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry will advise the public and stakeholders of the plan and its contents by:

- Making a copy of the plan available for public viewing free of charge at the ministry's Aylmer District Office
- Placing a copy of the plan on the Ontario Invasive Species Plant Council website at: [<http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>]
- Placing a copy of the plan on the Long Point Ratepayers' Association website at: [<http://longpointrpa.com/>]
- Placing a copy of the plan on the Long Point Waterfowlers' Association website at: [<http://lpwaterfowlers.wixsite.com/lpwa>]
- Including reference to the plan within communications materials being set out as part of this plan

2.7. Contact Details

Long Point Region Contact

Anyone wishing to contact the ministry to discuss the notification plan or to obtain details of the 2018 Phragmites Control Project should contact the Project Supervisor:

Phone: 519-200-2276

Email: longpointphragproject@ontario.ca

Long Point Provincial Park and Turkey Point Provincial Park Contact

Anyone wishing to contact Ontario Parks to discuss the notification plan or to obtain details of the 2018 Phragmites Control Project should contact:

Jeff Pickersgill, Park Superintendent

Phone: 519-426-7138 ext. 227

Fax: 519-586-3581

Email: jeffrey.pickersgill@ontario.ca

3. APPENDICES

3.1. APPENDIX I – Notification Letter

Ministry of Natural Ministère des Richesses

Resources and Forestry naturelles et des Forêts

615 John Street North 615, rue John Nord

Aylmer, ON N5H 2S8 Aylmer ON N5H 2S8

Tel: 519-773-9241 Tél: 519-773-9241

Fax: 519-773-9014 Téléc: 519-773-9014

September XX, 2018

Dear resident,

Subject: Notification of Aerial and Ground Herbicide Application for the Control of Invasive *Phragmites australis* within the Long Point Region

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resource and Forestry ('the ministry') plans to undertake an invasive *Phragmites australis* (*Phragmites*) control program in the Long Point Region. As part of ongoing efforts to control *Phragmites*, the ministry will work with several partners to treat lands at the Long Point Crown Marsh, Long Point Company, the tip of Long Point, private lands in Turkey Point, and the Lower Big Creek watershed. Selected areas will be treated with glyphosate to control the growth and spread of *Phragmites*. Herbicide application will be completed under appropriate weather conditions and has commenced in remote areas of Long Point beginning on August XX, 2018 and must be completed prior to October 31, 2017. Treatment of *phragmites* in the Long Point Crown Marsh will commence on September X, 2018. It is anticipated the project will be completed during the months of August and September. As this timing window approaches, the ministry will ensure regular updates on proposed treatment dates are available at the Aylmer District ministry office, as well as on the Ontario Invasive Plant Council website (<http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>).

This undertaking is part of a ministry pilot project using aerial and ground herbicide application techniques to control Phragmites growing within wet areas of the marsh. Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency has approved an Emergency Registration of Roundup Custom for the purpose of this pilot project.

As a precautionary measure, the ministry asks that all residences using a surface water system (for example: directly taking water from the boating channel or inner Long Point Bay) shut down their water system and avoid consumption of the water (drinking, cooking, or for preparative uses such as baby food/infant formula) for a minimum of 48 hours following herbicide application and then flush their systems for 20 minutes before consuming again. Bottled water will be available free of charge at Long Point Provincial Park. Residents or businesses in need of water may pick it up on Monday September XX, 2018 or call the project supervisor at 519-200-2276.

PLEASE NOTE: there is NO RESTRICTION on the USE OF WATER for RECREATION OR DOMESTIC PURPOSES (i.e. toilets, showers, etc.) following direct application of the herbicide.

Enclosed with this letter is a project map, which provides delineation of potential aerial and ground treatment areas.

For additional information regarding this letter, the project notification plan, or general project information, please contact the Project Supervisor at: 519-200-2276 or longpointphragproject@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

Project Supervisor

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

3.2. APPENDIX II – Map of Notification Sign Locations in Long Point Region



3.3. APPENDIX III – Aerial and Ground Notification Signs

Phragmites Aerial and Ground Control



Phragmites control project area, September 2018

NOTICE: An aquatic herbicide application for the control of *Phragmites australis* is planned for the month of September at the Long Point Crown Marsh and Long Point Provincial Park.

Residences within 800 metres of the project areas along with any other residences east of Hastings Drive in Long Point will receive direct notification from the Ministry of Natural Resource and Forestry 48 hours prior to treatment.

Anticipated Start Date: September 4, 2018 (weather permitting)

For updates visit - <http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>

Herbicide: Roundup Custom™ (glyphosate) (Reg. no. 32356)

As a *precautionary measure*, MNRF asks that all residences using a surface water system (e.g. directly taking water from the boating channel or inner Long Point Bay) shut down their water system and avoid consumption of the water (i.e. drinking, cooking, or for preparative uses such as baby food/infant formula) for a minimum of 48 hours following herbicide application and then flush their systems for 20 minutes before consuming again.

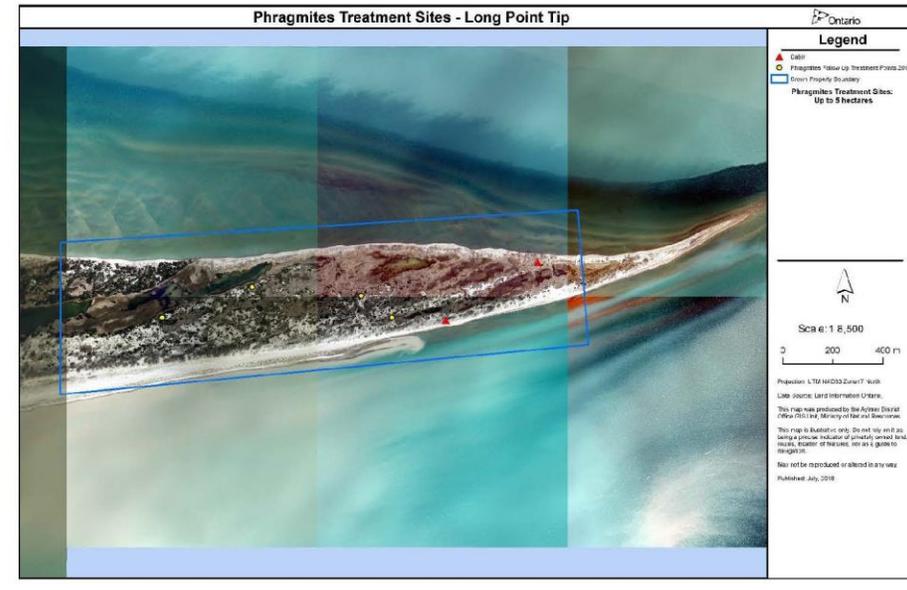
For more information regarding the aquatic herbicide application, contact:

Project Supervisor
519-200-2276 or longpointphragproject@ontario.ca

For more information regarding the permitting process, contact:

Air, Pesticides and Environmental Planning Supervisor
Ontario Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks
905-521-7639

Phragmites Ground Control



Phragmites control project area, September 2018

NOTICE: An aquatic herbicide application for the control of *Phragmites australis* is planned for the month of September at the tip of Long Point.

Anticipated Start Date: September 21, 2018 (weather permitting)
For updates visit - <http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>

Herbicide: Roundup Custom™ (glyphosate) (Reg. no. 32356)

For more information regarding the aquatic herbicide application, contact:
Project Supervisor
519-200-2276 or longpointphragproject@ontario.ca

For more information regarding the permitting process, contact:
Air, Pesticides and Environmental Planning Supervisor
Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change
905-521-7639

Phragmites Ground Control



Phragmites control project area, September 2018

NOTICE: An aquatic herbicide application for the control of *Phragmites australis* is planned for the month of September at Lower Big Creek.

Anticipated Start Date: September 4, 2018 (weather permitting)

For updates visit - <http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>

Herbicide: Roundup Custom™ (glyphosate) (Reg. no. 32356)

As a precautionary measure, MNRF asks that all residences using a surface water system (e.g. directly taking water from the boating channel or inner Long Point Bay) shut down their water system and avoid consumption of the water (i.e. drinking, cooking, or for preparative uses such as baby food/infant formula) for a minimum of 48 hours following herbicide application and then flush their systems for 20 minutes before consuming again.

For more information regarding the aquatic herbicide application, contact:

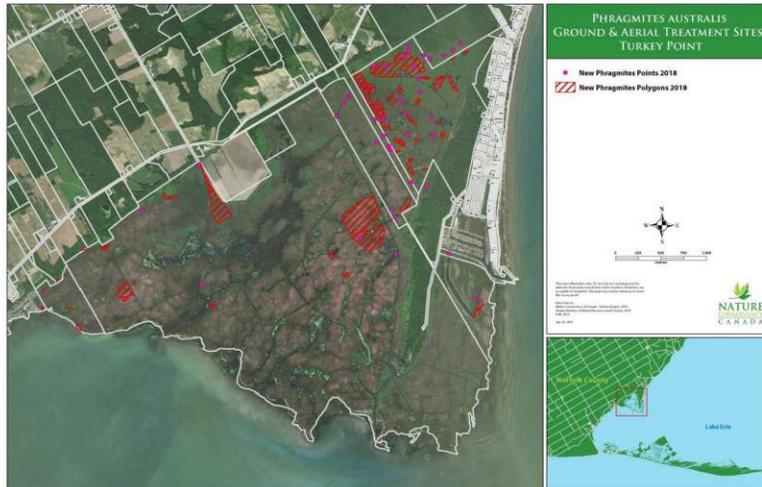
Project Supervisor

519-200-2276 or longpointphrag@ontario.ca

For more information regarding the permitting process, contact:

Air, Pesticides and Environmental Planning Supervisor
Ontario Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks
905-521-7639

Phragmites Aerial and Ground Control



Phragmites control project area, September 2018

NOTICE: An aquatic herbicide application for the control of *Phragmites australis* is planned for the month of September at Turkey Point.

Anticipated Start Date: September 4, 2018 (weather permitting)

For updates visit - <http://www.opwg.ca/projects/>

Herbicide: Roundup Custom™ (glyphosate) (Reg. no. 32356)

As a precautionary measure, MNRF asks that all residences using a surface water system (e.g. directly taking water from the boating channel or inner Long Point Bay) shut down their water system and avoid consumption of the water (i.e. drinking, cooking, or for preparative uses such as baby food/infant formula) for a minimum of 48 hours following herbicide application and then flush their systems for 20 minutes before consuming again.

For more information regarding the aquatic herbicide application, contact:

Eric Cleland – Nature Conservancy of Canada
519-586-7773 or Eric.Cleland@natureconservancy.ca

For more information regarding the permitting process, contact:

Air, Pesticides and Environmental Planning Supervisor
Ontario Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks