



Lambton Shores Wetland Enhancement Project

Wood Drive Resident's Newsletter July, 2019

In our continuing effort to control this very invasive species, which has an impact of farming and agriculture as well as tourism, we have some exciting news to share with you this month, despite deep cuts to provincial funding for all environmental issues leading to no grant money from federal or provincial budgets.

Since our spring newsletter, the **Municipality of Lambton Shores** responded positively to our application by way of a grant through its Community Vibrancy Fund. **Lambton Wildlife Inc.** has also given us financial support.

In our continued search for financial support for our efforts, we were delighted to learn that our work falls under the mandate of **Ducks Unlimited Canada**. They stepped up to help us by organizing a “crowd sourced fundraising” campaign. Please see the link to the campaign here, and again at the end of this newsletter:

<https://chuffed.org/project/fight-the-phrag-in-lambton-shores>

What wonderful news this is! It means that we will be able to continue Phragmites removal in the Wood Drive Wetland Marsh this summer, which is particularly critical, as the high water levels work to our advantage.

Here are the activities scheduled to take place over the three week period [from July 7th to July 26th](#):

- The IPCC manual cutting crew started manual touch up July 7th and will be working in Blocks 1 and 2. The crews will manually cut the random "Phrag" stalks that can't be reached with the Truxor harvesters.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) Stewardship Youth Rangers assisted with this on July 12.
- The Truxors will start in Block 1 (Shashawanda Creek to Butler's Bay) on Thursday, July 18. This start date is set by the MNR. The Truxors will be launched adjacent to Shashawanda Creek from Kettle Point and Stony Point First Nations land.
- The Truxor crews will then move to Block 3 (the southern end of the marsh near Lambton Centre). Phragmites in Block 3 will be cut, piled and monitored, continuing from where we left off in 2018.
- The goal is to have all removed from the water except for the middle section in Block 2, which lies between Butler's Bay and Fuller Road. This section is the most challenging because of access and removal of the biomass. It will be the focus of our work in 2020.

We are happy to say that, during this work activity, Lambton Centre and Joyce and Maril Semph have given permission for the machines and trailers to be stored on their properties while the work is underway.

A huge thank you to neighbour, Calvin Fuller, for coming to the rescue when an equipment truck got stuck on the Wood Drive water access right of way. Janice Gilbert will complete repair to ruts that were created at that time.

Other Phragmites projects that took place last week were in the Ipperwash Dunes and Swales and at L Lake in Port Franks. A total of 57 volunteers assisted with this work and partners included the Invasive Phragmites Control Centre, Stewardship Youth Rangers, St. Clair Region and Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authorities,

Nature Conservancy Canada and the Municipality of Lambton Shores. TD Bank, Home Hardware and RONA also assisted with donations.

ARE WE MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

Yes!

Already, in areas where the Phragmites has been removed, native plant species are recolonizing. Cattail, bulrush, sedges and the indigenous floating and underwater plants are making a come-back in leaps and bounds. These native plants have evolved along with native animals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, birds and insects that need specific types of plants and open areas in the marsh to survive.

Annual marsh monitoring for key birds and frog and toad populations by Chandre Sanyo and Maril Semph show that there are increasing numbers of all of these animals over the past three years since our concerted effort to remove Phragmites. Once again, secretive Least Bitterns are nesting. Pied Billed Grebes, Sora and Virginia Rails are again heard. Six species of amphibians have increased in numbers recorded. As well, they noted that the marsh provides prime feeding habitat to significant numbers of aerial insect hunters such as Common Nighthawk, Swallows and Swifts, all which have been negatively impacted from insecticides. The marsh is also an important migratory stopover point for the Manitoulin population of Sandhill Cranes as well as many duck and shorebird species.

Funding from **Lambton Centre, Grand Bend Rotary, the Thedford and Grand Bend Vegetable Growers Association** and the LSPCG, has enabled us to conduct important related research. We have contracted Lucas Foerster of Foerster Ecologic to complete general species monitoring. The **St. Clair Region Conservation Authority** staff and Janice continue their fish sampling in this very significant "nursery" for native Lake Huron fish species.

YOU TOO, CAN HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

Give a friendly wave to the volunteers who give their time to assist the Phrag removal crews.

Volunteer and enjoy the camaraderie by being a part of LSPCG during Phrag removal days.

Get rid of Phragmites from your property, using proper removal and burn techniques.

And, please DONATE to our fundraising efforts here:

<https://chuffed.org/project/fight-the-phrag-in-lambton-shores>

Even a donation as small as \$10 per year from every household in Lambton Shores will make a big difference in winning our fight to keep this invasive plant under control in one of the most sensitive areas of our beautiful municipality.