

REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

FROM: Jeff Lawrence, Tree Commissioner/Weed Inspector

DATE: April 19, 2021

SUBJECT: Tree Commissioner/Weed Inspector Quarterly Report January – March 2021

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the report titled "Tree Commissioner/Weed Inspector Quarterly Report January – March 2021" from the Tree Commissioner/Weed Inspector, dated April 19, 2021 be received and filed for information.

INTRODUCTION:

The following is a summary of activity related to the Elgin Woodlands Conservation By-Law for the period of January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021 and weed inspection activity for the same period.

DISCUSSION:

Logging Activity/Applications to Harvest:

A total of 50(18) applications to harvest were submitted from January 1, 2021 to March 31, 2021. Applications were filed by municipality as follows: West Elgin-12(4), Dutton/Dunwich-15(2), Southwold-0(2), Central Elgin-0(2), Malahide-15(3), and Bayham-8(5). The total volume for harvest was approximately 1.06 million board feet(0.578). The total forested area involved in these harvests was approximately 1275 acres(458). The numbers in brackets are corresponding first quarter numbers from 2020.

Applications for Woodland Clearings:

One (1) application was received to clear a portion of woodland in the first quarter of 2021, for a total area to be cleared of 0.1 hectares (~0.25 acres). This application is still in the public consultation phase of the review process.

Three (3) applications received in late 2020 were approved conditional upon conformity with Elgin County's "No Net Loss" policy. One clearing application in Southwold was approved for clearing approximately 0.24 hectare. One application was approved in Dutton Dunwich for clearing approximately 0.95 hectare and one application to clear approximately 0.34 hectare was approved in West Elgin.

Weed Complaints and Orders:

One (1) noxious weed complaint was received in the first quarter of 2021. This complaint was resolved by the landowner. No Weed Destruction Orders were issued in the first quarter of 2021.

Meetings and Workshops:

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the annual Weed Inspectors Conference, normally held in April, was cancelled in 2021 and replaced by an online certification process along with a virtual question and answer session.

Industry News:

European Gypsy Moth (Lymantria dispar)

Gypsy Moth is an insect native to Europe and Asia and has become well established in many areas of North America, including Southwestern Ontario. Introduced to North America in the 1860's near Boston and first detected in Ontario in 1969, it has continuously expanded its range.

The adult female Gypsy moth is flightless and tends to be larger than the males. It has white colouring with dark zig-zag markings. Adult males can fly and are greyish-brown with dark markings. Adult males survive about one week and often mate with several different females. The larvae (caterpillar) is charcoal grey in colour with a double row of five blue and six red dots on its back. Gypsy Moth egg masses are tan coloured and commonly found on tree trunks, bark or other hard surfaces.

Gypsy Moth caterpillars defoliate many of our native hardwood species, including oaks, birches, poplars and maples. Populations fluctuate annually and vary with local conditions. Gypsy Moth are impacted by funguses, viruses and predators and populations of the moth will crash for lengthy periods as a result.

Depending on their population levels, Gypsy Moth caterpillars can completely defoliate a tree. Annually repeated defoliation can severely weaken and stress trees, making them more susceptible to other pests or diseases, and can eventually lead to death. Gypsy Moth is a pest of forested areas, landscape trees, and orchards.

Unusually high numbers of Gypsy Moth were reported in southern Ontario, including Elgin County, in 2020. Many municipalities have considered taking action to reduce

populations and the most effective treatment is influenced by the time of year and life cycle stage of the insect. Actions that can be effective in reducing populations include spraying of an insecticide that contains a specific bacterium that only affects Gypsy Moth. Biological control agents containing the fungus or the virus are also used to control Gypsy Moth populations. Collecting and destroying egg masses and/or trapping and destroying the adults can provide effective control as well. Unfortunately, these control options can be impractical in a forest setting and good forestry practices are recommended as healthier trees are more able to withstand the impacts of defoliation and other stresses.

Additional information and images of the Gypsy Moth can be found on the following websites:

https://www.ontario.ca/page/gypsy-moth

https://invasivespeciescentre.ca/a-year-of-gypsy-moth/

https://inspection.canada.ca/plant-health/plant-pests-invasive-species/insects/gypsymoth/fact-sheet/eng/1330355335187/1335975909100

http://www.invadingspecies.com/invaders/forest/gypsy-moth/

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Serving Elgin	Growing Elgin	Investing in Elgin
☐ Ensuring alignment of current programs and services with community need.	Planning for and facilitating commercial, industrial, residential, and agricultural growth.	Ensuring we have the necessary tools, resources, and infrastructure to deliver programs and services
Exploring different ways of addressing community need.	 ☑ Fostering a healthy environment. ☑ Enhancing quality of 	now and in the future. ⊠ Delivering mandated programs and services
Engaging with our community and other stakeholders.	place.	efficiently and effectively.



None.

COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:

None.

CONCLUSION:

The above report details the activities of the Tree Commissioner/Weed Inspector for the period of January – March 2021.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Jeff Lawrence

Tree Commissioner/Weed Inspector Quarterly Report January – March 2021 Julie Gonyou

Chief Administrative Officer