



GREAT LAKES AND ST. LAWRENCE CITIES INITIATIVE
ALLIANCE DES VILLES DES GRANDS LACS ET DU SAINT-LAURENT

RESOLUTION 2 – 2010M

Phragmites

Submitted by the Georgian Bay Group of GLSLCI

WHEREAS, *Phragmites australis* is an invasive perennial grass that is causing severe damage to coastal wetlands and beaches in areas around the Great Lakes, particularly in the Georgian Bay area; 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 neighboring 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, an increased fire hazard due to the combustibility of its dead stalks, and can have an adverse impact on agriculture; and

WHEREAS, invasive *Phragmites australis* should be distinguished from the native species, *Phragmites americanus*, which does not require control as it rarely develops into monoculture stands, does not alter habitat, has limited impact on biodiversity and does not deter wildlife; and

WHEREAS, invasive phragmites have been identified as Canada's worst invasive plant species by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada; and

WHEREAS, controlling invasive Phragmites before it becomes well established reduces environmental impacts, time, and costs; and

WHEREAS, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has developed draft Best Practices that, once finalized, will assist land management agencies and landowners in controlling invasive Phragmites and has established a Phragmites Control Task Group to share information and experience on invasive Phragmites and provide direction and guidance on its control; and



WHEREAS, municipalities in Ontario can control invasive Phragmites on their own land, and on private property with the landowner's permission, provided they meet the requirements under the *Ontario Pesticides Act*; and

WHEREAS, conservation inspectors in Ontario currently lack authority to enter private land to take control measures against invasive Phragmites;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative calls on the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and other relevant authorities to introduce a protocol that establishes 'due process' in controlling invasive Phragmites, which would include but not be limited to:

- Increase public education to promote early detection of invasive Phragmites;
- Establish clear criteria that would guide decisions on whether action is required to control Phragmites, for example, based on the ecological or health implications of not taking action;
- If a situation meets this criteria, request that the private landowner take action to control Phragmites on his or her land;
- If a private landowner is unwilling to take action, allow the authority to take action as appropriate under a by-law or ordinance that respects the above 'due process'.
- Assist municipal and other local authorities with the implementation of best practices to control Phragmites.

Signed this 17th day of June, 2010

Denis Lapointe, Chair
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
Mayor of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield