

Developing a Strategy for Controlling Phragmites Around Lake St. Clair

Summary

The Lake St. Clair Phragmites Management effort is at a crossroads. Since 2009, Phragmites has been controlled on approximately 3,500 acres of wetland and natural resources predominantly around Anchor Bay, Lake St. Clair – using two federal grants. Federal funds have run out and a 2013 federal request for assistance to the Great Lake Restoration Initiation – was not awarded.

On March 14, 2014, a SEMCOG University was held at the Lake St. Clair Metropark to consider a local management structure for controlling Phragmites. Approximately 35 Lake St. Clair stakeholders, partners and interested parties involved in Phragmites management met to discuss the problems, costs, and potential options for continuing the management of Phragmites around the lake.

A Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) was suggested as a management structure. The CWMA is a partnership structure that coordinates the collaborative efforts of local, state and federal agencies, citizens, property owners and nonprofit organizations on managing the spread of invasive species such as Phragmites. A CWMA has already been established south along the Detroit River and Western Lake Erie basin to control Phragmites. In addition, the State of Michigan as part of its invasive species control strategy would like to establish a system of CWMA's across the state for invasive species management.

Currently, funding for state involvement in managing invasive species is working its way through the state budgetary process. Governor Snyder has put \$6 million into his proposed budget for invasive species management. SEMCOG is advocating to maintain the \$6 million in the final state budget. Some form of state assistance for managing land-based vegetative invasive species including *Phragmites australis* could be headed to the local management structures – either technical, financial or both.

Proposed characteristics of a Lake St. Clair Watershed CWMA structure are: 1) It is flexible – easy to operate and participate within, 2) It will operate at both the regional and local levels, 3) Management will not be limited to just Phragmites – other invasive species if necessary as well, and 4) Management structure will be collaborative – seeking to include all affected parties.

Our definition of affected parties does include homeowners. Three workshops for managing Phragmites has been scheduled for interested homeowners. We do not want homeowners to use herbicides to manage Phragmites on the landscapes of their properties without receiving some training. There are different types of herbicides available for various types of landscapes (terrestrial or aquatic). Without training homeowners could harm the environment or worse injure themselves.

Please notify your residents about these workshop opportunities. The information follows.

If you have any questions about this issue, contact Bill Parkus at parkus@semcog.org or 313-324-3351.

Phragmites Management Workshops For Homeowners

Phragmites, that tall feathery reed growing along roadsides, is an aggressive invader, that may also be overrunning lakeshore or wetlands on your own property. Get practical advice for controlling Phragmites, with an eye on cost and safety as well as effectiveness. Workshop leader Bob Williams has been a leader and trainer on Phragmites control since he started prairie restoration work on his Harsens Island property in 2005. Bob will be leading three Phragmites management workshops for homeowners on the following dates, times and locations. These workshops will provide the details a homeowner needs to chemically control and manage Phragmites on their property.

- April 26, 2014 – 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Clay Township Hall
Presented by the Clay Township Phragmites Advisory Board
Presenter: Bob Williams, Past Chairman, Clay Township Phragmites Advisory Board
4710 Pointe Tremble Rd., Clay Township, MI 48001
For information: 810-519-2985
- June 7, 2014 – 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
Clay Township Hall
Presenter: Bob Williams, Past Chairman, Clay Township Phragmites Advisory Board
Presented by the Clay Township Phragmites Advisory Board
4710 Pointe Tremble Rd., Clay Township, MI 48001
For information: 810-519-2985
- June 19, 2014 – 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Lake St. Clair Metropark (Nature Center)
31300 Metro Parkway, Harrison Township, MI 48045
Presented by The Lakeplain Cluster of the Stewardship Network
Presenter: Bob Williams, Past Chairman, Clay Township Phragmites Advisory Board
To register: [Click here](#)