



County of Grey
595 9th Ave East
Owen Sound, ON
N4K 3E3

July 16, 2020

RE: NCC delegation request for August 13 County Council meeting.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is a not-for-profit, private land conservation organization, working to protect our most important natural areas and the species they sustain. We secure properties (through donation, purchase, and conservation agreements) and manage them for the long term. Since 1962, NCC and our partners have helped to conserve more than 35 million acres (more than 14 million hectares) of ecologically significant land from coast to coast. NCC has been working with local governments, landowners, local communities, other conservation organizations, and the Saugeen Ojibway Nation on the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula to protect at-risk species (SAR), globally rare communities, and preserve habitat connectivity for future generations. Unfortunately, there is an ever-increasing threat from invasive species across this landscape that we must address collaboratively at a landscape scale to truly achieve success.

Invasive species are among the leading threats to native wildlife in Ontario. Invasive plants are non-native plants that have spread by global trade, and human and animal transport. These species invade forests, wetlands, shorelines, roadsides, and agricultural landscapes and without natural predators to keep them under control, they degrade these habitats. They spread quickly, outcompete native plants, and deteriorate soil. A well-established population is costly and time-consuming to control. It is imperative that we control the spread of invasive species here while it is still possible, and where populations are still small and manageable. Effective management of these priority species requires a coordinated effort from local communities, partner organizations, and all levels of government to ensure we can protect this incredible landscape for future generations, and before it becomes cost prohibitive.

NCC has obtained support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (\$727,000) over the next three years to bring together local partners and communities to work collaboratively to tackle invasive species across the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula both on public and private land. The newly formed, Saugeen Peninsula Invasive Species Collaborative (SPISC) is a growing group of organizations who have agreed to the idea of working collaboratively on invasive species management across the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula (Table 1). This will be a multi-species strategy, but the initial focus of the collaboration is to more effectively manage the spread and establishment of *Phragmites* by aligning mapping and control efforts and investing in private landowner outreach.

Members of the Saugeen Peninsula Invasive Species Collaborative (SPISC)	
Nature Conservancy of Canada	Bruce Peninsula Sportsman Association
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority	Bruce Trail Conservancy
Bruce County	Bruce Biosphere Association
Town of North Bruce Peninsula	Saugeen Ojibway Nation
Town of South Bruce Peninsula	Oliphant Fishing Islands Phragmites Community Group



Ontario Parks	Bruce Peninsula National Park
Grey County	Township of Georgian Bluffs
Bruce County Federation of Agriculture	Grey Bruce Woodlot Owners Association

Please accept this letter as a formal request for staff participation on the SPISC. We suspect the SPISC will meet 1 – 5 times annually. Staff may be asked to meet with NCC staff virtually, and/or in the field over the next 3-years, and there may be potential for subcommittees as needed.

Working together with local municipalities, Counties, MTO, and other levels of government we hope to build on great work already completed to manage populations of invasives, such as Phragmites, along some of the most significant spread vectors- roadways and right of ways. Over the next three years, investments by municipalities and the SPISC to manage these populations on public lands and right of ways while sharing knowledge will help us truly achieve landscape-scale control. NCC will focus our efforts on supporting private landowner engagement and control work on their properties in the Township of Georgian Bluffs, while providing support to partners on the SPISC collaborative. Through working together under the framework of the SPISC we can ensure that investments made in the fight against invasive species are aligned to a collaborative approach, which leads to greater success on the landscape.

We are grateful for the support that we have already received from Grey County on this initiative and look forward to continuing to work together to protect the Saugeen Bruce Peninsula and the species it sustains.

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