

From: "MIN Feedback (MNR)" <minister.mnrf@ontario.ca>

Date: January 18, 2018 at 3:43:23 PM EST

To: "wayne.emmerson@york.ca" <wayne.emmerson@york.ca>

Cc: "ian.buchanan@york.ca" <ian.buchanan@york.ca>, "Boyd, Ala (MNR)" <Ala.Boyd@ontario.ca>

Subject: Message from the Honourable Kathryn McGarry, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Office of the Minister

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Ministère des Richesses naturelles et des Forêts

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MNR6446MC-2017-2252

January 16, 2018

Mr. Wayne Emmerson
Chairman and CEO
The Regional Municipality of York
wayne.emmerson@york.ca

Dear Mr. Emmerson:

Thank you for your letter regarding York Region's financial challenges in the management of invasive species. I acknowledge and commend your Region's efforts and contribution towards invasive species management within the municipality.

The Ontario government is aware of the very real threat that invasive species pose to the environment, economy and society. With the 2012 release of the Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan, and the passage of the *Invasive Species Act*, Ontario has taken strong action to combat this threat.

As you know, my ministry has made significant investments through ongoing funding agreements with key partners in order to support public education and awareness, early detection and monitoring, as well as research and management actions. Within our government, invasive species management is supported by a number of ministries which allocate funding through various programs like the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry's Land Stewardship and Habitat Restoration Program and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change's Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund.

However, the complex nature of invasive species management is far beyond what any single organization can handle alone. We appreciate and value the important role that municipal governments, non-governmental organizations, stakeholders and members of the general public continue to play in tackling the invasive species issue in our province.

As indicated in earlier correspondence, my ministry does not currently have dedicated funding to support municipalities in invasive species management. I encourage York Region to explore the funding programs noted above as potential options for support of invasive species management initiatives in your municipality.

My ministry recognizes the importance of continuing our joint efforts to manage the spread and impacts of invasive species in the province, and will continue to seek opportunities to enhance the capacity of municipalities to deal with this issue.

If you need any additional information, please contact Ala Boyd, Manager, Natural Heritage Section, at (705) 755-5088 or ala.boyd@ontario.ca.

Again, thank you for writing.

Best,

Kathryn McGarry
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

c: Ian Buchanan, Manager, Natural Heritage and Forestry, York Region
Ala Boyd, Manager, Natural Heritage Section

Wayne Emmerson

Chairman and CEO



The Regional Municipality of York

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December 5, 2017

The Honourable Kathryn McGarry
Provincial Minister of
Natural Resources and Forestry
Suite 6630, 6th Floor, Whitney Block
99 Wellesley Street West
Toronto, ON M7A 1W3

Via email: minister.mnrf@ontario.ca

Dear Minister:

Re: Request for funding to assist with mitigating the impacts of invasive species

The Regional Municipality of York, like many other Canadian municipalities, continues to face burgeoning costs associated with managing the impacts of invasive species. Ontario in particular has more invasive species than any other province or territory in Canada with over 660 known species.

At present, there is no accurate estimate of the economic impacts associated with invasive species in Ontario. York Region alone spends over \$1 million annually to address the issue of invasive species. In 2017, a Michigan study, speaking only to aquatic invasive species, estimated the total economic impact to the state to be \$5.7 billion USD annually. The impact of all invasive species is significant and crosses all borders.

York Region's Annual Update on Invasive Species report covers some of the efforts our Region has made to manage invasive species. I thank you for comments provided in your letter dated November 15, 2017 however, I urge the Provincial government to consider Regional Council's request as a matter requiring more direct action and funding for municipalities. As you point out, the provincial government provides some level of funding to partner agencies – municipalities and conservation authorities.

Unfortunately, there remains no direct funding to municipalities working to manage the threat and impacts posed by a growing number of invasive species in Ontario. This funding is needed to support education, early detection and rapid response measures to offset some of the growing Regional costs associated with management and control efforts once a species becomes established.

Municipalities are working on the front line to manage the impact and spread of invasive species, and funding is urgently required to ensure that costs are shared equally among municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government. A funding request to help manage the impact of invasive species is also being made to the Government of Canada as invasive species are a concern to be shared across all levels of government.

The impact of invasive species will continue to have significant financial implications for the Region and its residents. We must continue to work together collaboratively and share the financial responsibility equally to make positive strides against the impacts of invasive species and maintain the health and function of our natural environment and our communities.

I trust that the provincial government will also see the importance of combatting the threat posed by invasive species across our borders by sharing the financial burden with all levels of government.

If you have any questions, please contact Ian Buchanan, Manager, Natural Heritage and Forestry, at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 75204 or ian.buchanan@york.ca

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Emmerson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "W" and "E".

Wayne Emmerson
York Region Chairman and CEO

Copy to:
Ian Buchanan, Manager Natural Heritage and Forestry, York Region

#7964209