

**Environment and Sustainability Committee**  
**May 5, 2011**

**TO:** Chair and Members of Environment and Sustainability Committee

**SUBMITTED BY:**   
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Phillip Townsend, Director, Infrastructure and Asset Management

**DATE:** April 15, 2011

**SUBJECT:** European Fire Ants

**ORIGIN**

Staff

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that this information report be forwarded to Regional Council.

## **BACKGROUND**

European Fire Ants have been identified in Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) as one of many invasive species.

HRM was fortunate to find a partnership with local graduate student Susan Horton in 2010, and she provided HRM with the most up-to-date information on European Fire Ants.

## **DISCUSSION**

Susan has provided HRM with a report (Attachment One): Summarily, European Fire ants are well established and all around the Halifax peninsula. No eradication methods have been confirmed. Residents and staff can continue to manage infestations using a multi-pronged approach. HRM will continue to provide best information available at: <http://www.halifax.ca/environment/InvasiveSpecies.html>. She has now completed her graduate degree and without funding, it is not anticipated that local study of European Fire Ants will continue in HRM. Staff will continue to monitor information from the University of Maine for current findings and research.

To clarify, the role of HRM as related to invasive species is to:

1. Diligently Manage impacts on municipally owned property; and
2. Provide residents with links to adequate information from other levels of government or stakeholders.

Research and private property remediation activities, is not within the scope of SEMO nor the mandate of the municipality. We look for this work from other levels of government.

## **BUDGET IMPLICATIONS**

There are no budget implications to this report.

There is no budget capacity in the currently proposed 2011/2012 budget for any or continued research related to European Fire Ants.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN**

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Project and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Project and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement related to this report.

**ALTERNATIVES**

Committee or Council could direct staff to resource continued investigation and research related to European Fire Ant Control or Management. Essentially, this alternative would require the creation of a new FTE such as an Environmental BioDiversity Officer, with a cost of approximately \$70,000.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment: Report from Susan Horton

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A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/commcoun/cc.html> then choose the appropriate Community Council and meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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