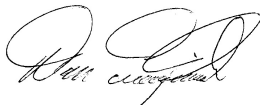


Item No. 11.1.2
Halifax Regional Council
April 13, 2010

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer



Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: March 26, 2010

SUBJECT: Alien Invasive Plant Species Policy

ORIGIN

Committee of Whole, June 23, 2009. Motion: **MOVED BY Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor McCluskey, that Halifax Regional Council refer the matter to staff to bring forward a policy for invasive alien plant control in HRM.**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Halifax Regional Council approve the following Action Plan surrounding Alien Invasive Species:

1. Work with other levels of Government, NGO's, and Community to identify Alien Invasive Species in Halifax Regional Municipality, to create a basic map of impacts in HRM and post on the HRM website;
2. Identify Provincial and Federal actions addressing Alien Invasive Species and include in HRM communications (website, Naturally Green, etc);
3. Spend no new money on this Staff Action Plan and utilize existing SEMO and HRM staffing resources;
4. Identify specific actions for inclusion in the Climate Change Risk Management Strategy developed under ClimateSMART.

BACKGROUND

Following the presence of Yellow Floating Heart in Big and Little Albro Lakes, HRM staff were requested to provide a presentation to Regional Council on the challenge. An overview of the presentation is available in the Council minutes at:

<http://www.halifax.ca/council/documents/cw090623.pdf>.

Following the discussion, Regional Council approved two motions:

1. MOVED BY Councillor Wile, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that Halifax Regional Council request that the Mayor write a letter to the Province requesting that there be a ban on the sale and import of alien invasive species.
2. MOVED BY Councillor Smith, seconded by Councillor McCluskey, that Halifax Regional Council refer the matter to staff to bring forward a policy for invasive alien plant control in HRM.

The letter was sent to the Province. This report addresses the second motion.

DISCUSSION

HRM is impacted by a large number of alien invasive species. These range from European Fire Ants, to Black legged Deer Ticks, to Long Horn Beetles, to Floating Yellow Heart - and on and on.

The SEMO office is responding to increasing numbers of impacts of invasive species. Generally, the mandate for this work is:

1. Provincial, through the Environment Act
2. Federal, through the Canadian Food and Inspection Agency, through the Alien Invasive Species Strategy for Canada
(http://www.ec.gc.ca/eee-ias/98DB3ACF-94FE-4573-AE0F-95133A03C5E9/Final_IAS_Strategic_Plan_smaller_e.pdf)

As we have been seeing, the potential cost implications for addressing alien invasive species is significant and is growing. HRM staff are currently expending funds on communications and staff time addressing alien invasive species inquiries and community concerns.

SEMO would like to address Alien Invasive Species as a top - down policy set, instead of developing policy on a piece by piece (or infestation by infestation) basis to establish some long term direction. We must clarify how the municipality and HRM citizens are able to access the variety of Provincial and Federal programs related to addressing invasive species.

Clear communications and understanding of Federal and Provincial services related to invasive species help citizens get the service and answers they desire and minimize service delivery and cost pressures on the Municipality.

Alternatively, HRM could choose to introduce a By-Law to restrict the purchase and sale of alien plant species in HRM which would be comparable to the Pesticide By-Law. The cost of such a program is in the magnitude of \$100,000 to \$200,000 per year which is currently not budgeted. This approach is not recommended.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The cost to complete the recommended Action Plan has no additional costs.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES/BUSINESS PLAN

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

ALTERNATIVES

Regional Council may wish to initiate a process to create a By-Law to restrict the purchase and resale of alien invasive plant species.

ATTACHMENTS

None

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

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