



Invasive Species Council of Manitoba

PRESS RELEASE

Invasive Phragmites across Manitoba The time to act is now

Winnipeg, Manitoba (August 29, 2017) - Invasive Phragmites, also known as European Common Reed, is starting to show up across Manitoba.

This aggressive plant is one of Canada's worst invaders and is identified by the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM) as a concern, based on its potential to cause serious impacts to the environment, economy and society.

Invasive Phragmites has the potential to overtake native plant life, resulting in unhealthy wetlands that exclude other species, affect drainage and can cause fire hazards.

Invasive Phragmites is regulated by the recently amended *Noxious Weed Act* and as an Aquatic Invasive Species under the *Water Protection Act* in Manitoba. There are currently a minimum of 12 documented sites of Invasive Phragmites in Manitoba with additional unconfirmed reports. These infestations are usually found in constructed or altered landscapes across Manitoba.

How to identify Invasive Phragmites?

The best time to identify Invasive Phragmites is now, late summer to early fall (August – September). Look for tall, dense grass stands of up to 6 metres (20 feet) in wet areas that aggressively crowd out other species. It has a dark, dense seedheads and bluish-green leaves. Invasive Phragmites can often be mistaken for native Phragmites, which is an important wetland species found throughout Manitoba. Native Phragmites tends to be scattered and smaller in size, reaching 2 m (6.4 ft) in height with a reddish-brown stem, lighter tan seedheads and starts to turn yellow, getting ready for the winter while the Invasive Phragmites continues to grow.

What can you do?

Preventing the spread of invasive species is the most cost-effective management tool. It's important to:

- Clean equipment (e.g. ATVs/UTV, boats, trailers, docks, fishing gear, hunting gear, recreational water-related craft and equipment and heavy road construction equipment) from one location to another, making sure equipment is free of aquatic plants, mud and standing water.
- Choose native or non-invasive plants for your garden and don't relocated from your home to your cottage or visa versa.
- Familiarize yourself with "Unwanted Invaders" or invasive species of concern that are regulated.
- Be aware of their origin and scientific names when acquiring new seeds or plants for your garden.

What to do if you think you have found Invasive Phragmites?

If you think you have found Invasive Phragmites, take several pictures of the stem, leaves, seedheads and site as well as note the exact location with a GPS if possible or on a map.

Report your findings by contacting the Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species program at 1-87-STOP AIS-0 (1-877-867-2470) (toll-free) or your local Municipality office or Weed Supervisor.

For more information visit:

- <http://invasivespeciesmanitoba.com>
- <http://www.eddmaps.org/prairieregion/>
- Follow us on [Twitter](#): @ISCM1
- Find us on [Facebook](#)

Quote:

"We have an excellent opportunity to eradicate Invasive Phragmites in Manitoba before it invades our natural wetlands. Everyone has a role in preventing its spread by taking a few minutes this fall to look for tall, dense bluish-green grass stands in wet areas with a dark seedheads. Reporting them to the Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species program or your local Municipality office is simple and can make a big difference." Julie Pelc, Chair - ISCM

About ISCM:

The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM) has declared August 2017 as Invasive Species Awareness Month. In an effort to foster awareness of invasive species in Manitoba, and to highlight the environmental and economic damage they can cause, the ISCM would like to share the below information on an invasive plant which is spreading in Manitoba.

"The ISCM is concerned about invasive species and plays a unique and important role in promoting awareness, coordinating cooperation and stimulating action to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in Manitoba." Julie Pelc, Chair - ISCM

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Pictures: See attached pictures of Invasive Phragmites seedheads and stand on Route 90 south of the Winnipeg's north Perimeter taken on August 26, 2017 by Julie Pelc, ISCM.