



City of Sarnia

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: October 21, 2019 RELEASE DATE: Immediate
FROM: Joe Boothe, Superintendent, Environmental Services
SUBJECT: Phragmites Eradication in Storm Water Management Facilities –
 Prescribed Burn

The Suncor Nature Way will be closed from 8:00 am until 5:00 pm Wednesday, October 23, 2019 to complete a prescribed burn.

The closure is part of the City's plan to eradicate phragmites in the municipal storm water management facilities. During closures, the entire storm water facilities will be inaccessible to the public.

These areas have a high concentration of phragmites, an invasive perennial grass, which has been causing damage to storm water management facilities.

Members of the public are asked to keep out of these areas for their safety. A spotter will be on sight for protection of pedestrians who inadvertently enter the trail near the work zone.

A prescribed burn deliberately uses fire in a specific area under certain conditions to accomplish the following:

- forest management
- wildlife management
- hazard reduction
- other land and resource management objectives

Prescribed burns can:

- clear forest areas to prepare for planting

- remove undesirable plants that compete with wanted species for nutrients
- remove undergrowth and allow sunlight to reach the forest floor, encouraging the growth of selected species
- control insect pests and diseases
- make nutrients more readily available to the ecosystem
- develop and enhance wildlife habitat (e.g. new nesting sites for birds in standing trees, habitat for small mammals where trees have fallen to the ground and where new growth has been stimulated from nutrient release from decaying trees)
- manage and maintain ecosystems in wilderness areas to conduct research

Following eradication of the phragmites, a suitable seed mix will be applied to allow native species to return to the area and limit the ability for invasive species to return. City Staff will consult with the Lambton Wildlife Committee and the Sarnia Environmental Advisory Committee to select an appropriate seed mix for the area.

- 30 -

For further information, please contact:

Joe Boothe, Superintendent, Environmental Services
joe.boothe@sarnia.ca or 519-332-0330 ext. 3590

James Jenkins, Deputy Clerk
james.jenkins@sarnia.ca or 519-332-0330 ext. 3208