

FIRST PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed invasive species control measure in the Trent River

The **Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR)**, **Peterborough District**, is inviting public comment on the proposed control of the invasive aquatic plant water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) in the Trent River. Water soldier is a prohibited invasive aquatic plant, native to Eurasia that was first observed in the Trent River in the fall of 2008.

Water soldier is an “evergreen” perennial plant resembling aloe vera or spider plants, with sharp, serrated leaf edges. It forms dense mats of floating and submerged vegetation that can aggressively out-compete other aquatic plants and negatively impact the biodiversity of aquatic ecosystems. Water soldier also poses a threat to navigation and recreation. The population of water soldier in the Trent River is one of only two known wild occurrences in North America. Since 2008, a number of research, control and management strategies have been undertaken to better understand the biology and management of this invasive plant. Taking action to control aquatic invasive species is consistent with Ontario’s Biodiversity Strategy, Ontario’s Invasive Species Strategic Plan and the Fisheries Management Plan for Fisheries Management Zone 17.

An inter-agency working group (MNR, Parks Canada-Ontario Waterways, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Trent University, Lower Trent Conservation, United States Army Engineer Research and Development Center, Ontario Invasive Plant Council, and Invasive Species Centre) was formed to help coordinate research, monitoring, control and prevention strategies. Extensive monitoring of the Trent River during the summer of 2017 identified populations of water soldier extending from County Road 30 downstream to the back channel of Wilson Island.

The working group has recommended the implementation of a large-scale control project to be implemented in the fall of 2017. Water soldier remains actively growing throughout September and October, while other native aquatic plants have gone dormant. This characteristic makes fall an optimal time to conduct herbicide treatment with minimal impacts to non-target aquatic plants.

Due to the size of the infestation, control efforts may be undertaken over several years, with a focus on preventing further downstream dispersal of the plants and addressing the source populations. The working group has identified the importance of an integrated management approach that utilizes a variety of control tools, including both physical removal and herbicide treatment. As part of this project, the use of the herbicide Reward® (active ingredient - diquat) is proposed to control the plant throughout the infestation area. For more information on Reward® please visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/pub75/pub75ch4.pdf> (page 55).

Further control measures are anticipated for 2018 and may involve physical removal of smaller populations and the continued use of Reward®. Waterfront residents will be directly notified if the herbicide is to be applied adjacent to their properties. There may be specific considerations for property owners that draw water directly from the Trent River for household use. If landowners have a water intake adjacent to their waterfront, they may advise MNR by email at FishPTBO@ontario.ca.

The OFAH will be hosting Public Information Centres to discuss details of monitoring and proposed control efforts, which the public is invited to attend at:

Wednesday, September 6, 2017
Campbellford Resource Centre
65 Bridge Street, Campbellford
Open House: 3pm - 7pm

Thursday, September 7, 2017
Quinte West Public Library
7 Creswell Drive, Trenton
Open House: 3pm - 6pm

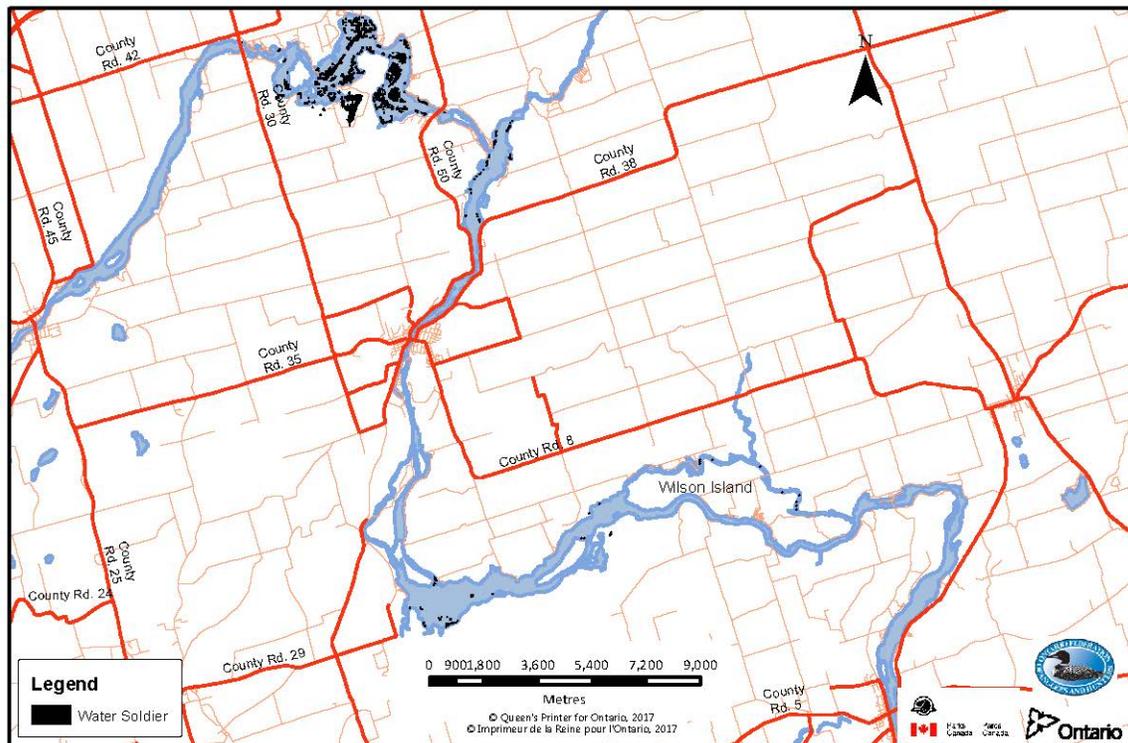
The proposal is being evaluated in accordance with a Category B project under the Class Environmental Assessment for MNR Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects. A Notice of Completion will be provided to parties who have provided input or requested further notice. If no concerns are identified, MNR may proceed to implement the project without issuing a Notice of Completion.

You are invited to direct any inquiries or comments regarding the proposed control of Water soldier to Holly Simpson, Management Biologist, Peterborough District MNR (705) 755-2001 or via email (FishPTBO@ontario.ca).

Comments must be received within the comment period, which expires on September 25, 2017.

Comments and personal information regarding this proposal are collected under authority of the *Environmental Assessment Act* and the *Pesticides Act* to assist MNR in making decisions. Comments not constituting personal information as defined by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, will be shared among MNR and others as appropriate and may be included in documentation available for public review. Personal information will remain confidential unless prior consent to disclose it is obtained.

Water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) distribution in the Trent River



For more information on the project, to submit comments or to request further notice, please contact:

Holly Simpson, Management Biologist
1st floor, South Tower, 300 Water St.
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M5
(705) 755-2001
FishPTBO@ontario.ca

To report sightings of water soldier please call the O.F.A.H./MNR Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711, or visit www.invadingspecies.com for more information.

Copies to:

- Project File
- MOE Regional Office (for Category B or C)

