

9933 Pinetree Court,  
Grand Bend, Ontario.  
N0M 1T0

November 19, 2020.

Dear Mayor Weber, Deputy Mayor Doug Cook, Lorie Scott, Jeff Wilcox, Dave Maguire, Dan Sageman, Ronn E Dodge, Scott Ferguson, and Dave March,

**Re: Public input to the Gypsy Moth Outbreak**

Thank-you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion concerning the issues surrounding the gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) infestation that is expected to cause considerable disruption to home and property owners in many areas of Lambton Shores in spring 2021. I have read Kevin Williams's recommendations and wish to address the various points he will be presenting to Council on December 1, 2020.

**Recommendation: Report CAO 06-2020**

*THAT staff develop a resource page on the Lambton Shores website in order to share third party information related to the lifecycle and management of the pest including the location and nature of any known neighbourhood-planned gypsy moth control initiatives on private property.*

A resource-based fact sheet on the Lambton Shores website would be educational to those who have not experienced approximately seven weeks of coping with the defoliating gypsy moth caterpillars this past spring/summer, are unfamiliar with the damage the caterpillars cause and are unaware spring and summer outdoor activities are not possible when thousands of caterpillars are present. Links to scientific studies and publications that fully explain the ramifications of this invasive pest on approximately five hundred tree species, would clarify, that although the defoliated oaks and hardwood trees often regrow their leaves, second-growth leaves are not only smaller but also draw the energy from the trees that would have been utilized the following spring. Consequently, the growth of many trees in our rare and fragile Oak Savannah are weakened and stressed. It should be noted that healthy stands recover normal growth within two to three years. Highly stressed stands may take up to ten years to fully recover and conifers (evergreens) may die after one year of defoliation. Studies proving the safety and effectiveness of *Bacillus thuringiensis var kurstaki* (Btk) as a biological pesticide to control the gypsy moth caterpillars thus reducing stress on trees should be addressed. This bio-insecticide is approved by Health Canada as well as Lambton Public Health and such information should be public knowledge.

Many residents have seen every gypsy moth stage develop on their properties. They have also attempted to use all of the suggested Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies such as burlap trapping, male moth trapping as an indication of the severity of the infestation, and egg mass scraping. When the infestation is advancing from the moderate to severe level, the IPM strategies are not enough. Nor are predators or parasites able to prevent or control outbreaks.

There are many groups of people and individuals who are involved in trying to find a way to control gypsy moths. Some areas in Lambton Shores do not have a representative. Some did not experience a severe infestation in the spring/summer of 2020 and may be unaware of the research that has been ongoing for many months. Since not all subdivisions have an association, communication is an ongoing problem.

**Fact pages on the Lambton Shores website would be of value to disseminate information about the gypsy moth life cycle and control methods; however, fact pages do not provide the leadership Lambton Shores needs to confront the gypsy moth problem that is indicated to occur in spring**

**2021. The most successful way to reduce the gypsy moth population is through community wide action in conjunction with the municipal government.**

*THAT prior to January 31, 2021, the Municipality direct-mail all Lambton Shores property owners, to advise of available website resources and neighbourhood contact information in order that the property owner can make informed decisions that best fit their individual situation.*

According to the London Free Press Article of November 13, 2020, the cost to direct mail all Lambton Shores property owners would be \$10,000.00.

**Adding educational fact sheets to the Lambton Shores website as suggested in the first recommendation, would certainly be an adequate method of communication without the expense or necessity of direct mail. This money would be better directed towards a solution to the gypsy moth problem. Neighbourhood contact information could be included in the first recommendation.**

*THAT the municipality support the control of gypsy moth on lands adjacent to its own by not objecting to any third party BTK spray initiative.*

I understand this to mean property owners do not require a waiver from the municipality if the property owners decide the best gypsy moth control is aerial spraying with BTK. This offers minimal support for property owners who do require a spray waiver if a neighbour decides not to control the gypsy moth on his/her own land. Zimmer Air Services Inc, the most experienced aerial spray provider, requires every property owner to ask the neighbour whether or not he/she plans to sign a contract with Zimmer Air Services Inc for the aerial spray program. If a neighbour declines, the property owner must request the neighbour sign a spray waiver and indicate whether or not the neighbour allows or objects to overspray. In the latter case, Zimmer Air Services Inc will maintain a twenty-metre buffer zone around the property of the objector. This could affect multiple property owners, create a patchwork effect as well as cause tension between neighbours. **There are vacant properties, property owners who do not reside in the area, some who do not reside in Ontario and others who do not live in Canada. How can private property owners manage these problems on their own? One contract with no waivers would eliminate many problems.**

*The Municipality of LS supports any known aerial BTK GM spray initiative by facilitating the necessary permissions/applications to the Ontario MOE, Conservation and Parks to enable alternate forms of notification and to Transport Canada to enable low flying aircraft.*

Zimmer requires all of the above as well as works personnel and municipal trucks to close down traffic during the aerial spray application.

**Passing a bylaw, such as the one passed in Sarnia and Pelham as well as other cities and communities, that does not allow anyone to opt out of the program is more efficient and economical since an egg mass survey has not been conducted in Lambton Shores and planning a targeted spray has now been made more difficult. London, Burlington, Oakville, and Hamilton have carried out their egg mass counts and will be spraying in 2021. Your constituents need municipal support that includes how to best manage organizing and paying for an aerial spray program. It is the only way to save foliage, to reduce the stress on trees and to prevent homeowners from enduring the caterpillar nuisance. **This issue is time sensitive and decisions and action are required now.****

Thank-you for allowing public input on this important issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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