

Subject: 2024 Invasive Species - Spongy Moth Status Report**Recommendation:**

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2024-0063, 2024 Invasive Species - Spongy Moth Status Report, for information.

Background:

In 2020, Council Approved Policy S802-03 to address the periodic infestation of the *Lymantria dispar dispar* moth (Spongy Moth) experienced in the Town of Pelham. In 2023, Council repealed the Spongy Moth Management Policy S802-03 and approved its replacement with the Invasive Species Management Policy S802-03.

The Spongy Moth Management Policy was reformatted as an internal procedure PW-IS-01 that continues to outline the Town's response to the periodic infestations of spongy moth including communication to both the public and Council.

This report serves to fulfill the requirements of the Spongy Moth Management Procedure PW-IS-01, to inform Council of the results of the egg mass surveys and management recommendations prior to the implementation of a treatment program, if required.

Analysis:

The Davy Resource Group was retained by the Town of Pelham through the competitive bid process to conduct spongy moth egg mass surveys in the Town of Pelham throughout January 2024. A total of 102 plots including street trees and forest plots were assessed throughout Pelham including Fenwick and Fonthill. The 2024 Spongy Moth Monitoring Report has been added as (Appendix A) to this report.

Not one of the 102 plots surveyed was found likely to experience heavy defoliation or exceed the Invasive Species Action Threshold of 2500 egg masses per hectare. Four plots were found likely to experience moderate defoliation, 20 plots may see light defoliation, and 78 plots are forecast to experience no detectible defoliation.

A large aerial spray program is not recommended in 2024, however, areas forecast for moderate to light defoliation may be investigated by staff for potential targeted ground spraying operations, limited to municipally owned property. If undertaken,

ground spraying will be reported to Council through the annual Tree Maintenance Program Summary Report.

The Town of Pelham will continue to provide information to the public on the identification and life cycle of the spongy moth as well as potential treatment options for private landowners. Communication will be through the dedicated invasive species page on the Town of Pelham Website, and social media feeds.

Financial Considerations:

The total approved budget for spongy moth management in 2024 is \$75,000. The 2024 egg mass surveys were completed at a cost of \$11,948.35 excluding taxes. Targeted ground spraying may be completed by town staff at a relatively low cost. In accordance with the Invasive Species Management Policy S802-03 the remaining budget at year end be allocated to the Invasive Species Reserve Fund.

Alternatives Reviewed:

No alternatives were reviewed as staff are following Policy S802-03.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Environmental and Climate Change Adaptation

The tree canopy within the municipal boundary is vital to the high quality of life in the Town of Pelham.

Consultation:

Davey Resource Group provided the 2024 Spongy Moth Monitoring Report.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

Appendix A – 2024 Spongy Moth Monitoring Report

Invasive Species Management Policy S802-03 and associated procedures

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