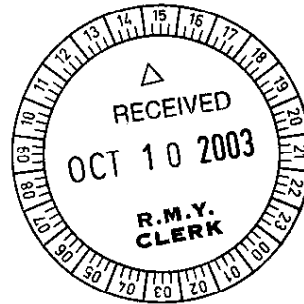




OCT - 3 2003

Mr. Denis Kelly
Regional Clerk
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1



REGION OF YORK
CLERK'S OFFICE

FILE No. - 906

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you for your letter of June 27, and enclosed copy of Clause No. 15 contained in Report No. 6 of the Regional Municipality of York's Transportation and Works Committee, regarding the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) damage and related containment efforts.

The Government of Canada recognizes that invasive alien species, such as the Emerald Ash Borer, are a significant threat to the environment and the economy, and require a co-ordinated and action-oriented response.

My colleague, the Honourable Lyle Vanclief, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, is the Minister responsible for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, which is leading the federal government's response to this plant quarantine pest. The Agency is co-ordinating its response to the Emerald Ash Borer with municipalities, the Province of Ontario, Natural Resources Canada (Canadian Forest Service), Environment Canada, and stakeholders. This response reflects the high priority assigned to this issue. I am forwarding a copy of our exchange of correspondence to Minister Vanclief for his consideration.

As the Agency leads the development of a strategy to respond to this invasive alien species, it is using surveys to determine containment and eradication measures, and activities to educate the public. The strategy and existing measures seek to prevent the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer to other regions in Ontario and the rest of Canada. Environment Canada appreciates the interest of the Regional Municipality of York and its citizens, in minimizing Emerald Ash Borer damage and preventing its further spread.

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I am pleased to report that the Government of Canada is taking action to address the threat of invasive species. In September 2001, a joint meeting of the federal, provincial and territorial Wildlife, Forest, and Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers identified invasive alien species as a priority issue for enhanced inter-jurisdictional collaboration under the Canadian Biodiversity Strategy. Specifically, the Ministers called for the development of a draft plan to address the threat of invasive alien species.

At their joint council meeting in September 2002, Ministers approved a blueprint for a national plan, and requested four thematic working groups to advance the initiative: aquatic invasives, terrestrial animals, terrestrial plants, and leadership and co-ordination. Each of the groups is tasked with assessing priority policy issues, invasive alien species, pathways/vectors of invasion, and developing recommendation and implementation plans to address them.

I appreciate your bringing this important conservation issue to my attention, and trust that my comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Anderson", followed by a horizontal flourish.

David Anderson, P.C., M.P.

c.c.: The Honourable Lyle Vanclief, P.C., M.P.