

Ministry of the Environment and
Climate Change

Ministère de l'Environnement et de
l'Action en matière de changement
climatique

Office of the Minister

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SUBJECT: Response to Question in the Ontario Legislature

Question No. 355

Will the Minister of the Environment and Climate Change urge PMRA to approve the applications of certain proven safe chemical applications (glyphosate and imazapyr-based without surfactants) for over-water application in order to stop the spread of the invasive species *Phragmites australis*.

Mr. McNaughton (Tabled April 16, 2015)

Response:

Pesticide products are registered for use in Canada by the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA), based on an application from the herbicide manufacturer. As part of the registration process, PMRA assesses the potential for impacts to aquatic life due to the intended use of the product.

The ministry is responsible for managing the use, sale, storage, transportation and disposal of federally registered pesticides under the Pesticides Act and Ontario Regulation 63/09 to protect human health and the environment.

Phragmites has been described as Canada's "worst" invasive plant. It is a perennial grass that is causing damage to coastal wetlands and beaches in Ontario. It spreads rapidly and creates monoculture stands, which reduce biodiversity and destroy habitat for other species, including Species at Risk.

The lack of registered herbicides for use in shoreline and wetland areas is a major impediment to the effective control of *Phragmites*, which threatens Ontario's most diverse and sensitive wetland ecosystems.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is the provincial lead for invasive species and is working to encourage herbicide manufacturers to seek registration by PMRA of appropriate herbicides products in Canada.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glen Murray', with a stylized, looping initial 'G'.

The Honourable Glen Murray
Minister of the Environment and Climate Change