

April 2022
Phragmites Working Group
Lake Bernard Sundridge
Contact Name: Marilee.koenderink@gmail.com

Dear Lake Bernard Property Owner:

As members of the local Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard, and concerned residents, we are writing to alert you about Phragmites Australis, an invasive, non-native reed grass that has established itself in and around the shore of Lake Bernard. It may be on your shoreline property and if so, you will want to remove it quickly. With your help and permission, we can show you what it is, and help you if you are not able to remove it yourself, beginning with cutting it from your property or at least removing the seed head this fall. We can provide you with a raspberry cane cutter at a discount to assist with removal on your property <https://www.leevalley.com/en-ca/shop/garden/garden-care/pruners/10242-raspberry-cane-cutter?item=ED725>

Information about phragmites has been posted on the following sites: The Near North Enviro- Education Centre (NNEEC) the lead agency: <https://www.nneec.ca/phragmites>

<https://www.phragcontrol.com/>

<https://georgianbayforever.org/invasive-phragmites/>

www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca

www.invadingspecies.com

The Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard has been locating and removing stands of phragmites along the shoreline for four seasons. It is growing over 15 feet tall in places. Phragmites root mats spread up to 10 feet in a season and can be up to four feet thick, sending out rhizomes (runners) up to 60 feet long, choking out other plant species such as cattails and preventing the free flow of lake water and streams. According to wetland biologists and invasive species experts, phragmites does not serve as a food source for wildlife, and it is too dense to serve as effective cover or nesting grounds. In fact, it is deeply destructive to our recreational fishing as well as our local bird and other wildlife habitat.

If it goes unchecked, it will cause property owners shoreline to fill in and native plants to disappear and the loss of biodiversity will cause additional stress to the natural ecosystem around the lake. It is currently being removed on Eagle Lake as well by the Eagle Lake Conservation Association.

Because stands of phragmites spread to other areas it is important that we identify where on the lake shore it is currently established and as well ask if property owners need assistance with removal of stands. It may take more than one year, with the expected cutting or spading time going down each year. We can get it well under control on all sites in 4 years if we all work together.

Here is what you can do:

- Educate yourself and your neighbours about phragmites.
- Identify the plant if it exists on your property and let us know.
- Give us your permission to assess/cut/remove invasive phragmites on your property according to best practices if you are unable to do it yourself with help from friends or family/properly disposing of it to prevent further spread following any COVID 19 precautions in place at the time.

For further information on this and other lake health initiatives, please check out the Lake Bernard Property Owners' Association (LBPOA) website at <http://www.lakebernard.ca>. Our phragmites cutting events are often listed there and on the LBPOA Facebook page. If you are not already a member of the Association, and own property on the lake please consider joining.

We hope you will consider joining this effort to ensure the health of our Lake, wetlands, wildlife, and maintain property and recreational values for future generations! Please email back if you need help removing Phragmites from your shore in 2022.

Sincerely,

Phragmites Working Group Lake Bernard

Marilee Koenderink chair

Marilee.koenderink@gmail.com

705-774-3878

I would like to know if I have Phragmites on my property and how to remove it and understand that I can ask volunteers to assist me to cut Phragmites from my property and shoreline.

Name of Property Owner _____

Signature of Property Owner _____

Address of Property _____

Date _____

Do you want to receive updates and information regarding this issue? If so, please provide your email address. _____