

## ***Lanark County to begin trial weed-spraying program***

Lanark County plans to begin a trial project for roadside herbicide spraying in an effort to control noxious and invasive weeds, such as wild parsnip – a poisonous, invasive plant that has spread rapidly in recent years to private properties and farmland.

The trial was approved by Lanark County Council on March 25 and is expected to begin in late May or early June. Due to the limited number of kilometres in the trial, the county will enter into an agreement with the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville's contractor.

"We have conducted a review of the roadside weed spraying conducted by UCLG," said Terry McCann, Lanark County public works director. "They have done an excellent job on their due diligence and follow the model used by the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry, which has been continuously spraying for more than 20 years."

Mr. McCann says the herbicide used (ClearView) selectively kills weeds but not grasses. "It is a herbicide that is approved for use on roadsides and a qualified contractor licensed by the Ministry of the Environment under requirements of the Pesticides Act conducts the spraying."

Spraying will only occur in unmaintained ditches on county roads selected for the trial. They will be sprayed from the edge of the shoulder to about one metre from the fence line. Roadside ditches maintained by property owners will not be sprayed. As well, a 10-metre buffer is required from freshwater habitat. Sprayers are turned off at mailboxes or whenever a pedestrian is nearby.

"We will have a county supervisor escort the spray operation to ensure only the designated areas are covered and to watch for creeks and other areas that need to be buffered," Mr. McCann explained, adding the contractor does not spray in rainy or windy conditions.

In 2015 there will be limited number of lane kilometers involved in Lanark County trial, including 21 km from Rideau Ferry to Perth on County Road 1, 18 km from Hwy. 15 to the Ottawa boundary on Cty. Rd 10, 14 km from Cty. Rd. 10 to the Beckwith 9<sup>th</sup> Line on Cty. Rd. 17 and 27 km from Merrickville to the Smiths Falls boundary on Cty. Rd. 43.

Prior to spraying, the county must receive approval from the Ministry of the Environment if a method other than posted signage is used to notify the public of the proposed activity. "A notice will be published in local newspapers and landowners will have an opportunity to obtain 'no spraying' signs from the public works business office," Mr. McCann said, adding notices will be published on the county website, through social media and through media releases as well.

"Reports from UCLG show the spraying to be very effective in controlling wild parsnip and broadleaf weeds, while the grass cover remains healthy. It may also help to reduce the need

for brushing in the ditches and trimming along guardrails,” Mr. McCann said.

For more information, visit <http://www.lanarkcounty.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=6365> or call 613-267-1353.

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