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Yukon Invasive Species Council

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Minister Mostyn  
Yukon Highways and Public Works

July 24, 2019

Dear Minister Mostyn,

We are writing to express concern about the spread of the invasive plant species along the Alaska Highway roadside between Whitehorse and Haines Junction. While white sweet clover has been present for some years, last year marked extensive and unprecedented spread of yellow lucerne eastward of Haines Junction and perennial sow thistle around Porter Creek. This year, yellow lucerne has spread south from Haines Junction along the Haines Highway. All three species displace native plants and impede visibility for motorists, making this a public safety issue.

We realize that mowing road right-of-ways is a costly annual expense for Highways and Public Works. Much of the visibility concerns are caused by invasive sweet clover, which unlike native herbaceous species like fireweed and *Hedysarum* species, reach heights over one to two metres. Strategic timing of mowing from late June to mid July to prevent invasive plants from seeding could be a win-win strategy in order to reduce both the cost of mowing and the spread of invasive species. While this year may be too late for this strategy to prevent seeding, we urge Highways and Public Works to incorporate this strategy next year in highway hotspots.

We know that the responsibility to control invasive species involves all levels of governments, businesses and individual Yukoners. We are reaching out to as many as possible to find ways to dovetail efforts.

Thank you for considering our concerns and proposed strategy.

Sincerely,

Marc Boulerice

YISC President