

August 15, 2019

Marc Boulerice, President  
Yukon Invasive Species Council  
PO Box 30111  
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5M2

**Re: Vegetation Control and Invasive Species**

Dear Mr. Boulerice:

Thank you for your July 24 letter regarding vegetation control and the spread of invasive species along the Alaska Highway and the Haines Road. We appreciate the Yukon Invasive Species Council and the important work you do in protecting Yukon's natural environment. Thank you for sharing this information regarding yellow lucerne and perennial sow thistle.

Historically, Highways and Public Works has taken a targeted, reactive approach to vegetation control. This was determined to have a limited effect on invasive species control. We recently announced a multi-year highway maintenance plan which will significantly increase the amount of vegetation control done along Yukon highways. The first year of the program prioritized highway safety and integrity issues. As you may be aware, compliance with the migratory bird legislation can add additional costs to any clearing work that may occur from May 15 to July 31, due to the need to have nesting surveys done by a professional biologist prior to work starting. Therefore, it is more economical and practical to do larger scale clearing work or vegetation control outside of the bird nesting window. In addition to regular vegetation control contracts, Highways and Public Works will continue with the annual 'pull and patrol' program which involves manually removing invasive species in select locations.

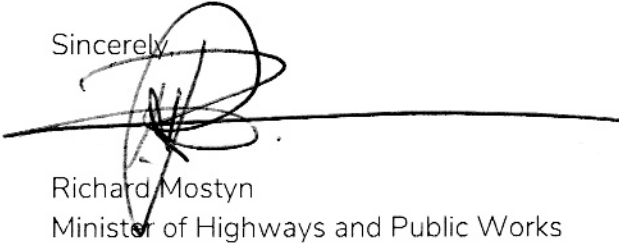
Highways and Public Works recognizes the ecological importance of protecting Yukon from invasive species. We are currently looking into developing a comprehensive strategy that draws on and incorporates practices from other jurisdictions to determine what will work best for Yukon moving forward.

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The department will continue to work in cooperation with the Invasive Species Interdepartmental Working Group and the Yukon Invasive Species Council to address the environmental issues posed by invasive species. Please contact Nathalie Gionet at 336-1389 or by email at [nathalie.gionet@gov.yk.ca](mailto:nathalie.gionet@gov.yk.ca) if you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right. The signature is positioned above the printed name and title.

Richard Mostyn  
Minister of Highways and Public Works