

Ontario taking action against invasive species

The Ontario government is taking action to prevent the introduction and spread of 13 invasive species that can cause significant harm to biodiversity and navigation in waterways, and affect recreational activities and tourism.

In a news release, the government listed the invasive species in question as: Wild Pigs, Marmorkreb (marbled crayfish), Tench (fish), New Zealand mud snail, European Frog-bit (plant), Yellow Floating Heart (plant), Prussian Carp (fish), Red Swamp, Crayfish Fanwort (plant), Bohemian Knotweed (plant), Giant Knotweed (plant), Himalayan Knotweed (plant) and Mountain Pine Beetle.

The government is seeking feedback from stakeholders, Indigenous communities and the public on the ecological, social and economic impacts of these invasive species, as well as the spread of invasive species through the movement of watercraft.

"Our government is committed to protecting Ontario's environment for future generations," said John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry. "It is important to prevent new invasive species from arriving or surviving in the province in order to protect our lakes, streams and native plants and animals. In addition, by taking these steps we will preserve and enhance the economic opportunities that ecosystems provide for our communities and industries."

The province is also working with partners in nearby jurisdictions to improve regulatory consistency in the Great Lakes basin.

The ministry is conducting a two-stage approach to public engagement. The initial posting is now available on the Environmental Registry of Ontario for public feedback until March 30, 2020. Information gathered will be considered in developing a regulatory proposal to prevent the spread of these species in the province.

The Ontario government will continue to work with conservation partners to coordinate prevention, management, and research activities to help address the serious threat while promoting public education on the negative impacts of invasive species.