

**From:** [MIN Feedback \(MNRF\)](#)  
**To:** [Ashley Sage](#)  
**Cc:** [Rowlinson, Dan \(MNRF\)](#)  
**Subject:** Message from the Honourable John Yakabuski, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry  
**Date:** September 1, 2020 12:19:18 PM  
**Attachments:** [image003.jpg](#)  
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**Ministry of Natural  
Resources and Forestry**

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354-2020-1531

September 1, 2020

Ms. Ashley Sage  
Clerk  
Township of North Dumfries  
[asage@northdumfries.ca](mailto:asage@northdumfries.ca)

Dear Ms. Sage:

Thank you for sharing with me your Council's resolution regarding the impact of gypsy moth infestations on the tree canopy.

Gypsy moth outbreaks are cyclical, typically occurring every seven to 10 years. In Ontario, major outbreaks have occurred in 1985, 1991 and 2002. The most recent outbreak, which peaked in 2008, was much less severe than previous ones. This is because the impacts from gypsy moth are gradually becoming less severe as natural parasites and diseases have adapted to regulate populations.

I understand your concerns; however, the Province of Ontario does not carry out insect control programs on private land. Pest management on private land is the responsibility of the landowner or municipality. Landowners wishing to reduce impacts on their property have the option to have trees sprayed with BTK (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) in the spring by a registered pesticide application company. This approach may be best carried out by coordinating efforts with other landowners wishing to spray.

On a smaller scale (ornamental or yard trees), there are several approaches available to help control gypsy moth, including physical removal of egg masses in the fall/winter, or removing and burning egg masses or soaking them with soap and water mixture. Also, in

the spring, once the eggs have hatched, a band of either burlap or other cloth product wrapped around the trunk will provide a place for caterpillars to hide during the heat of the day. Check these bands regularly and scrape caterpillars into a container of soapy water. Healthy trees are better able to ward off attacks and withstand stresses such as defoliation.

It is also important to note that a defoliated tree is not a dead tree and hardwood trees have the ability to produce a second crop of leaves during the growing season enabling them to continue to grow. In most instances, experience has shown that trees can withstand a few seasons of severe defoliation before branch and twig dieback starts to occur.

To support landowners in the management of gypsy moths, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) and its partners have developed fact sheets that provide information and outline best management practices. Please visit [www.invadingspecies.com/gypsy-moth/](http://www.invadingspecies.com/gypsy-moth/) and [www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/invasive-insects/gypsy-moth/](http://www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/invasive-insects/gypsy-moth/) for more information.

MNR also conducts aerial surveys to delineate the area and severity of the gypsy moth outbreak. Surveys of this year's infested areas are now complete, and data is expected to be made available in the fall of 2020. The data will be loaded as a pest disturbance layer in LIO (Land Information Ontario) and will be available to all who have a LIO account. For those who don't have a LIO account, a PDF map will be available on request. Planning is also underway to collect forecast information for next year. Forecasts for defoliation are based on observed egg mass densities. Barring any unforeseen events that may occur over winter or early spring, the egg masses of 2020 will predict defoliation for next year.

If you have any further questions, please contact Dan Rowlinson, Forest Health Monitoring Program Coordinator, Science and Research Branch, at (705) 946-7445 or [dan.rowlinson@ontario.ca](mailto:dan.rowlinson@ontario.ca).

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

John Yakabuski  
Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry

c: Dan Rowlinson

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