



December 21, 2020

Russell Dyson, Chief Administrative Officer  
Comox Valley Regional District  
770 Harmston Avenue  
Courtenay, BC V9N 0G8

Dear Mr. Dyson:

The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (MFLNRORD) has planned an aerial spray treatment to eradicate an establishing gypsy moth population in Courtenay, British Columbia. The aerial spray is planned for the spring of 2021 and covers 187 hectares. A map is attached for your reference.

Trapping and monitoring results over the past several years show clear evidence a gypsy moth population is establishing around Highway 19A, between Rennison Road and Veteran Memorial Parkway. The 2021 treatment area includes the 94 ha that was aerial sprayed in 2018. The 2018 aerial spray was effective however, the area was not extensive enough to eradicate the larger population. The moth population could easily spread to other areas via transportation routes, and if untreated, the moth could cause significant damage to the area's forests, farms, orchards and urban trees.

The Ministry requests an opportunity to present an overview of the planned Gypsy Moth Eradication program. The presentation would provide context on why the treatment is required; outline how the program would roll-out; summarize our communications strategy; and provide an opportunity to answer any questions. MFLNRORD will be represented by Tim Ebata, Forest Health Officer and Babita Bains, Provincial Forest Entomologist.

Gypsy moth is an important insect pest which can defoliate and kill a broad range of host trees. This insect is not native to British Columbia but is frequently introduced to the province through the movement of household goods from gypsy moth infested areas in eastern Canada and the United States. These periodic introductions are detected by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) that carries out an extensive pheromone-trapping program on an annual basis in high-risk areas, notably on Vancouver Island, the Gulf Islands and the Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley. The remainder of the province is surveyed at a lower intensity.

Eradication programs are an essential component of our Long-Term North American Gypsy Moth Management Plan for British Columbia.

This ensures a “gypsy moth free status” for the province, allowing continued open trade with the western United States, which also remains gypsy moth free. When new introductions are detected and subsequent surveys prove there is a breeding population of gypsy moth, treatment recommendations are developed by the Gypsy Moth Technical Advisory Committee (GM TAC) and forwarded to MFLNRORD for approval and implementation.

The active ingredient of the spray is a bacteria (Btk) that is found naturally in soil and it affects only the larvae of moths and butterflies that are feeding at the time of the spray. Humans, pets, birds, bees, plants (including berries, leaves and bark) and other wildlife are not affected. The spray breaks down rapidly once applied and there is no long-term residual effect. There are strict weather restrictions in the Pesticide Use Permit which prohibit spraying during windy conditions (maximum wind speed of 8 km/hour) to avoid spray drifting outside the permitted area. There are three proposed applications: the first occurring in late April or early May 2021 (weather dependent) and then two more at seven- to ten-day intervals. The spraying will be finished by 8:30am for each spray day (three spray days in total).

Further information regarding our planned 2021 gypsy moth spray program and studies relating to the impact on non-target moths and human health are also available on the Ministry website: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/gypsymoth>

Please let us know an appropriate time and venue to meet and discuss the program.

In the interim, if you have any specific questions or concerns regarding the program, please contact me or Tim Ebata ([Tim.Ebata@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Tim.Ebata@gov.bc.ca)) directly.

Yours truly,

*B Bains*

Babita Bains, M.Sc., RPF  
Provincial Forest Entomologist  
Resource Practices Branch  
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development  
200 – 10470 152 Street, Surrey, B.C. V3R 0Y3

Enclosure: 2021 Gypsy Moth Aerial Treatment Boundary for Courtenay, British Columbia

Planned Gypsy Moth Eradication Aerial Spray Treatment Area: Courtenay, B.C.

Pesticide Use Permit Application No. 738-0032-21-24

