

May 8, 2017

Commissioner Mitchell J. Silver
New York City Department of Parks & Recreation
830 Fifth Ave
New York, NY, 10065

Re: Funding for *Phragmites* Control

Dear Commissioner Silver:

I hope this letter finds you well.

I am writing to request that the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) provide funding for the mitigation of the fire hazard presented by the presence of fuel-rich *Phragmites* in certain areas on the east shore of Staten Island.

At a meeting of the East Shore Fire Council on December 6, 2016, convened to discuss and further the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, it was determined that DPR would conduct an analysis of properties and homes in the affected areas in order to prioritize mitigation efforts.

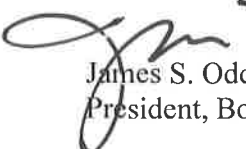
On January 23, 2017, in an email to members of my staff, Rebecca Swadek outlined a five-year remediation plan that consisted of mowing existing *Phragmites* and restoring the affected areas to a native plant community with a lower fuel load. The estimated annual cost was projected to be \$409,584.00.

In a subsequent email on February 10, 2017, Ms. Swadek informed my staff that "we lack the in-house capacity and staff to continue work on the East Shore without funding."

The presence of *Phragmites* in these areas constitutes a very real threat to the lives and property of its inhabitants. I am therefore requesting that this relatively small sum of money be budgeted in order to protect residents of the east shore from this potentially deadly danger. In my opinion, the risk to life and property is too great - and the cost of mitigation too small - to justify a refusal to fund this project.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,


James S. Oddo
President, Borough of Staten Island

