**The European Fire Ant in Canada**

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Despite conventional geo-climatic barriers, forces such as global warming, globalization of trade, and urbanization, are driving the introduction of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in greater frequency and range. The U.S. history is characterized by successive non-native ant establishment (e.g. Argentine Ant (1891), black imported fire ant (1918), red imported fire ant (1930), tawny crazy ant (2002)). Colonization by the European Fire Ant *Myrmica Rubra* through eastern coast U.S. is well documented, and is now present in QU (1957), ON (1975), NS (1998), NB/PEI (2008), and NL/BC (2010). Based on the US experience, Canada may be facing similar social and ecological challenges with the spread of *M. rubra.*  
  
Outside its native range *M. rubra* causes significant impacts to humans, non-human species, and ecosystems. BC estimates $100M annually over 20 years in combined health and property impacts. Municipalities in the GTA see the issue as cross-boundary, therefore, not their responsibility; while provincial and federal governments view it as a private property issue. Since an effective control of *M. Rubra* is nonexistent, control and mitigation can only occur with early detection, rapid response, and cooperation. Rapid wide-scale spread due to contaminated soil movement is clearly linked to issues around land use planning due to ongoing infill, new developments, and large infrastructure projects in the GTA that generate significant soil surplus.  
  
In my research I hope to answer critical questions that can contribute towards the development of a more complete understanding and effective approach to addressing the spread of *M. rubra* in the GTA.