



2015 Annual Summary Report



Message from the Chair

The year 2015 has been a landmark year for the Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society (CKISS). The CKISS celebrated its 10th year anniversary and with it many changes including a new name! We are now a species society rather than a plant committee, a reflection of the increasing awareness and expanding list of species that are on the verge of altering our precious Kootenay ecosystems.

The Kootenay region boasts some of the largest tracts of undisturbed, species rich habitat in the northern hemisphere, a gift and a responsibility that should not be taken lightly. Luckily there are many that work towards protecting our resources and we can count them as our supporters. These include our membership, staff, board members and funders. The outreach staff participated and organized events all year long including our AGM and 10th year celebration. The biodiversity bonanza theme was a blast for the kids and an opportunity to honour volunteers, exceptional community members and board members that have dedicated the full 10 years (and counting) of service. Education is a fundamental aspect of CKISS and we are proud to report that we reached over 10,000 people in 2015 alone.

Education is one of the key value added services that we provide our funders. Another key role of CKISS is as a hub of collaboration. Our collaborative framework has the capacity to maximize the efficiency of invasive species monitoring and control in the region. The CKISS had 14 funders in 2015 and over 40 stakeholders and partners. We are very grateful for the continuing support and vote of confidence from our funders. None of the amazing work from the talented and dedicated staff and consultants would be possible without also the dedication of its funders. Speaking of staff, the CKISS saw some major changes in staffing fully realized in 2015. With the departure of the previous Executive Director, Crystal Klym in late 2014, some new staff have added their talents to the pool under the leadership of the new Executive Director Jennifer Vogel. The board would like to sincerely thank Crystal for her dedication and vision that built CKISS into the leading organization that it is today. With a significant increase in funding for 2015, Jennifer was able to capitalize on new opportunities and really get some work done! But I will let her tell you all about it next.

Thank you to all our supporters, funders, staff, consultants and board members,

Laurie Carr
President, Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society



Laurie Carr, BScF, MSc. is the President of the Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society (CKISS). Many years of working in the field of conservation biology gave her an appreciation for the importance of invasive species in current environmental issues. After joining the board in 2010, she became the President in 2013. Laurie lives and works in Nelson where she enjoys the Kootenay life with her family. Laurie currently works as a researcher with the Borealis Centre for Environment and Trade Research.



Message from the Executive Director

2015 was an exciting year for the CKISS as it celebrated its 10th year anniversary! The CKISS has changed a lot since its inception in 2005, when it began under the direction of Juliet Craig. CKISS has grown into a thriving organization which partners with over 50 stakeholders and partners and is a leader in invasive species management and outreach for the region.

I would firstly like to thank Crystal Klym our departing Executive Director for her dedication to the CKISS team over the last several years. Under Crystal's leadership and direction the CKISS greatly expanded its programming in both education and invasive species management.

Building on the work of Crystal Klym, we realized ongoing improvements in areas of governance, education, invasive species management and protection of the regions biodiversity through these program areas.

Some of the specific achievements included:

Expanding the CKISS team to include a dedicated Education Program Coordinator and a Research Program Coordinator

Expansion of the aquatic invasive species program to include American Bullfrog surveillance and management

A name change and new branding for the Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society

Expanded partnerships with local and regional organizations

Another successful year of program delivery with over \$350,000 being disbursed throughout the region towards invasive species management and outreach

We would like to express thanks to our ongoing and new funding partners for supporting the work of the CKISS and its partner organizations. A special thank you to our board of directors for their willingness to volunteer their expertise and time and ensuring the ongoing success of the CKISS. In addition, a thank you to our many contractors that assisted with the operational and logistical work of the CKISS.

I would like to also personally thank the CKISS staff team, who complete much of the on the ground work that takes place throughout the region,

Khaylish Fraser

Aquatic Invasive Species Program Coordinator

Laurie Frankcom

Education Program Coordinator

Matthew Chilakos

Operations Program Coordinator

Morgan Sternberg

Research Program Coordinator

Summer Students-2015

Jay Mahoney, Chelsea Bennett and Kalyn May

Looking forward to a successful 2016!

Jennifer Vogel

Executive Director, Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society



Executive Director of the Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society. Jennifer is passionate about the work of maintaining and protecting biodiversity throughout the region, by managing high priority invasive species. Jennifer oversees the CKISS's fund development, project management and capacity building efforts and works to develop strong partnerships throughout the region and beyond.

What is CKISS?



British Columbia is the most ecologically diverse province in Canada making the Central Kootenays a beautiful place to work, live and play. The Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society (CKISS) strives to keep our lakes pristine, forests lush, mountains healthy and economies thriving through education and managing invasive species in an effective way.



Vision Statement

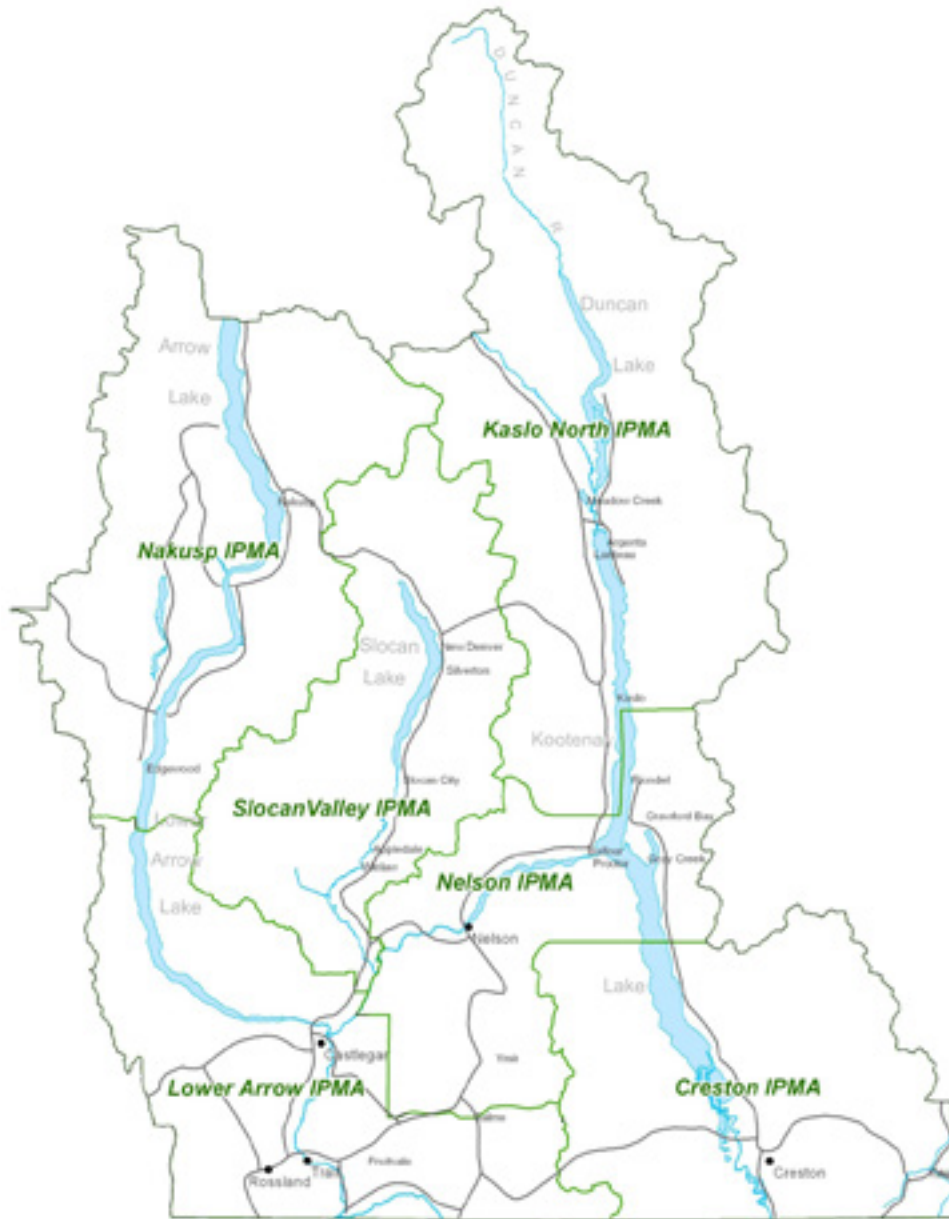
CKISS is a network of partners collaborating to minimize the impacts of invasive species on the ecosystems, communities, and economy of the Central Kootenay region.

The Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society is a non-profit society that was formed in 2005 by a group of residents and company/agency representatives who were interested in promoting collaborative approaches to invasive species management. The Society includes representatives from non-profit societies, utility companies, government agencies, and regional companies.

The purposes of the Society within the geographic area of the Regional District of the Central Kootenay and Areas A & B of the Regional District of the Kootenay Boundary, are to:

1. **Raise awareness and educate the public, government agencies, and other land managers about invasive species and their impacts in the area;**
2. **Prevent the further introduction and spread of invasive species in the area through education and awareness, early detection and control, and coordinated integrated weed management efforts;**
3. **Promote coordinated and collaborative management of invasive species between agencies and land occupiers;**
4. **Work towards the control/containment of highly invasive non-native species; and**
5. **Provide a conduit for information and a source of expertise on invasive species**

How did CKISS make a difference this year?



Operations **Terrestrial Invasive Species**

- Total Area Surveyed: 1031 Ha
- Total Area Treated: 261 Ha
- 30+ priority species treated utilizing Integrated Pest Management in 2015

High priority species treated in 2015

Baby's Breath
 Field Scabious
 Giant Hogweed
 Hoary Cress
 Leafy Spurge
 Plumeless Thistle
 Policeman's Helmet
 Purple Loosestrife
 Scotch Thistle
 Rush Skeletonweed
 Teasel
 Blueweed
 Hoary Alyssum
 Himalayan Blackberry
 Bohemian, Japanese and Giant knotweed
 Yellow Flag Iris
 Scentless Chamomile
 Scotch Broom

High priority species NOT present in the CKISS region which were surveyed:

1. Puncture Vine
2. Yellow Star Thistle

Knotweed profile



Knotweed is a fast growing highly invasive plant that is native to eastern Asia. It can grow up to a meter a month with an underground root system that is in excess of 10 meters in diameter from the parent plant. This plant will grow through concrete and asphalt, including roads and home foundations. Once established it is extremely difficult to eradicate and requires years of dedicated and persistent treatments. The only effective treatment for permanent control is the use of herbicides.



New Research Program Coordinator!

Morgan Sternberg was hired in 2015 to assist with developing partnerships with local, regional and provincial academic institutions.



CKISS + TRU

In 2015, the CKISS worked closely with the Thompson Rivers University on a control study for yellow flag iris using benthic membranes.



CKISS goes Hi Tech

CKISS is getting high tech, by using drones to survey invasive plants in the region. In 2015, the CKISS partnered with Thompson Rivers University to complete test surveys for Yellow Flag Iris in the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area.



Operations Aquatic Invasive Species

Invasive mussels anyone?

- 49 plankton samples collected
- 17 waterbodies sampled
- 4 substrate samplers installed and monitored

Result?

No zebra or quagga mussels detected!

We are invasive mussel free!



CKISS partnered with the Province of BC on the BC Invasive Mussel Defence Program, by providing them with a decontamination unit

American Bullfrog response takes a big leap forward!

- Acoustic monitoring devices installed at 3 locations
- Visual surveys completed at 3 locations
- Bad news.....bullfrogs found in Nelway
- Over 122 bullfrogs eradicated in 2015
- Created an American Bullfrog Action Team comprised of multiple stakeholders and partners



American Bullfrog profile



The American Bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*) is native to Eastern North America and was introduced to coastal BC by people who wanted to 'farm' the frog for its meaty legs. It is a large amphibious frog that lives along the waters' edge of lakes and ponds. They have smooth skin that can vary in colour from pale green to dark olive and some have brown spots. Bullfrogs have large golden eyes, large tympanums ("ears") and a skin fold following the shape of the eardrum. During mating season in the spring the male's distinctive call is a loud, low-pitched droning bellow. Listen online at <http://ckiss.ca/species/american-bullfrog/>.

Quick Facts

- Voracious predator that eats anything that fits into its mouth; we found a 28 g songbird in the stomach of a captured bullfrog!
- Carries a variety of amphibian diseases
- Severely reduces biodiversity by outcompeting native species for food and habitat
- Robust frog that can reach 20 cm in length and 800 g in weight
- Lays a high number of eggs compared to native frog species
- Can move overland up to five kilometres in one year



Education

Resources Dispersed: 5560

Youth Outreach Activities: 100 students

CKISS outreach booth: 14 community events

Adult Workshops: 135 adults

Volunteers: 53

of people reached at events, workshops and presentations: 9427

Social Media

New CKISS website was officially launched on August 11, 2015

Unveiled CKISS Twitter account @CKISS_Kootenay in September 2015



of hits on CKISS new website: 8960

of Facebook likes: 152

of NEW likes on Facebook page: 68

New CKISS newsletter, "CKISS N'Tell"

of subscribers to newsletter: 404

of NEW subscribers to our newsletter: 32

% of opened Newsletters by membership list: 35%, 14% above the average!

of times in media: 37



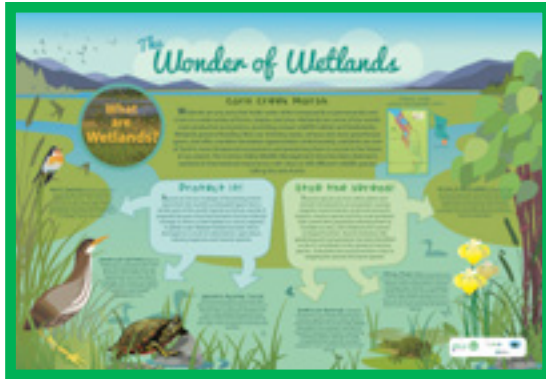
Education Programs, Events & Resources

1. **PlayCleanGo:** Education and outreach campaign targeted at outdoor recreationalists. We are a partner; through this partnership we receive support with resources.
2. **Clean, Drain, Dry (ISCBC):** campaign aimed at boaters and activities taking place on waterbodies throughout the province.
3. **PlantWise (ISCBC):** campaign aimed at horticulture industry, nurseries, suppliers, and consumers
4. **Don't Let it Loose:** CKISS initiative that is aimed at local schools, pet shops and aquarium stores, with opportunities for Citizen Science.
5. **Communities Pulling Together:** On-going program, where citizen groups/schools pull invasive plants at high priority sites and plant native species.
6. **Presentations/Workshops:** CKISS provides workshops and presentations upon request to local citizen and stewardship groups.



7. **Interpretive Signs:**
3 new signs at the Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area
8. **New Outreach Booth Banners:** 2 new AIS and TIS banners
9. **NEW CKISS Swag:**
t-shirts, bags, stickers and business cards with new and improved logo
10. **Boatwash rack cards**
11. **Clean, Drain, Dry advertising in regional tourism publications**
12. **CKISS celebrated its 10 year anniversary!**
13. **KIDS events**
14. **Annual AGM and Field Tour**
15. **School Groups**

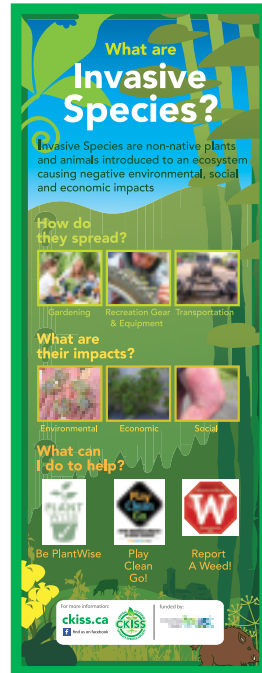
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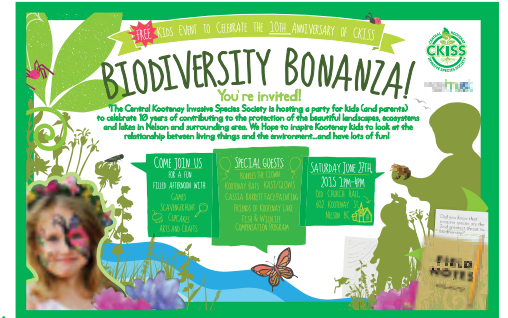
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15.



Funders

Thank you to our funders. We appreciate your continuing support!




Stakeholders

Thank you to our stakeholders. We look forward to working together again this year!



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ckiss.ca