



Working Together to Promote  
Invasive Species Prevention



## 2024 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAM FRAMEWORK


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## SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

### INTRODUCTION

The Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society (CKISS) mission is to protect ecosystems and communities by preventing and reducing the harmful impacts of invasive species. In the CKISS Strategic Plan 2020-2025 one of the three focus areas is ‘Education, Collaboration and Sharing Knowledge’. The objectives that relate specifically to this education framework include:

#### **Objective 1: Outreach / public awareness**

- Engage, educate and inspire residents and visitors to act on addressing invasive species.

#### **Objective 2: Strength through partnering**

- Work with business, industry, academia, community organizations and governments including First Nations to deliver effective invasive species management and prevent the introduction, establishment and spread of aquatic and terrestrial invasive species

### PROGRAM AREAS

The CKISS has been delivering education and awareness programs since 2005. Initially outreach activities were focused on terrestrial invasive plants and consisted of presentations and community weed pulls. Current outreach programming has evolved to include Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC) Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) programming, international programming and local/regionally specific programming.

## SECTION II. COMMUNITY BASED SOCIAL MARKETING (CBSM)

CBSM is a method that is used to foster sustainable behaviours by making direct contact with community members and removing barriers in order to create behaviours changes.

CBSM involves:

- Identifying the barriers to a behaviour
- Developing and piloting a program to overcome these barriers
- Implementing the program across a community
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the program

Currently the CKISS education staff are ambassadors and partners for existing CBSM programs developed that are listed below.

**PLAY CLEAN GO:** Education and outreach campaign targeted at outdoor recreationalists that encourages trail user to clean plant particles off their clothing and gear between recreation sites. We are a partner; through this partnership, we receive support with resources. (<http://canadainvasives.ca/taking-action/playcleango/>)



**CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY:** A program aimed at watercraft enthusiasts that encourages them to clean their boats and gear between waterbodies. CKISS is a Clean, Drain, Dry ambassador and will be working collaboratively with the Invasive Species Council of British Columbia (ISCBC) to deliver this program in order to mitigate the spread of aquatic invasive species ([ISCBC campaign](#)).



**PLANTWISE:** A program aimed at the horticulture industry, growers and buyers. The outreach program educates gardening enthusiasts about horticulture's most "unwanted" invasive plants in BC while providing a variety of non-invasive alternatives. CKISS is a PlantWise ambassador and will deliver this program in order to educate the gardening community on actions that they can take to prevent the introduction of invasive species. ([ISCBC campaign](#)).



**DON'T LET IT LOOSE:** This program is aimed at local schools, pet shops and aquarium stores, with opportunities for Citizen Science. The CKISS is a Don't Let it Loose ambassador and will be working with the ISCBC to deliver this program in order to promote responsible pet and aquarium ownership ([ISCBC program](#)).



**BUY LOCAL, BURN LOCAL:** A campaign aimed at car campers and park users that will encourage people to burn local firewood in order to prevent the spread of invasive insects or diseases that can harm native forests. CKISS is an ambassador



for the program and will work with the ISCBC in order to promote key messages. ([ISCBC program](#)).

### SECTION III. CKISS SPECIFIC EVENTS AND PROGRAMS

CKISS organizes, hosts, delivers, and promotes a variety of events, workshops and presentations. These events create an opportunity for community engagement and will raise the profile of CKISS, create community stewards, attract new members, and educate existing members about CKISS initiatives.

#### COMMUNITIES PULLING TOGETHER

During a Communities Pulling Together event, a group of volunteers uses hand tools to remove an invasive plant infestation in their community. Volunteers receive hands-on learning experiences on the impacts invasive plants can have on ecosystems and economies. In addition, they learn about plant ecology, proper removal and disposal techniques. These events are highly regarded and a fun way to develop environmental ambassadors.

CKISS will work with selected community groups who wish to partake in a Communities Pulling Together Event as a fundraising opportunity. The CKISS will provide a \$250 stipend to selected volunteer groups. In order to be eligible for the stipend a minimum of 10 volunteers must participate in a weed pull for minimum of 2 hours. The CKISS will run community events between May-October. Community groups that wish to book a weed pull and receive the stipend must book with [CKISS Education Coordinator](#).



#### KOOTENAY BROOM BUSTERS

The Kootenay Broom Busters is a new pilot program for 2024 launched by CKISS, focusing on mobilizing community involvement to combat the spread of invasive species, starting with Scotch broom in the Kootenays. While Scotch broom currently concentrates along the west arm and main lake of Kootenay Lake, scattered sites exist throughout the region, including the Slocan Valley. Removing smaller infestations is a priority to limit the plant's range and mitigate its impact on native ecosystems. This initiative seeks to instill environmental literacy through hands-on education opportunities and establish a long-term model for community-led invasive plant removal. By expanding the Pulling Together program, CKISS aims to empower residents as land stewards and perpetuate the program through education and community involvement. The program initially focuses on Scotch broom for its ease of

identification, significant ecological impacts, and potential for successful control. If successful, the model may expand to address other invasive species or adopt a multi-species approach in the future, following the model of the successful Broombusters program on Vancouver Island.

## YOUTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

CKISS offers educational programs designed to engage and inspire youth to become environmental stewards. The objective of the programs are to provide teachers, students, youth group leaders and youth participants the knowledge, tools and resources they need in order to make vital contributions to invasive species prevention and management. The following activities and resources are available for schools and youth groups within our region:



- **Youth Pulling Together Events**, youth use hand tools to remove invasive plants in their community.
- **Restoration/ Native Planting Events**, a class/youth group will assist CKISS at a selected site to restore natural ecosystems by removing invasive species and planting native species.
- **Guest Speakers**, CKISS staff can visit schools/youth group virtually or in person to give a presentation on Invasive Species 101 & Biodiversity.
- **Field Trips**, students/youth can participate in either a walking or off-site field trips with CKISS. Students will partake in a variety of games and hands on activities that will connect them with the natural world and teach them about invasive species.
- **STEMming Invasive Species Program**: a new interactive youth education program to be developed and offered 2022-2024. The program will demonstrate the role of science and engineering in solving pressing environmental issues, by using STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills in a variety of outdoor activities. The program will target females and indigenous participants because they are currently underrepresented in STEM careers.
- **Digital Resources for teachers**, the CKISS website has a wealth of information and classroom ready resources for teacher who wish to teach a unit on invasive species. Visit the [‘Teacher Page’](#). The games listed on the website can be used for summer camps, after school programs, scouts/guides and any other youth group.

The CKISS offers youth field trips, youth pulling together and restoration events between May-October. Guest speakers can be arranged throughout the school year. Interested schools or youth group leaders must pre-book youth programs with the CKISS [Education Program Coordinator](#).

## RESTORATION PROGRAM

CKISS recruits community volunteers to restore natural ecosystems by removing invasive species and planting native species at specific sites in our region. The program provides learning opportunities for volunteer groups to discover the ecological and cultural value of the native species and the importance of biodiversity.



## ECOACTION PROJECT

In the fall of 2022, CKISS kicked off the multi-year 'Communities Protect Freshwater Together: Riparian Restoration in the Kootenay Region' project. The overarching objective of this project is to engage and inspire the local community to help protect freshwater quality through the restoration of critical waterbodies and adjacent riparian habitat within three sites in the Central Kootenay region. The three restoration sites are the Bonanza Biodiversity Corridor in the Slocan Valley, Jubilee Wetland in Rossland, and a wetland in Harrop's Sunshine Bay Regional Park.



## AGM

This event takes place annually; it highlights the work that CKISS has been doing on the educational, aquatic and operations programs and activities. The meeting will be held virtually on May 14, 2024.



## PRESENTATIONS/WORKSHOPS/TRAINING


CKISS provides workshops, presentations and training opportunities to industry groups, government employees, municipal staff, businesses, local citizen and stewardship groups. The best management training workshops and presentations cover how to identify and report high priority invasive species, explain the economic and environmental impacts and teach techniques to treat and prevent further introduction and spread.



## WEBINARS

A webinar is an online event hosted by CKISS that allows the guest speaker to share presentations, videos, web pages, resources or other multimedia content with audiences located anywhere. CKISS' webinars cover a variety of topics and cater to many target audiences. During the webinar, participants can interact with the guest speaker and CKISS by making comments or ask questions in





real-time through instant messaging tool. A follow up email with the webinar recording, resources and a survey are emailed to people who registered for webinars. The webinar is recorded and uploaded to the CKISS You Tube channel and website for people to view at a later date,

## SECTION IV. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Overall, the CKISS strives to increase and enhance all marketing and communication platforms, including but not limited to website, social media platforms, brand enhancement, print advertising and media relations.

### KEY MESSAGES

While messages specific to provincial and regional programs are determined by the programs and their action plans, some messages are integral to the mandate of the CKISS.

These are outlined below;

- The establishment and spread of invasive species has become a growing concern provincially, nationally and globally.
- Invasive species are harmful.
- The introduction or spread of invasive species threatens the environment, the economy and society, including human health.

Stopping invasive species is possible if we change our behaviours by;

- Increased prevention, detection and improved management of invasive species can provide significant economic benefits to the province, businesses, industry, and citizens.
- Effective management of invasive species requires all British Columbia citizens to work together, take responsibility for their actions and change their behaviors.

### TARGET AUDIENCES

It is important that CKISS identify and understand target audiences. *“Who is CKISS trying to reach and what does CKISS want them to do?”* A target audience is a specific group of people within the market that CKISS aims a message to. For example, if the target audience is gardeners, then the targeted message will be to become PlantWise. The CKISS market is vast; however, the market can be broken down into the following priority target groups:

#### Government:

- BC government ministries
- First Nations governments
- Regional and local governments

## Industry

- Nurseries and greenhouses
- Utility companies
- Land developers
- Real estate agencies
- Landscape companies
- Agriculturists (commercial, organic and hobby)
- Forestry companies
- Media

## Stewardship Groups/Societies

- Recreation clubs and societies, such as the Kootenay Columbia Trail Society, Trail Wildlife Association
- Regional invasive species societies, such as the East Kootenay Invasive Species Council
- Agricultural societies, such as the Creston Valley Beef Growers Association
- Stewardship societies such as the Slocan Lake Stewardship Society
- Youth Groups such as Girl Guides of Canada
- 

## General Public

- Outdoor enthusiasts and recreationalists.
- Environmentalists, such as birders, etc.
- Gardeners,
- Boaters, anglers
- Tourists
- Pet owners
- Children and youth
- Teachers and school groups

## MEMBERSHIP

Anyone can choose to apply to become a voting member of CKISS free of charge by filling out the [online membership form](#). All membership applications go through an approval process. Application are reviewed and approved at CKISS board meetings. Applicants will be notified via email. The CKISS collects information on our members in order to understand and serve the membership, attract more members to events and utilize keen volunteers. Members are actively recruited during the field season at meetings events, presentations and workshops.



## WEBSITE

The [CKISS website](#) is a tool to engage, interact with, and mobilize our audience in order to ultimately inspire action. It is important to keep website content fresh, therefore updates occur on a regular basis throughout the year on the CKISS site. Whenever possible CKISS staff will direct the public, media and funders to the CKISS website for additional information.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has become a vital component of community engagement; they keep CKISS followers up-to-date, promote events and spread the word about CKISS programs and key messages. CKISS' social media platforms are [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



## iNATURALIST

iNaturalist is a crowdsourced citizen science platform where people can record and share their observations of living things, including invasive species. Anyone can make an account, and can access iNaturalist using either the app or a desktop web browser.

- CKISS created two Guides: [Guide to Invasive Plants of the Central Kootenays](#) and [Invasive Fauna of the Central Kootenay](#). These guides are a great resource for anyone looking to learn more about invasive species in our region, and how they are categorized and managed.
- CKISS created two projects: [CKISS Priority Invasive Plants](#), and [CKISS Faunal Invasive Species](#).



## EMAIL MARKETING/NEWSLETTER

The "CKISS n' Tell" newsletter is a powerful tool to communicate CKISS news to our membership, funders and the media. The main goal of the CKISS newsletter is to motivate our target audiences to become advocates for the organization's key messages. The newsletter has interesting content and powerful images that links back to the CKISS website. Articles are written with the target audience in mind, outlining what the benefit is to the reader e.g.) *Removing invasive plants will help native plant populations thrive!*



## MEDIA

CKISS will work with the media and journalists for the purpose of informing the public about our organizations key messages, in a consisted and credible manner. The goal of media relations is to maximize positive coverage of the CKISS in order to increase awareness, share important information, build public support, public opinion and reach target audiences. The CKISS has developed an internal media policy that provides guidance to staff and the board of directors on media relations protocol.

## ADVERTISING

CKISS will purchase strategically placed print ads and boosted posts on Meta in order to promote CKISS and deliver key messages. The publications selected have a broad distribution throughout the West/Central Kootenays.



An example of strategic advertising in 2024 is the placement of a Clean Drain Dry and Play Clean Go ads in the Do and Go Magazine which targets tourists to enjoy the water and great out doors while preventing the introduction of invasive species into the Kootenays.

## SECTION V: EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION MONTH

A province wide campaign spearheaded by the ISCBC designed to raise awareness of the environmental and economic damage that invasive plants and animals can cause if they become established. The CKISS will collaborate with the ISCBC and other regional societies in order to promote the awareness campaign.



### OUTREACH BOOTH

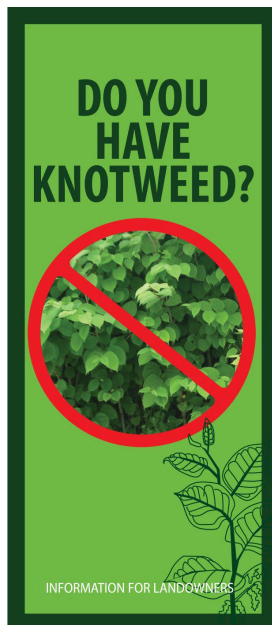
A CKISS representative will set up an eye-catching and interactive booth at events hosted by our partners throughout the Central and West Kootenay Region. The purpose of the outreach booth is to



increase public awareness of CKISS, build the readership for the “CKISS n Tell” newsletter, recruit new members, promote key messaging and distribute resources.

### OUTREACH MATERIALS AND DISTRIBUTION

CKISS has a variety of resources to share with the public and partners. These resources have been developed by CKISS, ordered from ISCBC or other program partners. The public will have access to these resources at community events, targeted retail stores and visitor centres.



### SIGNAGE

CKISS designs and coordinates the installation of behaviour change program and interpretive signs in our region. For example Clean, Drain Dry signs are installed at boat launches to remind water craft users the actions they can take to stop the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species.



### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CKISS staff will be participating in a variety of workshops and conferences in order to gain knowledge of new practices/technology and to improve their professional skill set. Another purpose of attending industry events is to network and build working relationships with other regional societies, partners, government officials and funders.

## SECTION: VI OUR SUPPORTERS

CKISS would like to thank the following organizations that have supported our education and outreach activities in 2021.

### COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST

The core funding of the CKISS education program is through Columbia Basin Trust who supports the ideas and efforts of the people in the Columbia Basin.



### GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development & BC Parks and the Gaming Grant.



### GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

The **STEMming Invasive Species Program** is made possible with support of Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) PromoScience Program



Natural Sciences and Engineering  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences  
naturelles et en génie du Canada

Canada

The Communities Protect Freshwater Together: Riparian Restoration in the Kootenay Region' project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change.

Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier du gouvernement du Canada agissant par l'entremise du ministère fédéral de l'Environnement et du Changement climatique.

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:  
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

### **REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY**

We want to thank the Regional District of Central Kootenay for supporting Community Pulling Together Events and The Kootenay Broom Busters Program is made possible with funding by the Regional District of Central Kootenay through the Local Conservation Fund.



### **REGIONAL DISTRICT OF KOOTENAY BOUNDARY**

We want to thank the Regional District of Central Kootenay for supporting Community Weed Pull Events.

