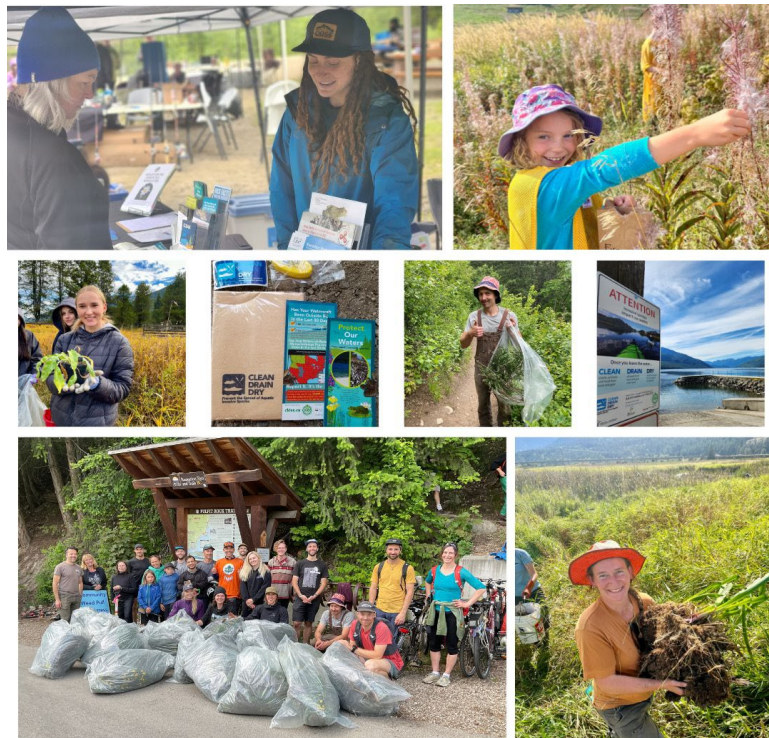




Working Together to Promote  
Invasive Species Prevention



## 2026 ENGAGEMENT 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 2020-2026 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](#).



#### NATURE FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS

The Nature for Neighbourhoods program is a community-based initiative that supports residents in RDCK Areas A, D, E, F, and H to take meaningful action against invasive plants on their own properties. Through the program, participants can earn cash rewards by removing priority species—spotted knapweed, common tansy, and Scotch broom—using the Crowdsorsa mobile app. After registering their property with CKISS, participants simply download the app (available from early May through October), follow clear plant identification and removal guidance, and upload before-and-after videos of their work to receive payment. The program is designed to be flexible and accessible, allowing landowners to complete the work themselves or have a friend, neighbour, or family member carry out

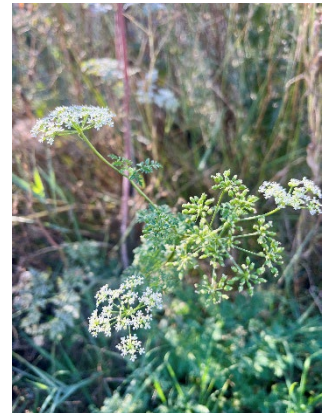


the removal and earn the incentive.

By combining hands-on stewardship with financial incentives, Nature for Neighbourhoods helps reduce invasive species at the source while building awareness and capacity within local communities. The program also encourages CKISS' Eco Garden program, the first 20 people to participate in the NFN program will receive EcoBucks rewards, which can be used toward native plants and seeds at the KinSeed fall sale in Nelson. Overall, the initiative empowers residents to contribute to healthier ecosystems while fostering a shared sense of responsibility for invasive species management at the neighbourhood level.

### **COMMUNITY POISON HEMLOCK ERADICATION PLAN - POISON HEMLOCK PATROL- CASH FOR CONSERVATION**

Under the Community Poison Hemlock Eradication Plan, CKISS is mobilizing the Creston community to tackle one of the region's most toxic and invasive plants: poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*). This highly poisonous species endangers humans, livestock, and pets, while outcompeting native plants—particularly in sensitive riparian zones. Through collaborative action involving landowners and volunteers the program aims to eliminate poison hemlock from the Central Kootenay landscape and prevent its spread across the region.



CKISS is partnering with Crowdsorsa to launch a mobile game-based eradication mission in June 2026. Residents and visitors in the Creston area can earn money while contributing to conservation efforts by using their smartphones to locate and remove poison hemlock. Participants submit before-and-after videos through the app, and once verified, receive direct financial compensation. With \$1,800 in total rewards available, players can earn up to \$30/hour based on infestation size and density. All participants are required to complete safety training and use personal protective gear. This innovative approach not only raises awareness but also strengthens local capacity to manage invasive species—making conservation fun, rewarding, and community-driven.

### **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.



Funding dependent, 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.
- **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 [Engagement 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.



## JUBILEE WETLAND RESTORATION: HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

In partnership with Rossland Summit School and supported by the CBT Small Ecosystem Grant, the Central Kootenay Invasive Species Society (CKISS) is leading a multi-year effort to restore and enhance the North Jubilee Park wetland in Rossland. This unique site, home to a pre-existing wetland, is being rehabilitated as part of the broader Jubilee Park redevelopment initiative. The project focuses on removing invasive species such as creeping buttercup and sow thistle and replanting the area with locally sourced indigenous vegetation. Restoration efforts aim to improve wetland function, support biodiversity, and create critical habitat for species such as frogs, nesting Killdeer, and native pollinators. A key goal is to introduce the threatened Oregon checker mallow (*Sidalcea oregana*) to the site, contributing to pollinator conservation and regional ecological resilience.



The project will engage over 130 student and teacher volunteers from local schools in restoration activities, including invasive species removal, seed collection, and the planting of native species. Additional techniques such as mulching and solarization will be applied to improve success rates in controlling invasive plants. The wetland serves not only as vital habitat but also as an outdoor classroom and a hub for community

stewardship. With monitoring led by CKISS and on-the-ground support from local teachers, the project will track plant survivorship and the reduction of invasives, with success metrics including a 50% survival rate for native plantings. This initiative strengthens CKISS's commitment to fostering youth engagement, ecological restoration, and the protection of sensitive ecosystems in the Central Kootenay region.

## 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 13, 2026.



## 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 government

### 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 group

### 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 outdoors while preventing the introduction of invasive species into the Kootenays.

## SECTION V: EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION MONTH

A nationwide campaign spearheaded by the Invasives Canada 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 Invasives Canada and other regional societies in order to promote the awareness campaign.

### OUTREACH BOOTH

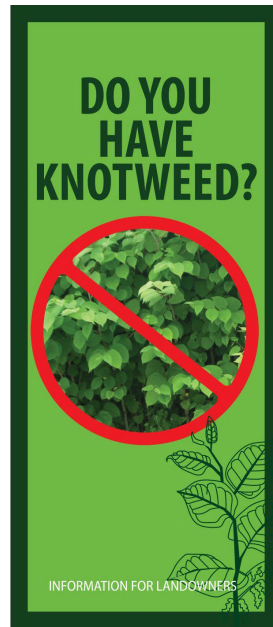
A CKISS representative will set up an eye-catching and interactive booth at events hosted by our partners throughout the Central and West Kootenay Region. The purpose of the outreach booth is to



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.



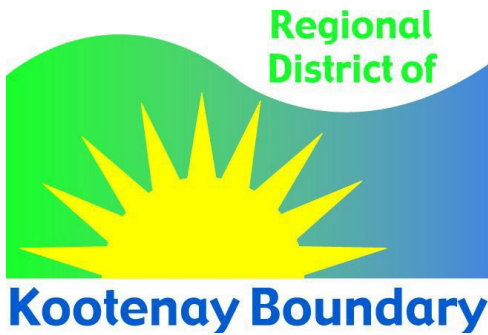
**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL KOOTENAY**

We want to thank the Regional District of Central Kootenay for supporting Community Pulling Together Events and The Kootenay Broom Bashers 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 the CKISS Engagement Program.



## HABITAT CONSERVATION TRUST FOUNDATION

The CKISS recognizes the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation for making a significant financial contribution to support the Poison Hemlock Patrol a Community Poison Hemlock Eradication Plan. Partnerships are key to conserving BC's wildlife, fish, and their habitats.



## FORTIS BC

We want to thank Fortis BC for supporting the CKISS Engagement Program, specifically our Clean. Drain, Dry program and restoration efforts at Waterloo Eddy Park.

