

B16 - Holding Back The Invasion: Invasive Plant Management

Presentation # 1 title: Invasive Plant Management in British Columbia - Toward Healthy Landscapes

Presenter:

Becky Brown, P.Ag. - B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

Abstract

Invasive plants threaten all lands and most watercourses in BC. The introduction and spread of these species are significantly affected by human activity. Climate change may accelerate the introduction and expansion of invasive plants at a rate not yet experienced in the province. Impacts to water, soil and air quality, food production, forest regeneration, infrastructure, human health and safety, biodiversity, and recreation are known or anticipated. Ninety-four percent of the land base in BC is public, placing considerable responsibility with the provincial government to manage those lands for the public good. The ministries of Agriculture and Lands; Forests and Range; Transportation and Infrastructure; Environment; Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources; and Tourism, Culture and the Arts, work cooperatively to fulfill the primary invasive plant management mandates of the province. Like many land-use issues, invasive plants challenge both public and private land planners and managers. The magnitude of biodiversity and landscape conservation issues alongside concerns for land modification and fragmentation, habitat loss and water quality require invasive plant managers in BC to operate in a complex, multi-jurisdictional environment involving stakeholders at all levels. The high socio-economic and environmental impacts to the province from noxious weeds and other invasive plants require a long-term, cost-effective, coordinated invasive plant management system that effectively addresses governance, funding, early detection and rapid response, inventory and treatment. Within the context of land use, broad ecological diversity, and conservation planning, the provincial invasive plant program objectives are to: 1) prevent the introduction of new, potentially invasive species; 2) apply an early detection and rapid response approach to new invaders; 3) reduce the spread of existing invasive plants to new areas within BC; 4) strengthen cross-agency relationships for ongoing management. The BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands' Invasive Plant Management Program coordinates provincial government management activities and funding through the Inter-Ministry Invasive Plant Working Group and the Invasive Plant Council of BC. The provincial program, totaling approximately 4 million dollars annually, supports the establishment and operation of regional invasive plant management programs by providing annual grants and strategic technical advice. Through a complex network of land managers, planners and specialists, the province is building strong cooperative relationships to effectively address the challenges of invasive plants with limited resources. This presentation will discuss several of the mechanisms, tools and creative solutions developed to manage invasive plants in the province of BC, toward healthy landscapes.

Speaker Biography

Becky Brown is the Invasive Plant Coordinator with the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and an active member of the BC Institute of Agrologists. Based out of Victoria, BC, Becky draws on over 10 years of experience in natural resource management, land use planning and environmental science to support land managers throughout the province in developing strategic, creative invasive plant management approaches. Becky believes that the true global impacts of invasive plants to drinking water quality and food production have yet to be realized and feels very fortunate to be working with such a dedicated and knowledgeable network of individuals toward improving management in BC and beyond.

Presentation # 2 title: Practical solutions for preventing and managing invasive plants in our changing climate.

Presenter:

Gail Wallin - Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia

Abstract

Abstract: Invasive plants are alien plant species that have the potential to pose undesirable or detrimental impacts on humans, animals or ecosystems. Invasive plants cost communities, governments, ranchers, farmers, utility companies, hunters, and all British Columbians millions of dollars annually in lost productivity and reduced opportunities. Key pathways of invasion include areas of disturbance (e.g. land clearing and logging), land and water-based recreation, horticulture, excessive grazing, and transportation and utility corridors. Vehicles, humans, wildlife, and livestock all contribute to the dispersal of invasive plant seeds and plant parts. The Invasive Plant Council of BC (IPCBC) was established to provide province-wide coordination for invasive plant management. It is a registered society with a Board of Directors and an inclusive membership represented by the signatories to the Council's Memorandum of Support. The IPCBC is helping to support its members, including individuals, organizations, agencies, and businesses, in coordinated and cooperative invasive plant management efforts; however, the IPCBC does not conduct on-the-ground operational work. Climate change has the potential to drastically alter BC's ecosystems and increase invasive plant management challenges for all land managers. To address this need, the IPCBC is working through province-wide cooperation and coordination to minimize the negative ecological, social, and economic impacts caused by the introduction, establishment, and spread of invasive plants. This presentation will discuss impacts associated with invasive plants, identify key pathways of invasion, and provide practical actions for land managers and owners to protect their properties against the introduction and spread of invasive plants.