



EAST KOOTENAY INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

From the Program Manager

2019 marked EKISC's eleventh year – over a decade of collaboration, outreach, and 'boots on the ground' operations taking place while fulfilling our mission of mitigating the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of invasive species across the East Kootenay region. At a time where the threats of invasive species are only exacerbated by continued land-use pressures and a changing climate, I am increasingly inspired by the fervour in which our staff and board are working to ensure the continued success of EKISC.

There are many program successes to highlight for 2019, including new and expanded partnerships with regional stakeholders, increased delivery of invasive plant workshops and training courses to community groups and industry, coordination and delivery of invasive plant treatments with 17 land manager groups, conducting invasive plant inventories across thousands of hectares of ecological restoration project sites, monitoring for invasive mussels at 12 high and critically at risk lakes, utilizing funds from Canada Summer Jobs to employ three full time summer field and outreach staff, and attending a diversity of invasive species-related conferences, forums and field tours. Details on some of these activities can be found within this annual report.

On behalf of the EKISC board and staff, I would like to thank Todd Larsen for his commitment to building EKISC operations over his 5-year term as Program Manager. Todd facilitated the expansion of program funding from 12 partners in 2013, to 22 partners in 2018, and led a core team of staff to effectively deliver field and outreach programs across the region. Another special thanks goes to our contractors that support our seasonal operations, and to everyone who attended a weed-pull, enrolled in an education workshop, or stopped by our outreach booth to say hello.

Finally, I would like to express sincere gratitude to our dedicated funding partners for their continued support, enabling the provision of integrated, collaborative invasive species management across the East Kootenay region.

All the best to our fellow land-stewards in the coming year,

Kendal Benesh

PROGRAM MANAGER





From the Chair

This year, 2019, has been relatively stable for EKISC's eleventh year of operations. In her first year as Program Manager, Kendal Benesh has been doing very well by leading the team in making many welcome changes to our financial systems and field operations. One staff member, our Field Operations Coordinator Laura MacKinnon, stepped down. But our other operations staff, Danny Smart and Katie Reid stepped up and split Laura's duties between them while carrying on with their normal tasks. Jessie Paloposki, our Education and Communications Manager, has continued to improve and expand our website, reach out to new stakeholders such as realtors, and increase our communications, even as she occasionally reports in from South America.

Early in 2020, EKISC is also seeing the retirement of Lily Durham and Pam Turyk, two of our long term, active Directors from our Board. We wish them the best in their "retirement" but we hope they remain active in our operations. If you want to help out with our organization in any capacity, please let us know; our website <https://www.ekisc.com/> has our contact information.

We did have some setbacks this last year. The Board had approved the purchase of a used field vehicle in 2018 as there was a good case put forward that buying a truck would save our organization money over two field seasons with reduced vehicle rentals. Unfortunately, the vehicle developed serious mechanical issues in its second season, and, after serious discussion and number crunching, we decided to sell the field vehicle and stick with short term rentals for the foreseeable future.

Our perennial challenge of stable funding continues, and we have been tirelessly looking for new project partners and funders to support our base operations. We will see some of these successes come to fruition in 2020. One highlight was that the Columbia Basin Trust made 2019 the last year that they would provide base funding to EKISC and the two other Regional Invasive Species Organizations (RISOs) operating in the Columbia Basin. After a long appeal led by RISO staff and a review of our funding proposals for 2020, we are grateful that the Columbia Basin Trust will be supporting our education and outreach programming in 2020.

We carry on with a focus on controlling terrestrial invasive plants as per our stakeholders' direction. The zebra and quagga mussel monitoring will also continue this year with some new partnerships in tow. We have little direct involvement with the boat wash check stations, but keeping zebra and quagga mussels out of BC is a huge priority for us locally and in our province.

We are, as always, looking forward to another good year with spray contractors, rancher sprayer contractors and our own in-house crew, all working together for a weed free East Kootenays.

Randy Harris

EKISC BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR

Who is EKISC

The staff at EKISC are an enthusiastic team who strive to address the threats of invasive species with diligence, passion, and creativity. We are located throughout the East Kootenays in home-based offices; when necessary, joining forces at our staging location in Cranbrook, BC. Together, we bring diverse expertise and experience in natural science, policy, economics, administration, communications, and education.

Kendal Benesh
PROGRAM MANAGER

Katie Reid
FIELD OPERATIONS MANAGER

Jessie Paloposki
EDUCATION & COMMUNICATIONS
MANAGER

Danny Smart
FIELD OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

Serena MacKay
EDUCATION ASSISTANT

Katie Grady
FIELD ASSISTANT

Emily Markholm
FIELD ASSISTANT

Laura MacKinnon
FIELD OPERATIONS COORDINATOR
(resigned May, 2019)

Pat Wray
FIELD OPERATIONS SUPERVISOR
(not Pictured)



EKISC is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors who represent stakeholders, including at-risk industries and recreational pursuits, with an interest in protecting the East Kootenays from invasive species. The Board Members are drawn from provincial and local governments, agriculture, non-governmental environmental organizations, and the private sector.

Shawna LaRade
VICE CHAIR

Dave Pick
DIRECTOR

Randy Harris
CHAIR

Jamie Davies
DIRECTOR

Stephanie Daniels
DIRECTOR

Pam Turyk
DIRECTOR

Jim Campbell
DIRECTOR

Stephanie Najda
DIRECTOR

Lily Durham
SECRETARY
(not Pictured)

Rick van Horne
DIRECTOR
(not Pictured)

Rick Tegart
DIRECTOR
(not Pictured)



Our Mission

Mitigating the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of invasive species.

To **coordinate the management** of invasive species on public and private lands in the East Kootenay region using an integrated pest management approach.

To **educate** about invasive species and their impacts.

To **prevent** the introduction and spread of invasive species in the East Kootenays.

To **foster expanded support** of invasive species management initiatives in the East Kootenays.

Our Vision

An East Kootenay region free from invasive species

The Golden Shovel Award

Since 2010, the East Kootenay Invasive Species Council has selected an organization and/or individual who has made significant contributions to invasive plant management efforts in the region. We call this the Golden Shovel Award.

2019 Recipient: Pam Turyk



Photo: Larry Halverson

Field Operations



Photo: EKISC

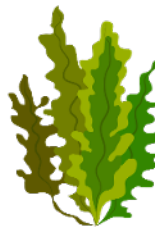
In 2019, EKISC field operations staff included a Field Operations Manager, Field Operations Coordinator, two Field Assistants, and a Field Operations Supervisor.

The team focused on mechanical weed pulls in riparian areas and conservation lands, invasive mussel larvae sampling in lakes across the RDEK, and invasive plant inventories for various funders.

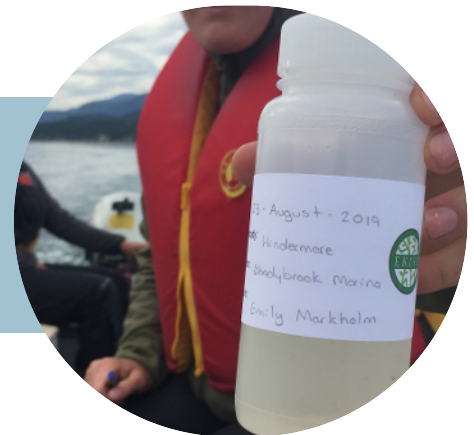
The operations team also completed spring and fall treatments of all Priority 1 (P1) invasive plant species across the region as part of the ongoing Rapid Invasive Plant Response Squad (RIPRS) crew established in 2018.

No biocontrol agents were released by EKISC in 2019.

ZERO AQUATIC
INVASIVE SPECIES
FOUND



42 Sample site locations across
12 Lakes in the RDEK



145 Samples collected over the summer
6 New Clean, Drain, Dry signs installed

TREATMENTS

	CHEMICAL	MANUAL	TOTAL
SITES	3239	44	3383
HECTARES	794.64	4.17	798.82

PLANT SPECIES TREATED (HA)

89 St. John's Wort

98 Yellow Hawkweed

130 Other

144 Blueweed

333 Spotted Knapweed



13
INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT
AREAS



10

RANGE UNITS
TREATED

5 RANCHER-SPRAYERS
CONTRACTED WORK

15 INVASIVE PLANT
INVENTORIES
COMPLETED:

4,352 HECTARES

OVER 600 KM OF HIKING

**20 DIFFERENT LISTED
NOXIOUS PLANTS
OBSERVED**

**OVER 2,500
POINTS/LINES/POLYGONS
CREATED**

2 PROVINCIAL EDRR SPECIES TREATED



BLACK HENBANE

PERENNIAL PEPPERWEED



GREP RESEARCH DATA COLLECTED
FROM **57** PLOTS ACROSS **5** IPMA'S

Education & Communication

6 SPECIAL EVENTS
11 FARMERS' MARKETS
25 COURSES & WORKSHOPS
24 SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS
13 INDIRECT EVENTS



5902
PEOPLE REACHED*

* Indirect/Direct combination through events.



65%
E-NEWSLETTERS
OPENED IN 2018



96
EDUCATION & OUTREACH
EVENTS ATTENDED



28
STORIES MADE LOCAL
NEWS HEADLINES



FOLLOWERS



518



217



216

In 2019, the Education and Communications Manager and one Education Assistant were responsible for delivering EKISC's educational program and communication activities.

Even with one less staff member than 2018, the Program flourished. For the first time, EKISC's Education Program was supported through fundraising by selling EKISC merchandise and introducing small course fees. A new course alignment evolved and we were able to offer both recreational and professional level course curriculums.

Two new educational projects emerged in 2019 as well: the first was the creation of an invasive plant herbarium, which allowed our educators to host invasive plant identification courses even when live plant samples were not available. The second was an art-based workshop which encouraged participants to find use for invasive plants after they had properly harvested them.

We worked with more volunteers than ever in 2019, pulling invasive plants, restoring damaged areas, and acting out scenes at our BC Parks interpretive plays.

Thank you for another great year!



17 COMMUNITY WEED PULLS
4 BC PARKS INTERPRETIVE PLAYS
= OVER 100 VOLUNTEERS



EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS AND MESSAGING
REACHED FARMERS AND RANCHERS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, INDUSTRY,
RECREATIONAL GROUPS, PET OWNERS, AND BEYOND!





Finances & Funders

28 FUNDERS SUPPORTING EKISC IN 2019

SPARWOOD FISH & WILDLIFE CLUB

ELKFORD ROD & GUN CLUB

WILD SHEEP SOCIETY OF BC

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

COLUMBIA BASIN WATERSHED NETWORK

COLUMBIA POWER

7AQ'AM COMMUNITY

BC HYDRO

BC PARKS

BC PARKS - PARKS ENHANCEMENT FUND

CANADA SUMMER JOBS

COLUMBIA BASIN TRUST

COLUMBIA VALLEY LOCAL CONSERVATION FUND

CROWN-INDIGENOUS RELATIONS & NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA

ENVIRONMENT CANADA

FISH & WILDLIFE COMPENSATION PROGRAM

FORTIS BC

GRASSLAND & RANGELAND ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

HABITAT CONSERVATION TRUST FOUNDATION

MADERA RANCH

MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

NATURE CONSERVANCY OF CANADA

NATURE TRUST OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ROCKY MOUNTAIN TRENCH NATURAL RESOURCES SOCIETY

TRANS CANADA TRAIL

VILLAGE OF RADIUM

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

GROSS REVENUE IN 2019

\$982,703

FUNDING HISTORY

2016	\$924,978
2017	\$973,989
2018	\$978,920
2019	\$982,703



Education Programming
10%



Aquatic Programming
2%



Invasive Plant Management Programming
78%

Full financial summary available upon request

Background photo: P. Conte



EAST KOOTENAY
INVASIVE SPECIES
COUNCIL



www.ekisc.com



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@EastKootenayInvasives



@EK_Invasives