FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

200 People to Gain New Skills and Protect BC's Environment

(August 9, 2021 – Williams Lake, BC)

The Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC) has already employed over 100 people throughout British Columbia, thanks to an $8-million investment from the provincial government's economic recovery plan, to help detect and remove invasive species.

StrongerBC: BC's Economic Recovery Plan is supporting jobs and helping communities cope with the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. ISCBC is on track to hire an additional 100 people to meet the target of 200 new job opportunities for unemployed or underemployed workers, such as displaced agriculture, tourism and forestry workers, Indigenous people, youth, women and others affected by COVID-19.

"We are pleased to partner with the government of BC to create jobs in small and large communities in BC," said Gail Wallin, Executive Director, ISCBC. "As a result of StrongerBC funding, over 200 people will gain critically needed skills and field experience while helping protect Crown lands, BC Parks, trails and other lands from invasive species."

The funding is creating practical job opportunities that provide training and transferrable skills to support on-the-ground management of invasive species. Participants are gaining valuable work experience as they help increase public awareness and learn about reporting techniques and best practices associated with invasive species management.

"The BC government's support for this training and job creation program will benefit communities by increasing the number of workers who can survey, monitor and remove invasive species," said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. "The Invasive Species Council of BC is a leader in this field and is working with its partners to help manage plants and animals that can cause environmental and economic damage."

Four-person teams are currently working in 11 communities to identify, report and manage invasive species at high-priority sites flagged by local land managers. Those hired to conduct on-the-ground invasive species management are receiving additional training such as pesticide applicator certification and first aid training.

"By receiving not only job opportunities, but also skills development, individuals will be well-positioned to continue being leaders in creating healthy habitats for the benefit of all British Columbians," said Wallin.

Learn more at bcinvasives.ca, ISCBC's social media channels and through ISCBC's newsletter.

About the Invasive Species Council of BC

The Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC) is dedicated to keeping our landscapes and communities free of invasive species. It provides a coordinated, provincewide approach to reducing the impact of invasive species in BC. ISCBC unites efforts throughout the province and collaborates with a variety of partners to develop unique solutions for the wide variety of ecosystems in BC. For more information, visit bcinvasives.ca

Media contact:

Gail Wallin
gwallin@bcinvasives.ca
250-305-9161

Photos available on request.

APPENDIX – ACTION TEAM COMMUNITIES

ASHCROFT
Key locations include Downing Provincial Park, Elephant Hill and Savona Sands Pit.
Key species include Baby's breath, Spotted knapweed and Diffuse knapweed.

CHILLIWACK
Key locations include Cultus Lake Provincial Park, Matsqui Dike and Agassiz Bridge Pit.
Key species include Tansy ragwort, Daphne and English holly.

GRAND FORKS
Key locations include Christina Lake and Kettle Valley Rail Trail.
Key species include Sulphur cinquefoil, Blueweed and Common bugloss.

NANAIMO
Pilot Action Team completed worked on the ground from March through to May.
Key species include Himalayan blackberry, Scotch broom and English holly, totaling 3,500 kilograms of plant material.
Key locations include Petroglyph Park, Ladysmith Woodley Nature Reserve and Newcastle Island.

NELSON
Key locations include Syringa Provincial Park, Rosemont Skatepark and Lakeside Dog Park.
Key species include Policeman's Helmet, Scotch broom and Hoary cress.

PRINCE GEORGE
Key locations include Hixon Community Centre, Crieff Park and Moore's Meadow Trail.
Key species include Common tansy, Marsh plume thistle and Oxeye daisy.

SALMON ARM
Key locations include Sunnybrae Road, Albert Canyon and Crazy Creek Forest Service Road.
Key species include Spotted knapweed, Marsh plume thistle and Blueweed.

VANCOUVER
Key locations include Colony Farm Park, Quarry Lookout-Cypress Mt and Boundary Bay Park.
Key species include St. John's wort, Scotch broom and Himalayan blackberry.

VERNON
Key locations include Goose Lake Range, Baird Lake Recreation Site and Cherry Creek Pit.
Key species include Garlic mustard, Marsh plume thistle and Scotch thistle.

VICTORIA
Key locations include Goldstream Provincial Park, Mill Hill Regional Park and S'amunu Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

Key species include English holly, Scotch broom and English ivy.

WILLIAMS LAKE

This new team is starting with locations such as Esketemc, River Valley Trail and Scout Island. Key species include Russian knapweed, Spotted knapweed and Burdock.