



Business Plan 2024-2026

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Message from the Executive Director

British Columbia is home to spectacular landscapes that support unrivaled biodiversity, enable outstanding recreational opportunities, produce abundant agricultural products, and provide exceptional natural resources. As climate change impacts life both locally and globally with greater urgency, protecting landscapes and communities in BC from the threat of invasive species is increasingly important. Working in partnership with Indigenous communities, learning from Indigenous peoples, and promoting practices informed by Indigenous perspectives is integral to our approach and to our success.

While environmental protection is a key priority, the economic and social impacts of invasive species are also of critical importance. We are committed to sustainable solutions that advance resiliency in all forms. Working collaboratively to adapt to provincial emergencies like wildfires, flooding, and drought, we must also consider the intersectional risks posed by invasive species. Together, we can make a difference.

This 2024-2026 Business Plan charts a course that strengthens collaborations, amplifies Indigenous reconciliation, enables science-informed action, and engages people in British Columbia at home, work, and play to take action on invasive species. The key directions and measures of success captured in our three-year plan reflect our commitment to healing the land. This includes expanding ongoing Council priorities like partnerships and engagement as we address emerging issues related to climate resiliency and actively call for change. Annual evaluation and review of the Plan will ensure its relevance moving forward.

Meeting the needs of changing climate conditions means coming together more than ever. Over the next three years, our Business Plan will strive to address these unique challenges and opportunities through partnership and collaboration focused on reducing the threats and impact of invasive species in communities, across the province, and at our borders. Thank you to our partners, volunteers, funders, and leaders who continue to step up, take action, and inspire others to protect and steward natural spaces.

Gail Wallin

Executive Director, Invasive Species Council of British Columbia

Executive Summary

Engagement in ecological stewardship across British Columbia is on the rise. Increasingly, people are learning skills and adopting practices to protect biodiversity. As a registered charitable organization, the Invasive Species Council of British Columbia leads and supports individuals, organizations, businesses, and communities in protecting natural spaces from the environmental, economic, and social threats of invasive species. Our strength is in bringing diverse people together at work and in their communities, to address invasive species issues. In the context of reconciliation and climate change, collective leadership is critical for biodiversity conservation and environmental sustainability, as well as for economic and social stability.

The 2024-2026 Business Plan reflects ISCBC's commitment to expanding engagement with diverse peoples and communities; growing with and learning from Indigenous groups and partners to advance reconciliation; supporting ecological resilience to mitigate climate change impacts; and promoting knowledge and skills informed by both Western and Indigenous science. This directional document complements other Council plans, including our annual action, communications, fund development, and operations plans, which collectively inform our annual workplans.

KEY DIRECTIONS

The following pages outline three key Council directions – **Enhancing Engagement, Building Technical Capacity, and Advancing Organizational Resilience**. Each key direction details outcomes and strategies that collectively galvanize timely and essential efforts to increase knowledge and reduce the impacts of invasive species across British Columbia, while metrics help us track our progress and measure the difference we make.

Key Direction 1 – Enhancing Engagement

Improve knowledge of invasive species and invasive species prevention strategies by engaging diverse people across British Columbia. Educational programming reflects traditional knowledge and western perspectives and promotes the adoption of small actions that make a meaningful difference in preventing the introduction, spread, and establishment of invasive species.

Key Direction 2 – Building Technical Capacity

Expand invasive species technical knowledge and skills among people in British Columbia through training and applied programming to enhance prevention, management, and control efforts. Foster increased connection and coordination among those involved in invasive species management through knowledge and data exchange, extension, and partnerships.

Key Direction 3 – Advancing Organizational Resilience

Deliver community-informed, inclusive, and accessible programming through effective people, partnership, and fiscal management infrastructure and practices supported by robust safety measures. Enhance the activities of the Council through strategic, collective calls to action in alignment with policy mandates of all levels of government.

Introduction

Established in 2004 as the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia following the development of the first Invasive Plant Strategy for British Columbia, the Council's original function was to provide province-wide coordination for invasive plant management. In 2009, the Council broadened its mandate to include all invasive species and in 2012, formally changed its name to the Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC). ISCBC is a British Columbia society and was granted charitable status from the Canada Revenue Agency in August 2007. Today, it is the largest organization in Canada dedicated to reducing the impacts of invasive species.

Bringing diverse people together with a common interest in reducing the introduction, spread, and environmental, social, and economic impacts of invasive species is a foundational priority of the Council. ISCBC programs and resources are developed in partnership with communities and experts across BC. This includes all levels of government, Indigenous organizations, industry, as well as environmental and community groups. This collaboration is increasingly important as we guide the prevention, control, and eradication of invasive species, along with our partners, collectively scale our efforts to protect biodiversity and make meaningful contributions towards climate mitigation and adaptation. We are committed to continuous improvement to protect social, economic, and natural infrastructure from invasive species.

The 2024-2026 Business Plan embraces a suite of priorities that supports a scaled approach to biodiversity protection and a reduction of the impacts of invasive species in the face of climate change. Building on the 2018 *Invasive Species Strategy for BC*, the 2024-2026 Business Plan emphasizes ecological resiliency, recognizing the intersections between invasive species, carbon sequestration, and manifestations of climate change, including wildfires, floods, drought, and disease.

A series of fundamental principles are guiding Council programming into its next chapter. This includes reconciliation and recognition of Indigenous ecological expertise; climate change mitigation and adaptation; input from and representation of ever-growing partnerships; promoting the complementary value of traditional ecological knowledge alongside western science and research; and fostering connections and knowledge reciprocity across a diverse network.

The ISCBC Board of Directors includes representatives with a diverse range of backgrounds and interests from three chambers: community and business, industry, and government. Five Board Committees – Governance, Finance and Human Resources, Communications, Programs & Partnerships, and Fund Development – are led by Board Directors who provide business and strategic guidance.

Role of the Council

At ISCBC, collaboration and partnerships are at the heart of our work. We unite people from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and identities to collectively address invasive species issues locally and across jurisdictional boundaries. Together with our partners and volunteers, supported by diverse skill sets and types of knowledge, we take action on invasive species to protect biodiversity, reduce economic losses and build climate resiliency. Our role includes:

- **Increasing awareness of invasive species and their impacts.** Educational programs for people of all ages and from all walks of life are an ISCBC staple. Educational resources, events, hands-on learning experiences, and operational skills and training courses, in coordination with our partners, empowering people across BC to take action on invasive species.
- **Promoting responsible practices.** With guidance from our partners, we develop resources and training programs encouraging people across British Columbia to implement responsible practices that prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species at work, at home, and at play.
- **Addressing emerging issues.** Through a combination of field activities, research, data collection, education, outreach, and coordination, ISCBC works on a range of emerging issues, including management and control, responding to the arrival of new invasive species, biodiversity protection, climate resilience, and carbon sequestration.
- **Supporting effective policy and legislation.** With input from our network and drawing on the expertise of our team and our partners, we put forward policy and legislation recommendations designed to facilitate change in invasive species prevention and management for all levels of government, including Indigenous governments. Our role involves unifying parties calling for action on invasives species by defining collective messaging and coordinating collaborative recommendations and building public awareness through engagement.

Vision, Mission, and Key Directions

The ISCBC Vision outlines what we are striving for through our work, while our Mission details how we get there. Our Vision and Mission is supported by Key Directions that outline where our efforts are focused. While our Vision and our Mission remain consistent over time, our Key Directions evolve to reflect current priorities and the changing context in which we do our work.

VISION

Healthy landscapes and communities free of invasive species.

MISSION

To take action to build healthy landscapes, including habitats and communities, through education and responsible practices to prevent the spread of invasive species.

KEY DIRECTIONS

The Key Directions outlined in the 2024-2026 Business Plan – **Enhancing Engagement, Building Technical Capacity, and Advancing Organizational Resilience** – include a series of priority outcomes, strategies, and metrics to guide how we conduct our work to protect biodiversity in BC.

The outcomes under each Key Direction are ultimately designed to reduce the presence and impacts of invasive species across British Columbia. Together they galvanize essential efforts to engage people in ecological stewardship and expand capacity at a provincial level to address invasive species issues. The strategies supporting each outcome reflect our focal program areas and build on our commitments to growing and learning with our Indigenous partners and mitigating climate change impacts. Our metrics help us measure our progress under each Key Direction, and ultimately, our progress towards our Mission and Vision.

Key Direction 1 – Enhancing Engagement

Objective

Improve knowledge of invasive species and invasive species prevention strategies by engaging diverse people across British Columbia. With educational programming that reflects traditional ecological knowledge and western perspectives, promote adoption of small actions that make a meaningful difference to prevent the introduction, spread, and establishment of invasive species.

Rational

People in British Columbia have an important role when it comes to invasive species prevention and management. Human activity is one of the main ways invasive species are introduced and spread. Increasing awareness increases the potential for individuals and organizations to collectively undertake actions to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in their communities and across their activities.

Diverse perspectives, including those of Indigenous peoples who have stewarded these lands since time immemorial, enhance the strength and application of invasive species prevention and management initiatives. With ISCBC programs reflecting the diversity of people, knowledge and experiences, people are more likely to be adopt and successfully implemented actions to address invasive species issues.

With programs that highlight the importance of biodiversity, conservation, Indigenous knowledge, and climate mitigation, ISCBC cultivates a commitment to ecological stewardship and economic resilience in British Columbia.

Outcomes	Strategies	Metrics (Annual)
<p>Increase knowledge of invasive species.</p> <p>Increase adoption of strategies to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species.</p> <p>Increase participation in activities that support invasive species management.</p> <p>Improve representation of Indigenous knowledge and leadership in invasive species management.</p>	<p>Build the Community Science program.</p> <p>Grow a diverse network of partners supporting Behaviour Change programming.</p> <p>Grow volunteer programming.</p> <p>Engage youth in schools and beyond.</p> <p>Maintain/grow media and social media engagement.</p> <p>Develop partnerships with Indigenous organizations and businesses.</p> <p>Work with each network (Local government, Affiliates, Indigenous) to identify priority direction, including tools, supports, and measurement metrics.</p>	<p>Increased number of community science reports by 10% YOY.</p> <p>Increased media and social media reach by 10% YOY.</p> <p>Increased number of organizational partnerships with 5 new partners annually.</p> <p>Increased number of volunteers by 5% YOY.</p> <p>Increased number of relationships with Indigenous businesses and organizations with 3 new partners annually.</p> <p>Increased network membership by 10% YOY.</p> <p>Every program includes at least 3 performance metrics</p>

Key Direction 2 – Building Technical Capacity

Objective

Expand invasive species technical knowledge and practical skills among people in British Columbia through research, training and applied programming that incorporates traditional ecological knowledge and western knowledge to enhance prevention, management, and control efforts. Foster increased connection and coordination among those involved in invasive species management through knowledge exchange events, extension, and partnerships.

Rational

Research, training, applied programming, and promotion of best management practices all develop knowledge and skills within the workforce, and within communities across BC, to address invasive species issues. Evidence-informed training developed in partnership with industry leaders and invasive species experts promotes key learnings from academic research, Indigenous ecological knowledge and practical experience. Providing a platform for learning and collaboration, improves the potential for meaningful actions at an individual and collective level.

There is a wealth of knowledge and skills across BC when it comes to invasive species prevention and management. ISCBC has an important leadership role in equipping people in British Columbia with the knowledge and skills to integrate invasive species management into their organizational, business, and land and water management practices.

Outcomes	Strategies	Metrics (Annual)
Increase invasive species management skills in the workforce.	Develop a training program that includes certification opportunities.	500 people trained.
Improve and restore areas affected by invasive species.	Deliver applied field programs (monitoring and management) across BC.	By 2026, 1 new industry-targeted program/certification developed
Increase prevention and management-based partnerships.	Partner with local agencies on capacity building and management initiatives.	Increase operational activities for invasive species suppression in at least 25 sites across all regions.
Improve response to emerging issues.	Lead/co-Lead coordinated responses to emerging issues (Ex. Japanese beetle).	Report annually on at least 3 success stories/lessons learned for invasive species reduction.
Increase connection between academia, traditional ecological knowledge, and managers and practitioners.	Facilitate knowledge exchange and connectivity opportunities through events-Forum/webinar, Research Conferences,etc	Increased number of relationships with Indigenous businesses and organizations with 3 new partners annually.
Increase extension of invasive species information and news.	Disseminate key information in accessible formats (factsheets, research summaries, articles, etc.).	Number of coordinated responses where ISCBC has a key partnership role
Improve scope of research available on invasive species.	Facilitate processes to identify research gaps; commission research to address gaps.	Increased number of event participants by 10% YOY.
		Develop 5 new resources/year.
		1 research report completed.

Key Direction 3 – Advancing Organizational Resilience

Objective

Ensure a stable resilient organization that is recognized for its integrity, quality and reliability delivered through effective people, partnerships, and strong fiscal management, supported by robust safety measures.

Rationale

Strong organizational management practices establish a foundation for an engaged, productive team and extended organizational network with a capacity for creativity and innovation. Our continued commitment to maintaining and growing recognition of ISCBC as a leader in invasive species education, training, management, strategy, and collective action, is reflected in our commitment to a respectful, safe, inclusive, and equitable workplace that fosters a high degree of functionality and stability.

Outcomes	Strategies	Metrics (Annual)
<p>Increase organizational funding and funding stability.</p> <p>ISCBC is a respectful, safe, and inclusive organization committed to equitable spaces and opportunities for professional development for staff, board, volunteers, and members.</p> <p>Increase Council role in informing effective strategies, policy, and legislation.</p> <p>Maintain a high standard of safety protocols and practices.</p>	<p>Recruit and diverse funding including multi-year public funding, private funding, and fee-for-service funding.</p> <p>Improve people, partnership, and fiscal management infrastructure and practices.</p> <p>Develop strategic issues and actions to build a collective voice to inform effective invasive species strategies, policy, and legislation.</p> <p>Maintain the Council Safety Plan, including the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, annual safety manual review, home office safety assessments, and event safety plans.</p>	<p>Ensure at least a stable \$4 million operating budget.</p> <p>Increase private and unrestricted funding by 20% YOY.</p> <p>High satisfaction is reported among staff, board, volunteers, and members.</p> <p>Increase of Council membership by 10% YOY.</p> <p>ISCBC provides input on 5 policy-related initiatives annually.</p> <p>No reportable incidents.</p>

Measuring Success

The 2024-2026 ISCBC Business Plan outlines the changes ISCBC is leading across BC. Each Key Direction – Enhancing Engagement, Building Technical Capacity, and Advancing Organizational Resilience – lists a series of outcomes representing those changes. These outcomes are supported by additional outcomes at both the program and organizational level designed to contribute to achieving the larger goals specified in this plan.

The outcomes included in this Plan are associated with both strategies and metrics. The strategies denote the programming focus designed to achieve the intended outcomes we have established. These strategies guide our annual, monthly, and daily work plans.

Metrics represent the key indicators that will measure our progress. They will be tracked year over year across all programs and will also be used to assess the efficacy and help us take a deeper look at the bigger picture, confirming we are moving in the right direction.

Annual assessment of progress towards our outcomes is a critical part of how we strengthen our program offerings and the way we approach our work. It also measures our success.

While the outcomes focus primarily on the difference we specifically make as an organization, they are also contributing factors in the reduced introduction, spread, and establishment of invasive species. The more people know about invasive species and what they can do to make a difference, the more likely they will be engaged in solutions at the individual, community, regional, and provincial level.

We look forward to sharing the meaningful learnings that emerge as we measure our successes in 2024, 2025, and 2026.

Conclusion

As people across British Columbia grapple with the emerging impacts of climate change and recognize the critical need to protect biodiversity, action on invasive species has never been more important. Whether it's knotweeds taking over riparian areas, burdock or knapweed taking over range pastures, Japanese beetles threatening natural and horticultural landscapes, European green crabs uprooting eelgrass meadows, or parrotfeather choking our freshwater systems and drainage infrastructure, invasive species cost us all economically, environmentally, and socially.

Since the birth of the organization that began as the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia 18 years ago, a lot has changed in how people view and understand invasive species. As we consider our role in this shift, we recognize that success going forward depends on the strong foundation we have built in the past. To meet our mission, we will continue to facilitate cooperation and coordinated research, support strong regulatory tools, deliver effective programs, and work to establish a broader funding base.

ISCBC takes seriously its role of bringing together people, communities, businesses, industry, academics and governments to efficiently and effectively tackle the recommendations set out in the Invasive Species Strategy. By educating, collaborating, and inspiring the adoption of responsible practices across British Columbia, we are making a positive difference for biodiversity protection and climate change mitigation. We continue to welcome new partners as our work takes on new directions. Strong, focused, and strategic plans like this one will keep guiding us as we gather strength, develop partnerships, and advance this important work, reducing the impacts of invasive species across BC, and restoring the natural environment to a state of resilience and health.

Contact Information

We would love to hear from you – please get in touch!

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Appendix A

Assumptions Informing Metrics

Key Direction One – Enhancing Engagement

- Increased community science reports indicate an increase in the number of people with knowledge of invasive species, an increase in the adoption of strategies to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, and an increase in participation in activities that support invasive species management.
- Increased media and social media reach indicates increased knowledge of invasive species.
- Increased number of organizational partnerships indicates an increase in people with knowledge of invasive species, an increase in the adoption of strategies to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, and an increase in participation in activities that support invasive species management.
- Increased number of volunteers and volunteer hours indicates an increase in people with knowledge of invasive species, an increase in the adoption of strategies to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species, and an increase in participation in activities that support invasive species management.
- Increased engagement of Indigenous businesses and organizations indicates increased engagement in ISCBC programming, and consequently, improved representation of Indigenous knowledge in invasive species management.
- Increased membership of IISN indicates increased engagement in ISCBC programming, and consequently, improved representation of Indigenous knowledge in invasive species management.
- Our strategies to enhance awareness of invasive species will ultimately reduce the introduction and spread of invasive species.

Key Direction Two – Building Technical Capacity

- Training translates to increased knowledge, skills, and awareness in the workforce.
- Industry targeted programming will be accessed and applied by industry, thereby increasing knowledge, skills related to prevention, management, and control.
- Management activities offer knowledge and skill development opportunities that will continue to be applied throughout the careers of involved staff, developing capacity for prevention, management and control of invasive species across the environmental protection field.
- Increased number of partnerships is reflective of an increase in knowledge, skills, connection, and coordination across the sector.
- Increased number of partnerships with Indigenous businesses and organizations is reflective of an increase in knowledge, skills, connection, and coordination across the sector, as well as representation of traditional ecological knowledge in invasive species management.

- Number of coordinated responses that ISCBC is involved in is indicative of a leadership role in coordinating collective efforts and reflective of improved capacity to respond to emerging issues at a provincial, inter-provincial, and international level.
- Increased number of participants in knowledge exchange and connection events correlates with increased knowledge and connectivity, and consequently, increased capacity for collaboration.
- Increased number of resources developed correlates with increased availability of invasive species information, and therefore, invasive species related knowledge and skills.
- Number of research reports completed improves the scope of information about invasive species available to other researchers and practitioners, thereby informing knowledge and skill development as well as capacity for connection and collaboration.

Key Direction Three – Advancing Organizational Resilience

- High satisfaction reported among staff, board, volunteers, and members is indicative of a respectful, safe, inclusive space with the appropriate internal infrastructure to attract, maintain, and contribute to a healthy organizational ecosystem.
- Increase in Council membership reflects strong engagement with the Council as a result of community informed programming that aligns with the interests of program participants.
- The number of policy related initiatives ISCBC is involved in shaping, positions the Council as a reliable representative of important information, informing effective strategies, policies, and legislation.
- Avoiding and/or reducing the number of reportable safety incidents confirms the strong safety practices in place and consistently used.
- Stable operating budget affirms organizational funding stability, as well as community and funder interest in the work of ISCBC as aligned with priorities identified by people in British Columbia, including government. Increasing private and unrestricted funding demonstrates improved long-term organizational stability.