

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



Vision

Healthy landscapes and communities free of invasive species across British Columbia.

Mission

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



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

As Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, I am delighted to join you in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Invasive Species Council of BC, whose work in educating and raising awareness around invasive species has helped our province to bloom to its full potential.

Organizations such as the Invasive Species Council of B.C. have devoted time, knowledge and hard work to ensuring delicate environments like Garry oak meadows can survive and thrive. With the Invasive Species Council in their corner, our forests, fields, shorelines and waterways have a fighting chance to continue as they always have, granting us the gift of natural beauty in return.

The Honourable Janet Austin, OBC

M. Harder

MESSAGES FROM THE CHAIR & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2024 was a rewarding year in the Council's story as we broadened our connections and expanded our impact. We engaged new audiences, helping medical professionals connect the dots

between invasive species and human health and working with the mining sector to see invasive species integrated into operations. The 2024 Wildfire & Invasives Workshop provided the foundation for further actions to prevent invasive species from being spread through wildfire response, and to be addressed in remediation activities. And after over a year of gathering input, the Invasive Species Strategy for B.C. 2024-2028 was officially launched — calling for an 'all of society approach' to protect ecosystems, economies, and communities in B.C. from invasive species. It has been an honour to chair the ISCBC's Board of Directors — a group of dedicated visionaries and passionate leaders who give their time and share their wisdom. As we look to 2025, and our 20th anniversary, I look forward to celebrating progress and imagining future possibilities.

Nadia Chan,
Chair



This past year demonstrated the power of collaboration, creating outcomes that could not be achieved by one person or organization alone. Thanks to the depth of advisors, and the

leadership of Indigenous partners guiding projects, we have collectively created practical tools and actions. The coordinated response to Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*) integrated guidance and support from at least 10 partners, resulting in a decline from 8,276 beetles in Vancouver in 2018 to zero beetles in 2024! We worked with partners across Canada to connect youth and to close key pathways of introduction and spread. As we look back on 2024, I want to recognize the amazing leadership, initiative and teamwork across the ISCBC team — who together tackled new opportunities and shaped our next Strategic Plan. A huge thanks to all our partners, our amazing Board, donors, advisors, and our tremendous staff for the successes in 2024 and the inspiration for 2025!

Gail Wallin,
Executive Director

NEW PARTNERSHIPS AND BIG CONVERSATIONS

Invasive Species Strategy for B.C. 2024–2028

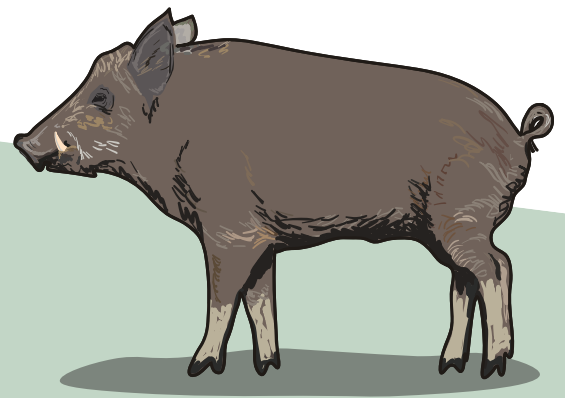
Across B.C., hundreds of people and organizations shaped the fourth Invasive Species Strategy for B.C. calling for ‘all hands-on deck’ to protect lands and waters from invasive species. Recognizing the growing risks of climate events and the impacts to Indigenous practices, high priority actions for the next five years were identified for governments, businesses, and

individuals! A big thanks to those who contributed through surveys, virtual and in-person workshops, and online reviews. Special thanks to the Ministry of Forests for their support.



Mining Industry Tools and Resources

An invasive species management plan developed for Teck Resources Ltd. focused on global guidance, operational best practices, and innovative tools for mines across North America and beyond. A management plan for black locust was also developed to support biodiversity and ecosystem health.



Squeal on Pigs

In partnership with First Nations, the provincial government, the pork sector, and B.C. Wildlife Federation, work is well underway to address the emerging threats of the planet’s most destructive invasive species — feral pigs and the associated African Swine Fever. With new resources, training and equipment, the goal is to prevent feral pig populations from establishing through early detection and rapid response.

KEY COMPONENTS

- » Wildlife camera monitoring networks in Cariboo and Peace regions
- » Resources for small pork producers, local government, and First Nations
- » Workshops on trapping and response capacity across B.C.

Addressing Operational and Regional Risks

By assessing operating procedures, conducting a baseline inventory, and considering regional invasive species risks, ISCBC provided recommendations to Envirogreen Technologies LTD to prevent the spread of invasive species through their work treating contaminated soil, sediment, and sludge.



Black locust tree T. Slobogean

ENGAGING THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

In partnership with the diverse agriculture sector across the Fraser Valley, new tools and resources were developed.

These Stop the Spread posters (in English, Spanish, and Punjabi), developed in partnership with the Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society and the Abbotsford Community Foundation, show common methods of introduction, spread, and prevention of invasive species in agricultural settings.



The priority weeds poster identifies the top 10 agricultural weeds and invasive plants in the Fraser Valley. Posters and updated invasive plant fact sheets have been distributed to berry, forage, and vegetable growers throughout the Fraser Valley.



Culture camp youth participate in activities and weed pull.



ISCBC's Play & Protect Trailer at the Nlha'7Kapmx Child & Family Services Annual Family Culture Camp.

HONOURING THE INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVE

Protecting First Foods and medicine from the threat of invasive species is important to preserving traditional practices. Indigenous communities across B.C. guided development of culturally respectful resources, management plans, and training programs. Community training and youth engagement — in school and beyond — established meaningful connections.

Indigenous Invasive Species Network (IISN) **membership up almost 10%** from 2023

IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES:

15 classes of **300+** students participated in hands-on, interactive learning sessions about invasive species

5 multi-day training courses were held (Kanaka Bar Indian Band, Okanagan Indian Band, Coldwater Indian Band, K'len T'em, and Citxw Nlaka'pamux Assembly)

Stories of connection to the land and the impacts of invasive species are powerful.

“

The relationships between plants and animals and ourselves has been a time-honoured balance that has sustained us. The focus of our Indigenous teachings is the respectful relationship with the environment around us. Some of the invasives like thistles or tumbleweeds make it difficult to gather some foods as you essentially walk through armored plants — and it discourages us. It's that balance that that we are part of — a healthy ecosystem, a healthy water system, and a healthy people — because it's part of our nutrition.

Dave Walkem, Senior Manager of Strategic Partnerships, ISCBC

ACTION ON THE GROUND

Got Invasives? Get a Goat!

In collaboration with Spectrum Resource Group Limited, a second season of goat grazing trials at a utilities right of way found significantly reduced invasive plants. Goats continue to make a name for themselves beyond the barnyard as a complementary approach to manual and chemical treatment options.

Unsplash

Monitoring Nets no Mussels

2024 marks the 7th year ISCBC has taken part in the provincial mussel monitoring program. Active sampling of 12 lakes saw no sign of zebra or quagga mussels in the Cariboo!



A. Mutch

Salmon and Aquatic Invasive Species

Together with the Pacific Salmon Foundation, Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), important work is being done to protect salmon and their habitat from invasive species.

1,100+ people were reached through a webinar, and a new **Aquatic Invasive Impacts on Pacific Salmon** resource was created.

Gravel Pits

The movement of equipment and aggregate materials are key vectors and pathways for the spread of invasive plants. In 2015 the Ministry of Transportation and Transit began partnering with ISCBC to strategically manage noxious and invasive plants in priority gravel pits across the province.

2015
22 gravel pits in 2 regional districts were surveyed, applying manual and/or herbicide treatments, and monitoring for efficacy

2024
200 gravel pits in 10 regional districts were part of the program — thanks to years of management, only 50% required survey and treatment in 2024

Stewarding Aquatic Ecosystems

Over the past two years community members surveyed and removed invasive plants at two community access sites in the Okanagan and the Cariboo. The project provided guidance for community led stewardship activities to increase biodiversity and ecological resilience.

HOW WE MADE
A DIFFERENCE
IN 2024

1,650 lb
of invasive plants
removed in community
weed pulls

92 people
engaged
in-person

32,343
people reached
virtually

195 native
trees, shrubs, and
grasses planted

Planting native
species near Otter
Lake after removing
invasive plants.



Benthic and
Limnetic stickleback
males G. Velema

Saving the Stickleback

The only place on the planet to find these rare and endangered stickleback species pairs is in five lakes on the Sunshine Coast. ISCBC's community stewardship and outreach project prioritizes their protection.

200+ people
reached during Texada Island's
popular Sandcastle weekend

Partnership with
NatureKids family club
and Texada school
facilitated hands-on activities
and invasive plant removals
from stickleback habitat

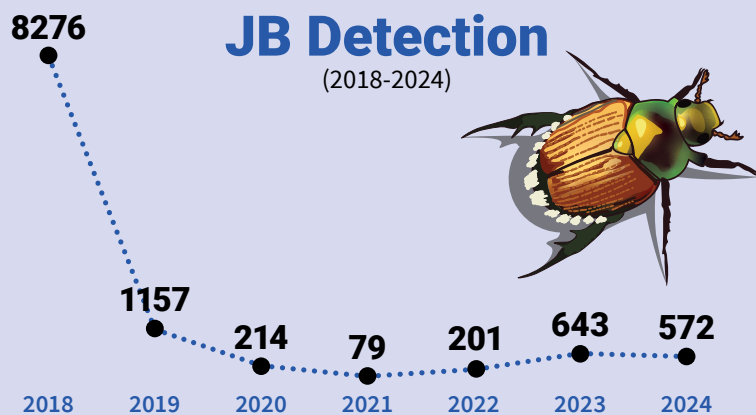
THE POWER OF COORDINATED MANAGEMENT EFFORTS

Japanese beetle
skeletonization of a tree
in Ottawa. N Wong

Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*)

Since 2018, ISCBC has had a key role along with dedicated partners to collaboratively support the eradication of Japanese beetle (JB) from B.C. ISCBC facilitated the response of 10+ organizations, provided education and outreach, and supported the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's annual JB surveillance program.

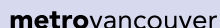
Increased numbers in 2023 arose from a new hotspot in Port Coquitlam, with new detections in 2024 in Abbotsford and Kamloops. On a positive note, there were zero JB detections in Vancouver in 2024, indicating that with efficient treatments, effective movement controls, consistent messaging and strong outreach and education, eradication is possible.



4,523 traps set
and checked
across the Lower Mainland

16 information sessions hosted
across Vancouver, Burnaby, Coquitlam,
and Port Coquitlam

100+ strategy subcommittee
meetings and
1 season-ending wrap up meeting



Box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*)

A fourth season collaborating with the BC Landscape and Nursery Association and Ministry of Agriculture and Food for box tree moth resulted in zero detections.

0 detections – traps checked
monthly for 4 months

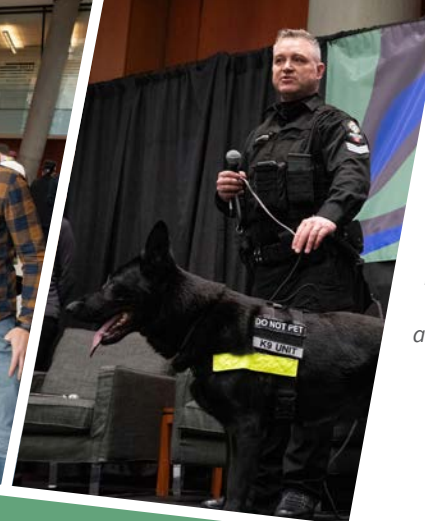
79 traps set at 18 Lower
Mainland boxwood
growers and in 15 parks

Spongy moth (*Lymantria dispar dispar*)

B.C. has been successful in keeping spongy moth from establishing and devastating forests and tree cover that provide critical habitat and shade communities. Providing support to the Ministry of Forests, ISCBC assisted with weather monitoring, treatment signs, and managing spray deposit cards in three regions during 12 treatment events.

Spongy moth larvae are voracious feeders, consuming large quantities of leaves. SM Reiven Martin, iNaturalist.ca

In 2024,
B.C. was declared
northern giant hornet
(*Vespa mandarinia*) **free**
with zero detections
over the last
three years.



LEFT:
Dynamic keynote
speaker Chef Dan
Hayes cooks up invasive
species and fun.
B. Howell

MIDDLE:
Popi meets Grahame Gielens,
Ministry of Transportation
and Transit, and Derek Hogan,
Ministry of Forests. B. Howell

RIGHT:
Sgt Chretien and K9 Major
put on a mussel-detection
demonstration for the crowd.
B. Howell

“

*I had a really good time
and enjoyed the
opportunities for networking!
I was also really appreciative
of the Indigenous
perspectives, which have
been sorely lacking at other
conferences that I've been to.*

Brittany Barker, Senior Research
Associate, Oregon State University

INVASIVES 2024 FORUM & AGM: INSPIRING. PRACTICAL. CONNECTED.

INVASIVES 2024 delivered
in-person opportunities for
networking, collaboration, and
learning. Highlights included a
captivating K9 demonstration
by the Invasive Mussel Defence
Program, a cooking demonstration
led by dynamic, Day 2 keynote
speaker, Dan Hayes, and the
always-popular speedy sessions.

244 participants

57 speakers shared
cutting-edge research,
innovative strategies, and success stories

ATTENDEES:

23% self-identified
as **Youth**

14% self-identified
as **Indigenous**

COMMUNICATIONS AND NETWORKS

114 media reports
featured ISCBC

4,214 monthly eNews
subscribers

229 Indigenous Invasive
Species Network
members, up from 209 in 2023

166 Local Government
Invasive Species
Network members,
up from 146 in 2023

13,092 social
media
followers across all channels,
880K+ people reached

Organizations who featured ISCBC information

- » Japanese beetle flight season info in Western Canada Turfgrass Association's June newsletter
- » 'Pretty but Toxic: Invasive Plant Harms Horses' reprinted in *Saddle Up* magazine's June edition
- » Three pages of ISCBC's invasive species info in the Green Lake Area Ratepayers Association's September newsletter
- » 'Invasives Impacting an Endangered Ecosystem' in the Coastal Douglas-fir & Associated Ecosystems Conservation Partnership's October newsletter
- » 'Texada Island Stickleback Species Pairs: BC's Precious Nature Heritage with Global Importance' in the winter conservation issue of *Nature Wild* magazine, published by NatureKids BC
- » 'How to Avoid Invasives in Winter Decorating' in District of Port Edward's December community newsletter — ISCBC now a monthly contributor



Youth in Action — Microgrants

YOUTH IN ACTION

Over 460 youth gained experience and knowledge to protect their communities from invasive species. Building on ISCBC's national partnership with the Canadian Council on Invasive Species, youth across Canada (aged 15-30) gathered in Ottawa, New Westminster, and online to learn from one another and leaders in conservation. For the first time in Council history, ISCBC provided grant funding for youth-led community initiatives. Projects focused on habitat restoration, invasive species removal, environmental education, climate action and more.

58 youth led projects
across Canada received grant funding

31 resources developed
including species factsheets,
stickers, posters, and training videos

6,022
volunteer hours

53 youth attended Rooting
for Change National Summit
hosted in partnership with CCIS

90 community sites
positively impacted, improving
environmental resiliency

“

This project has made me realize a passion I had for biology. Before this project I had never considered a career in this field, however, researching and studying invasive species has made me find a new interest I didn't know I had.

Youth in Action Microgrant Recipient

“

I really appreciated the opportunity to network, learn from the presenters, and hear about the youth projects happening across the country. I hope this program will run in future years for other youth volunteers to experience.

ISCBC Youth Volunteer



Participants enjoying the National Rooting for Change Youth Summit in Ottawa. K. Faridani

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Science Network

Reporting invasive species through the 'I Spy and Identify' project on iNaturalist helps the scientific community identify and manage invasive species. Every report is integral to protecting biodiversity.

'I SPY AND IDENTIFY' PROJECT ON INATURALIST

388,633
iNaturalist observations;
129,217 from B.C.

1,420 members

321 reports made
through bcinvasives.ca and
by phone

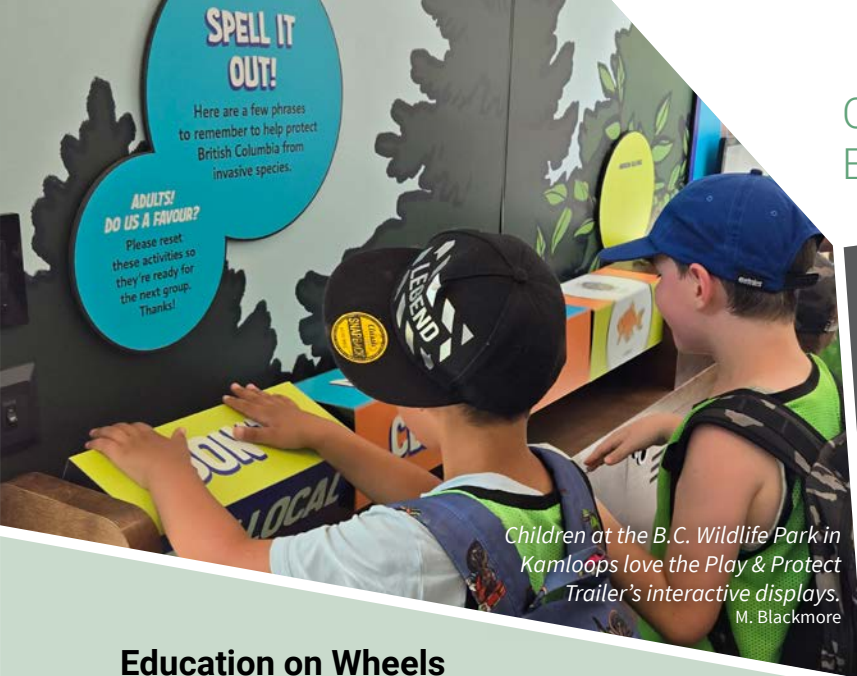
ISCBC's Bioblitzes:

Biodiversity Bonanza (June 20-30):

3,310 observations
of **1,022** species

Fall Frenzy Bioblitz (Sept. 20-30):

1,150 observations
of **546** species



Children at the B.C. Wildlife Park in Kamloops love the Play & Protect Trailer's interactive displays.
M. Blackmore

OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION

“

As a gardener and proud member of my local horticultural society, I just wanted to congratulate you on the production of this resource [Invasive Species Education Kit]. Learning more about these species is an important and easy way to engage with our local ecosystems. Gaining this knowledge may prevent people from buying and planting invasives in their gardens. Thanks for all your hard work!

Heather Mills, Head of Marketing and Communications,
Outward Bound Canada

Education on Wheels

For the second year in a row the interactive Play & Protect Trailer hit the road. Along with the Play and Protect Challenge video game kiosk, engaging invasive species education found its way to communities in interior B.C.

PEOPLE ENGAGED:

2,000+
at community events
in Interior B.C.

1,574
at outreach events hosted
by the Regional District of
the North Okanagan Invasive
Species Ambassador Program

1,786
at schools and
community events
through the Cariboo
Regional District Education
and Outreach Program

7 communities
visited in 4 different regions

13 species factsheets
created or updated

9 Clean, Drain, Dry signs
installed at key locations in the
North Okanagan, as part of
the North Okanagan
Conservation Fund

23 new stickers
(English and French) and
invasive species poster
designed



Invasive-Wise Education

ISCBC supports educators with curriculum-based lesson plans and educational resources, virtual classroom presentations, and teacher professional development workshops. Through a partnership with the Outdoor Learning School (OLS) and Store, ISCBC's Invasive Species Education Kit is available to a North America-wide audience.

246 educators in the
Invasive-Wise Education network

500+ educators reached in
4 professional development workshops

600+ students engaged in
20+ virtual presentations in English and
French and at one summer camp

Grade 4/5 students practice Play Clean Go after learning about invasive species and what they can do to make a difference.

“

A big thank you to the Invasive Species Council of BC for thinking of us and letting us host this exhibit kiosk! This fun game encourages critical thinking to protect local areas from the threat of invasive species!

Okanagan Science Centre,
summer hosts of the Play and Protect Challenge Kiosk



A PAC participant from K'len T'em in Merritt demos some personal protective equipment.
M. Blackmore

INVASIVE SPECIES ACTION MONTH

May 2024 was dedicated to sharing how to identify, report, manage, and prevent invasive species spread. Thanks to the support of the Ministry of Forests, Invasive Species Action Month continues to gain momentum in engaging people from across B.C.

LEARNING AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

We make learning easy with in-person or virtual courses.

6 Pesticide Applicator Certification (PAC) workshops held

8 Webinars hosted
(666 people registered)

603 new eLearning Centre accounts created

138 people completed the European Green Crab eLearning course, eligible for certification with a section 52 Scientific Collection/Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Control License. Created in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)

122 people registered for the Forestry course pilot program

9 articles shared on ISCBC's website
12 media reports mentioned ISCBC

5 themed webinars with special guest speakers viewed **826** times on YouTube

77,000 total website visits,
37,000 were first time visitors

95,177 accounts reached across social media platforms

TOGETHER IN ACTION AWARDS

ISCBC's annual awards honour exceptional leaders and innovators in invasive species prevention, management, and education.



Together in Action Student Leadership Award Winner

Sharmin is an active volunteer with endless curiosity and enthusiasm for community and environmental stewardship.

"For me being a volunteer and participating in different activities was already very rewarding. I have met several people, learned different things, and have grown as a person. Sometimes I go back to places where I have removed invasives or planted trees and it fills me with joy knowing I did something to better the environment."

Sharmin Malik, horticulture student, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, and avid ISCBC volunteer



Together in Action Innovation and Leadership Award Winner

Bill's first introduction to invasive species was Scotch broom in the mid 90's.

"I still remember the reforestation conversation I had with an Australian forester during an operations field tour in which he said I would soon learn to hate those beautiful yellow flowers. He was absolutely right! On a good note, it was this same challenging plant that first introduced me to the Council. Fast forward 15 years or so, I can truly say that ISCBC has been an important part of both my professional and personal life."

Bill Grutzmacher, operations forester

THE PEOPLE POWERING THE ISCBC TEAM

Meet the Board

ISCBC's Board of Directors provide incredible and diverse knowledge about invasive species management and prevention, volunteering their time and expertise to lead our organization. Thanks to their guidance and vision the Council is reaching new audiences, is recognized as a trusted invasive species resource, and has new opportunities to make a bigger impact every day.



Sarah Nathan



Steve Thomson

Congratulations to Award-Winning ISCBC Board Members

Two ISCBC Board Directors — Sarah Nathan and Steve Thomson — won the prestigious King Charles III **Coronation Medal!** This

medal recognizes *those who have made a significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region or community of Canada, or have made an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada.* These tireless champions have made an incredible difference, personally and professionally. The Council is deeply grateful for their leadership.

GOVERNMENT CHAMBER

INDIGENOUS

Jonathan Holmes

*Lower Nicola Indian Band
Development Corporation*

Loren Muth

Ch'iyaaqtel (Tzeachten) First Nation

LOCAL

Nadia Chan, Chair

City of Surrey

Sophie Dessureault

Vancouver Park Board

PROVINCIAL

Val Miller

Ministry of Forests

Jennifer Psyllakis

*Ministry of Water, Land and
Resource Stewardship*

FEDERAL

Dave Ensing

*Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada*

COMMUNITY CHAMBER

COMMUNITY

Harold Aljam

First Nations Agriculture Council

Terry Peters

Local invasive species committee

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Alec Dale

Volunteer, conservation leader

Sarah Nathan

Ducks Unlimited Canada

Eamon O'Donoghue

Farmer, stewardship leader

Joanne Sales

Broombusters Invasive Plant Society

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY CHAMBER

AGRICULTURE

Steve Thomson, Vice Chair

Farmer, agriculture leader

NATURAL RESOURCES

Christine Gelowitz

Forest Professionals BC

Eric Nijboer, Past-Chair

Spectrum Resource Group Inc.

TRADE & RETAIL

Scott Pearce, Secretary

GardenWorks

TRANSPORTATION & UTILITIES

Nicci Bergunder

Defence Construction Canada

Jennifer Robertson,

Treasurer

FortisBC

Dan Tisseur

Enbridge



*Board meeting field tour
at Tranquille Wildlife
Management Area
near Kamloops.*

THANK YOU!

The ISCBC Staff

With great knowledge and an impressive skill set, each member of ISCBC's team contributes unique talents to programs and strategic initiatives, advancing the understanding of invasive

species and their impacts across B.C. and beyond. Thank you to the 2024 staff team for your vision, commitment, and so much more.



ISCBC team, October 2024.

ISCBC Supporters

The work of the Council is made possible by the generous contributions of its supporters. Those offering their resources and support make a major, positive impact possible. Special thanks to the members of our community whose individual donations further support our efforts.

2024 Funders

Abbotsford Community Foundation

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada)

BC Hydro

BC Gaming

Canadian Heritage (Patrimoine canadien)

Cariboo Regional District

Clean Foundation

Corteva Agriscience

Employment and Social Development Canada (Emploi et Développement social Canada)

Enbridge Inc.

Envirogreen Technologies Ltd.

Envu Canada

Environment and Climate Change Canada (Environnement et Changement climatique Canada)

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Pêches et Océans Canada)

Forest Professionals BC

FortisBC

Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation

Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Province of B.C.

Ministry of Forests, Province of B.C.

Ministry of Transportation and Transit, Province of B.C.

Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, Province of B.C.

Mosaic Forest Management

NATS Nursery

North Okanagan Conservation Fund

Pacific Coastal Airlines

Pacific Salmon Foundation

Project Learning Tree Canada

Regional District of North Okanagan

SePRO Systems

Teck Resources Ltd.

Trans Mountain



#72 – 7th Avenue South
Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 4N5
BCINVASIVES.CA
info@bcinvasives.ca
1-888-933-3722

Charitable Registration: 856131578RR0001

We invite you to consider joining our community of supporters to help make invasive species education and ecological stewardship programming accessible across B.C. Visit our website to learn more.

McCormell Lake M. Blackmore