

Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council

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Stop the Spread: Horticulture solutions to invasive species

November 23, 2010

FORUM SUMMARY

Participant brainstorming (afternoon)

Participant list at end of summary

At the end of the forum, two key questions were posed. Answers in general order of priority are below.

Question #1: What prevents you or your organization from being able to assist in the battle against invasive species?

1. Lack of education
2. Lack of safe disposal site
3. Cost: Need financial help to do the right thing (e.g. removal, non-invasive plant costs) and other incentives
4. Lack of bylaw/government legislation: no teeth
5. Other landscapers: Can't compete with those who don't care (doing the right thing costs more)
6. Landscape architects: Lack of knowledge of problem (may prescribe invasive plants, don't know how to maintain plants)
7. Garden centres/nurseries: Those still selling invasive plants
8. Lack of coordination & collaboration: broaden knowledge base (e.g. chemists, herbalists); individual efforts need coordinated plan of attack
9. Lack of ownership: Responsibility, leadership, commitment
10. Cross cultural and cross industry boundaries

Question #2: What can you or your organization do now and in the near future to assist in the battle against invasive species? Where do opportunities exist?

1. Education:
 - a. events for stakeholder engagement, public, horticulture industry, school children

- b. Need more general information out to everyone that creates sense of urgency but is not daunting (help get people to care, non-science based)
- c. Need specific info regarding ID, treatment and control to be available
- d. Volunteer weed pulls: organize and get involved
- e. Online technical knowledge (e.g. current SSISC website, video apps)
- f. Give high school students invasive species tags that they can use to tag invasive plants in the neighbourhood
- g. Inform through invasive plant walk: Signs at trailheads with information
- h. Offer education on use of herbicide treatments (*dependant on local bylaws*)
2. Safe invasive disposal site: Local government to provide; ideally free and easy to access
 - a. Provide a controlled way to remove, transfer and dispose
3. Stop growing invasive plants in nurseries:
 - a. Tagging invasive plants at garden centres/nurseries – message to leave in containers and dispose of properly
 - b. Plant swap – provide alternatives to invasive plants
4. Remove, control & report: including soil quality control (report infested soil/fill/gravel)
5. Introduce bylaw/government legislation: prioritization first and eventually enforcement
6. Certification: local companies to be members (e.g. When you apply for business licence)
 - a. Must be certified (through munis)
 - b. Maybe certified through provincial associations (e.g. BCLNA)
7. Cooperation with home owners: offer invasive plant assessments
8. Provide access to alternative plant and non-invasive seed mix (could be fundraiser)
 - a. Teach people to propagate natives, learn what natives compete well with invasives, highlight benefits of native plants
9. Need a champion (e.g. Al Gore) – at local, provincial level
10. Prepare easy and tangible tasks that anyone can do: make it simple for the lay person
11. More effective communication (sexy and marketable); media attention
12. Develop a systems based strategy
13. Border control – trans country (province to province) e.g. state of California

Next Steps (not discussed at the meeting)

- SSISC to discuss safe disposal sites initially with Carney's (Pat Mulholland) and the District of Squamish (Rod McLeod) for solution by spring
- Certification programs to be researched to determine feasibility
- RMOW invasive bylaw potential model for rest of corridor, SSISC to coordinate collaboration
- Updated priority species list to be up on website by end of December (maps and species specific info on ID, treatment and control to be available by end March)
- Regional brochure to be available by end March and distributed to garden centres
 - Nurseries asked to participate in volunteer ban of invasives if no regulations in place by March
- Fundraising to facilitate education and on the ground operations
- Next public meeting planned for March (AGM)

Presentations & Panel discussion (morning)

Kristina's presentation (SSISC Coordinator)

- Focused on background: about SSISC, what are invasives, why are they a problem, what can we do, current and proposed regulations, which horticulture plants are the greatest threats
- Download presentation on website www.ssisc.info

Bob's presentation (Whistler Biodiversity Project and SSISC Director)

- Focused on the connection of invasive plants with the rest of the kingdoms. For more information see www.whistlerbiodiversity.ca

Panel Discussion Participants:

Paul Beswitherick – RMOW Landscape Maintenance Supervisor

- Difficult for invasive to get a foot hold in Whistler due to elevation and accessibility
- Not aware of invasive yellow flag iris, planted in wetland area and have a significant problem with them in an introduced bioswale
- Lots of people are still not aware of the problem
- Soil relocated from infested excavation sites – currently no way to track where it goes
- Illegal dumping is a big issue – when you charge for dumping then people dump elsewhere

Edith Tobe – Squamish River Watershed Society

- Active in watershed restoration - membership group of the SSISC
- Work hard to raise awareness with munis and public
- Working hard to re-establish natural growth on restoration sites - despite this invasives are still coming in
- Japanese knotweed has become a big problem within District of Squamish
- Looking forward to continued work with invasive

Andrea Martinello – N.A.T.S. Nursery (Langley)

- N.A.T.S. voluntarily removed invasive plants from stock
- Have an award for leadership from the Invasive Plant Council of BC
- Problem identified: Designers specify invasive plants and if they can't get them from N.A.T.S. they will go elsewhere
- Alternates are wrongfully accused of not being visually appealing to customers - work on education with clients
- Gave advice to nurseries who want to stop selling invasives

Bob Brett – Whistler Biodiversity Project

- Started Biodiversity Project in 2004, inventory of all species (native & non-native)
- Hot spot team is making a big difference on the ground work
- Personal interest with invasive plants is that they cause trouble within natural ecosystems

- Orange hawkweed going into natural environments a threat at higher elevations

Marie Grindlay - Mountain View Landscape Supplies (Squamish)

- Been a landscaper in Squamish for over 10 years
- Landscapers are trying to figure out the right thing to do is
- Pulled lots of invasives over the years
- Have a great opportunity to educate customers
- Disposal a big issue

Bryce Anderson – Whistler Landscaping

- Cites example of employee of Nicolas North Golf Course bringing back broom from the island years ago, 7-8years ago this was planted, still an issue despite removal
- Education is the biggest opportunity and challenge
- Designer, landscapers, retailers, growers, need to know what the invasive plants are in this area
- Disposal an issue
- Opportunity – provincial and national association (e.g. BCLNA) are great resources,

Scott Lamont – District of Squamish

- Offering education to staff on identification and removal
- Working on finding disposal site
- Working on letting council know that there is a problem and figure out how we can get operational funding to deal with it
- Communication is key, a lot of people don't know

Discussion arising from panel – key points

- Disposal in Whistler: Digging big holes (10 feet deep) and burying material, 2ft of cover and geotextile
- Threat: People throw their garden waste into neighbouring green space
- Compost facility in Callaghan; Pat Mulholland from CARNEYS invites folks to contact him directly for more information about the facility
- How does burning impact air quality: take into consideration the lesser of the two evils, also not talking about large amount, tonnage basis is relatively small, and what is your best practice. Some species do require burning some don't
- Signs on highway are a great tool tie in some of the problem plants get the message out put them in your own compost
- Barrier: people are attached to their invasives (e.g. butterfly bush)
- Barrier: No source, can't buy native seeds
- SRWS getting a specific seed mix from Langley for the area
- Funding: Get support from councils and tax payers to support budget funding on what needs to be done
- What kind of repercussions could there be for nurseries that are not complying – whistler has a draft bylaw environmental bylaw with invasive species section – nobodies is allow to buy or sell

invasive plants and if it is on your lands it needs to be removed in a specific time, and need to dispose of it properly, when the weed control act comes into play there will be repercussions there

- Landscape industry cares – needs to be tackled from many different angles
- Need communication education on the ground work
- Coast Salish meetings – 54 first nations 22 us tribes, dealing with issues on at an eco-region level. International dialog have now signed statement of cooperation.

Participants

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| Amanda McArthur | Studios Landscaping |
| Andrea Martinello | Nats Nursery |
| Beverly Carson | |
| Bob Brett | Whistler Biodiversity Project |
| Bryce Anderson | Whistler Landscaping |
| Cameron Keith | Another View Landscaping |
| Carl Halvorson | North Vancouver Outdoor School |
| Carolyn Ann Wray | |
| Clare OBrien | NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service |
| Dave Colwell | Squamish Garden Club |
| Dave Crowther | |
| Dawn Johnson | Stewardship Pemberton |
| Doug Morrison | Squamish Environment Society |
| Edith Tobe | Squamish River Watershed Society |
| Francine Cooper | Ministry of Environment |
| Glenn Campbell | |
| Heike Stippler | Heike Designs |
| Ian Creighton | Another View Landscaping |
| Joanne Ronsley | Village of Lions Bay |
| John Bradbury | Picketts Nurseries |
| John Meilleur | Fern 2 Firs |
| Judith Knapp | |
| Judith Vetsch | Squamish Environment Society |
| Kimberley Armour | IPCBC & SSISC |
| Kimberley Martin | Carney's Waste Systems |
| Kris Latham | Latham Landscapes |
| Kristina Swerhun | SSISC |
| Laurelin Fondacaro | Tom Barratt Ltd |
| Marie Grindlay | Mountain View Landscape Supplies |
| Marie-Claude (MC) Laski | Deeply Rooted Landscaping |
| Mary Miles | Lions Bay Native Gardens |
| Meg Fellows | |
| Nicolette Richer | RMOW |

Patrick MacNamara
Patrick Mulholland
Paul Beswetherick
Randall Lewis
Sandy Steer
Scott Lamont
Scott Martin
Sharon Watson
Stewart McArthur
Tom Barratt
Tom Nosella
Tracey Kronko
Vlasta Aracki
Wolfgang Pauli

Squamish Environment Society
Carney's Waste Systems
RMOW
Squamish Nation
District of Squamish
District of Squamish
Syntaris Power

Studios Landscaping
Tom Barratt Ltd

Latham Landscapes
Canadian Tire, Squamish