



## EYES ON INVASIVE SPECIES



Newsletter of the Yukon Invasive Species Council \* March 2017

# What's up with YISC?

### **National Invasive Species Forum in Ottawa February 27 - March 2, 2017**

The forum was hosted by the Canadian Council on Invasive Species (CCIS) and brought more than 85 participants together from a variety of federal and provincial governments, industry, scientist, First Nation representatives and non-profit organizations. The CCIS started out as a council of councils, bringing together all the councils across Canada. Last year the CCIS started to expand their membership by bringing in other key partners to work with the council. YISC is a member of CCIS and as the coordinator, I participate on a regular base in activities with the CCIS and also attended the forum. During the forum we had a full day meeting as the Canadian Council and three days of presentations, workshops and speedy sessions. These were days filled with networking, collaborating, soaking up information, sharing and learning from others. We all took a lot of positive energy back to our daily workplaces. And the good news is, there is a strong movement federally to reactivate some of the funding programs such as the Invasive Alien Species Partnership Program which would allow us councils more access to funding.



**Work started on our weed warrior project.** With this project we are reaching out to all Whitehorse schools. One part of the project is to bring a presenter to the class to talk about invasive species and to involve the class in a role-play activity to engage the kids in an informal way with the topic. We are hoping to get the classes also engaged in hands-on work by removing invasive species from their school area. The developed kit includes background information for the teacher, a lesson plan, the activity and supporting educational materials. Currently we are working on two focus groups. This spring a pilot project will be implemented with the grad 4. At one point we are planning on expanding the program to the whole territory.

### **Ongoing Programs:**

**In previous years YISC established programs which we like to continue. Spotter's network and Grow me Instead**

**Spotter's network:** We need your eyes on the ground! A lot of invasive species reports come from the public. Through our spotter's network training you receive identification training, a poster and a field guide.

**Grow me instead:** Horticulture is a well-known pathway of introduction and spread of invasive species. Responsible gardeners are encouraged to consult YISC's [Grow me Instead brochure](#) to learn about species we would like to keep out of gardens because they have the potential to jump the fence and act invasive in natural areas. The brochure points to ornamental plants that are well suited to replace those unwanted species. On your spring shopping trip to your local garden centre watch for the *Good to grow* label!

It is easy to get involved, participate in one of our events and if you are looking for information, all of our materials and reports are posted on our website.



**The Play Clean Go initiative** targets recreational users of trail systems and the backcountry. The goal of this initiative is to educate recreationalists on the importance of their responsibility in stopping the spread of invasive species. The message is: After we played out there, we clean our equipment such as the mountain bike or the ATV to make sure all dirt and plant parts are removed because these can be the source of spreading invasive species to new areas. This project includes a survey of selected trails within the City of Whitehorse to collect data on presence and absence of invasive plants. Education components include Best Practices, info kiosks and signage. The Play Clean Go is an initiative started in Minnesota. Currently the CCIS works on extending this program to Canada. The Yukon Invasive Species Council is one of the leading organizations in Canada to implement this program. For both of these projects we were successful in securing funding money through the ECOAction Community Funding Program.



### Roadside survey report completed

Last summer's roadside survey, the second territory wide survey, is completed and the report is in its final making. I am excited to read the report and see the maps. Results of the survey have been presented at the Biodiversity Forum in Whitehorse and as soon as the report is finalized, it will be posted on the website.



### Weed alert

YISC started an educational column in the quarterly publication of the Agriculture Branch. Selected invasive species are portrayed. We started with the slug and the article on narrow leafed hawksbeard is next. Concerned about what grows on your field? Take advantage of our **Walk your Field** program. A plant specialist comes out to your property to help you identify species you are concerned about or not familiar with. Early detection is the best approach in dealing with invasive plants!



Are you interested in organizing a neighbourhood weed pull or a Spotter's Network training for your workplace?

Please get in contact with YISC to get started on your project.

Contact Andrea:

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