

2021 AGM

YEAR IN REVIEW

Yukon Invasive Species Council



Summary

2021 saw a slight comeback but COVID was still ever present. Evidence is in our ability to program in communities, with communities and do in person outreach activities.

Project Updates

What's new this summer

- Dawson specific outreach
- Summer Camps
- Yukon wide roadside survey in partnership with Yukon Seed and Restoration.

Things ongoing

Play Clean Go Campaign

This year we focussed on Facebook outreach for the Play Clean Go program. We did not have any specific programming for the campaign. Seven Facebook posts were created to highlight the importance of cleaning biking and hiking equipment before using it in new areas.

Boot brush stands were inspected and maintained. The four stands were all in good condition, and the Magnussen and Copper Ridge stands still have the bike brush attached. Minor maintenance was done: removing weeds at the base of stands, wiping debris from stands.

Spotter's Network

In 2021 we were able to offer an in-person spotter's network course to several organizations. The Y2C2 Green Team did a training (2 crew members participated). YISC ran a Spotter's Network course for Scott Gilbert's class at Yukon University. This class had 9



participants. There was also a session run for the Grade 9 class from Haines Junction, which had 7 students.

We also offered the training to Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre staff and Champagne and Aishihik First Nation Land Guardians, both of whom expressed interested in potentially participating in the program in the future.

Bruce Bennett completed an introduced species walk at the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in bioblitz in Dawson City.

YISC also ran a self-paced scavenger hunt activity over our social media in which we had one entry.

Plant Wise Campaign



YISC reached out to garden centres at the beginning of the summer to arrange to drop off new Grow Me Instead brochures, stickers, and plant cards. We also developed 11 targeted Facebook posts, which focussed on illegal dumping, proper disposal of gardening materials, and which plants to grow instead of invasives.

We placed a display ad in the Yukon News and Whitehorse Star papers on June 4th about good stewardship practices for gardeners and landowners.

A membership blitz was conducted for our AGM, and prizes focussed on good gardening practices. We received prizes from Home Hardware, Yukon Grow, and Greenspace North Landscaping.



Environmental Damages Carcross project

This year's funding approval came through too late to organize a public weed pull in Carcross. We identified and surveyed access points to Bennett and Tagish Lakes, and created a digital map of the surveyed locations. We suggest in future years to reach out the Southern Lakes Resort about surveying their boat launch, which is available to members of the public to use though it is on private property.

YISC organized a meeting with the C/TRRC to discuss how to collaborate on invasive species outreach work for this project. At this meeting, YISC learned that high water levels throughout the summer and into the fall meant that the train bridge was not passable for boat traffic going up to Bennett Lake. According to Don Toews (RRC member) and Andrew Serack (Executive Director), many boat launches in the Southern Lakes have been flooded most of the summer, and fewer people were out on the lakes in boats.

Boat launches that have been surveyed do not currently show any sweetclover, but as the bridge and boat launch construction in Carcross is recent, this would be a good area to watch for sweetclover popping up in the next several years. Clematis is growing in several spots in the town of Carcross, including near the parking lot for the Carcross commons, and behind the Whitepass station building (though this looks like it might be private property).

Sweetclover is growing near the Carcross commons parking area. A public pull might take a route along the road into the town of Carcross, working from the end of the infestation towards the centre.

YISC reached out to Carcross schools to offer our aquatic invasive species programming for the fall.

Weed pulls

This summer, YISC ran six sweetclover pulls in neighbourhoods where we had previously partnered with community associations. We had a total of 53 volunteers come out to these events. These pulls happened at (see contact information in Google Drive outreach.yisc folder):

Pineridge. Partner Pineridge Community Association. 12 Participants.

Wolf Creek. Partner Wolf Creek Community Association. 6 Participants.

Mt. Sima. Partner Winterlong Brewing Co. 4 Participants.

Meadow Lakes. Partner Meadow Lakes Community Association. 3 Participants.

Spruce Hill. Partner Spruce Hill Community Association. 12 Participants.

Fish Lake Road. Partner Friends of McIntyre Creek. 16 Participants.

This year, we were able to leave most sweetclover to dry on the side of the road, and therefore we do not have accurate estimates of how much plant material was removed. However, at several sites, including Pine Ridge, Meadow Lakes, and Spruce Hill, there remains very little sweetclover, indicating that yearly pulls are reducing the amount of plants that come back each year. Though there is slightly more sweetclover at Wolf Creek,

Mt Sima, and the Fish Lake Road, it is clear that there are fewer plants in the areas that we focused on pulling in previous years. This progress made residents and pull participants hopeful that these activities are making a difference.

CBC Yukon came out to the Fish Lake Road weed pull. This was the most well-attended weed pull of the season, and the partnership with Friends of McIntyre Creek should be maintained here.

We also created a DIY weed pull toolkit. This toolkit was adapted to Yukon from the Sea to Sky Invasive Species Council version with permission from the organization. This toolkit could be used

Organize your own family, neighbourhood, or community weed pull! This guide will provide the tools to get you started. Let's get our hands dirty!

DIY Weed Pull Toolkit

Protect your neighbourhood from invasive species



in future to support self-organized community weed pulls in cases where the goal is to have more self-sufficient pulling without high capacity from YISC.

Thats a wrap

We saw funding end for two major projects this year. Environmental Damages Fund for the City of Whitehorse which focused on Bird Vetch and EcoAction in Alsek Watershed focusing on Clean Drain Dry in the Kluane region.

ECOAction Project

In 2021, YISC developed several products for the ECOAction project in the Alsek Watershed. We updated a fact sheet on aquatic invasive species to make it Yukon-specific, we created a Clean Drain Dry video with Dennis Zimmerman in partnership with the Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management board, and we delivered rack cards on aquatic invasive species to Yukon visitor information centres. YISC also got permission to modify several of ISCBC's

Clean Drain Dry videos to make them more Yukon-relevant.

YISC did four outreach sessions in the Alsek watershed, two at Kathleen Lake in coordination with Parks Canada, and one each at Kathleen River and Dezadeash Lake in coordination with contractors doing angler surveys for Government of Yukon. Though boat launches and fishing spots were quiet on the weekends that we conducted outreach activities, we were able to talk to 22 people about the Clean Drain Dry program and aquatic invasive species concerns. We reached out the Kluane Fishing Derby and the Yukon River Quest about attending their events to promote Clean Drain Dry, but these events were either cancelled or modified due to COVID-19.

YISC was able to collaborate with partners at the Alsek Renewable Resources Council, the Dan Keyi Renewable Resources Council, Government of Yukon, and the Village of Haines Junction to install interpretive signage and Clean Drain Dry signage at several key access points to the Alsek watershed. So far, 5 signs have been installed, and one will be installed at Jarvis River by Government of Yukon Department of Environment in the spring.

Facebook posts were created to promote the Clean Drain Dry program, and a mock signage installation was held at Schwatka Lake for media coverage. Yukon News and the Whitehorse Star both published articles and photos of the mock installation event. We estimate that our communications activities reached over 7400 people in 2021.

In Haines Junction, YISC conducted one public weed pull and one weed pull with the Haines Junction Boys and Girls Club. We had arranged to work with a Y2C2 crew to do another pull, but their crews ended up changing schedules due to the flood emergency in the Southern Lakes area. Working with Y2C2 on a pull in a Yukon community would likely be well received in future. Parks Canada conducted several of their own weed pulls in the Haines Junction area, and YISC is waiting for them to compile the data on these pulls this fall.

YISC was able to get a trailer to store and transport outreach materials this summer. Designs for the trailer are coming soon, and the trailer will be useful in future summer outreach activities as a convenient, efficient, and eye-catching way to set up an outreach station.

YISC has reached out to Haines Junction schools about delivering invasive species programming this fall. This has not been confirmed by teachers.

An in-person or online event is being planned for this project for fall/winter 2021. YISC had planned to collaborate with the ARRC on a summer outreach event, but this was cancelled several times due to COVID outbreaks.

Environmental Damages Bird vetch project

In summer 2021, YISC was able to conduct bird vetch pulls at three sites: Rotary Park, the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre, and Hillcrest subdivision. We mapped 4 sites, which include the pull sites as well as a bird vetch patch along Mountainview Drive near C & D Feeds. Though we had also planned to conduct a pull at this site, the size of the patch as well as some road construction at the site meant that we switched to the Hillcrest site for a pull instead.

For the public pulls at Rotary Park, we advertised using Facebook, Display ads, posters, the YISC Newsletter, and the YCS Enviro Update newsletter. The Yukon Visitor Information Centre in Whitehorse put up posters to advertise the pull. We also reached out to the



Downtown Residents Association to post on their Facebook page, and to the Yukon Canoe and Kayak Club. The first public pull only had 5 people attend, while the second had zero. We would suggest that this lower turnout to a pull is because there is no resident's association immediately adjacent

to the pull site and so community members do not have the same incentive to come out to a pull as with other neighbourhood pulls. Other incentives and further advertising efforts may be needed in future to increase attendance at these pulls. YISC also conducted a bird vetch pull with staff from the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. There were 5 staff involved in this pull.

YISC planned and created an interpretive sign about bird vetch and how to manage it. Partners at the City of Whitehorse and the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre reviewed the sign and consented to have their logos on it. This sign was installed along the millennium trail by staff at the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre.

In September, we had two staff members from Associated Environmental Consultants join us for a native seed collection at Ear Lake. EDI and Tetrattech expressed interested in contributing to YISC's work via a seed collection, but they could not make it on the day of the collection. We would suggest that these might be businesses to reach out to in the future about this type of activity. The seeds collected at Ear Lake were spread at the Range Point management site.

In September, we also developed a press release detailing YISC's concern about bird vetch. The press release was published in the Whitehorse Star. We also created some display ads about the issue that were printed in the Yukon News and Whitehorse Star papers on October 8.

Other news

Media coverage

YISC was featured in the news 7 times over the summer 2021 season. In June, the Yukon News published an article on our invasive species work. In July, CBC Yukon attended the Fish Lake Road weed pull and interviewed YISC and Friends of McIntyre Creek about the pull. In August, the Yukon News published an article about the new top 5 invasive species of concern list from the conservation data centre. In September, YISC submitted a press release to CBC Yukon, the Yukon News, and the Whitehorse Star, and articles in the Whitehorse Star and Yukon News were published on our Clean Drain Dry programming. Also in September, YISC submitted a press release to all three news outlets and had articles published in the Yukon News and Whitehorse Star about the concern around bird vetch invasiveness. All articles can be found on DropBox.

Display ads

YISC submitted 5 display ads this summer. These were submitted to both Yukon News and the Whitehorse Star. Ads focussed on the AGM, best stewardship practices for gardeners, sweetclover weed pull event advertising, bird vetch weed pull event advertising, and bird vetch invasiveness awareness.

Other collaborations and partnerships

YISC worked with several new partners this year. We collaborated with the Yukon Visitor Information Centre in Whitehorse to advertise our waterfront bird vetch pull and to disseminate rack cards to other visitor centre. We also worked with staff from the Fish Ladder to do a weed walk and show them how to pull sweetclover from near the Fish Ladder. This may be a good partnership to continue in future years, though pulls would

need to take place before July when the salmon start running and staff are busy at the fish ladder.

YISC reached out to the Yukon Canoe and Kayak club about the Yukon River Quest launch, which did not end up happening. This may be a good organization to contact in the future about aquatic invasive species outreach.

YISC worked with staff from the Yukon Transportation Museum to develop an invasive species and transportation tour for the museum. This tour was a work in progress in 2021 and will likely be ready for the summer of 2022. The museum organized a talk around this subject with Bruce Bennett, in which they had 23 participants. Ongoing support may be offered to the museum to develop their 2022 tour.

Other outreach activities

In total, YISC had 18 new members register this summer. These members mainly joined through some of our Spotter's Network activities, as well as through our membership blitz. Several members who signed up through the Spotter's network followed up after the course to request species identification key chains.

YISC worked on several miscellaneous projects this summer. We compiled research on invasive lady beetles to use in a future funding proposal for the Species at Risk funding around threats to the Transverse Lady Beetle. We also focussed several Facebook posts and an article in the Yukon Conservation Society and Wilderness Tourism Association newsletters on introduced Earthworms and the importance of collecting more data with iNaturalist in the Yukon. We also compiled some of the information available on the threat of Elodea spp. in the Yukon.

YISC created a video detailing the YESAB assessment process for invasive species and development projects in the Yukon. This video is aimed at project proponents as well as YESAB assessors.

Finally, several local businesses donated prizes for various YISC events this summer. Home Hardware, Yukon Grow, and Greenspace North Landscaping donated prizes for our membership blitz. This membership blitz saw 11 participants and 8 new YISC members. This was one of our highest participation rates in a contest that YISC has held in the past 2

years. This may have been due to boosting posts on Facebook. Up North and Lister's Motor Sports donated prizes for our mock Clean Drain Dry installation.

