



## **2019 Business Plan Invasive Plant Management Program (1010)**

*Peter Hughes,  
Manager of Environmental Services*

***Working in partnership with communities, large and small, to make the Cariboo Chilcotin a socially, economically and environmentally desirable region to live, work and play.***

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### **Department/Function Services**

The Invasive Plant Management function provides the following services:

- Coordinating and cooperating with other organizations, both public and private, to ensure that effective and acceptable invasive plant control measures are carried out;
- Providing landowner assistance programs to assist in the management of invasive plants on private property;
- Undertaking public education initiatives aimed at raising awareness about invasive plants and the problem they create;
- Managing invasive plant species on private and public land following an integrated pest management approach;
- Enforcing the Invasive Plant Management Regulation Bylaw No. 4949, 2015 on private lands.

The Cariboo Regional District's Invasive Plant Management function has been in operation since 1979. The function was originally initiated to manage land against knapweed. Since that time, it has evolved to respond to the increasing invasive plant threat. In fact, the



Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Invasive Plant Committee has currently prioritized 35 invasive alien plant species within their Regional Strategic Plan. Those 35 plants are threatening the Region's economic, environmental, and societal health. The program implements the services listed above to mitigate the impacts of these species.

Since 2007 the Invasive Plant Management function has acquired the following capital assets:

- 2007 – 12 – Backpack Herbicide Sprayers
- 2008 – 1 – ATV Herbicide Spray Tank
- 2009 – 1 – 100 Gallon Spray Tank
- 2009 – 1 – Yamaha Grizzly ATV
- 2010 – 1 – Newmans ATV Trailer
- 2011 – 1 – Yamaha Grizzly ATV
- 2011 – 1 – ATV Herbicide Spray Tank

The Invasive Plant Management function operates under the authority of the Cariboo Regional District Weed Control Extended Service Establishment Bylaw No. 3483, 1998.

Taxation is collected by way of assessment on land and improvements. There is no limit on taxation.

	<b>CRD \$/100, 000 Requisition</b>	<b>City of Quesnel Requisition</b>	<b>City of Williams Lake Requisition</b>	<b>City of Wells Requisition</b>
<b>2013</b>	\$2.27/100,000 \$151, 242	\$55, 000*	\$36, 973	\$454
<b>2014</b>	\$2.29/100,000 \$154, 267	\$55, 000*	\$37, 528	\$463
<b>2015</b>	\$2.32/100,000 \$153, 350	\$33, 000*	\$38, 443	\$465
<b>2016</b>	\$2.30/100,000 \$154, 609	\$33, 429*	\$37, 254	\$395
<b>2017</b>	\$2.30/100,000 \$154, 684	\$33, 864*	\$37, 438	\$406
<b>2018</b>	\$2.21/100,000 \$154, 609	\$34, 711*	\$37, 254	\$395

\* A contract contribution

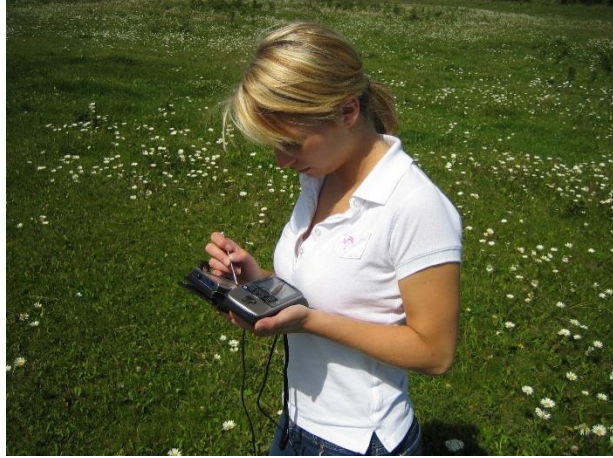
The service is provided throughout the entire district. All members of the Board are responsible for the governance of this service except the District of 100 Mile House and City of Quesnel.

## **2019 Goals**

**Goal 1:** Increase human resource capacity within the Invasive Plant Management program.

**Rationale:** Current human resource abilities are insufficient to fulfill program workloads within allocated timeframes. Operational duties, data integration, data management, and bylaw enforcement duties have been severely impacted by the staffing shortage. Specifically, delays in completing data integration has become a chronic issue since a staffing reduction occurred in the Invasive Plant Management program in 2013. Other program responsibilities limit the ability of the Invasive Plant Management Coordinator to assist in data integration. The Invasive Plant Management Technician, therefore, is responsible for integrating the majority of data into the provincial database. The position, however, becomes part-time on November 1st each year until April 15th where she

resumes full time hours to accommodate operational season demands. Her part-time status over the winter months allow for 2 working days per week. Management activities conducted on behalf of provincial government agencies account for around 70% of data volume each year. All data must be integrated, as per contract deliverables, by December 31st. Current staffing capacity will allow only 63% of the data to be integrated by that deadline. In addition to data integration, there exists



a critical need to manage the data already within the database to ensure integrity. Provincial partners have identified data management as a high priority and have provided a portion of funds for this purpose to be completed by March 1st. Data management activities, including, reviewing, editing, and deleting data take an average of 15 working days each year. The Invasive Plant Management Technician is responsible for the majority of this task in addition to data integration. Factoring in the anticipated delays in data integration, current workload capacity for this position will support completing 53% of this task by the deadline. In addition, a number of Invasive Plant bylaw complaints require investigation and processing over the fall and winter. This responsibility takes considerable time and attention. Finally, failures to meet human resource demands has had a trickle-down effect on the program's ability to deliver on other mandated objectives and may result in the following consequences:

- A breach of contract that could potentially cause legal and/or financial implications.
- Inability to meet reporting deadlines to funders, resulting in further contract breaches.
- Inability to meet reporting deadlines to provincial regulatory agencies, resulting in legal and/or financial implications.
- A threat to future invasive plant management contracts and the revenue derived from the contracts that support employment opportunities for our communities.
- Delays or failures in delivery of other program elements, including:
  - Annual Regional Strategic Planning with partners to identify management priorities,
  - Operational planning, organization, and implementation,
  - Program development,
  - Stakeholder and partner coordination and relations,
  - Bylaw enforcement implementation,
  - Contract management,
  - Landowner Assistance Program development and delivery,
  - Financial planning and management,
  - Fund development.

**Strategy:** Reclassify the position of Invasive Plant Management Technician from part-time to full-time permanent. The financial implications are outlined in the Overall Financial Impact section of this Business Plan.



**Goal 2:** Deliver invasive species outreach and awareness initiatives on a contractual basis.

**Rationale:** External organizations can deliver invasive species outreach and awareness activities with efficacy and efficiency. Over the last three years, the CRD Invasive Plant program has contracted its outreach and awareness component to an outside organization as part of the Board approved strategy in 2016 to reduce the program surplus. The resulting experience of the

partnership has been positive and one worth continuing for a number of reasons. Firstly, the non-profit organization that delivered the Invasive Plant Awareness and Outreach contract for the Cariboo Regional District was successful at leveraging an additional \$118,000 for increased invasive species management and outreach in the Cariboo Chilcotin. The CRD monies and additional funding increased the capacity of the local non-profit, created employment for the region's communities, and enhanced the overall delivery of invasive species awareness. Secondly, the non-profit permitted more flexibility in directing staffing schedules to accommodate outreach events that occurred after normal workday hours, on weekends, and on statutory holidays. In addition, their staffing schedules tolerate more adaptability on short notice to accommodate attendance at last minute events. Finally, employing an outside organization to develop and deliver awareness and outreach initiatives greatly reduced the strain on human resource capacities within the Invasive Plant Management program. Program staff were able to focus their limited time and energy on the development and implementation of management programs, enforcement activities, data management, stakeholder relations, and landowner assistance programs.

**Strategy:** Develop and award a contract outlining the provision of a community outreach program that will focus on preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species within the region. The financial implications are described in the Overall Financial Impact section of this Business Plan.

## **Overall Financial Impact**

The specific requisition increases for each goal are outlined below.

Goal 1 – the requisition is increased by \$0.10 or 5.7% from the 2018 requisition as a result of increasing human resource capacity to adequately fulfill workload requirements (as outlined under Goal 1 above).

Goal 2 – the requisition is increased by \$0.57 or 26% from the 2018 requisition as a result of delivering invasive species outreach and awareness initiatives on a contractual basis (as outlined under Goal 2 above).



A significant portion of the invasive plant function budget is derived from federal and provincial grants and contracts. The Provisional Budget assumes that we will receive a portion of these provincial funds; however, they could be eliminated at any time. If funding is not provided, then the budget and program will be revised accordingly.

Capital reserves at the end of 2018 are \$50,887.



### **Significant Issues & Trends**

Over the term of this plan it is anticipated that insufficient contract funding will have a significant effect on the Invasive Plant Management Program; particularly on operational treatments. The Invasive Plant Management Program works collaboratively with other agencies responsible for a mosaic of jurisdictions within the region. The Cariboo Regional District Invasive Plant Management Program budget receives a significant portion from federal, provincial, and private grants and contracts. Budgetary cuts will both directly and indirectly impact the Invasive Plant Management Program. Directly, in our ability to secure adequate funding to treat other agency's jurisdictions and augment our budget and indirectly, as other jurisdictions will not be able to maintain the level of management efforts previously held. Without adequate funding, invasive plant management programs will be forced to prioritize invasive plant species and sites for treatment. This prioritization process will unfortunately leave areas and species without treatment. Thus, agency funding constraints will in turn increase the cost to private landowners as uncontrolled infestations will be free to expand by 14% annually (BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, 2005) until resources are available to put towards expensive containment strategies.

The wildfire season of 2017 and 2018 will continue to have an effect as well on the Invasive Plant Management Program over the next number of years due to the widespread disturbance of the landscape and the high probability that firefighting equipment, vehicles, and personnel were contaminated with invasive plant seeds or material. Preventative measures will be critical over the next few years in monitoring fire-impacted areas for invasive plant presence and aggressively controlling any plants found to stop a population from establishing and spreading. An increase in funding from the Province will be required for multiple years to make a positive response and stakeholder collaboration.

The Cariboo Regional District is a signatory on the Province of BC/UBCM Climate Action Charter, and has committed to continuing work towards carbon neutrality in respect of corporate operations.

### **Measuring Previous Years Performance**

**Goal:** The 2018 program followed a business as usual delivery.