



EAST KOOTENAY  
INVASIVE SPECIES  
COUNCIL

# EAST KOOTENAY INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



With spring around the corner, and as we prepare for another whirlwind EKISC field season, I'm reflecting over my first full year as EKISC's Program Director. There are a few words running through my mind: stability, staff, and success! It was a great year in which EKISC continued to build our Operations capacity. We saw a huge revival in our Education & Communications programming, and our permanent staff, including our summer assistants, finally felt like the cohesive team EKISC has been waiting for.

One of the biggest highlights for me was that our Education & Communication program experienced a resurgence after almost three years of a near-hiatus due to Covid. Only hired in April 2022, Megan rallied with so much energy that EKISC was able to host an in-person GREP Symposium, which was very well-attended at Fort Steele in June. It was great to see so many people coming together who care about invasive species, ranch lands, and grasslands. Megan's persistent organizing paid off and we were all so impressed! Throughout the summer, Megan and her summer assistant Justine worked together and independently, travelling the entire region for weed pulls, farmer's markets, invasive species trivia nights, school events, workshops, BC Parks booths, and so much more. EKISC needs this of exposure and we couldn't have done it without Megan and team!

It was also another busy year Operationally. EKISC's contracts grew, which is always exciting and let's us know that we are highly respected in the field of weed management. This year the program incorporated Wildfire Recovery & Rehabilitation and Wildfire Risk Reduction into our funding and treatments, completed an Invasive Plant Management Plan for the Cranbrook Community Forest, and continued our close working relationship with Yaqit ʔa-knuqʔi 'it. We did all this work with our combined efforts, and I want to thank Emma, Gabriela, Megan, Justine, and Katie and Miranda, our seasonal field assistants. To me, EKISC's growth means we are doing the right thing by our funders, land managers, and community members.

With all our success, we still face challenges; this is part of the territory I've come to know (and accept!) throughout my time with EKISC. I still feel we are functioning (however highly!) at a staff shortage, and our field season only seems to be getting longer. We are applying for and receiving excellent grants, getting more involved in grass seeding efforts post-treatment, and building new partnerships (in 2022, we initiated four new partners!). We continue to develop new ideas and stay connected with the other Regional Invasive Species Organizations, as well as ISCBC. It's also been a great year for attending in-person workshops, field site visits with other partners, forums, summits, gatherings, and AGM's! Whew – how do we do it?!

We do it with dedicated staff, a committed Board, contractors who know and love the East Kootenay's, rancher-sprayers who keep their ranges healthy, and all our loyal and newly interested funders. Thank you everyone!

I'm looking forward to another great season with my team: Emma, Megan, Gabriela, and our newest member Nicola, hired as Field Operations Coordinator. It's going to be another busy one – we got this!

**KATIE REID**  
**EKISC PROGRAM DIRECTOR**

After two years of rapid changes in our staff, I am pleased to say EKISC is finally in a quiet period with five year-round staff.

First off, I would like to point out that we hired Megan MacPhee as our Education and Communication Manager in April 2022, just after I wrote my last update. Megan has put a lot of new energy and direction into our communications portfolio after two years of covid closures and eight months without a full-time communication manager. Megan has revamped our monthly newsletters and social media strategy and will be presenting new options and outreach to the EKISC membership. You will see her out in the valley this summer with two seasonal assistants that we will hire for her team.

Our latest staff member is Nicola Herman who started work on March 21st as the Field Operations Co-ordinator. In this role Nicola will supervise our two summer field assistants as they carry out weed pulls, veliger sampling for invasive mussels, invasive plant surveys, vegetation plot sampling, and more; all the field work that makes the EKISC program run.

The Board and I would like to thank Katie Reid, Emma de Groot, Gabriela Halas, Megan MacPhee, and our seasonal crew for taking on all extra work to cover staffing transitions. Compared to our workload, EKISC is light on staff compared to other similar Invasive Species Organizations. We are hoping that having a full crew will allow the staff to get a better work-life balance and reduce the stress of being chronically short staffed. We do hope that we can stop staff turnover and improve the staff requests for professional development and improved benefits.

As far as the Board, we are now up to ten directors, just shy of our maximum of twelve. In September 2022, Rick Tegart had too many committees in his day timer, and he asked Rick Larsen at J2 Ranch to take over as a director of EKISC. We are glad to have Rick as he continues to represent the Windermere District Farmers Institute. With our invasive plant mandate EKISC needs representation from the agriculture community, and we especially need representation from the North end of the district; the issues are quite different in the Upper Columbia. As we have gone to constant zoom meetings, we hope to keep Rick's time commitment manageable given his ranch workload.

In November at our Special Resolution meeting, we were able to accept Ashleigh Harvison, a certification officer from Canfor as another new director. This gives us representation and a window into the forest industry who are major actors in our local ecosystem. Both Rick Larsen and Ashleigh were voted in for two-year terms at this special resolution meeting. Welcome to EKISC Rick and Ashleigh.

We are, as always, looking forward to another good year with spray contractors, rancher-sprayers, our in-house field crew and, our education and communications crew; all working together for a greener East Kootenays.

**RANDY HARRIS**  
**EKISC BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHAIR**



# OUR TEAM



**KATIE REID**  
PROGRAM  
DIRECTOR



**GABRIELA HALAS**  
PROGRAM  
ASSISTANT



**MEGAN MACPHEE**  
EDUCATION +  
COMMUNICATIONS  
MANAGER



**EMMA DE GROOT**  
FIELD  
OPERATIONS  
COORDINATOR



**MIRANDA STEWERT**  
FIELD ASSISTANT



**KATIE GRADY**  
FIELD ASSISTANT



**JUSTINE LEROUX**  
EDUCATION  
ASSISTANT

## OUR MISSION

Mitigate the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of invasive species in the Regional District of the East Kootenay. To coordinate the management of invasive species on public and private lands in the East Kootenay using an integrated pest management approach. To educate about invasive species and their impacts. To prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species. To foster extended support of invasive species management initiatives in the East Kootenay.

# OUR BOARD

EKISC is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors who represent stakeholders, land managers, + community members with an interest in protecting the East Kootenay from invasive species. The board members are drawn from provincial + local governments, First Nations, agriculture, non-government environmental organizations, + the private sector.

**RANDY HARRIS**  
CHAIR

**STEPHANIE DANIELS**  
VICE CHAIR

**RICK VAN HORNE**  
TREASURER

**RAELYNN BLUMHAGEN**  
SECRETARY

**JAMIE DAVIES**  
DIRECTOR

**MYRA JUCKERS**  
DIRECTOR

**DAVE PICK**  
DIRECTOR

**RICHARD LARSON**  
DIRECTOR

**SHAWNA LARADE**  
DIRECTOR

**ASHLEIGH HARVISON**  
DIRECTOR

STAY CONNECTED WITH **EKISC** +  
JOIN OUR NEXT AGM TO  
EXPRESS YOUR INTEREST IN  
JOINING OUR BOARD!



**CHRIS BOSEMAN**  
2021 GOLDEN  
SHOVEL RECIPIENT

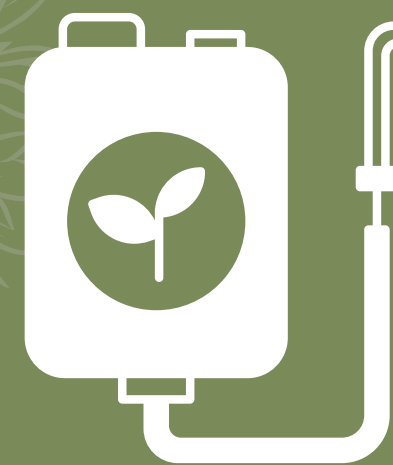
Currently the Kootenay Conservation Manager for the Nature Trust of BC, before that he was the acting Land Resource manager for ?aq'am and before that he was the Invasive Species coordinator for RDEK. Throughout all these roles he has been a strong support of EKISC. Even being our first chair on our Board of Directors.



# FIELD OPERATIONS



**41**  
sites + 18.83ha  
of land  
mechanically  
treated



**708** ha of land chemically treated  
**2543** chemically treated sites



**130**  
negative water  
samples for  
invasive mussel  
monitoring

**21**  
waterbodies  
monitored for  
Zebra + Quagga  
Mussels



**13** invasive plant inventories  
**6783** ha of land inventoried  
**3608** invasive plant survey points

## YEAR 3

of the Upper Elk Valley  
Invasive Plant Management  
Plan, including large-scale  
treatments, multi-  
stakeholder engagement,  
long term plot monitoring,  
education +  
communications activities.

## MONITORING

**9**

previously established  
vegetation plots to  
evaluate invasive plant  
response to chemical  
treatments, as part of  
the Effectiveness  
Monitoring Plan under  
GREP



**11**

previously established  
vegetation plots to  
evaluate invasive  
plant response to  
chemical treatments  
at the Wycliffe  
Conservation Complex

## 4 EDRR

species treated

YELLOW FLAG IRIS

FIELD SCABIOUS

PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE

WILD PARSNIP

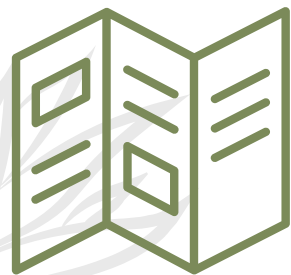




# EDUCATION + COMMUNICATION



**14**  
community  
weed pulls + 89  
bags of  
invasives



**700** print  
resources  
distributed



**8** weedy walk n' talks, house calls + ID workshops

  
**2431**  
public interactions

## OUTREACH BOOTHS

**7**  
**BC PARKS  
EVENTS**

276 direct public  
interactions



**9**  
**FARMERS  
MARKETS**

527 direct public  
interactions



**128**  
members

**120**  
volunteers



**29**  
industry  
professionals  
received  
training



**335**  
youth reached  
through  
classrooms +  
clubs

reach      followers

 **42,611**      **695**

 **18,634**      **684**

 **10**  
e-newsletters

**584**  
website subscribers

**WWW.EKISC.COM** 

BRAND NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

 **1**  
new  
webinar

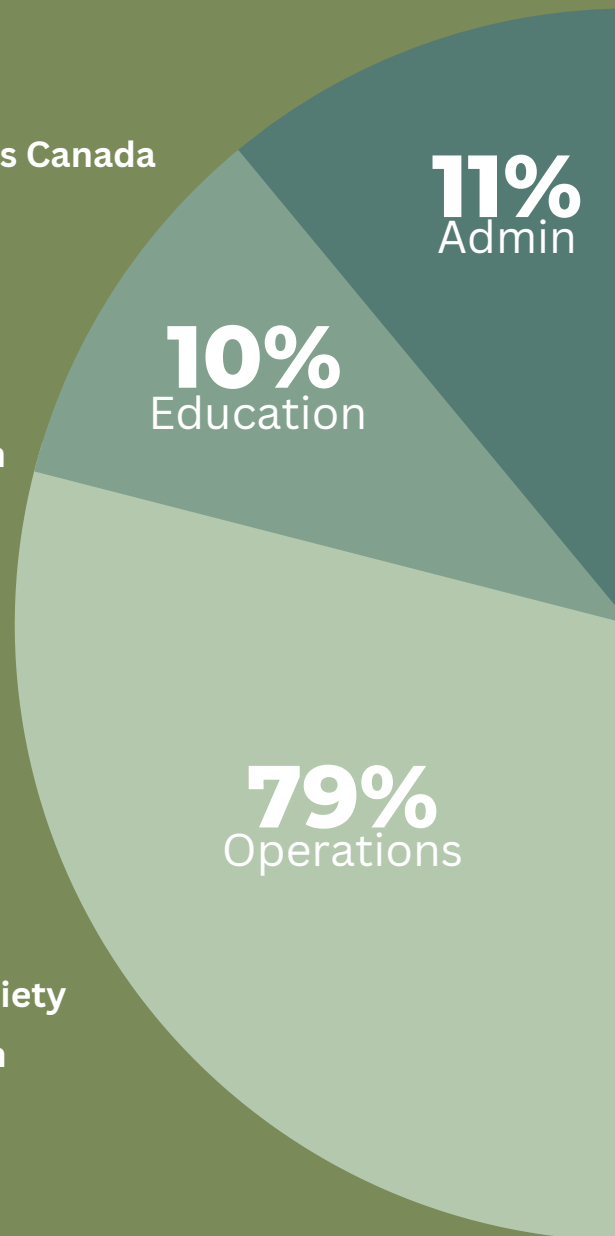


# FUNDERS

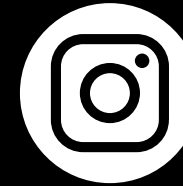
**GROSS REVENUE IN 2022: \$1,088,148**

?aq'am Community  
Bayer Crop Science Inc.  
BC Hydro  
BC Parks  
Canadian Forest Products  
Canadian Wildfire Service  
Canada Summer Jobs  
Columbia Basin Trust  
Columbia Basin Watershed Network  
Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund  
Crown-Indigenous Relations + Northern Affairs Canada  
Cranbrook Community Forest Society  
Environment Canada  
Fish + Wildlife Compensation Program  
Fortis BC  
Grassland + Rangeland Enhancement Program  
Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation  
Invasive Species Council of BC  
Ministry of Forests  
Ministry of Transportation + Infrastructure  
Ministry of Water, Lands + Natural Resources  
Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Nature Trust of BC  
Regional District of the East Kootenay  
Rocky Mountain Trench Natural Resource Society  
Sparwood + District Fish + Wildlife Association  
TC Energy  
Yaqit ?a·knuqti 'it First Nation  
Wild Sheep Society of BC  
Wycliff Conservation Complex

**30**  
**FUNDERS**  
**SUPPORTING**  
**EKISC**



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