

**Invasive Species Council of
Manitoba**

**ANNUAL REPORT to
STAKEHOLDERS AND
PARTNERS**

2014



Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014..... | 3 |
| MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR..... | 4 |
| WHO WE ARE..... | 6 |
| Strategic Goals..... | 6 |
| The Structure of the ISCM | 6 |
| OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019..... | 8 |
| 2014 ISCM PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS | 9 |
| Working with ISCM Partners | 9 |
| Pembina Valley Projects | 9 |
| Friends of Birds Hill Park | 10 |
| Best Management Plans for Invasive Plants..... | 10 |
| Invasive Species Greenhouse Surveys | 11 |
| International Partnerships -Victorian Weed Spotters Program..... | 12 |
| FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS | 13 |
| COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS | 13 |
| Strategic Planning Committee..... | 13 |
| Workplanning and Staffing Committee..... | 14 |
| Fundraising Committee | 14 |
| Constitution, Bylaws and Charitable Status Committee | 14 |
| Communications and Awareness Committee..... | 15 |
| EDRR Committee and Working Groups | 15 |
| Weed Spotter’s Network Working Group | 16 |
| FUTURE OF THE ISCM – MOVING FORWARD 2015 | 18 |
| Appendices – Examples of Education and Awareness Activities..... | 19 |

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2014

Executive Members

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Chair - Julie Pelc | Nature Conservancy of Canada |
| Vice Chair - Candace Parks | Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship |
| Treasurer - Fiona Ross | Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship |
| Secretary – Cory Lindgren | Canadian Food Inspection Agency |
| Jane Thornton | Manitoba Agriculture Food and Rural Development |
| Doug Cattani | University of Manitoba |
| Cameron Meuckon | Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship |
| Michele Ammeter | Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association |
| Lisette Ross | Native Plant Solutions – Ducks Unlimited Canada |
| John Johnston | Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group |
| Bev Dunlop | Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada |
| Wybo Vanderschuit | Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve |
| Bill Murray | Manitoba Beef Producers |
| Carol Churchward | Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation |
| Paul Graveline | Manitoba Infrastructure and Transportation |
| Glennis Lewis | Member at Large – retired botanist |



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

This past 2014/2015 year has been an exciting one for the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM). New and long-term Board Members have been engaged in meetings every 2nd month to determine ISCM's direction and activities. We continued working together to be transparent in our decision making and appreciate perspectives from all stakeholders.

Over the past year, the ISCM's work was guided by our 5 year Strategic Plan. Our most exciting and recent progress has been made to improve communications and coordination across jurisdictions and government. ISCM Board members John Johnston, Doug Cattani, Cory Lindgren and myself meet with the Ministers Gord Mackintosh, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and Ron Kostyshyn Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development in March 2015. It was agreed at this meeting that ISCM in partnership with the Province of Manitoba would explore the opportunity to host a Manitoba Invasive Species Summit to engage all stakeholders in discussions relating to invasive species in Manitoba and identify priorities for action.

To foster awareness, ISCM's 2014 Summer Student Rachel Cherka conducted a survey of greenhouses, nurseries and garden centers for invasive species and aquatic plants and seeds, worked with partner organizations - Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project



(MPLP), City of Winnipeg, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship – Forestry Branch, Friends of Birds Hill Park and Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association on their invasive species initiatives as well as developed newsletters and website updates. A special focus was on ISCM's continued work with the Pembina Valley Invasive Species Group to increase awareness relating to key local invasive species. Funding for this position was provided by the Manitoba Urban Green Team and Enbridge Inc.

With funding from Shell Canada, ISCM has the opportunity to develop and deliver a Weed Spotters Program in Manitoba. The objective is to create a network of weed spotters (volunteers) which will undertake Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) procedures on invasive terrestrial, semi-aquatic and aquatic plants and weeds across the Province of Manitoba. A provincial Community-based weed detection network, or Weed Spotter's Networks (WSN), is one of the tools which has proven effective in other parts of the world.

Moving forward, I am looking forward to reviewing and updating ISCM Constitution and By-laws and Terms of Reference as well as applying for Charitable Status to further strengthen ISCM to fulfill our mission statement and meet our goals. Thank you Glennis Lewis, Board Member, for undertaking the lead on this initiative. I'd like to extend a special thank you to the Board of Directors for their continued commitment and participation in Board, Committee and Working Group participation. I also want to acknowledge the valuable contribution and commitment of the Executive Candace Parks – Vice Chair, Fiona Ross – Treasurer and Cory Lindgren – Secretary.

In looking back and reflecting over the past year, it has been a very busy and productive year. Thank again the Board of Directors and Staff for the great year. It has been a pleasure for me to serve as the ISCM Chair and have the opportunity to work with many dedicated and individuals. I look forward to continuing the momentum in 2015/2016 to strengthen awareness, preventing new introductions and spread of invasive species in Manitoba.

- **Julie Pelc, ISCM Chair**



ISCM Mission

To promote awareness, education, cooperation and stimulate action to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in Manitoba.

To build capacity and develop a network of partnerships and stakeholders to address invasive species issues in Manitoba.

To facilitate information sharing and promote education and awareness that leads to preventing introductions of invasive species in Manitoba.

ISCM Vision

Our vision is to maintain a healthy, bio-diverse landscape through the prevention, early detection, and fostering education and awareness of invasive species.

WHO WE ARE

The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM) is a multi-stakeholder, non-profit organization providing a forum to engage Manitobans in taking action against invasive species. The ISCM was formed out of the demand for collaboration among stakeholders in December of 2006 and continues to grow and gain momentum. The ISCM has representatives from federal, provincial and municipal governments, industry, non-government organizations and the community at large. Since its inception, the ISCM has created a network of over 600 stakeholders. It is the only such organization in Manitoba.

The ISCM of Manitoba represents all major stakeholders in Manitoba concerned about invasive species and plays a unique and important role in coordination, collaboration, provisions of advice and delivery of education and outreach materials.

Strategic Goals

The ISCM has five strategic goals which are found in the ISCM's 5-year Strategic Plan, in order of priority these are:

- Goal #1: A Strong Functional Council
- Goal #2: Provide Leadership by being a Provincial Coordinating body
- Goal #3: Foster Innovative Education and Awareness
- Goal #4: Prevent New Introductions through EDRR
- Goal #5: Maintain a Provincial Invasive Species Database EDDMaPs

The Structure of the ISCM

Figure 1 summarizes the current structure of the ISCM. The current Board of Directors represents a wide variety of organizations. The ISCM generally employs a project coordinator to administer its day-to-day activities. The ISCM members are individual citizens and representatives of organizations including conservation group, non-profit groups, aboriginal groups, First Nations groups, stewardship networks, consultants, industry as well as municipal, provincial and federal levels of government. The ISCM Executive includes the Chair, Treasury/Secretary and Vice-Chair positions.

Much of the Council work is undertaken through committees or working groups which have been the cornerstones for guiding the Council's operations since inception. Committees are created based on the needs of the Council. The Council currently has the following committees which are composed of Board Members:

- **Strategic Planning Committee**
- **Fundraising Committee**
- **Constitution, Bylaws and Charitable Status Committee**
- **Communications and Awareness Committee**
- **Work Planning and Staffing Committee**
- **EDRR Committee and working groups:**
 - **Weed Risk Assessment Working Group**
 - **Knapweed Working Group**
 - **Invasive giant reed (*Phragmites*) Working Group**
 - **Weed Spotter's Network Working Group**

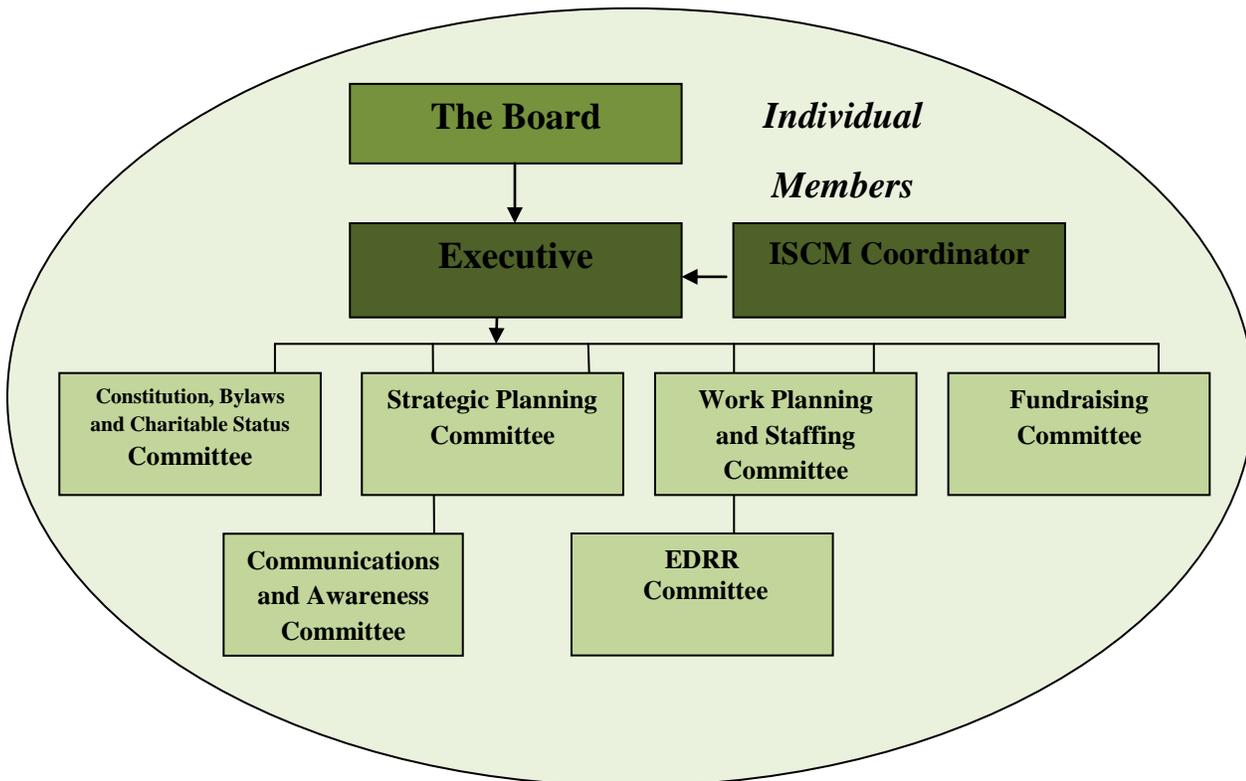


Figure 1: Invasive Species Council of Manitoba Organizational Chart

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019

The ISCM has developed a 5-year Strategic Plan for the 2014-2019. The intent of this Strategic Plan is to set the direction of the ISCM and to provide a framework with regards to decisions on allocating resources and focus towards identified priorities. It is a blueprint for action to impact change within Manitoba. It is based on a realistic assessment of resources and commitment by ISCM Board Members and their respective organizations. This plan provides a strategic-level approach to guide the activities and priorities of the Council.

The following priorities are intended to direct the efforts and resources of the ISCM from 2014-2019 with the focus is on medium and long-term goals. These priorities are intended to guide the day-to-day operations of the ISCM, the ISCM coordinator/staff, as well as the ISCM Board Members. The status of the implementation of this plan will be monitored and reviewed by the ISCM Board Members at regular Board meetings.

These are hierarchical priorities, with the first and foremost priority being for the Council to become strong and resilient. In the event that such funding is acquired, time and resources would then shift accordingly to the other priorities with direction provided by the Board of Directors.

Table 1. Summary of ISCM Goals and Priorities 2014-2019.

| Priority | Time & Resources | Goals |
|----------|------------------|--|
| Goal #1. | 30% | A Strong Functional Council |
| Goal #2. | 25% | Provide Leadership by being a Provincial Coordinating body |
| Goal #3. | 20% | Foster Innovative Education and Awareness |
| Goal #4 | 15% | Prevent New Introductions through EDRR |
| Goal #5. | 10% | Maintain a Provincial Invasive Species Database - EDDMaps |

2014 ISCM PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Working with ISCM Partners

The ISCM partners with a number of Manitoba groups to address invasive species. In 2014, the ISCM partnered with the Manitoba Purple Loosestrife Project (MPLP), the City of Winnipeg, The Pembina Valley Conservation District, A Rocha, the Manitoba Weed Supervisors Association, Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship and the Friends of Birds Hill Park. Activities included helping with surveys, removing invasive plants and helping to plan education and awareness events.

Pembina Valley Projects

The Pembina Valley Project was one of the highlight projects for the ISCM in 2014. Project activities included a Weed Spotter's Workshop, a leafy spurge beetle collection day which was run by Richard Warkentin of Stanley Soils Management Association. The ISCM also helped with a diffuse knapweed event.

Pembina Valley Weed Spotter's Workshops

On Wednesday, August 20th, the ISCM delivered a Weed Spotter's Workshop at the A Rocha Pembina Valley Interpretive Centre near the Pembina Valley Provincial Park. With 13 new Weed Spotter's attending the workshop.

The day began with a presentation on the Weed Spotter's Network and selected invasive species plants of concern in the Pembina Valley area which included species like common tansy, leafy spurge, nodding thistle and ox-eye daisy.

In the afternoon, the group travelled to the Pembina Valley Provincial Park where a common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) population, a plant listed on the Manitoba *Noxious Weed Act*, had infested a creek bed. The group filled more than a dozen garbage bags with pulled common tansy.



Fig. 2. Common Tansy flower (above); Bags of Common Tansy pulled from Pembina Valley Provincial Park (below)

Best Management Plans for Invasive Plants

BMPs help landowners prevent or control invasive plants using a variety of options that consider the individual weed. Landowners have the ability to reduce or stop the spread of invasive plants by implement BMPs.

NODDING THISTLE

Carduus nutans

Why is it a Problem?



Invasive plants pose a very real threat to Manitoba's economy, environment and society. Nodding thistle, also known as musk thistle, has proven to be an aggressive competitor of pastures. Once established, nodding thistle can reduce forage for livestock and wildlife. It degrades pastures, rangelands native grasslands and meadows by out competing native species. It can also increase surface water runoff, soil erosion and stream sedimentation. A single plant can produce as many as 100,000 seeds

This event was a success and ISCM hopes to deliver more Weed Spotter's Workshops in the future. Thanks to A Rocha and Pembina Valley Conservation District helping with the event and to all the volunteers who made this event possible.

Friends of Birds Hill Park

Friends of Birds Hill Park's (FoBHP) invasive species management activities are carried out in coordination with Manitoba Conservation and Water Stewardship (CWS), Springfield and Selkirk Weed Districts and the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM). FoBHP volunteers are engaged in an annual leafy spurge control event staged in partnership with ISCM and CWS. A "Stop the Spread" invasive plant awareness poster for the Birds Hill Park Ecoregion was produced in partnership with Manitoba Weed Supervisors, ISCM, Leafy Spurge Stakeholders Group, and Native Orchid Conservation Inc, and funded in part by Wal-mart Evergreen Green Fund. The poster highlights spotted knapweed, red bartsia and leafy spurge identification and reporting. It will be distributed in spring 2015 to over 10,000 Eastman residences.

Best Management Plans for Invasive Plants

In 2014 the ISCM created a Best Management Plan (BMP) for the invasive plant nodding thistle (*Carduus nutans*). Local landowners were surveyed with regards to the impacts of nodding thistle on their land. A best management plan was then created using information gathered from the interviews.

The weed is found in all Canadian provinces except PEI. In Manitoba, it is found in the Pembina Valley region with smaller populations established in other Rural Municipalities across Manitoba. It was introduced into Canada from Europe as a result of contaminated seed brought in ships ballasts and was found in Manitoba as early as 1950.

Invasive Species Greenhouse Surveys

In 2014, greenhouses, nurseries and garden centers were surveyed for invasive plants including aquatic plants which were “for sale” as well as examining the labelling of plants and seeds for sale. It’s recognized that many invasives that have been introduced into native areas were the result of escaped garden plants, making the involvement and cooperation of the gardening industry crucial in stopping the spread of invasive plants. The purpose of this survey was to determine if any garden centers or green houses in the Winnipeg area were selling any plants on the ISCM EDRR list, known or otherwise regulated invasive plants. We were also interested on how the plants (or seed packages) were labeled, for example was the complete scientific name used or just the common name. The survey took place in of 2014.

Some Results:

Plant Labeling

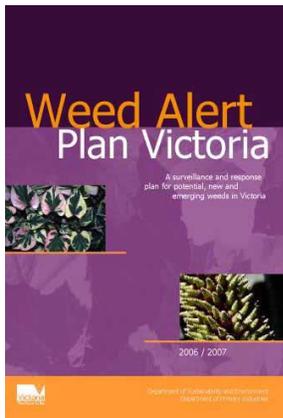
- Eight retailers were found to be selling invasive species either as transplants or seeds
- Most retailers were found to have the scientific name on the labels of plants being sold.
- Seeds generally were not found to have the scientific name included, however one retailer did have the majority of their seed packages labeled with scientific names.

Table 2. Invasive plants found for sale in the Winnipeg area.

| Common Name | Scientific Name |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Baby's Breath | <i>Gypsophila paniculata</i> |
| European frog-bit | <i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i> |
| Globe Thistle | <i>Echinops spp.</i> |
| Narrow-leaved cattail | <i>Typha angustifolia</i> |
| Ox-eye Daisy | <i>Chrysanthemum leucanthemum</i> |
| Pennywort | <i>Hydrocotyle vulgaris</i> |
| Water Hyacinth | <i>Eichhornia crassipes</i> |
| Yellowflag Iris | <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> |



International Partnerships -Victorian Weed Spotters Program



In November of 2014 the ISCM met with Catherine McInerney (the Weed Spotter’s Program Coordinator for the Department of Environment and Primary Industries in Victoria, Australia) to learn how they deliver their Weed Spotter’s Program. The Victorian Weed Alert program aims to prevent the introduction of serious new weeds into Victoria and eradicate the highest risk incursions. The focus of the program is on weeds of the future, which pose a serious threat to Victoria’s agricultural and natural assets or may affect human health. The ISCM was interested in learning how the Victorian program is delivered and administered in Australia. The Weed Spotter’s Program focuses on surveillance and detection, collection, identification, assessment and ranking, response and review and is framed by the Weed Alert Plan for Victoria. The ISCM hopes to partner with and use the Victoria program as a template to develop a Weed Spotters Program in Manitoba.

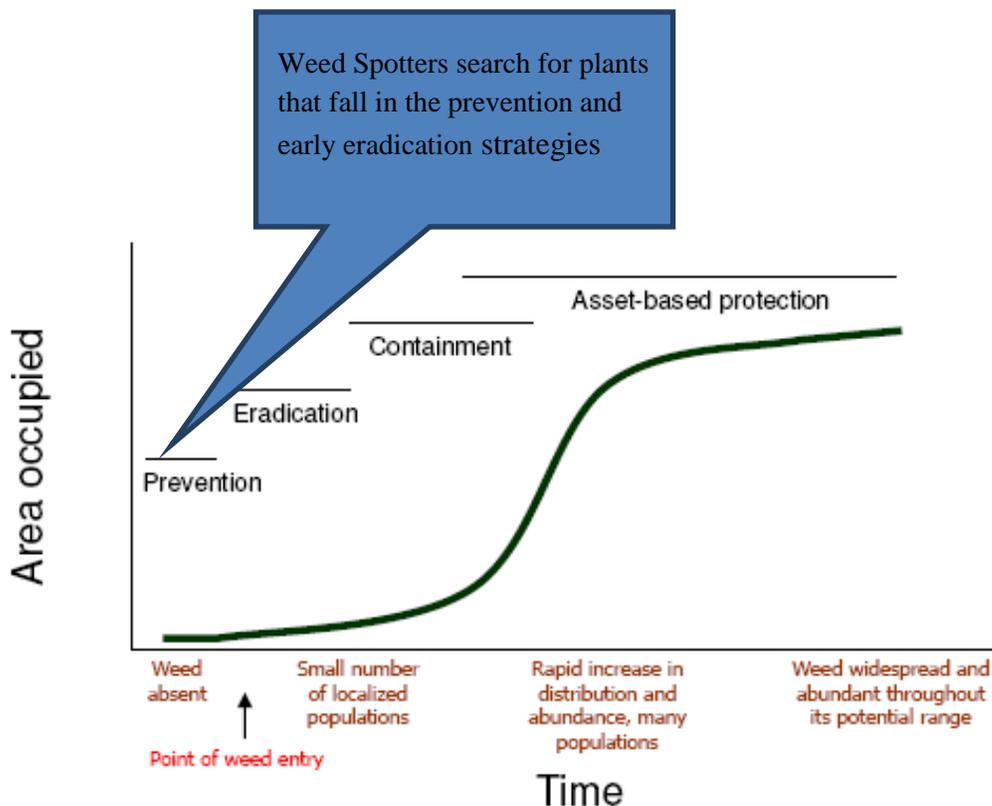


Figure 3: Strategies to deal with invasive weeds based on area occupied and time since introduction.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The ISCM's account opened on April 1, 2014 with a balance of \$10,364.82 and closed on March 31, 2015 with a balance of \$35,106.20. This represents an increase of funds of \$24,741.38. The vast majority of ISCM's revenue was a project grant from Shell Canada at 25,000 (for a Weed Spotter's Network); and funding received from the Green Team Program for an invasive species summer technician in 2014 was \$5,935.00. The largest expenditures in 2014/15 involved payroll at \$7,014.79 and travel/project related expenses at \$2,042.31

COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS

The ISCM has established a number of committees and working groups, each with a specific focused task. Committees are formed as required. Each committee has a lead or chairperson who regularly reports back to ISCM Board of Directors. Committees are open for any stakeholders to participate. The committees facilitate collaborative provincial action and work on increasing awareness across Manitoba. A committee may also establish working groups to which address specific tasks within the committee's area of interest.

Strategic Planning Committee

Cory Lindgren (lead), Candace Parks, Doug Cattani

The purpose of this committee is to develop and provide strategic direction for the ISCM. To date, the committee has focused on the development of the strategic plan to guide the council through 2014-2019.

In 2013, the committee completed development the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan and it was approved at the ISCM 2014 AGM. As a priority action item for the ISCM, the committee identified it was important to meet with Manitoba Government officials to discuss how the ISCM can help coordinate IAS activities in Manitoba and discuss how it can work with the Government of Manitoba to deliver on the goals and objectives of the ISCM Strategic Plan. Currently, the committee is working on delivering on the objectives of the ISCM Strategic Plan.

Workplanning and Staffing Committee

Julie Pelc (lead), Cory Lindgren, Fiona Ross



The purpose of this committee is to supervise the hiring of students and administration of funding as related to hiring of students. In 2014, the work of this committee involved reviewing job applications for summer positions submitted to the Green Team program and Young Canada Works programs and interviewing, hiring and supervising an Invasive Species Technician; and the supervision as related to the position. In 2014, the ISCM was successful with one Green Team application and hired Rachel Cherka as an Invasive Species Technician who reported to the committee.

Fundraising Committee

Cory Lindgren (lead), Cam Meucon, and Fiona Ross

The purpose of the fundraising committee is to actively seek out potential funding opportunities for ISCM activities and to identify sources of core funding and organizational income to build capacity. In 2014, the Fundraising Committee successfully secured funding from Shell Canada to deliver a Weeds Spotters Network in 2015.

Constitution, Bylaws and Charitable Status Committee

Glennis Lewis (lead), Julie Pelc, Cory Lindgren, Doug Cattani

The Constitution and Bylaws of the ISCM is a living document which is reviewed on an ongoing basis. The Constitution, Bylaws and Charitable Status Committee meets to ensure these documents continue to meet the needs of the ISCM and Board of Directors. The ISCM Constitution and Bylaws are undergoing review to ensure they provide for effective and efficient governance. The constitutions of other provincial invasive species councils are being examined to assist in this process. Proposed changes will be presented to the ISCM Board before the next AGM.

The ISCM is also investigating the benefits of obtaining registered charitable status. The ISCM hopes to complete an application to register the ISCM as a charity in 2015. In 2014, a lawyer agreed to work *pro bono* with ISCM on this application.

Communications and Awareness Committee

Fiona Ross (lead), John Johnston, Candace Parks, Bev Dunlop

ISCM has joined Twitter!

This past year the ISCM has work diligently to continue public awareness on issues close to our heart. The ISCM partnered in a variety of media event, conducted interviews and distributed radio and print public service materials as part of its efforts in the Pembina Valley region.

In 2014 outreach material was provided at two horticultural events. The ISCM also continued to promote activities on Facebook and our website and produce the ISCM Newsletter “Unwanted Invaders”.

EDRR Committee and Working Groups

Julie Pelc and Rodney Penner (leads), John Johnston, Bev Dunlop, Candace Parks, Cory Lindgren, Doug Cattani

The purpose of the Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDRR) Committee is to develop an EDRR strategy for Manitoba. The Committee has also has four working groups: (1) the Weed Risk Assessment Working Group, (2) the Knapweed Working Group and (3) the Invasive Giant Reed (Phragmites) Working Group and (4) Weed Spotter’s Network Working Group. The ISCM recognizes that there is no coordinated Manitoba wide effort in place to detect, report or respond to new occurrences of invasive species. It is recognized that cheaper and more efficient shipping and communications and growing consumer demand has resulted in increases in global trade. These increases in trade will result in more invasive species being introduced into Manitoba, either intentionally or unintentionally. The importance of preventative actions to address invasive plants, such as EDRR programs, is well recognized by government agencies at all levels as well as by the ISCM.

The EDRR Committee has completed an Early Detection and Rapid Response Plan (Part 1 Species Listing). The below criteria were selected to determine ISCM EDRR-species:

- vascular plants only,
- do not include plantings in cultivation (i.e., gardens),
- impact Manitoba’s economy, environment, and society including human health.

ISCM target EDRR-species fall into two categories:

- “**Category 1**” Not found in Manitoba (see Table 2)
- “**Category 2**” Found in Manitoba however localized presence only.

Table 2. List of EDRR-Category 1 Species.

| ISCM Category 1 EDRR-species | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <i>Common Name</i> | <i>Scientific Name</i> | <i>Distribution</i> |
| Russian knapweed | (<i>Acroptilon repens</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Jointed goatgrass | (<i>Aegilops cylindra</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Diffuse knapweed | (<i>Centaurea diffusa</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Spotted knapweed | (<i>Centaurea maculosa</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Yellow starthistle | (<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Common crupina | (<i>Crupina vulgaris</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Purple nutsedge | (<i>Cyperus rotundus</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Pattersons curse | (<i>Echium plantagineum</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Woolly cupgrass | (<i>Eriochloa villosa</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| European Frogbit | (<i>Hydrocharis morsus-ranae</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Hydrilla | (<i>Hydrilla verticillata</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Mile-a-minute weed | (<i>Persicaria perfoliata</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Eurasian watermilfoil | (<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Curlyleaf pondweed | (<i>Potamogeton crispus</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Kudzu | (<i>Pueraria montana</i>) | Not in Manitoba |
| Saltcedar | (<i>Tamarix spp.</i>) | Not in Manitoba |

Weed Spotter's Network Working Group

Bev Dunlop (lead), Doug Cattani, Julie Pelc, John Johnston (alternate- Michele Ammeter) Cory Lindgren, Candace Parks

The purpose of this committee is to develop a Weed Spotters Network (WSN) for Manitoba. The WSN committee was formed in September 2014 as a result of the successful procurement of funding from Shell by the ISCM Funding Committee. The main goals of this working group are to:

1. Ensure that funding procured for a Weed Spotter's Network (WSN) is managed effectively and funding timelines and deliverables are met.
2. Hire WSN Provincial Coordinator (May – Oct term) who will develop and implement a WSN.
3. Give support and direction to staff hired to complete WSN deliverables.
4. Work towards WSN future sustainability of the WSN.

In 2014, the Committee's highlights included:

- Creating a WSN list of species to target initially. It consists of Early Detection and Rapid Response (EDDR) species Category 1 (Prohibited species) plus three Category 2 species.
- Developing a proposed budget for moneys procured
- Developing and posting a WSN Provincial Coordinator job description

Invasive Knapweeds

Spotted knapweed (*Centaurea biebersteinii*) has established in the western provinces of Canada and is now found in localized areas in Manitoba. By 2010, patches were found in roadsides south of Beausejour, in roadsides and a gravel pit north of Sprague, and in Birds Hill Provincial Park in the tall grass prairie area. In 2013, spotted knapweed sightings occurred west of Winnipeg, Brandon, Griswold and Deloraine.



Figure 4. Spotted Knapweed

Diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*) can be found in Manitoba, but its extent is minimal. The largest infestations have been found south-west of Morden. This invasive weed is not wide-spread and there is an opportunity to stop it in its tracks.

Knapweed Working Group

Doug Cattani (lead), Beverly Dunlop, Michele Ammeter, Kent Shewfelt and Sherry Punak-Murphy.

Spotted (*Centaurea biebersteinii*) and diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*) are biennial, short-lived perennials, and considered regionally noxious under the Manitoba *Noxious Weed Act*. Spotted knapweed is a prolific seed producer, with individual plants producing up to 140,000 seeds per square metre. Seeds and plant fragments make their way into hay and onto the undercarriages of vehicles, allowing for new infestations over great distances. Diffuse knapweed plants can produce up to 18,000 seeds that can remain dormant in the soil for years. Both knapweeds spread by wind, livestock and people, preferring open areas and well-drained soils where they establish in grasslands, open forests, and along roadsides.

Under the supervision of Michele Ammeter, Macdonald Weed District, Rachel Cherka, ISCM Summer Technician, surveyed all known reported spotted (*Centaurea biebersteinii*) and diffuse knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*) infestations in the summer of 2014.

Most visits resulted in confirmation that the knapweeds in question still had a presence at the site. Previous control efforts were shown to have had some impact on the size of the infestations, however, there were a few that showed little effect of treatment on the infestation.

Annual identification and treatment of the diffuse knapweed site near Morden has resulted in the spraying and/or pulling of all discovered plants. This program appears to have been successful in containing the infestation to the original site of discovery.



FUTURE OF THE ISCM – MOVING FORWARD 2015

The ISCM has two key project activities on which to focus its energies in 2015. These are (1) working collaboratively with the Province of Manitoba towards an Invasive Species (IS) Summit Meeting and a Provincial Invasive Species Strategy and (2) developing a provincial Weed Spotter's Network.

Delivering on our NEW Strategic Plan – Invasive Species SUMMIT

On March 5, 2015, the ISCM met with the Manitoba Minister of Water Stewardship and Conservation and the Manitoba Minister of Agriculture. The meeting was a result of a request for a meeting letter sent to the Minister's in September of 2014 requesting such a meeting. The ISCM proposed to help the Government of Manitoba organize and deliver an invasive species Summit to collect data on the status of invasive species to be used to develop a provincial IS strategy and priorities for Manitoba. At the meeting, the Government of Manitoba verbally agreed to partner with the ISCM in developing plans for a provincial invasive species summit meeting.

Weeds Spotters Network

The Invasive Species Council of Manitoba is embarking on the development of a provincial program to detect new and emerging invasive plants or weeds called a **Weed Spotter's Network**. Weed Spotters will be on the watch for and report invasive plants and weeds as listed on the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba's Category 1 Early Detection and Response (EDRR) Plan.

Appendices – Examples of Education and Awareness Activities

DIFFUSE KNAPWEED FIELD DAY



Diffuse Knapweed is an invasive species currently found minimally in Manitoba, but has the potential to cause severe impacts on the rangeland in this province. When left untreated it will invade and take over rangeland, killing off native plants in the process. Diffuse Knapweed is very rarely eaten by grazers as it is spiny and bitter tasting; this means that it also affects cattle and other grazers as this plant will leave little left for foraging.

This invasive species has greyish-green leaves and white or sometimes purple flowers, with small, sharp, rigid spines on the bracts. Since this plant reproduces solely by seed it can spread quickly by wind, animals, farm equipment vehicles and infested feed or gravel. However, this also means that pulling, mowing and

other means of removing it will be effective if implemented before the plant begins to seed.

Originally native to Eurasia, this invasive was accidentally introduced through contaminated seed to Canada and the United States and as a result has spread throughout the two countries. In Manitoba, its range is limited and we hope to stop it in its tracks!

To do this we need you! Join us **Friday, July 25th** starting at **10:00am** for the Diffuse Knapweed Field Day. We will be meeting at the entrance of **Stanley Centennial Park** ½ mile South (5.6 km) and 2 ½ miles West (4 km) of Morden (Junction of Highways 432 & 3). The day will include identifying, scouting and removing Diffuse Knapweed! Please be sure to bring a lunch, bug spray and wear closed-toed shoes.

Richard Warkentin of Stanley Soil Management Association, is the host and has been leading the fight against Diffuse Knapweed for many years. Richard, along with the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba have all partnered this year to continue the control of Diffuse Knapweed. This event is also generously sponsored by Enbridge and Rural Greenteam through the Province of Manitoba.

For more information, please call Richard Warkentin at 204-362-0352.



Manitoba Cooperator – September 23, 2014

Invasive Species Council declares war on weeds

New weed spotters' workshops are designed to educate public and raise awareness

By **Meghan Mast**

Reporter

Published: September 23, 2014



A small group met in the Pembina Valley Interpretive Centre August 20 to discuss how to engage the public in tracking a common enemy — weeds.

The workshop was the first of what Julie Pelc, chair of the Invasive Species Council of Manitoba (ISCM), hopes will be many weed spotters' workshops.

“We really want to increase knowledge and awareness of these priority invasive species,” Pelc said in an interview.

At least 257 invasive plant species substantially affect agriculture in Manitoba,

according to the ISCM. These introduced species threaten the local environment and economy but some can also risk human and animal health. They can dominate their environment over time — choking other plants and monopolizing root space.

ISCM is a non-profit organization comprised of federal, provincial, NGO and community representatives. It works to educate the public and spread awareness about harmful weeds. The plan to develop a weed spotters' program was part of an updated strategic plan finalized earlier this year.

Workshop participants learn to identify invasive species in their region. During the first one Pelc highlighted several problematic weeds in the Pembina Valley region, including leafy spurge, nodding thistle and common tansy.

Leafy spurge, which can grow to just under a metre tall, is believed to have hitched a ride to North America with seed brought in by early settlers. An economic impact assessment undertaken by Brandon University in 1999 estimated it infested 340,000 acres and was costing the economy \$20 million in direct and indirect costs — mainly due to reduced grazing capacity. By 2010, it had spread to more than 1.2 million acres and its economic impact had risen to more than \$40 million in lost grazing capacity, cost of control measures, and other indirect costs.

“Once leafy spurge invades a pasture it reduces the value of that pasture, reducing the area available for grazing and livestock,” said Pelc.

Once the classroom portion of the workshop finished, the group headed outdoors to find and pull common tansy weeds. Bright-yellow, button-shaped flowers cluster at the top of these plants. They contain several toxic compounds harmful to humans and animals if absorbed through the skin or ingested.

Pelc emphasized that unsupervised weed removal is discouraged. Some weeds can be dangerous. One example is giant hogweed — which, as of January 2014 has not been seen in Manitoba but has been spotted in Ontario. This plant burns skin to the touch.

Richard Warkentin, who attended the weed spotters' workshop, said he received a call this summer from someone who thought they had seen giant hogweed. Warkentin, who works for the Stanley Soil Management association, said investigation revealed it to be a false alarm.

“It was something called tall water parsnip,” he said. “It can irritate your skin like poison ivy, but it isn't as dangerous as giant hogweed.” The small circular, white-flowered cluster looks similar to the corrosive weed.

To avoid risk, Pelc recommends when someone spots what looks like a weed, they take a photo and contact the ISCM that will then pass the weed through a verification process. Once it's identified, it will be passed on to the appropriate authority for control. “The weed spotters' program is about early detection and not enforcement,” she said.