PEI Invasive Species Council Newsletter

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About the Council

The PEIISC is a non-profit group of individuals and organizations focused on the creation of a framework for the management of invasive species that threaten Prince Edward Island's environmental, economic and social health.

The PEIISC is made up of volunteer representatives from federal, provincial, municipal governments, watershed groups and community members. The PEIISC currently has 22 council members, including staff.

Welcome!

The PEIISC is happy to welcome you to our first PEI Invasive Species Council Newsletter!

We are in need of a name for this Newsletter and invite you to participate in a contest to help us find one. Submit your ideas to peiinvasives@gmail.com with the subject line "Newsletter Name". The chosen newsletter name will win a PEIISC hat and key cards.

We would like to extend a special welcome to over fifty new spotters who have recently joined our Invasive Species Spotter's Network. We are excited to have you on board! This group of volunteers will be provided training opportunities, spotter's kits and encouraged to report invasive species sightings to a central system. If you haven't already, join us and fill out this google form to get signed-up!

A Look Back...

The past year has been a busy one for the PEIISC. An early highlight was the addition of two full-time staff positions. A coordinator and technician started work for the PEIISC in June, 2021. Ongoing activities focus on building the capacity of the council to effectively manage invasive species in PEI. Check out page three for a staff spotlight!

One of the PEIISC's main initiatives has been developing the capacity to detect invasive species early, and building on the ability to rapidly respond (EDRR).

Prevention is our most effective tool in managing invasive species and it requires diligence. Many PEI residents are dependent, directly or indirectly, on primary resources that can be negatively affected by invasive species.

The likelihood of detecting new species is higher with the aid of the Spotter's Network. Citizen science is an invaluable tool improving reporting over a much broader geographical range, including private land. Detection efforts have been further strengthened by consolidating existing invasive species data across PEI to a central system. PEIISC staff have collected sightings from over a dozen relevant conservation organizations and consolidated thousands of historical reports into a new reporting/mapping system, EDDMapS. PEIISC expects to input thousands more reports over the upcoming months, so now is a great time to become familiar with the software!

EDDMapS
Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System

EDDMapS is a web-based mapping system used to document invasive species distribution across PEI. Use either the website or smartphone app to make reports of invasive species sightings. No data is necessary in the field! The reports will go into an upload que for you to submit later when connected to the internet. You can also make reports on the website and find distribution maps there. Check out both methods! All reports that are mapped are verified by our team. Visit *EDDMapS.org*!

Invasive Species Action Team

In 2021, the PEIISC lead stakeholders in several first year management activities at sites where priority invasive species were reported. These novel introductions highlighted the need for an invasive species action team that could tackle management activities at priority sites, to prevent priority invasive species from establishing and permanently altering PEI's landscape.

Pictured: PEIISC members & staff outfitted in protective gear for management of a Giant Hogweed outbreak site. The PEIISC developed a safe work practice guide for PEI so that hogweed could be managed with worker safety as a top priority.

We are excited to report that, in close collaboration with the PEIISC, the PEI Watershed Alliance will implement an invasive species Action Team of 3-4 staff this coming field season. The team will work with watershed groups across PEI to engage in invasive species removal and habitat rehabilitation within priority areas, taking guidance from the PEIISC. The PEIISC looks forward to working with this team and supporting its important work.

New Website Information

The PEIISC staff have been working on two new website sections that each support a key prevention message, Don't Move Firewood & Play Clean Go.

The Don't Move Firewood website section will highlight the risks associated with moving firewood and pests commonly moved through firewood, plus cover the importance of the Acadian Forest Region. It will also explain the importance of monitoring tree health for invasives, and will provide a resource section for adults and youth. PEIISC staff also created a "Buy Local, Burn Local" map that shows private campgrounds locations and the nearest sources of local firewood for purchase. Gathering firewood from the nearest convenient source in relation to the burn site is encouraged and, ideally, firewood should never be moved more than 10km and never across provincial boundaries.

The Play Clean Go website section focuses on how invasive species use outdoor recreationalists as pathways to spread to new areas. It engages the public to recognize the importance of cleaning gear before and after outdoor adventures. It will also link to an existing trail map produced by *Island Trails* and have a resource section for adults and youth.

BUY LOCAL BURN LOCAL
DON'T MOVE FIREWOOD

Play Clean Go | Jouez Nettoyez Partez

FIND US ONLINE

For more information on the PEIISC, identification and management factsheets, and helpful links, check out our website: www.peiinvasives.ca

You can also find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter!

Jumping Worms — On the Horizon

Recently confirmed in NB! These invasive worms outcompete other earthworms and their castings degrade soil quality, leaving it inhospitable to many native plant species which makes areas susceptible to increased erosion. Prevent their introduction to PEI by limiting movement of outdoor plants from outside provinces. Even if you don't see the worm itself, their eggs can be present in the soil.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Beth Hoar—Chair

Beth is a professional photographer, retired biologist/urban forester. She has been volunteering with the PEIISC since 2008 and has a passion for invasive species work. Beth has been instrumental in keeping the council active over the years and supports the PEIISC by fostering communication between members, identifying funding opportunities and participating in project work. She has also been supportive and encouraging of staff as they take on their new roles in invasive species work.

Beth's Invasive Pest Peeve: It's hard to just pick one invasive species. Glossy buckthorn has to be at the top of my list. I found a small specimen on my property last year for the first time!!

Erica MacDonald—Coordinator

Erica joined the PEIISC team in late January. Her agri-environmental background and years of management experience have made her an asset to our team, and we are grateful to have her on board!

Erica's Invasive Pest Peeve: Multicolored Asian lady beetles right now for sure...I keep finding them in my house!

Kassidy Matheson— Invasive Species Technician

Kassidy was hired in June 2021. She is a certified North American Wildlife Conservation Technician with experience working as an Urban Forestry Technician with the City of Charlottetown and as a watershed technician on PEI.

Kassidy's Invasive Pest Peeve: I would have to say Japanese Knotweed as I currently have roots penetrating my foundation so it feels like its personal now!

Simon Wilmot — Former Coordinator

Simon was hired in June 2021. He is a certified North American Wildlife Conservation Technician with experience working as an Urban Forestry Technician with the City of Charlottetown, and as a Forestry Technician with the PEI Forest, Fish and Wildlife Division. Simon has moved on from this role with the PEIISC to work as a Forest Habitat Specialist with the PEI Watershed Alliance. In his new role he will continue to support the PEIISC as a council member, and is working to bring the invasive species lens to his work with watershed groups to support native ecosystems. We wish him luck in his new role and thank him for his hard work!

Click to View

Working Priority List of Invasive Plant Species

...or find it on our website:

Resources/Invasive Species on PEI/PEI Invasive Species Plant List

Upcoming Event:

The PEIISC's 9th Annual Meeting
Monday, April 11th, 12:00 - 5:00pm at the PEI Farm Centre, 420 University Avenue in Charlottetown

Registration: Please email peiinvasives@gmail.com to confirm your attendance and reserve your seat(s).