

HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE

to invasive plants in ponderosa pine ecosystems

The ponderosa pine ecosystem occupies lower elevations of dry valleys throughout the Southern Interior and East Kootenays of British Columbia. Ponderosa pine is best known for its characteristic vanilla scented, cinnamon-coloured bark made up of puzzle-shaped scales. While ponderosa pine is the dominant tree in this forest type, the understory is a mixture of grass, forbs and shrubs. Common plants include Saskatoon, perennial bunch grasses, yarrow and arrow-leaved balsamroot. A large number of wildlife species call this plant community home. Rare species include Bighorn Sheep, White-headed Woodpecker, Lewis's Woodpecker, Western Rattlesnake and Great Basin Gopher Snake. Fire is essential to shaping and maintaining ponderosa pine ecosystems. Historically, fires burned naturally on a cycle of one every 5 to 25 years. This frequent fire burned the grasses, shrubs and small trees, and maintained an open stand of larger ponderosa pine trees.

One of the primary impacts to ponderosa pine ecosystems is invasive plants.

Invasive plants are not indigenous to Canada and lack the natural enemies that keep them in check in their native habitats. They are competitive, spread quickly, and can be difficult to control.

How do I control invasive plants?

- Identify the species on your property and understand their biology and life cycles.
- Map the outbreak and areas of disturbed soil that are prone to invasion.
- Consider vectors of spread that may be moving invasive plants around your property.
- Develop a plan that considers a variety of strategies including manual control, chemical treatment, biological control and seeding (or planting). Using a single management practice will not result in effective control.
- Implement your plan and monitor the results
- Contact OASISS or another specialist if you need advice.
- Be patient and diligent - it may take repeat treatments to effectively control the plants.

Common Invasive Plants



Sulphur cinquefoil
Potentilla recta



Cheatgrass
Bromus tectorum



Diffuse knapweed
Centaurea diffusa



Blueweed
Echium vulgare

For a more extensive list of invasive plants in the Okanagan-Similkameen, check out: www.oasiss.ca



How you can help prevent the spread.

Be invasive-wise

- Minimize soil disturbance
 - Retain natural vegetation as much as possible
 - Seed or re-plant disturbed areas with native plants or non-invasive drought-tolerant species
- Use mulch, gravel or fill that are not contaminated with invasive plants
- Properly dispose of invasive plants
 - Do not put them in compost or yard waste
 - Take to the landfill and inform attendant you have invasive plants
- Avoid wildflower and bird seed mixes
 - These often contain seeds of invasive plants
- Educate your neighbours
- Host an invasive plant removal event in your community

Learn to identify invasive plants

- Download our [Guide to Identifying Invasive Plants and Weeds](#)
- Visit www.oasiss.ca and browse through the species profiles



Don't plant invasive species

- Download our [Plantwise Guide](#)
- Be suspicious of plants promoted as "fast spreaders" or "vigorous self-seeders" as these are often invasive plants.



GET ADVICE

For more information about invasive species contact:

www.oasiss.ca



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Okanagan and Similkameen
Invasive Species Society

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