

A scenic landscape photograph of a mountain meadow. The foreground is filled with vibrant red and purple wildflowers, including columines and delphiniums, growing among green grasses and rocks. In the background, a range of blue mountains stretches across the horizon under a sky filled with soft, white clouds. Several tall, dark evergreen trees are scattered across the middle ground.

Annual Report 2022-2023

Vision Statement

To control, prevent, and minimized the impacts of invasive species on our communities, natural environment, and the economy.

Goals of the Society

- 1 Raise awareness about invasive species, their impacts and management strategies, and inspire action
- 2 Facilitate the flow of information and provide a source of expertise on invasive species
- 3 Improve stakeholder communication, collaboration, coordination and information sharing
- 4 Minimize or reverse the spread of existing invasive species through coordinated, integrated invasive species management efforts
- 5 Build capacity to ensure program sustainability

Where We Operate



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The terrestrial program operates within the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen, and the aquatics program operates across the Okanagan Valley Basin.



Okanagan Basin



Our Team



"It was somewhat comforting to begin putting the pandemic behind us in 2022-23. We were fully staffed for both our terrestrial and aquatics teams. In fact we had our biggest ever aquatics team. As community events started to come back on track, we were able to do more face-to-face events. This included hosting the annual gathering of the Regional Invasive Species Organizations – a 3-day event with representation from all around BC. We were reminded during this past year of the value and positive impact of face-to-face interactions. We were excited to welcome new partners this past year, and continue working collaboratively with our alliances across BC and into Washington state."

- Executive Director, Lisa Scott

Board of Directors



Charles Oduro
Director/ Vice-Chair



Glenn Carlson
Director



Ken Sapsford
Director



Aquatics



Terrestrial

Sierra Collins
Program Assistant

Joel Vandermeulen
AIS Assistant

Elaine Desjarlais
Field Operations
Manager

Trista Algar
Outreach Assistant

Ty Sorenson
Aquatic Invasive
Species (AIS)
Program Coordinator

Selena Carl
AIS Assistant

Ben Koenig
Invasive Plant
Program Assistant

Dave Koponen
Work Crew

Katie Lewko
AIS Assistant

Chris Cail
Invasive Plant
Program Assistant



Megan Bull
Director



Tyrion Miskell
Director



Zoe Kirk
Director/ Chair



Terrestrial Program Highlights

Overview

- Regional program with over 20 funding partners
- Emphasis on invasive plants
- Two summer staff hired through Canada Summer Jobs
- Field operations manager, a work crew, and a certified spray contractor funded through grants and service agreements with government, conservation groups, utility companies, and other partners



Invasive Plant Management

-  1,268 Surveys
-  33 Species
-  715 chemical treatments covering 34 ha
-  188 mechanical treatments covering 2 ha
-  214 sites with 'no plants found'

Education and Outreach

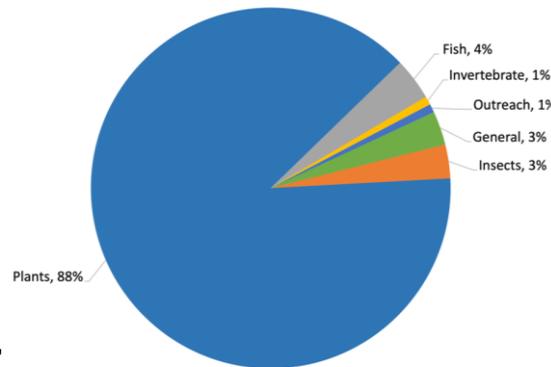
- Okanagan Invasive Species Online: app development, website enhancement, assisting the agricultural sector in the Okanagan Valley
- Provided public information on emerging species, including insect pests
- Produced media coverage/editorials
- Enhanced social media outreach through Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube. Wisdom Wednesday, Movie Monday, and Feature Friday series
- Coordinated with organic growers
- Hosted Earth Day in Summerland



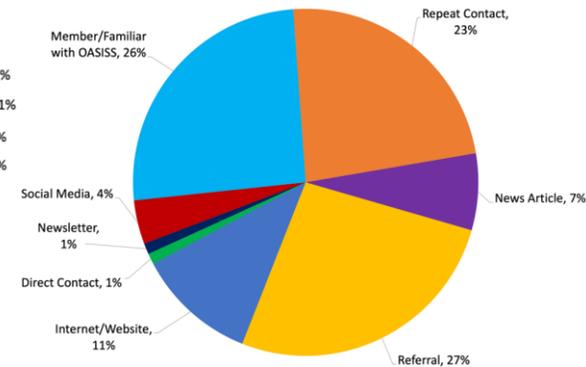
Summary of Enquiries

Responded to ~135 enquiries

Categories



Sources of Information



Aquatics Program Highlights

Overview

- Three summer staff and a full-time supervisor hired through Canada Summer Jobs
- Assisted by grants from Okanagan Basin Water Board and Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation (HCTF), which helped fund plankton tow sampling and substrate monitors
- Partnered with the province, all three Regional Districts, and many municipalities



Boat Launch Interactions

Staff attended launches around the valley to educate boaters about the threat of invasive mussels, ask a survey questionnaire, and spread the “Don’t Move A Mussel” message.



1,111 boats



18 launches



2,254 people



Invasive Mussel Monitoring

- Collected water samples and deployed substrate monitors in partnership with several marinas, yacht clubs, and local governments
- No invasive mussels detected!



5 lakes



19 locations



148 samples



Education and Outreach

- Interacted with ~3,500 people about aquatic invasive species
- Distributed invasive mussel resources to 145 businesses and organizations
- Presented to 162 youth at summer camps
- Attended 13 community events
- Created Don't Let It Loose resources for pet stores
- Shared information through social media and press releases



Projects With Partners

Citizen Science

Invasive clam shoreline surveys were conducted at beaches on Osoyoos Lake in partnership with the Osoyoos Lake Water Quality Society and the Okanagan Basin Water Board.



4 volunteers



6 Beaches



No invasive clams detected!



RBC Tech For Nature Interactive Video

A grant from RBC Tech For Nature provided funding for the development of a digital interactive video on invasive mussels, which was launched in July 2022 to the OASISS website.

Okanagan Invasive Species Online

Previously, the Okanagan-Similkameen did not have a valley-wide system to share information pertaining to invasive species. As a result, the Okanagan Invasive Species Online (OISO) website was created to provide invasive species information and resources, with a focus on the agricultural sector. In 2022, efforts focused on maintaining and updating species information.



Includes 70 species profiles that give information on identification, biology, look alikes, habitat, impacts, priority level, prevention options, and treatment options.



Offers a variety of features that allow for easy navigation and invasive species support.



Complimented with an app that can be downloaded on both iOS and Android devices



Projects With Partners Continued

White Lake Biodiversity Ranch

Since 2019, OASISS has worked with partners such as Nature Trust BC and Penticton Indian Band to implement invasive plant control measures at White Lake Biodiversity Ranch. Target species included puncturevine, hoary alyssum, St. John's wort and sulphur cinquefoil.



Image of sulphur cinquefoil growing next to spīłm (pronounced speetlum), also known as bitterroot in the White Lake Basin. Bitterroot is a culturally important plant for the sylix People. Invasive plants such as sulphur cinquefoil can outcompete native plants such as bitterroot.



Sage and Sparrow, Kit Carr & Osoyoos Oxbows Conservation Areas

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) contracted OASISS to implement invasive plant management activities for the Sage and Sparrow, Kit Carr and Osoyoos Oxbows Conservation Areas. Stats for all areas:

-  113 surveys covering 42 ha
-  87 chemical treatments covering 0.62 ha
-  22 sites with 'no invasive plants found'

SOCF Middle School Project

OASISS developed a project called "Biodiversity Under Siege: Teaching Okanagan Students About Invasive Species" through a grant from the South Okanagan Conservation Fund (SOCF). The project developed a teacher's guide, lesson plans, and kits for middle school students in SD67 and SD53 that help educate about invasive species impacts on biodiversity. In 2022, the project involved OASISS staff taking students out into nature to learn about native plants and help remove invasive plants.



Projects With Partners Continued



District of Summerland

OASISS was contracted by the District of Summerland (DoS) to implement invasive plant management activities in the area, with a large focus on hoary alyssum. Staff used an integrated management approach and focused on areas alongside pastures and hayfields where hoary alyssum can have negative impacts.



15 sites treated covering 1 ha

OASISS staff also conducted extensive invasive plant surveys, mechanical treatments and biocontrol monitoring at Giant's Head Mountain.



City of Penticton

OASISS was contracted by the City of Penticton to assist with the management of jointed goat grass and rush skeletonweed.



Mechanical treatment of jointed goat grass covering 0.073 ha (380 kg removed)



Mechanical and chemical treatment of rush skeletonweed covering 0.12 ha



Outreach with private property owners



Door-to-Door Contact

The terrestrial team delivered information to properties in the Princeton and Okanagan Falls areas. These properties were within high priority treatment areas for hoary alyssum and blueweed.



Projects With Partners Continued

Garnet Park, Heritage Hills

OASISS was contracted by the Regional District of the Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) to remove invasive plants from Garnet Park. The team treated Scotch thistle, burdock, common tansy, hoary alyssum, Canada thistle, hound's-tongue, diffuse knapweed, bull thistle, baby's breath, Russian olive and Dalmatian toadflax.



100 kg removed – 93% decrease from 2020



Princeton KVR

The terrestrial team targeted spotted and diffuse knapweed along the Princeton KVR.



Chemical treatments covering 1 ha



70% decrease in herbicide use since 2018

RISO Tour

OASISS hosted the Regional Invasive Species Organizations (RISO) annual professional development session and tour. Members from the RISO's, partner organizations, and other community groups attended.



30+ attendees



Financial Management Highlights

Overview

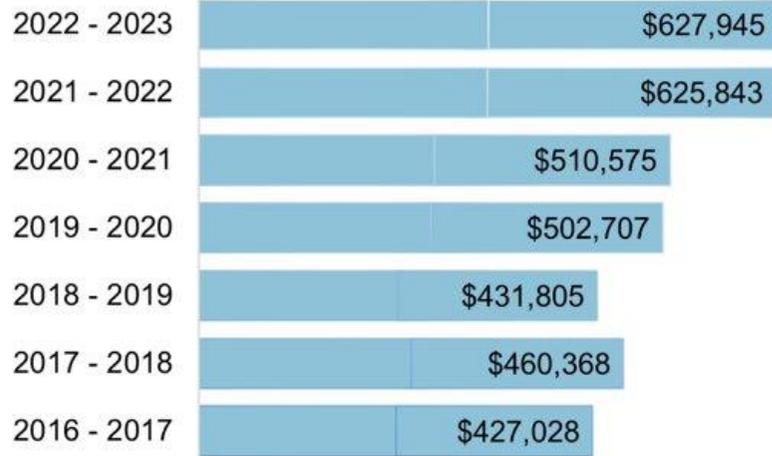


\$627,945 Total Revenue



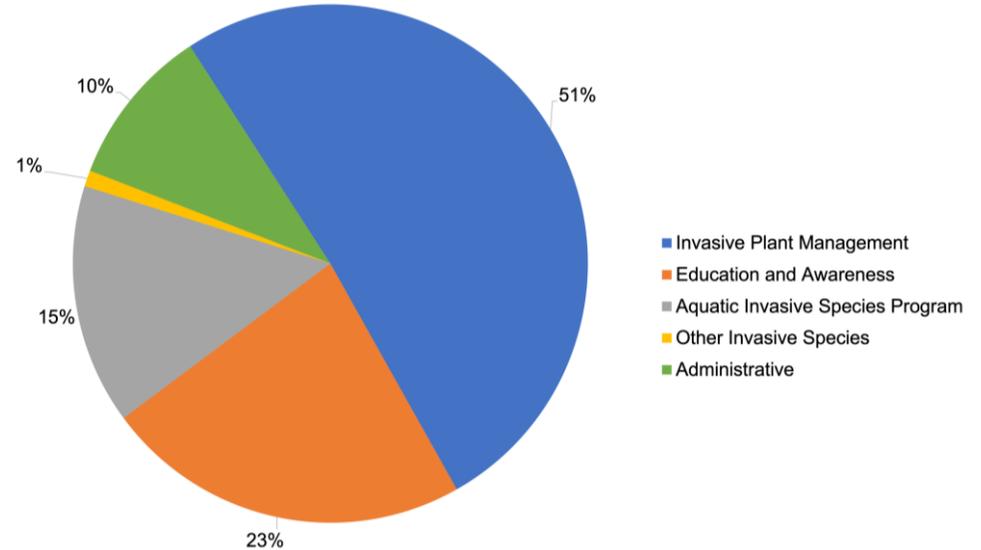
21 Funders Supporting OASISS

Funding History



"Invasive species are a clear and present danger. The issue is only exacerbated by climate change. OASISS is dedicated to be a leader in the management and education of invasive species. Our staff, Board and contractors will continue to work with our many partners, taking a holistic approach to create more resilient ecosystems in the Okanagan-Similkameen" – Zoe Kirk, OASISS Chair

2022-23 Program Budget



Thank You to Our Funders!



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Canada

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Service

Environnement
Canada

Service Canadien
de la faune



BC Hydro
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