

Invasive Species Risk and Community Readiness



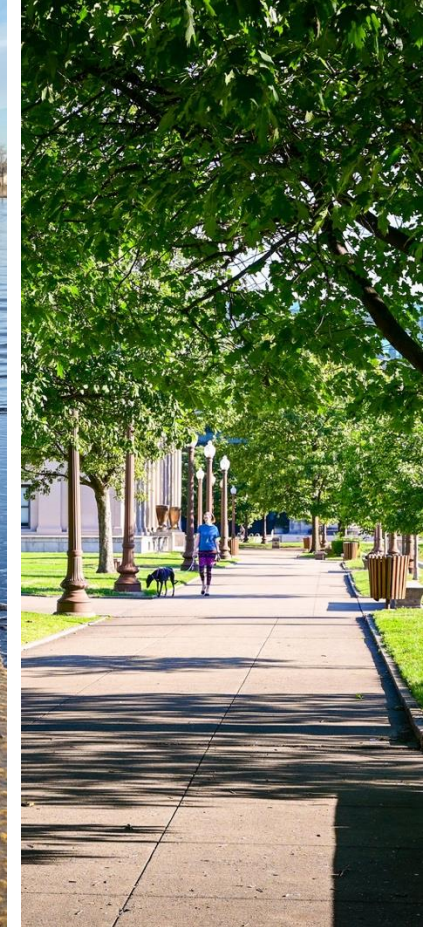
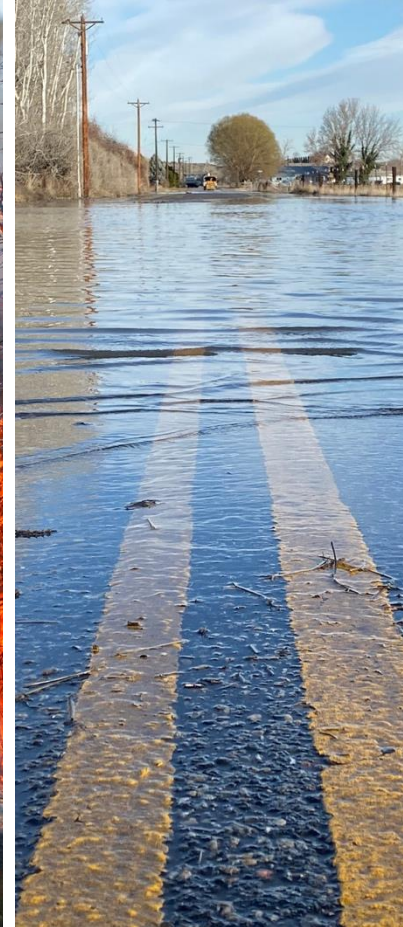
Invasive Species Risk and Community Readiness

- **Largest provincial invasive species charity in Canada**
- **Focus: education, outreach, training, cross-border collaboration across Canada and internationally**
- **Founding member, past chair of the Invasives Canada (Canadian Council on Invasive Species)**

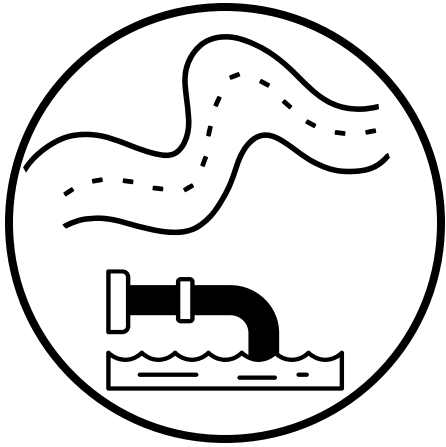


Invasive species are not just an environmental issue

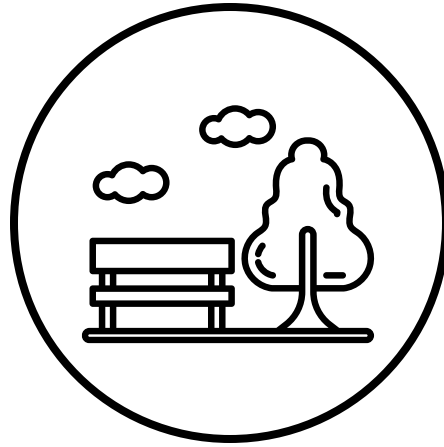
- **Wildfire & flooding**
- **Roads & water**
- **Parks & recreation**
- **Climate resilience**



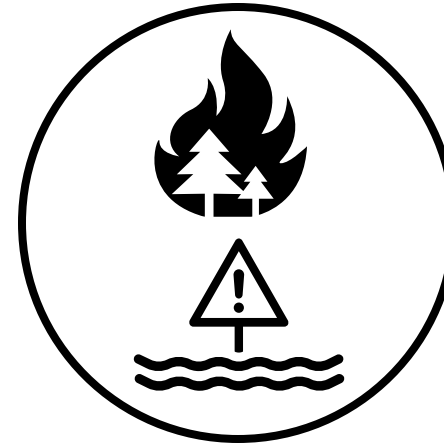
Invasive species have real costs to communities



**Road &
Drainage
Repairs**



**Park &
Greenspace
Maintenance**



**Emergency
Response
Costs**



**Property &
Tourism
Impacts**

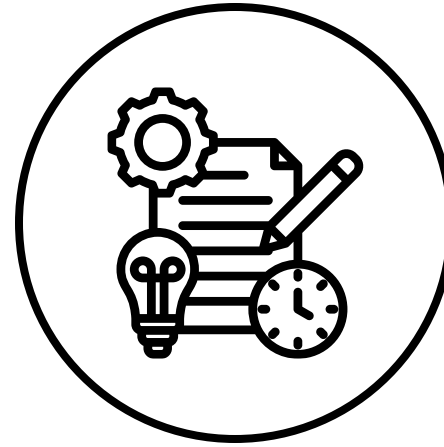
How local governments take action



**Bylaws &
Enforcement**



**Programs &
Partnerships**



**Planning &
Policy**



**Education &
Outreach**

1. Impacts on the Land & Shared Stewardship

Loren Muth – Councillor, Tzeachten First Nation

2. Municipal Realities: Challenges & Opportunities

Nadia Chan – Manager, Environment, City of Richmond

3. Visible Impacts in Our Communities

Sophie Dessureault – Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

4. Measuring Community Preparedness

Gail Wallin – Executive Director, Invasive Species Council of BC

Invasive species affect the land we depend on

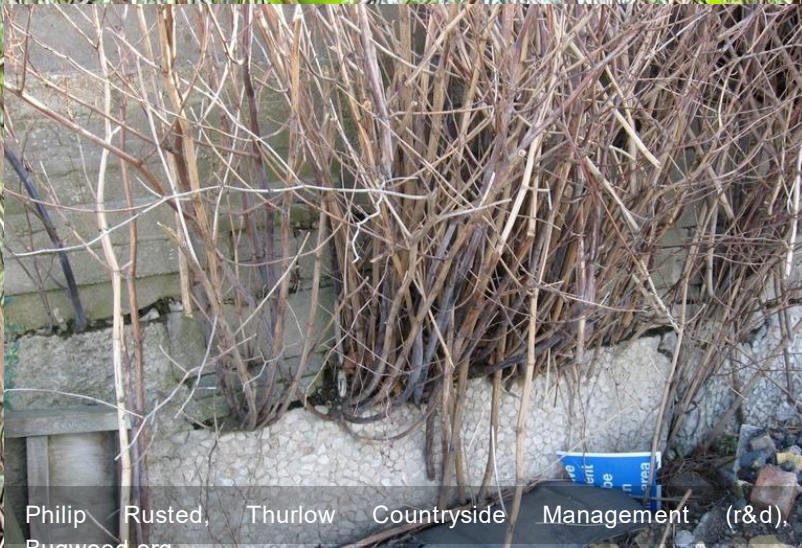
- **Erosion and infrastructure risk**
- **Barriers to cultural sites and recreation**
- **Loss of biodiversity and food security**



Himalayan blackberry: access & habitat loss



Knotweed: erosion & infrastructure at risk



Philip Rusted, Thurlow Countryside Management (r&d),
Bugwood.org



CABI



Reed canary grass: wetlands & fish habitat overrun



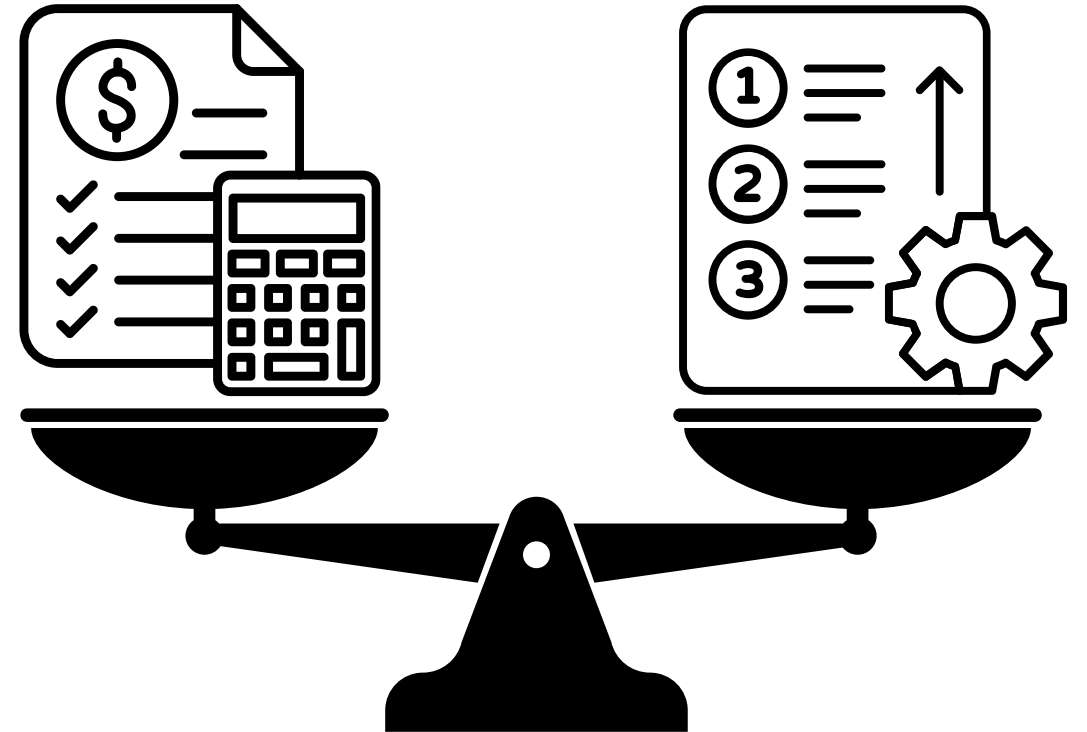
- **Generations of caring for the land**
- **Deep understanding of natural cycles and change**
- **Place-based knowledge carried forward through generations**



- **First Nations and local governments working together**
- **Collaboration lowers costs, time and effort**
- **Joint action builds safer, resilient communities**



- **Limited resources**
- **Competing priorities**
- **Ongoing invasive impacts**



Catching invasives early saves costs

- **Detected in Richmond in 2014**
- **Provincial partnership
→ EDRR program**
- **No new detections since 2021**

Brazilian elodea

When invasives spread, safety is at risk

- Spreads quickly along roadsides and forests
- Increases wildfire risk



Cheng-Te Hsu, iNaturalist Canada (CC BY)

Scotch broom

- **Forage and yield losses**
- **Partnerships driving solutions**

Spotted knapweed

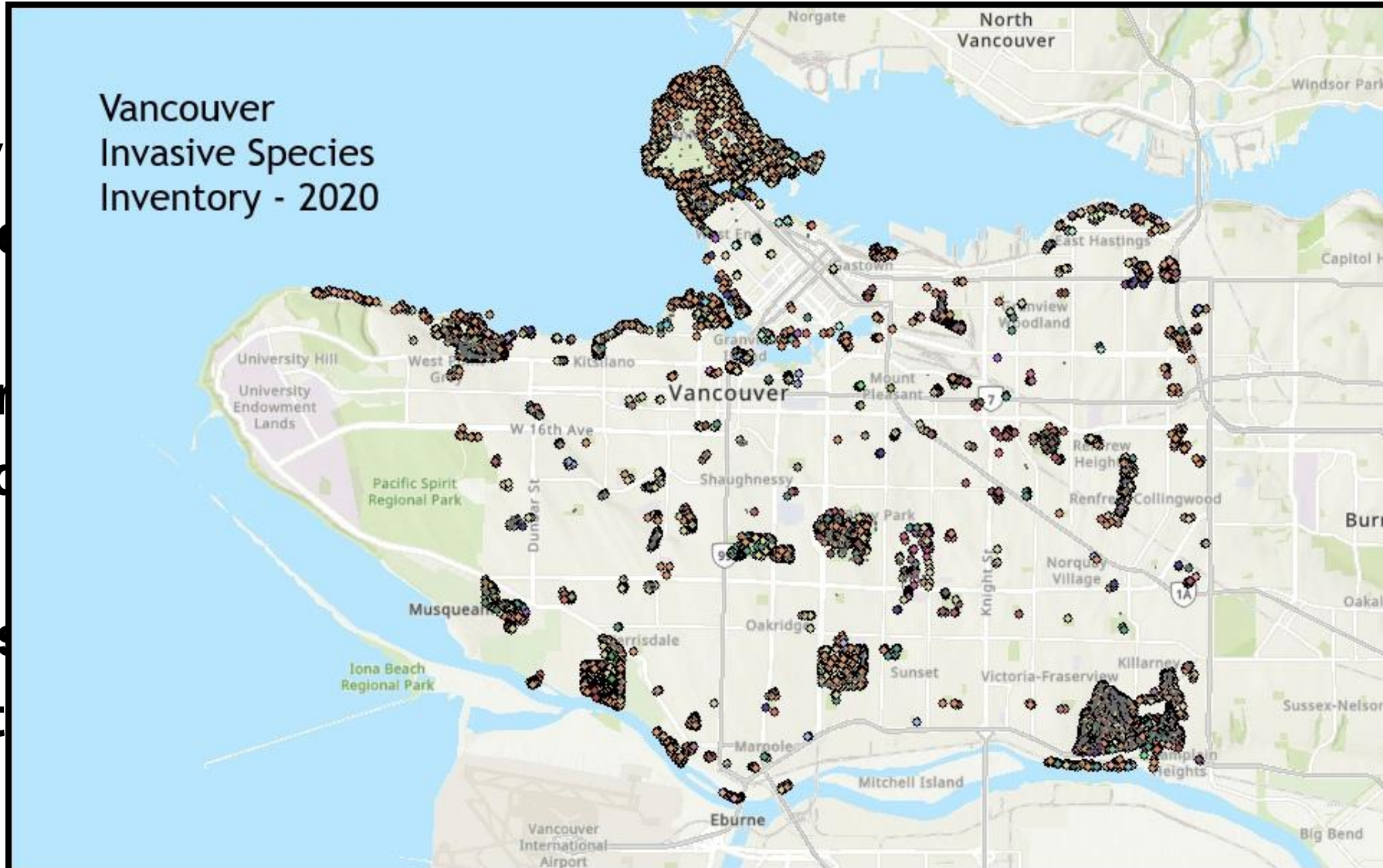
- **Long-term management protects recreation and water**
- **Prevention avoids devastating costs**
- **Regional coordinated advocacy**



Zebra mussels clogging pipe, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Zebra mussels (Not in B.C. yet)

- Invasive tree
- Threat to
- Resilient



Department of Plant
Penn State University,
Bugwood.org

Japanese beetle: collaboration in action

- Impacts turf, golf courses, parks, agriculture
- Massive collaborative effort from multiple partners
- Multi-pronged approach: regulation, treatment and education



- **Confirmed in Metro Vancouver (2024)**
- **Millions of ash trees destroyed in North America**
- **Potential for significant canopy loss**
- **Sustained funding required to preserve ash trees**



Robert Roach, iNaturalist Canada (CC BY)

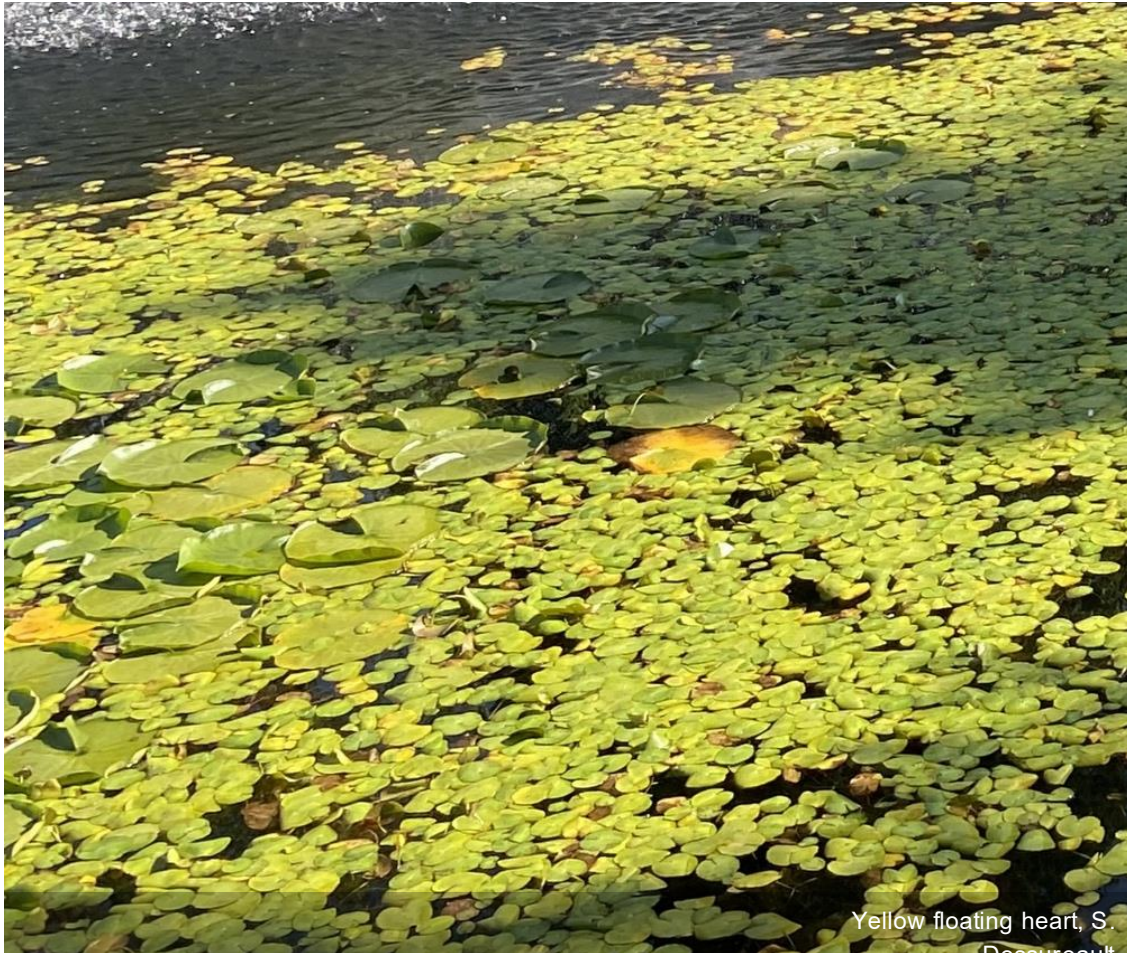


CoV Vanmap



T. Kimoto

Early detection prevents long-term costs



Yellow floating heart, S.
Dessureault



Mouse-ear hawkweed, Oleg Miasin |
Dreamstime.com

Toxic invasives threaten health & safety

- **Giant hogweed, American pokeweed, foxtail barley, among others**
- **Dangerous to people, pets, wildlife**
- **Often missed until residents report**

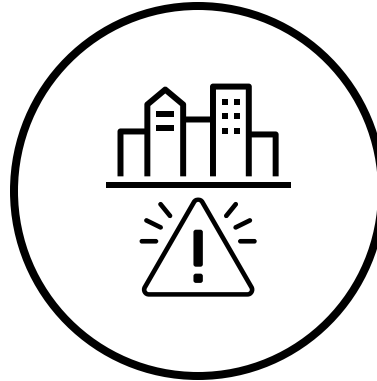


Species (clockwise starting in the upper left): giant hogweed, American pokeweed, foxtail barley, Italian arum

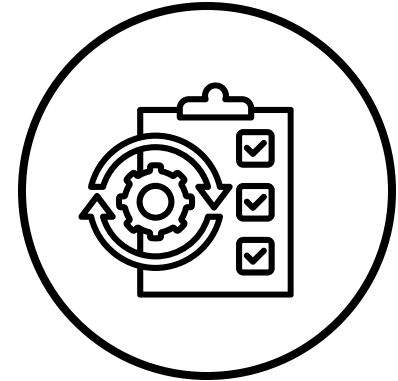
Five key areas for council readiness



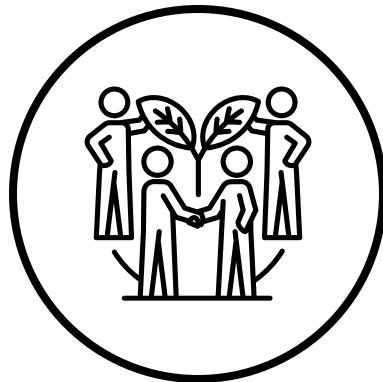
**Governance
& Resources**



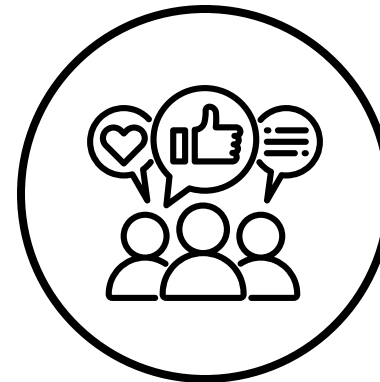
**Risk &
Infrastructure**



**Operational
Readiness**



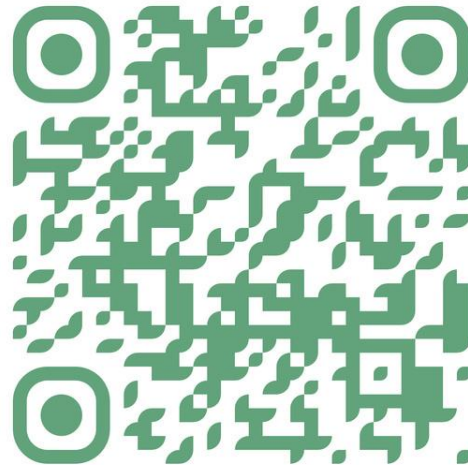
**Collaboration
& Stewardship**



**Community
Engagement**

- **Join the Local Government Invasive Species Network (LGISN) – connect, share, and learn with peers across B.C.**
- **Local Government Toolkit & Factsheets – ready-to-use resources for councils, staff, and residents.**
- **INVASIVES 2026 Forum – February 9–12, New Westminster. Leading voices, practical solutions, and collaboration.**

Explore more resources for local governments
bcinvasives.ca/about/local-government/



Interested in joining the Local Government Invasive Species Network?
Email Craig at cstephani@bcinvasives.ca