



Spring 2024 Newsletter

# Welcome to the Spring 2024 AKISP Newsletter!

The Alaska Invasive Species Partnership is an informal group comprised of individuals representing agencies and organizations statewide, with a shared vision that Alaska's diverse environmental, cultural, and economic resources are kept free from the impacts of invasive species. Partnership and committee membership is based on interest, availability for meetings, and willingness to work toward the goals of the group. We hope you enjoy this newsletter and learn something new too!

Photo: Incoming and outgoing AKISP Board members at the 2023 AKISP Workshop in Sitka



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# Summer 2024 Events

## ALASKA

**KP-CISMA training:** May 16-17th, Soldotna, register [here!](#)

**Alaska Native Plant Month:** May, Alaska

**Weed-Free Products Inspector**

**Training:** May 21, Palmer

**European Green Crab monitoring**

**training:** May 24, Homer

**Potter Marsh Discovery Day:** June 1, Anchorage

**Fairbanks Weed Smackdown:** June 14th, Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge

**Seward Community Weed Pull:** June 21, Seward

**Floatable Weed Smackdown- Gulkana River:** July 6th, Gulkana

**European Green Crab Awareness Day:** July 19th, Alaska

**Anchorage Weed Smackdown:** August 17th, Anchorage

**Alaska Invasive Species Partnership monthly meeting:** First Wednesday of the month. Partnership meeting at 9:00 a.m., followed by board meeting at 10:00 a.m. Next meeting will be Wednesday, June 5th.

# Alaska Invasive Species Awareness Week



ALASKA INVASIVE SPECIES AWARENESS WEEK

SECOND FULL WEEK OF JUNE

This year, Alaska Invasive Species Awareness Week (AK-ISAW) will be celebrated during the week of **June 9th to the 15th**. This awareness week is formally and regularly observed by AKISP during the second week of June.

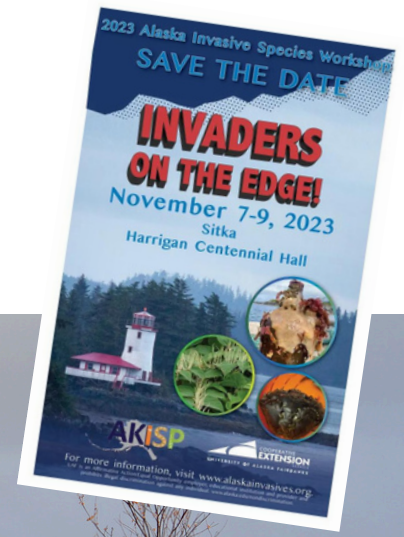
During this week, AKISP partners are encouraged to engage with Alaskans, lawmakers, and visitors to provide information on invasive species issues specific to Alaska as well as to provide information on how they can do their part, at all levels, to prevent the spread of invasive species in Alaska.

Check out some of the scheduled activities (left) or plan an event in your own in your community! Want help planning an invasive species activity? Check out the UAF guide [\*Pulling Together in Alaska: A Volunteer's Guide to Community Weed Pulling Events.\*](#)



Volunteers gather for the 2023 Anchorage Weed Smackdown

# Invaders on the Edge: Highlights from the 2024 AKISP Annual Workshop



The AKISP Board is grateful to have had the opportunity to host the 2023 AKISP Annual Workshop in Sitka. The AKISP membership gathered from across the state to present on their work, share ideas for future collaborations, and brainstorm on how to prevent species “on the edge” of invasion from establishing in Alaska!

During the 2023 gathering, AKISP members shared their experiences and plans to continue monitoring and coordinating on a response to European Green Crab as they continue to persist in Metlakatla and its surrounding areas.

The 2023 Workshop also included a session on data collection and sharing where AKISP entities shared tips, tools, and examples of data collection systems being used in Alaska.

Other highlights included a poster session, AKISP Board and Committee updates, and a Keynote from global change ecologist, Cascade Sorte.

This year, the Alaska Invasive Species Partnership will be turning 25! To celebrate, the 2024 workshop theme is *25 years of AKISP: Learning from the past and looking to the future*. The workshop will be held in Fairbanks during the week of November 11th. Keep a look out for a Save-the-Date and a Call for Proposals!







## 2023 AKISP Award Winners

As is tradition, the AKISP membership voted on awards that were presented to seven outstanding individuals making impacts within the world of invasive species in Alaska. From left to right: **Jasmine Maurer**- Outreach Award, **Bill Pyle**- Lifetime Achievement Award, **Tim Stallard**- Outreach Award, **Anne Billman**- Volunteerism Award, **Wendy Mahovlic**- Lifetime Achievement Award, **Aaron Martin**- Leadership Award, and **Carol Griswold**- Advocate Award. Each awardee received recognition at the 2023 AKISP Workshop as well as an AKISP hat to help them continue being amazing AKISP ambassadors.



To learn more about the 2023 AKISP awardees and all that they have done for the for invasive species community, check out their profiles on the [Workshop page](#) of the AKISP website!

## Funding Opportunities

### Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund

Proposal deadline: June 12  
<http://www.akssf.org/cfp/>

### USFWS Eradication Funding

Proposal deadline: May 27  
<https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/353208>

### USFWS EDRR Funding

Proposal deadline: July 15  
<https://grants.gov/search-results-detail/351110>

### Roadside Pollinator Program

Proposal deadline: June 18  
[https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env\\_topics/ecosystems/pollinators/RPP.aspx](https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/env_topics/ecosystems/pollinators/RPP.aspx)

## Noteworthy News

### AK AQUA gets an update!

The newest version of AK AQUA (Alaska Aquatic Invasive Species Clearinghouse) is ready to view at <https://accs.uaa.alaska.edu/invasive-species>

### Elodea Found in Crescent Lake

In late September of 2023, staff from the Chugach National Forest found Elodea in Crescent Lake during a scheduled survey. After surveying the entire 1,345-acre lake, they identified four discrete infestations in the western lobe of the lake, covering a surface area of roughly 11 acres. Most concerning is the infestation located in the shallow, slow moving water at the lake's outlet. Surveys downstream from the outlet along Quartz Creek and into Kenai Lake did not identify any additional populations of Elodea. The Forest Service is currently working to develop a management plan to address this new infestation.



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM AROUND THE STATE

## Growing the supply of certified weed-free gravel in Southcentral AK

Contributed by Anchorage SWCD

Over the winter, Anchorage Soil & Water Conservation District hosted a booth at the Mat-Su and Anchorage Transportation Fairs, where they connected with gravel suppliers and DOT&PF and municipality employees that work on road projects. They also had the opportunity to talk with members of the community about how invasive plants are spread through transportation and road construction. Check out the new Certified Weed-free Gravel Program [info sheet](#) for gravel producers, contractors, and road managers in Southcentral Alaska.



PHOTO BY ANCHORAGE SWCD

## Understanding the extent of Prunus in Fairbanks

Contributed by Hazel Berrios, Fairbanks SWCD

In recent years, the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District (FSWCD) has intensified its efforts to document the presence of *Prunus* in key urban and suburban areas, including Creamer's Field Waterfowl Refuge and other popular recreational spots near the city. Our surveys have identified *Prunus* infestations along the boardwalks and trails of Creamer's Field. Additionally, these infestations have been observed in all major waterways in Fairbanks, including the Chena River, Noyes Slough, Deadman Slough, and Tanana River, with varying degrees of intensity listed from highest to lowest. *Prunus* has also been detected along major roadways such as the Elliot Highway and Chena Hot Springs Road, with infestations typically not extending beyond the Haystack and Two Rivers areas.

Preliminary data analysis suggests that *Prunus* thrives in disturbed habitats, especially in forest areas recently affected by fire and characterized by balsam poplar, a mix of birch and aspen, and nearby water bodies. FSWCD plans to continue their surveys and expand data collection to better understand and predict which habitats are at risk of significant *Prunus* invasion.



Right: A technician with Fairbanks SWCD works to remove a European Bird Cherry tree from Tanana lakes recreation area using a lance to insert herbicide directly into the tree. Photo by Fairbanks SWCD



## Creeping thistle treatment success in Kodiak

Contributed by Masumi Palhof, Kodiak SWCD

Persistence has led to an amazing success story in Kodiak, where a large patch of Creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) has been reduced to trace amounts. Starting in 2015 (top right), targeted, yearly herbicide treatments were implemented that have reduced the population and allowed native vegetation to re-establish. No plants have been found at the site since 2020, although, during a monitoring visit in 2023, a single specimen of the highly invasive thistle was found (right). Long-term monitoring is an essential part of any successful integrated pest management plan!



PHOTOS BY KODIAK SWCD

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM AROUND THE STATE

### Chasing Elodea in Interior Alaska

Contributed by Colin McKenzie, FSWCD

Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District (FSWCD) is gearing up for another season of managing invasive species in Interior Alaska! They are continuing their work on a handful of water bodies that are infested with elodea. These sites have all undergone control efforts, such as aquatic herbicide applications and continued monitoring, to ensure that their efforts are being successful. So far, all the sites that FSWCD has treated have seen partial to complete eradication of elodea but there is still a lot of work to do. Special consideration should be taken when recreating in the following water bodies: Chena Slough, Piledriver Slough, all stocked lakes in the vicinity of Eielson Airforce Base, and

especially Harding Lake, which has seen a persistent elodea presence and is a popular destination for recreating. Elodea has the potential to spread from these infested sites, so please remember to clean, drain, and dry all boats and recreational equipment when leaving and entering water bodies to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. Elodea can survive for a long time out of the water and it only takes one small fragment to start a new infestation.






































































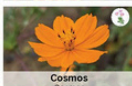















































































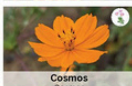





































































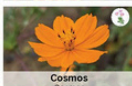



























































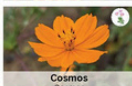

















































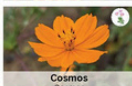







































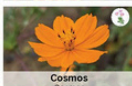





























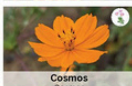

























































PHOTO BY FAIRBANKS SWCD



# Kodiak SWCD prepares for the 2024 growing season

Content contributed by Masumi Palhof

Perennials Plants that live more than 2 years					Annuals, Biennials, & Tender Perennials Plants that live 1-2 years if kept outdoors year-round in Kodiak					Key	Please Do NOT Plant in Kodiak Aggressive and invasive plants we do not recommend growing. This is not a comprehensive list. Contact our office for more information.																																																																																			
										Tree	Forbs/Herbs	Bulb Plants	Shrub/Bush	Vine																																																																																
 European, Ussurian Pear <i>Pyrus communis, P. ussuriensis</i>	 Hops <i>Humulus lupulus</i>	 Clumping or Trailing Lobelia <i>Lobelia</i>	 Dusty Miller <i>Jacobaea maritima</i>	 Baby Blue Eyes <i>Nemophila menziesii</i>	 Hosta <i>Hosta</i>	 Pacific Serviceberry <i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	 Fuchsia <i>Fuchsia</i>	 Love-In-a-Mist <i>Nigella hispanica</i>	 Borage <i>Borago officinalis</i>	 Common Reed <i>Phragmites australis</i>	 Foxtail Barley <i>Hordeum jubatum</i>	 Ribbongrass <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> var. <i>plata</i>	 Spreading/Kentucky Bluegrass <i>Poa pratensis, P. annua</i>	 European Alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	 London Pride <i>Saxifraga x urbium</i>	 Shasta Daisy <i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>	 Ornamental Cabbage <i>Brassica oleracea</i>	 Stock <i>Matthiola incana</i>	 Petunia <i>Petunia x atkinsiana</i>	 Knotweed <i>Fallopia/ Reynoutria</i>	 Goutweed <i>Angelica podagraria</i>	 Common/English Ivy <i>Hedera helix</i>	 Peppermint/Spearmint <i>Mentha piperita, M. spicata</i>	 Mayday Tree, Chokecherry <i>Prunus padus, P. virginiana</i>	 Striped Squill <i>Puschkinia scolopendria</i>	 Peony <i>Paeonia</i>	 Tulip <i>Tulipa</i>	 Godetia <i>Clatagia bipinnata</i>	 Snapdragon <i>Antirrhinum</i>	 False Spiraea <i>Spiraea x arifolia</i>	 Oxeye Daisy <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	 Himalayan Blackberry <i>Rubus discolor</i>	 Scentless False Mayweed <i>Tripsurospermum inodorum</i>	 Sneezeweed <i>Achillea ptarmica</i>	 Himalayan Blue Poppy <i>Meconopsis betulaefolia</i>	 Apple/Crabapple <i>Malus</i>	 Gladolus <i>Gladolus hybrids</i>	 Nemesia <i>Nemesia strumosa, N. fruticans</i>	 Butterfly Flower <i>Silene latifolia</i>	 Purple Crownvetch <i>Scorpiurus verticillatus</i>	 Herb Robert <i>Geranium robertianum</i>	 Rugosa Rose <i>Rosa rugosa</i>	 Foxglove <i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	 Sweet/Dame's Rocket <i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	 Delphinium <i>Delphinium elatum</i>	 Queen of the Prairie <i>Liparis laevis</i>	 Viola <i>Viola cornuta</i>	 Hollyhock <i>Alcea rosea</i>	 Monkeyflower <i>Mimulus lewisii</i>	 Purple Loosestrife <i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	 Bigleaf Lupine <i>Lupinus polyphyllus polyphyllus</i>	 Ground Ivy <i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	 True Forget-me-not <i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>	 Rampion Bellflower <i>Campanula rapunculoides</i>	 Drumstick Primrose <i>Primula acaulis</i>	 Asian Bleeding Heart <i>Lamprocapnos spectabilis</i>	 Dahlia <i>Dahlia</i>	 Strawflower <i>Helianthus bracteatus</i>	 African Daisy <i>Osteospermum</i>	 Bird Vetch <i>Vicia cracca</i>	 Purple Toadflax <i>Linaria purpurea</i>	 Alfalfa <i>Medicago sativa sativa</i>	 Butterfly Bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	 Perennial Comflower <i>Compositum leucanthemifolium</i>	 Orchard Primrose <i>Primula vialii</i>	 Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron spp.</i>	 Common Geranium <i>Pelargonium</i>	 Marigold <i>Tagetes</i>	 Cosmos <i>Cosmos</i>	 English Holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	 European Mountain Ash <i>Sorbaria aucuparia</i>	 Orange Hawkweed <i>Hieracium angustifolium aurantiacum</i>	 Yellow Iris <i>Iris psittacorum</i>	 Common Tansy <i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	 Chives <i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	 Columbine <i>Aquilegia</i>	 Tuberous Begonia <i>Begonia hybrids</i>	 Nasturtium <i>Tropaeolum majus</i>	 Sunflower <i>Helianthus annuus</i>	 St. Johnswort <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	 Bird's-foot Trefoil <i>Lotus corniculatus, L. uliginosus</i>	 Yellow Archangel <i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>	 Dalmatian/Balkan Toadflax <i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	 Butter n' Eggs/Toadflax <i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	 Asiatic Lily <i>Lilium asiaticum</i>	 Przewalski's Leopardplant <i>Ligularia przewalskii</i>	 Pot marigold/Calendula <i>Calendula officinalis</i>	 Blue-eyed Daisy <i>Gaillardia</i>	 Canary Creeper <i>Tropaeolum peruvianum</i>	 Garden Loosestrife <i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>	 Siberian Peashrub <i>Caragana arborescens</i>	 Tibetan Cowslip <i>Primula Section Sikkimensis</i>	 Lady's Mantle <i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	 Leafy Spurge <i>Euphorbia esula</i>
 London Pride <i>Saxifraga x urbium</i>	 Shasta Daisy <i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>	 Ornamental Cabbage <i>Brassica oleracea</i>	 Stock <i>Matthiola incana</i>	 Petunia <i>Petunia x atkinsiana</i>	 Knotweed <i>Fallopia/ Reynoutria</i>	 Goutweed <i>Angelica podagraria</i>	 Common/English Ivy <i>Hedera helix</i>	 Peppermint/Spearmint <i>Mentha piperita, M. spicata</i>	 Mayday Tree, Chokecherry <i>Prunus padus, P. virginiana</i>	 Striped Squill <i>Puschkinia scolopendria</i>	 Peony <i>Paeonia</i>	 Tulip <i>Tulipa</i>	 Godetia <i>Clatagia bipinnata</i>	 Snapdragon <i>Antirrhinum</i>	 False Spiraea <i>Spiraea x arifolia</i>	 Oxeye Daisy <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	 Himalayan Blackberry <i>Rubus discolor</i>	 Scentless False Mayweed <i>Tripsurospermum inodorum</i>	 Sneezeweed <i>Achillea ptarmica</i>	 Himalayan Blue Poppy <i>Meconopsis betulaefolia</i>	 Apple/Crabapple <i>Malus</i>	 Gladolus <i>Gladolus hybrids</i>	 Nemesia <i>Nemesia strumosa, N. fruticans</i>	 Butterfly Flower <i>Silene latifolia</i>	 Purple Crownvetch <i>Scorpiurus verticillatus</i>	 Herb Robert <i>Geranium robertianum</i>	 Rugosa Rose <i>Rosa rugosa</i>	 Foxglove <i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	 Sweet/Dame's Rocket <i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	 Delphinium <i>Delphinium elatum</i>	 Queen of the Prairie <i>Liparis laevis</i>	 Viola <i>Viola cornuta</i>	 Hollyhock <i>Alcea rosea</i>	 Monkeyflower <i>Mimulus lewisii</i>	 Purple Loosestrife <i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	 Bigleaf Lupine <i>Lupinus polyphyllus polyphyllus</i>	 Ground Ivy <i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	 True Forget-me-not <i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>	 Rampion Bellflower <i>Campanula rapunculoides</i>	 Drumstick Primrose <i>Primula acaulis</i>	 Asian Bleeding Heart <i>Lamprocapnos spectabilis</i>	 Dahlia <i>Dahlia</i>	 Strawflower <i>Helianthus bracteatus</i>	 African Daisy <i>Osteospermum</i>	 Bird Vetch <i>Vicia cracca</i>	 Purple Toadflax <i>Linaria purpurea</i>	 Alfalfa <i>Medicago sativa sativa</i>	 Butterfly Bush <i>Buddleia davidii</i>	 Perennial Comflower <i>Compositum leucanthemifolium</i>	 Orchard Primrose <i>Primula vialii</i>	 Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron spp.</i>	 Common Geranium <i>Pelargonium</i>	 Marigold <i>Tagetes</i>	 Cosmos <i>Cosmos</i>	 English Holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	 European Mountain Ash <i>Sorbaria aucuparia</i>	 Orange Hawkweed <i>Hieracium angustifolium aurantiacum</i>	 Yellow Iris <i>Iris psittacorum</i>	 Common Tansy <i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	 Chives <i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	 Columbine <i>Aquilegia</i>	 Tuberous Begonia <i>Begonia hybrids</i>	 Nasturtium <i>Tropaeolum majus</i>	 Sunflower <i>Helianthus annuus</i>	 St. Johnswort <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	 Bird's-foot Trefoil <i>Lotus corniculatus, L. uliginosus</i>	 Yellow Archangel <i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>	 Dalmatian/Balkan Toadflax <i>Linaria dalmatica</i>	 Butter n' Eggs/Toadflax <i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	 Asiatic Lily <i>Lilium asiaticum</i>	 Przewalski's Leopardplant <i>Ligularia przewalskii</i>	 Pot marigold/Calendula <i>Calendula officinalis</i>	 Blue-eyed Daisy <i>Gaillardia</i>	 Canary Creeper <i>Tropaeolum peruvianum</i>	 Garden Loosestrife <i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>	 Siberian Peashrub <i>Caragana arborescens</i>	 Tibetan Cowslip <i>Primula Section Sikkimensis</i>	 Lady's Mantle <i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	 Leafy Spurge <i>Euphorbia esula</i>															
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**Plant Selection Matters**  
When selecting plants for your garden, consider their aggressiveness, suitability to your soil, sun exposure, and watering requirements. Some tender perennials may survive multiple years if grown in a greenhouse or hoop house or if plants/bulbs are overwintered indoors, but will behave as an annual if kept outdoors in Kodiak.

**Don't Plant a Problem**  
Some of these plants are aggressive spreaders not yet assessed for invasiveness, some are known invasives, and some are not yet in Kodiak but invasive in Alaska. Invasive species can harm Alaska's ecosystem, economy, and food security and cause billions of dollars of damage in the U.S. annually.

Plant These

Not These

In preparation for the upcoming gardening season, staff at Kodiak SWCD have developed a new outreach tool - "Plant These, Not These" - to help gardeners hungry for color in Kodiak plant their gardens responsibly. Included on the "Not These" side are plants that are known invasive species as well as aggressive garden plants that have been used in ornamental gardening in Alaska.

Included on the "Plant These" side are both native and non-native plants that have been found to be safe for gardening in Alaska. Currently, the list includes only a few plants that are native to Alaska. Kodiak SWCD wanted to focus on plants that they knew would be available to gardeners in Kodiak. But, Kodiak SWCD hopes to change this in the coming years. They are currently working to develop a local, native plant nursery to supply the area with native seeds and plants.

Want to learn more about gardening responsibly with native plants in Alaska? Visit the [Publications](#) page of the Alaska Native Plant Society's Alaska Native Plant Month website.



# Outside Alaska

In each newsletter, we highlight an invasive species issue beyond Alaska's borders to broaden our understanding of invasive species management on a global scale. This time, an update from Florida on the management of pythons.

Story contributed by Bill Thomas, Jr., USFWS Invasive Species Strike Team Leader- Everglades



Burmese pythons (*Python molurus bivittatus*) are large constrictor snakes native to Southeast Asia that have been introduced to southern Florida through the exotic pet trade. Pythons have likely been established in Florida since the 1980s and are currently distributed over a vast area of public and private lands, crossing multiple jurisdictions south of Lake Okeechobee to the Upper Keys and from the east and west coast of Florida. By far, the areas of the Everglades to the south and southwest of the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Loxahatchee) and east of Naples, Florida, harbor the greatest concentration of pythons.

Pythons are a threat to native ecosystems, human health and safety, Everglades restoration efforts and more. Their impacts include direct predation of native wildlife, competition for resources, and introduction of novel pathogens and parasites. A scientific publication noted a 90% decrease in both medium (i.e., opossums and raccoons) and large mammals (i.e., white-tailed deer) populations seen on wildlife surveys in Everglades National Park (ENP) since surveys began in the early 1970s, likely the result of predation by pythons. Despite control efforts undertaken by land managers since the early 2000s, the python population continues to expand in Florida.

To better manage the continued expansion of the Burmese python population, 15 state, federal and local agencies, tribes, and one non-governmental organization embarked on a three-year collaborative effort to develop a management plan for Burmese pythons; the Florida Python Control Plan (FPCP). The FPCP stresses the importance of a unified approach and adaptive management strategy across the landscape to control invasive Burmese pythons.

Since the mid-1990s, over 21,000 pythons have been removed from the Florida ecosystem. In 2017, in response to the threat to native wildlife, especially to threatened and endangered species, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) established their paid contractor removal programs- Python Action Teams Removing Invasive Constrictors and the Python Elimination Program respectively. Under these two unified programs, contractors receive an hourly 'search' rate plus an incentive payment for each snake removed based upon the length of the python. Premium hourly pay is offered for conservation lands on the edge of the 'advancing front' (i.e., Loxahatchee) and sensitive habitats that harbor 'at risk' species (i.e., Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge [NWR]). Contractors also receive a bonus payment for finding a female python guarding a nest



containing eggs. The two state contractor programs alone have combined to remove over 13,500 pythons on the Everglades landscape since their creation.

Florida NWR staff contribute to the python management effort by developing agreements, conducting surveys, and by funding or participating in collaborative research projects with internal and external partners, universities, and non-governmental organizations. In June of 2022, a verbal agreement was established with FWC and the SFWMD permitting their paid python contractors to access eight south Florida NWRs to survey for and remove pythons.



AN 11+ FOOT BURMESE PYTHON REMOVED FROM A ROCK AND DIRT DEBRIS PILE ON CROCODILE LAKE NWR, NORTH KEY LARGO, FLORIDA. THIS SPECIMEN HAD CONSUMED AN OPOSSUM FITTED WITH A GPS RADIO COLLAR. IT TOOK THE TEAM OVER SIX HOURS TO DIG THE SNAKE FROM ITS UNDERGROUND RE-TREAT. PHOTO BY USFWS

Starting in 2023, Loxahatchee hired two American Conservation Experience interns specifically to conduct python surveys on refuge lands and levees and, if necessary, to respond rapidly to reports of large constrictors on the refuge and in the local area. To date, the interns have not encountered a single python. Crocodile Lake NWR is conducting regular surveys for pythons using interns and volunteers with limited success and is using telemetered prey (i.e., opossums) fitted with GPS collars, a detector dog, and 'scout' snakes to pinpoint the location of pythons in underground refugia on refuge and partner lands. In addition, Crocodile Lake, through an agreement with the University of Florida Species CrocDocs, is funding an invasive species outreach campaign throughout the Florida Keys to educate the public on invasive species, the impacts to native species and the environment, and on available reporting mechanisms, such as the FWC Invasive Species Hotline and IVEGOT1 app.

## New outreach tool for field workers!

In 2024, the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Ad hoc Committee was formed. In response to needs expressed by AKISP members, the Committee set out to create an outreach document to assist IPM practitioners with speaking to the public about IPM and herbicide use in Alaska. A tri-fold was born! Click here for a downloadable/printable version of the document!

**AKISP**  
Invasive Plant Management in Alaska

**LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION?**  
DEC's Pesticide Control Program: <http://www.epa.gov/pesticides>  
EPA pesticides info: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticides>  
National Pesticide Information Center: <http://www.npic.orst.edu/> or 1-800-858-7328  
UAF Cooperative Extension Service: <https://www.uaf.edu/ces/invasives/>  
Help keep Alaska wild and free of invasive species by reporting any sightings at 1-877-464-5454 or using the AK Invasives ID App.  
AK Invasive Species Partnership: <https://alaskainvasives.org/>  
DMR noxious and prohibited weeds list: <https://plants.alaska.gov/invasives/pdf/noxious-weeds.pdf>

**WHY ACT?**  
Invasive species are considered the second greatest threat to biodiversity after habitat loss worldwide! The longer we wait, the greater impact they cause. If we do not respond quickly, we must fight and how to manage the species we can't remove.

**DMR noxious and prohibited weeds list:** <https://plants.alaska.gov/invasives/pdf/noxious-weeds.pdf>

**INVASIVE SPECIES** are any species not native to a particular place and cause harm to humans, the environment, or the economy.

If we take action to prevent further effects of invasive species, we can help protect our abundant natural resources!

**INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (IPM)**

**What is the IPM approach?**  
• Preventing invasive species introduction and spread  
• Early detection of new infestations and rapid response (ERIR) increases management success.  
• Understanding the species and environment to target weaknesses and reasons for invasion.  
• Understanding species biology and the environment to clarify vulnerabilities.  
• Understanding the species and the environment to target weaknesses and reasons for invasion.

**How are control methods selected?**  
Thoughtfully, by considering:  
• Impacts to plants, animals, and people from both the pest and from the treatment options.  
• The biology of the pest, what would remove and discourage it most effectively.  
• Whether a single or combination of control methods will achieve the greatest benefit and least harm to the environment.

**Who is applying herbicides?**  
Applications must be certified through the Alaska Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC). Usually, invasive species applications are conducted by biologists, ecologists, botanists, and land managers who do a large variety of conservation work. In 2021, 2,112 lbs. of herbicide (improving) was applied by the DEC. In 2022, only 2,078 lbs. of herbicide (improving) was applied by the DEC. In 2023, the amount of herbicide used in 2023 was 21% less than in 2021. The success of the work can be seen in how native plants have rebounded, increasing biodiversity and available forage for the state's Kuskokwim Beaver population.

**How are herbicides regulated?**  
The Alaska DEC Pesticide Control Program regulates the use, disposal, storage, and sale of pesticides approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which extensively studies and regulates them for safety.

**How are herbicides used responsibly?**  
Application techniques depend on the species, the size of the infestation, the proximity to sensitive resources, and the timing of the application. Whenever possible, spot spraying or a direct application method is used.  
Applications assess the surrounding sensitive resources and choose the application method and chemical formulation to ensure no adverse effects. If spraying applications are required to monitor wind speeds and spray droplet size to minimize the possibility of herbicide off-target drift. Every herbicide has a label outlining all requirements for use, which by law must be followed.  
Herbicides are not intended to be used indefinitely or any time. The amount of herbicide needed should decrease over time, although it may take several years of targeted applications to control infestations. If applications are not effective, another control method should be implemented.

**Does IPM include pesticides?**  
Yes, a pesticide is any substance that controls a pest, or herbicide is a pesticide that kills plants.  
Herbicides sometimes have the least negative impact on the environment with the greatest control of harmful invasive species.

**What does this look like in the real world?**  
An infestation of Orange Hawkweed was discovered in 2020 near our Camp Road on Kotlik in 2022. Since then, the Kotlik National Wildlife Refuge and Kotlik Soil and Water Conservation District have implemented herbicide use in 2021, 2022, and 2023. The success of the work can be seen in how native plants have rebounded, increasing biodiversity and available forage for the state's Kuskokwim Beaver population.

**Why don't you just let nature take its course?**  
Human introduced species have already begun to upset the balance of nature in Alaska. If we do nothing, invasive plants will continue to spread and exert more plant communities, disrupting ecosystems and degrading natural resources on a loss of biodiversity and harm to fish and wildlife.

**Alaska Invasive Species Partnership**  
[www.alaskainvasives.org](http://www.alaskainvasives.org)  
facebook.com/Alaskainvasives



# Get Involved: Join an AKISP Committee!

The AKISP forms standing committees to address specific topics of concern. No matter your interest, there's a committee for you!

## Annual Workshop Planning

This committee works throughout the year to plan and prepare for the Annual AKISP Workshop. This year's theme: 25 years of AKISP: Learning from the past and looking to the future. Contact: Gino Graziano ([gagraziano@alaska.edu](mailto:gagraziano@alaska.edu))

## Elodea

The Statewide Elodea Committee meets twice a year to support the mission to protect and rehabilitate freshwater ecosystems in Alaska by improving the effectiveness of actions such as research, prevention, early detection, rapid response, outreach, and education through collaboration and resource sharing among partners. The Alaska Elodea Survey Map Viewer is available [here](#). The next committee meeting will be held on October 3rd 2024 at 2pm. Contact Nicole Swenson at [nswenson@ttcd.org](mailto:nswenson@ttcd.org) for more information.

## Government Relations

The AKISP Government Relations Committee is dedicated to engaging with governmental entities about invasive species and the AKISP, and to support and inform policies to promote prevention and management of invasive species in Alaska. Each year we develop and distribute an outreach tool for legislators that AKISP members are welcome to circulate. The committee meets regularly during the legislative session and less frequently throughout the summer. We welcome all participation. Contact: Danielle Verna ([dverna@pwsrccac.org](mailto:dverna@pwsrccac.org)) or Tammy Davis ([tammy.davis@alaska.gov](mailto:tammy.davis@alaska.gov)).

## Marine

The Marine Invasive Species Committee provides a forum for community-based stakeholders to discuss and problem-solve early detection monitoring, education, research, and new detections, together with identifying and working to mitigate events that could facilitate the spread of marine invasive species. The committee meets via Microsoft Teams the second Tuesday of each month at 10am and welcomes participation by all interested. A subcommittee focused on European green crab in Alaska meets on the third Wednesday of the month at 11am. Contact Tammy Davis ([tammy.davis@alaska.gov](mailto:tammy.davis@alaska.gov)) or Danielle Verna ([dverna@pwsrccac.org](mailto:dverna@pwsrccac.org)).







Left: Kenai fjords National park invasive plant management team checks spongy moth monitoring traps deployed around the exit glacier developed area. Right: Kenai Fjords National Park invasive plant management team collecting weather data before applying herbicide Credit: National Park service

## Outreach & Education

The Outreach and Education Committee meets at least once a month, generating discussion and content as it relates to invasive species outreach in Alaska. The O&E Committee also maintains the [AKISP Facebook Page](#) - follow and "like" us to stay up to date on all things invasive species in Alaska and beyond! Interested in joining our committee? Reach out to Ashley Lutto at [ashely\\_lutto@fws.gov](mailto:ashely_lutto@fws.gov).

## Dreissenid Mussel

The Dreissenid Committee collaborates to keep freshwater ecosystems free from dreissenid mussels (zebra and quagga mussels) and other freshwater invasive mollusks, as a means to protect Alaska resources and the livelihoods that depend upon them. This new (as of 2024!) committee meets monthly on the last Friday of the month, and is currently collaborating to contribute water quality data to existing data sets and to build an early detection network in lakes vulnerable to invasion. Contact: Tammy Davis ([tammy.davis@alaska.gov](mailto:tammy.davis@alaska.gov)).

## Northern Pike

The Northern Pike Committee engages in multiple efforts to prevent new introductions of northern pike and control existing populations to benefit native fisheries and ecosystems. Members are actively engaged in outreach on this topic and the committee also maintains the [Technical Guidance and Management Plan for Invasive Northern Pike in Southcentral Alaska: 2022-2030](#). This is a living document and serves as the foundation for the committee's collaborative work to prevent northern pike from spreading, remove their populations where feasible, and restore impacted fisheries. Contact: Krissy Dunker ([kristine.dunker@alaska.gov](mailto:kristine.dunker@alaska.gov)) or Parker Bradley ([parker.bradley@alaska.gov](mailto:parker.bradley@alaska.gov))

## Weed-free Gravel and Forage Certification, Division of Agriculture Program

This committee meets quarterly to provide a mechanism for managing and optimizing the Alaska Weed Free Forage, Straw, Gravel, and Mulch Certification Program. The program's objective is to reduce the potential for transport and dispersal of listed weed species in Alaska through the movement of forage, straw, gravel, and mulch products. Contact: Summer Nay ([summer.nay@salchadeltaswcd.org](mailto:summer.nay@salchadeltaswcd.org)).