



Business Plan 2007-2010

Ratified January 19, 2007

Introduction

The Alberta Invasive Plants Council (AIPC) is a not-for-profit association of professionals from federal, provincial, municipal governments, industry and non-government organizations. Council members are knowledgeable on invasive plants or their management. The AIPC was formed in 2004 to address the lack of coordination and understanding associated with invasive plants within the province of Alberta.

Recognizing that managing invasive plants is a shared responsibility among stakeholders, the Council will:

- Foster awareness and understanding of invasive plant issues.
- Encourage action to help detect, prevent and manage invasive plants.
- Bridge mandates and encourage partnerships and dialogue between organizations and stakeholders (stakeholders include: government agencies, NGOs/invasive plant councils/NAWMA, landowners/general public, industry/occupants, research/academia)
- Serve as a respected repository and source of credible information and resources on invasive plants in Alberta.
- Work toward becoming the lead agency to coordinate and enable shared responsibility of invasive plant management in Alberta.

Invasive plants threaten the integrity and economic value of Alberta's ecosystem, reducing biodiversity, displacing native plants, damaging wildlife habitat and reducing food sources, decreasing land productivity, and diminishing aesthetic values of the land, costing our economy millions of dollars each year.

Successful management of invasive plants requires the mutual cooperation of a variety of agencies, organizations, user groups and individuals. The AIPC provides a forum in which to pursue cooperative and innovative solutions.

Vision

Albertans understand the impacts and significance of invasive plants and are motivated to work together to ensure Alberta's environment, economy and social interests are safeguarded.

Mission Statement

The Alberta Invasive Plant Council (AIPC) provides leadership, expertise and a forum to engage, enable and empower Albertans to take action on invasive plant issues.

Guiding Principles and Values

The Alberta Invasive Plant Council, individually and collectively, desires to be

1. Collaborative and consensus-based.
2. Innovative and open to non-traditional approaches to managing invasive plants.
3. Science-based in its assessment and prioritization of concerns.
4. Transparent and accountable in its business.
5. Trusted by Albertans as a credible source of invasive plant information and expertise.

Challenges

The AIPC has identified a number of key challenges in advancing invasive plant management in Alberta:

1. Lack of awareness and understanding of the impacts on the environment, economy and society, as well as impacts to individual livelihoods
2. Alignment of policy, mandates and strategies and the coordination of actions to fulfil them.
3. Lack of science defining socio-economic impacts of invasive plants on Alberta's landscapes.

The AIPC's Goals and Strategies aim to address these challenges.

Goals and Strategies

The AIPC will aim to achieve the following goals by employing the indicated strategies.

Goal 1

Enhance the authority, membership and profile of the AIPC.

Strategy 1 – Formalize the governance of the Council including Board of Directors and Membership

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Develop Terms of Reference to govern general Membership and Board of Directors.
 - b) Develop policies, procedures and operating guidelines.

Strategy 2 – Secure long term funding to support salaries and expenses

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Develop promotional plan to attract/increase membership.
 - b) Apply for grants.
 - c) Annual General Meetings and workshops.
 - d) Sponsorship.

Strategy 3 – Develop recognition/awards program

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Create a section on the website as well as in the newsletter dedicated to recognizing an individual or group for outstanding efforts in increasing awareness about invasive plants.
 - b) Establish an awards/recognition ceremony as part of the AGM.

Goal 2

Increase the awareness of Albertans about the impacts of invasive plants on the environment, economy, society and individual livelihoods.

Strategy 1 – Lead education and awareness on invasive plants in Alberta through public forums and presentations

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Annual General Meetings combined with invasive plant forums/workshops.
 - b) Attend stakeholder functions (as a presenter, showcasing poster/display, or just as a delegate) to maintain rapport and increase profile (e.g. Home and Garden Shows).
 - c) Host seminars and workshops.
 - d) Host invasive plant days/weed pick days (demonstration and empowerment).
 - e) Hold open discussions at speaker's bureau (e.g. Call of the Land spot), public service announcements, etc.

Strategy 2 – Develop, maintain and distribute educational and promotional materials

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Maintain website as key information exchange forum.
 - b) Publish e-newsletters, technical bulletins and fact sheets on website and distribute to membership via email.
 - c) Scan existing school curriculum modules and seize opportunities to promote invasive plant education through the school curriculum.
 - d) Create awareness signs and promote their use (provide sample signate on website).
 - e) Maintain invasive plant brochure.
 - f) Develop an icon/persona to be a symbol for invasive plants in Alberta.
 - g) Utilize other educational items as opportunities arise (e.g. Invasive plant calendar).

Goals and Strategies (continued)

Goal 3

Collaborate with stakeholders with mutual interests in invasive plants.

Strategy 1 – Facilitate communication and collaboration between key stakeholders and partners

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Provide a venue to facilitate information exchange and coordination of management on invasive plants in Alberta.
 - b) Encourage the establishment of invasive plant partnerships or working groups at regional/local level.
 - c) Establish mutually beneficial partnerships where opportunities arise (e.g. Tansy biocontrol).

Strategy 2 – Promote coordinated research efforts

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Support invasive plant research and the transfer of results/information.
 - b) Actively pursue research projects focused on the social and economic impacts of invasive plants on Alberta's natural capital.

Goal 4

Operate as an effective resource for agencies and stakeholders.

Strategy 1 – Provide expert advice to stakeholders in applied invasive plant management

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Utilize and promote the GOA risk assessment tool and its outputs as scientific backing for advice on, justifying prioritizing of, and education relating to invasive plant management.
 - b) Maintain an information hotline for invasive plants through the website (email or phone).
 - c) Continually update information on the most effective control methods, best management practices and mitigation measures.

Strategy 2 – Be informed about key policy and program initiatives on invasive plants of relevance to Alberta

- ACTIONS:*
- a) Board members to bring forward key areas of concern from the sector they represent.
 - b) Provide appropriate input to key policy initiatives on invasive plants.