

Guide to Noxious Weeds & Invasive Plants for Developers & Real Estate Professionals



Hoary Cress

Invasive species are a growing concern for local governments, developers & real estate professionals.

Alien invaders such as European Fire Ants, Tree of Heaven, Brown Marmorated Stink Bugs, Puncturevine, Giant Hogweed, and Knotweeds can have profound, detrimental effects on the use and value of property.

BC's Weed Control Act applies to all Crown and private lands in British Columbia, and requires land owners or occupiers to control listed Noxious Weeds.

When purchasing property, many folks don't realize that their little piece of paradise already has a noxious weed problem, or may get infested if integrated management methods are not used to stop the spread of noxious weeds.

Noxious weeds take over native ecosystems and can cause unsightly weed infestations that degrade property values.

If caught early, an infestation can be relatively inexpensive to control, and possibly, eradicated.

If left untreated, a small infestation can quickly spread, leaving a degraded piece of land with a lowered property value that is very costly to treat, as it often takes multiple years of repeated treatment to manage an infestation.

As a realtor or a developer, you are a key partner in spreading the word about the detrimental impacts of noxious weeds on property values, and the potential future impacts of new infestations on adjacent properties, local ecosystems, and wildlife.



Japanese Knotweed, Vernon BC

grows aggressively through concrete, impacting roads & house foundations

If the presence of noxious weeds is acknowledged and proper treatment is administered, the economic, ecological and aesthetic value of the property is increased, and the spread of noxious weeds can be prevented.



Weed Regulations & Bylaws

Property owners and land occupiers must comply with the provincial **Weed Control Act**, and also, follow any relevant bylaws.

Regional districts and municipalities can consolidate Noxious Weeds or Invasive Species regulations in **Unsightly Premises** or **Good Neighbour** bylaws, or enact a **Noxious Weed** bylaw.

A **Weed Control Officer** or Inspector may be appointed. Nuisance abatement and cost-recovery bylaws provide local governments with authority to enter, clean up, and charge the property owner.

Covenants can be placed to protect adjacent natural areas from invasive species and, if damage occurs, the landowner could be subjected to civil action.

Soil deposition bylaws can regulate the movement of infested soils, and local governments may also regulate the safe disposal of invasive species.

Complaint and enforcement policies vary by jurisdiction - please check with your municipality or regional district. Regulations may also vary by electoral area.

Invasive Species are non-native organisms whose introduction to BC is likely to cause harm to human health, the economy and our environment.

Invasive Plants are non-native plants that invade our ecosystems and out-compete local plants or cultivated crops for water, nutrients and light.

The Province of BC has classified some invasive plants as “**Noxious Weeds**” within all regions of BC, while others are considered noxious within regional district boundaries.

Find a list at www.bcinvasives.ca > Invasive Species > About > Regulations



Orange Hawkweed

Developing Land?

Land development often requires movement and redistribution of soil, which can spread invasive species to a new area.



To prevent invasive plant growth and soil erosion:

- Minimize disturbed area.
- Retain natural vegetation.
- Plant fast-growing, native species immediately after disturbance.
- Find more best management practices in **Develop with Care** (2014), produced by the BC Ministry of Environment.
- Or, go to www.bcinvasives.ca > Resources > Publications

Contact your local government about properly managing, removing, and disposing of invasive species

Selling Infested Property

The sale and purchase of private property infested with invasive species can quickly become complex, placing the sale at risk.



Legal complications may result from damage caused by invasive species, the high cost of removal, and the on-going costs of continued treatment over multiple years to keep an existing infestation under control.

Property Disclosure Statement (PDS)

When involved in a property transaction, landowners have an ethical duty to be forthcoming with all information about the property. The PDS is the tool to disclose issues or concerns surrounding a property, and may be legally binding if incorporated into the sales contract. The seller's agent should be apprised of invasive species within property boundaries, and any nearby infestations.

Online Mapping

Visit www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/plants to learn more about **BC's Invasive Plant Program** and the **Invasive Alien Plant Program (IAPP)** database, which allows you to view online maps of invasive plant surveys, treatments, and activity plans for the entire province.

Get Advice

Find more information about invasive species and management advice specific to the Okanagan:

Okanagan & Similkameen Invasive Species Society
www.oasiss.ca 250.404.0115

Columbia Shuswap Invasive Species Society
columbiashuswapinvasives.org
1-855-PUL-WEED (785-9333)

Regional District of North Okanagan
www.rdno.ca/weeds
250.550.3700



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