



COLUMBIA VALLEY LOCAL CONSERVATION FUND (CVLCF) FINAL REPORT 2019

General Instructions

- Final reports must be submitted **by 4:00 pm MT January 31, 2020** to the Kootenay Conservation Program. Email final report to info@kootenayconservation.ca.
- All areas of the final report must be answered.

Section A – GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Project Title (as indicated in application): Strategic Invasive Plant Control of Leafy Spurge (SIPCOLS)

2. Proponent

- a) Legal Name: East Kootenay Invasive Species Council
b) Organization Registration #: S-53803
c) Mailing Address: 1902 Theatre Rd. Cranbrook, BC Postal Code: V1C 7G1
d) Contact: Kendal Benesh, Program Manager
e) Telephone #: 250-919-7826 f) Fax #: N/A
g) Email: kendal@ekisc.com

3. Partner (if applicable)

- a) Legal Name:
b) Organization Registration #:
c) Mailing Address: Postal Code:
d) Contact:
e) Telephone #: f) Fax #:
g) Email:

Section B – PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Project Location: RDEK Electoral Areas F and G
(ie: RDEK area, watershed, direction from major centre, etc)

2. Total Project Value: 19204

3. CVLCF Contribution: 6500

4. Non-CVLCF Contribution: 12704

5. Single or multiple year project: This is year 4 of a 5 year project.

Section C – PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Please provide a single paragraph describing your project, its objective (goals) and the results. As this summary will be used in CVLCF communications, clearly state the issues addressed and avoid overly technical descriptions. Maximum 2000 characters (~290 words).

The objective of this project is to control and prevent the spread of leafy spurge (LS) infestations in RDEK Electoral Areas F and G, including inventory and mapping of existing and new LS sites, and treatment of LS sites within 1km of private property. During the 2019 field season, EKISC coordinated the inventory and treatment of 99 LS sites across high value grasslands and conservation areas in the upper Columbia Valley in collaboration with various stakeholders (RDEK, MFLNRORD, Village of Radium, Canada Wildlife Service). Chemical treatments were delivered in early October using 1,693 L of herbicide mix, covering an area of 8.45 ha. Approximately 10% of treatment sites were monitored to assess treatment completion and herbicide efficacy and all inventory and treatment data were entered into the Provincial Invasive Alien Plant Program database prior to December 1, 2019.

An assessment of 2019 treatment locations indicate that herbicide treatments are continuing to be successful for management of LS by reducing the spread and size of existing infestations, and ultimately supporting healthy ecosystem function in the upper Columbia Valley. Specifically, in 2019, 100% of project site locations in the Columbia Wetlands Wildlife Management Area (CWWMA) were treated – the first time this large of an area has been covered in one year. Site monitoring resulted in a 100% site completion score and a 95% treatment efficacy score. At a site-specific level, we are also seeing successes in long term treatments, i.e., areas where over time the use of herbicide and area treated is decreasing. By managing existing LS infestations, we also are actively preventing the spread and introduction of this species into neighbouring areas. Finally, we are continuing to engage new stakeholders in this project, building support for LS management in the upper Columbia Valley.

2. OPTIONAL: If your project lends itself to sparking interest through a compelling sound bite (for potential use in CVLCF communications), please tell us what that would be. Maximum 1050 characters (~150 words).

Got roots? Leafy Spurge does. This invasive species shoots out an extensive root system as far as 9 metres – about as long as a school bus! If you aren't aware, invasives pose significant threats to food security, human health, and economic development. In the Upper Columbia Valley, Leafy Spurge has infested high value grasslands and conservation areas, and because of its impressive ability to spread far and wide, it's very difficult to manage. EKISC, with support from the CVLCF and local land managers, has inventoried, treated, and monitored these areas for the past nine years in order to reduce direct pressures on biodiversity in the area. This has allowed EKISC to not only make better informed decisions regarding Leafy Spurge management planning for the Columbia Valley, but has also generated successes in raising awareness about Leafy Spurge for land managers and user groups, and has actively operated to reduce the spread of existing populations and prevent introduction of new infestations.

3. Biodiversity Targets (please list, maximum 90 words):

This project works to reduce direct pressures on biodiversity and is related to Aichi Biodiversity Target 9: By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment.

This project takes place in upland grassland and open forest ecosystems of the RDEK and includes globally significant components of the Columbia Valley Wetlands.

4. IUCN Threats to Target (please list, maximum 90 words):

Invasive species are recognized as one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss at the global level by the IUCN. In addition to negative environmental impacts, invasive species pose a threat to food security, human health and economic development. This project directly aims to mitigate the negative environmental, social and economic impacts of Leafy Spurge in the Columbia Valley.

Section D – PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND RESULTS

1. Identify the deliverables outlined in your application in the table below (50 words/field) and list the results of each. Please include copies of any relevant communications products (brochures, posters, videos, websites, photos of signage, etc.) resulting from this project. Add an attachment if you need more room.

Deliverables	Results
Site Selection: (a) Generate a list of leafy spurge sites in RDEK Electoral Areas F and G using the Provincial IAPP database, and (b) Identify private properties with leafy spurge and prioritize treatments at sites that are within a 1km buffer.	<p>(a) We generated a list of existing leafy spurge sites in the project area using the Provincial IAPP database.</p> <p>(b) Sites were reviewed and a SIPCOLS site eligibility list was produced based on location (within 1km of private property), treatment records, and available funding.</p>
Coordination: (a) Develop and (b) Present a work plan to Provincial Ministries, the Regional District, local community groups, and other relevant agencies and organizations.	<p>(a) We developed an annual SIPCOLS work plan based on site selection, and available funding from CVLCF and other stakeholders (e.g., Canadian Wildlife Service, Provincial Ministries).</p> <p>(b) We presented this work plan to stakeholders (Canadian Wildlife Service, Ministry of MFLNRORD, Ministry of Transport and Infrastructure).</p>
Treatments: (a) Administer treatment contract to a qualified, experienced herbicide applicator. (b) Complete treatments at sites identified in work plan.	<p>(a) Our SIPCOLS treatment contract was administered to Rob Chemelli at RMC Enterprises. He is a licensed herbicide applicator with significant experience with leafy spurge management.</p> <p>(b) Treatment plans were communicated in Spring 2019. Herbicide treatments were completed by October 15, 2019.</p>
Monitoring & Data Entry: (a) Monitor at least 10% of all treatments to ensure efficacy and site completion is reached, and (b) Enter all inventory and treatment data into the Provincial IAPP database.	<p>(a) At least 10% of contractor treatments were monitored to ensure site completion and treatment efficacy.</p> <p>(b) All inventory and treatment data collected to date were entered into the IAPP database prior to December 1, 2019.</p>
Reporting: (a) Analyze and summarize treatment records, and (b) complete Final Report outlining the goals, objectives, and measures of success.	<p>(a/b) Analysis and reporting on the SIPCOLS project, including an overview of project goals, objectives and measures of success, are complete and will be submitted along with this report (prior to the January 31st, 2020 deadline).</p>
Communications: (a) Press release to local papers highlighting the project and funding support (b) Present final results to all Partners and other relevant Government agencies and organizations and (c) Press release to local papers showcasing project and results.	<p>(a) A project spotlight was included in the EKISC September Newsletter, highlighting the project support of CVLCF and the KCP.</p> <p>(b) Final results are being presented to partners and relevant organizations during seasonal meetings and 2020 work planning sessions.</p> <p>(c) A final press release was completed in January 2020 and run on EKISC social media.</p>

Section E – PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

1. Please evaluate the effectiveness of the project using objective standards, quantifiable criteria and/or quality control measures identified in your application/proposal. Maximum 2000 characters (~290 words).

To assist with tracking accomplishments and results, EKISC tracks the following measures of success related to this project: (1) Short term success of invasive plant treatments through seasonal monitoring of project sites. Treatments are monitored for efficacy, completion, and response. In 2019, 100% of project site locations in the CWWMA were treated (note: this was the first time this large of an area has been covered in one year). Monitoring resulted in a 100% site completion score and a 95% treatment efficacy score. Treatment efficacy score was not 100% due to the limitation of herbicide selection (currently in BC we do not have access to herbicides that will translocate the entire root length, therefore 95% treatment efficacy is expected). (2) Long term success of invasive plant treatments through annual site monitoring. Treatment and inventory records are collected annually and entered into Provincial IAPP database (includes infestation size, density, herbicide use, etc.). Some long-term treatment sites are resulting in reduced size and density of LS infestations. For example, treatments at Site 324112 within the CWWMA has had a steady decrease in the total treatment area over the last 3 years. Note: not all SIPCOLS project sites have annual funding. Amount of herbicide also depends on application rate. (3) Prevention of new LS introductions. We aim to reduce the spread of LS into new areas within the Columbia Valley through early detection and rapid response and treating known infested areas. Though difficult to quantify, because of successful treatments we anticipate a lower frequency of new LS introductions into project areas. (4) Stakeholder engagement and participation. Success can be measured in the number of stakeholders participating in the SIPCOLS Project. This year, we were able to engage with the Shuswap Indian Band and hope to work with the Lands Department in 2020 on treatments adjacent to reserve lands.

2. What are the top 3 lessons learned from the project that would be important to communicate to others doing similar work throughout the RDEK? Maximum 1050 characters (~150 words).

(1) Due to the nature of invasives, it can be difficult to quantify successes in management actions. LS spreads quickly and can be introduced to new areas easily – so while we work to reduce distribution and density of existing populations, we see the introduction and spread of new infestations. Therefore, our main lesson learned is to ensure that invasive plant management programs set realistic and achievable objectives and goals; ones that can be effectively communicated to stakeholders and project partners. (2) With an increase in inventory and survey efforts, we often see an increase in LS presence and distribution. This again makes it difficult to quantify successes but should be anticipated to help future project planning. (3) Invasives do not know boundaries. This is increasingly important when thinking about management for LS, and why coordinating treatments across stakeholders and landscapes is crucial. For anyone considering invasive plant management, we recommend contacting and engaging with adjacent managers.

Section F – FURTHER COMMENTS

1. Please provide any further comments including recommendations for future conservation efforts. If your project produced a narrative or scientific report or additional project products (e.g. maps, photos), attach them as an Appendix (maximum 90 words).

Please see the following documents:

- SIPCOLS Supplementary Information 2019 for treatment summaries, maps, and future recommendations
- Appendix 1 for 2016 - 2019 chemical treatment records
- Appendix 2 for EKISC SIPCOLS News

Section G – FINANCIAL REPORT

1. Please submit a financial report for the project outlining revenue and expenditures with a comparison to the budget submitted with your CVLCF application. **Use the Final Budget Reporting form provided.** Details on any discrepancies from the budgeted amounts or items are required (maximum 90 words).

There are no major changes from the original proposed budget. Note the RDEK's Neighbourhood Invasive Plant Program does not provide funding to the SIPCOLS Project. The Village of Radium contributed funding to treatment of LS in 2019. This is acknowledged in the budget template.



Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund (CVLCF) Final Reporting Budget

Proponent: East Kootenay Invasive Species Council

10

Please include both cash and in-kind amounts, and itemize all projected revenues and expenditures, confirmed and pending (including in-kind contributions). Please ensure revenues and expenses balance.

Be sure to identify the specific component(s) of the project allocated to the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund. Record them in the "CMLCF Funding" column.

Please remove all green text upon completion of this Budget Form.

Strategic Invasive Plant Control of Leafy Spurge

Annual Report 2019
Supplementary Information



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Date: January 15, 2020



Contents

List of Tables	1
List of Figures	1
Introduction	2
Objectives	2
Management Area	2
Treatment Summary & Project Results	4
2019 Treatments.....	4
Measures of Success.....	5
Future Recommendations	12

List of Tables

Table 1 Summary of SIPCOLS treatments, project funding, and stakeholder participation.....	4
Table 2 Examples of sites that have received treatment funding since 2016 and are experiencing a trend in decreased infestation size and herbicide use.....	6

List of Figures

Figure 1 Invasive Plant Management Areas (IPMAs) within the Regional District of East Kootenay. Note that IMPA's 1 through 3 are further divided into sub-IPMAs.....	3
Figure 2 Locations of 2019 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.	8
Figure 3 Locations of 2018 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.	9
Figure 4 Locations of 2017 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.	10
Figure 5 Locations of 2017 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.	11



Introduction

The East Kootenay Invasive Species Council (EKISC) is a regional non-profit organization that strives to mitigate the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of invasive species within the East Kootenay Region. Part of this work includes coordinating the inventory and treatment of invasive species on different land jurisdictions and fostering increased support for invasive species management. As such, EKISC works with various land managers and granting agencies to provide noxious and invasive weed control activities in areas across the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK). In 2019, EKISC partnered with the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund (CVLCF), a program supported by the RDEK and administered by the Kootenay Conservation Program (KCP) to deliver year 4 of 5 of the Strategic Invasive Plant Control of Leafy Spurge (SIPCOLS) Project.

The overall objective of this project is to control and prevent the spread of leafy spurge (LS) infestations in RDEK Electoral Areas F and G, including inventory and mapping of existing and new LS sites, and treatment of LS sites within 1km of private property. During the 2019 field season, EKISC coordinated the inventory and treatment of LS sites across high value grasslands and conservation areas in the upper Columbia Valley in collaboration with various stakeholders. Chemical treatments were delivered in early October, and treatment sites were monitored to assess treatment completion and herbicide efficacy. Inventory treatment data were entered into the Provincial Invasive Alien Plant Program (IAPP) database.

Project deliverables and results can be found in the completed *CVLCF Final Report template for 2019*. This Supplementary Information document contains supporting material, such as inventory and treatment records and project maps, that help EKISC evaluate the effectiveness of this Project in terms of short- and long-term successes, and stakeholder participation.

Objectives

Specific objectives for 2019 delivery of the SIPCOLS Project include:

1. Inventory and map all known and newly identified LS sites in the project area.
2. Create a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder invasive plant management plan for LS in the Columbia Valley, focusing on areas that are of high habitat value and pose the greatest threat to adjacent land managers (i.e., Wildlife Management Areas, conservation lands, agricultural lands).
3. Treat identified high-priority LS infestations within 1km of private land in the project area. Infestations that are on crown land within 1km of the Columbia Wetlands Wildlife Management Area (CWWMA) were also treated to protect the high ecological value surrounding the wetlands.
4. Communicate importance of LS control to stakeholders and community members within the Columbia Valley.

Management Area

Invasive plant treatments occurred within the East Kootenay Region, which has been divided by EKISC into five primary Invasive Plant Management Areas (IPMAs), as shown in Figure 1. The intent of delineating these units is to provide a more localized approach to prioritizing invasive plant species. Invasive plant treatments taking place under the SIPCOLS Project occurred within IPMAs 4 and 5. Several known infestations of LS occur outside of these IPMAs but are treated with other land manager funding.

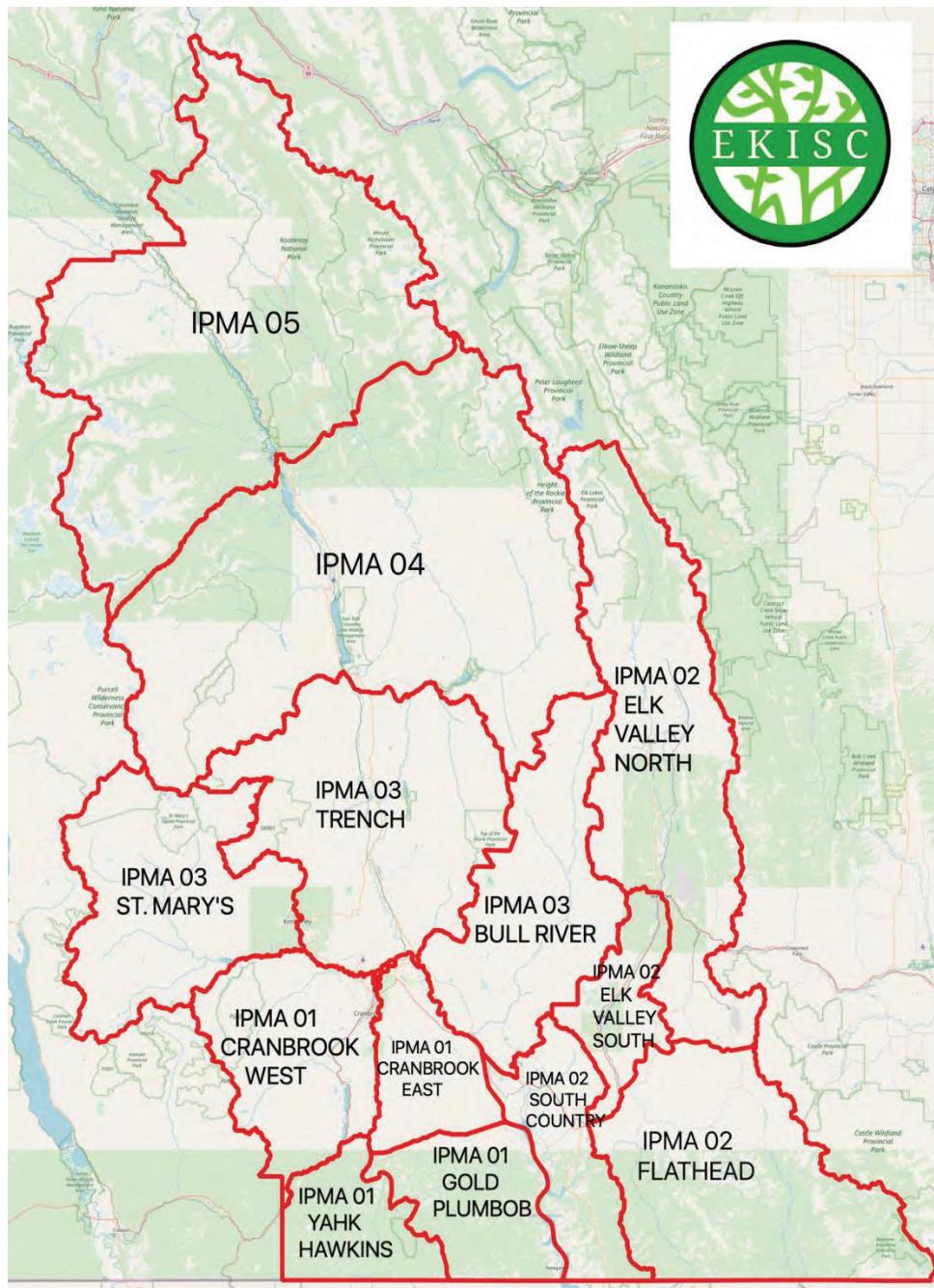


Figure 1 Invasive Plant Management Areas (IPMAs) within the Regional District of East Kootenay. Note that IPMA's 1 through 3 are further divided into sub-IPMAs. The SIPCOLS Project manages LS infestations within IPMAs 4 and 5, within the Columbia Valley.



Treatment Summary & Project Results

2019 Treatments

EKISC combines available information from the Provincial Invasive Alien Plant Program (IAPP) database, previous treatments completed, project and site objectives, existing funding, and adjacent land manager plant management plans to allocate treatment dollars for the SIPCOLS Project. Treatments for LS are typically completed at the same time as nearby treatments to increase efficiency and better utilize a landscape level approach.

In 2019, EKISC coordinated the inventory and treatment of 99 LS sites across high value grasslands and conservation areas in the upper Columbia Valley in collaboration with various stakeholders (e.g., RDEK, MFLNRORD, Village of Radium, Canada Wildlife Service). Chemical treatments were delivered in early October using 1,693 L of herbicide mix, covering an area of 8.45 ha. Table 1 summarizes treatment information, as well as funding levels and stakeholder engagement for the SIPCOLS Project from 2016 to 2019.

A complete extract of all 2019 chemical treatment locations (as well as treatments completed in the years 2016, 2017 and 2018) can be found in Appendix 1: 2016-2019 Leafy Spurge Treatment Data.

Table 1 Summary of annual SIPCOLS treatments, project funding, and stakeholder participation.

Year	Total Funding Allocated to LS ¹	SIPCOLS Funding Provided ²	# LS Sites Treated ³	Amount of herbicide mix used (L) ⁴	Area covered (ha) ⁵	No weed found sites ⁶	Stakeholders Engaged ⁷
2016	\$8,713.54	\$6,838.63	81	1842.35	9.19	20	5; MFLNRORD, MOTI, BC Hydro, CVLCF, EKISC
2017	\$7,596.86	\$6,500.00	96	896.11	4.41	56	6; MFLNRORD, MOTI, BC Hydro, CVLCF, EKISC, CWS
2018	\$12,565.00	\$6,500.00	115	1837.68	9.01	16	7; MFLNRORD, MOTI, BC Hydro, CVLCF, EKISC, CWS, RDEK, Village of Radium
2019	\$19,204.00	\$6,500.00	99	1693.06	8.45	15	8; MFLNRORD, MOTI, BC Hydro, CVLCF, EKISC, CWS, NCC, Village of Radium

¹Total funding allocated is the total amount of funding provided by all EKISC project partners to treat LS.

²SIPCOLS funding is funding provided directly through the CVLCF.



³Number of LS sites treated is highly dependent on funding, and can also be affected by seasonal work planning, spatial distribution of sites, and other factors. Sites also vary in size and density. Funding is typically the limiting factor in number of sites treated (i.e., not all LS sites are treated every year).

⁴Amount of herbicide mix used varies based on number of sites visited, size and density of site, type of herbicide used and application rate. Less herbicide used does not necessarily mean less LS sites or density. Amount of herbicide used can also vary greatly at an individual site from year to year due to plant response to treatment.

⁵Area covered is the total treatment area for all LS sites. Area covered is based on the amount of herbicide mix used and the herbicide delivery rate. Area covered can also vary greatly at an individual site from year to year due to plant response to treatment. Note: previous reporting included only the area treated with CVLCF funds.

⁶No weed found sites. This is the number of sites visited that had no LS plants observed. LS sites are visited for up to five years after No Weed Found. LS plants may not be visible at a site one year but be visible the subsequent year.

⁷Stakeholders engaged is the number of funders that contributed funding to LS treatments in a given year.

Measures of Success

Due to the nature of invasive species, it can be incredibly difficult to quantify successes in management actions. Invasive plants can spread quickly and be introduced to new areas easily – so while we are working hard to reduce the distribution and density of existing LS populations, we are also seeing the introduction and spread of new infestations in the Columbia Valley. Throughout this project, EKISC has observed that LS responds aggressively and unpredictably to herbicide treatments. For example, a site that has herbicide applied in one year may experience a boom in growth during subsequent years – the infestation may either increase in density, or more often in size, sending out new shoots up to ten metres away from the main infestation. This can increase the size of the site or “area covered” and increase the amount of herbicide used.

LS is also very easily spread to new sites, making it difficult to use the total number of LS sites in the Columbia Valley as an indicator of project success. In addition, the longer this project runs, the more likely we are to see more LS sites, as our cumulative plant inventory time increases. Finally, due to limited funding, EKISC is not able to treat all LS sites every year which can also complicate evaluating treatment and project success.

To assist with tracking accomplishments and results, EKISC tracks the following measures of success related to this project:

1. Short term success of invasive plant treatments through seasonal monitoring of project sites. Treatments for this project are monitored for treatment efficacy, completion, and response.
 - a. In 2019, 100% of site locations in the CWWMA were treated – the first time this large of an area has been covered in one year. Monitoring of LS treatments sites resulted in a 100% site completion score and a 95% treatment efficacy score. Treatment efficacy score was not 100% due to the limitation of herbicide selection (currently in BC we do not have access to herbicides that will translocate the entire root length, therefore 95% treatment efficacy is expected).
2. Long term success of invasive plant treatments through annual site monitoring. Treatment and inventory records are collected annually and entered into the Provincial IAPP database. Data submitted includes the infestation size, density, and herbicide use.
 - a. Some long-term treatment sites are resulting in reduced size and density of LS infestations. For example, Site 324112 within the CWWMA has the following treatment record data associated with it:



- 2017: 21L of herbicide sprayed over 0.08 ha
- 2018: 11.5L of herbicide sprayed over 0.03 ha
- 2019: 9.5L of herbicide sprayed over 0.04 ha

Table 2 showcases additional sites where we are observing trends of decreased herbicide use and infestation size. Many of these areas are in high value wildlife habitat.

- b. As mentioned, although the infestation size is decreasing in areas, new sites are establishing, and some existing patches of LS seem to be spreading. This is likely due to the long root system of LS, and effort from treated plants to spread out and survive once treatment is initiated. Though we have observed the unpredictability of LS response to herbicide, we expect that subsequent treatments at these sites will decrease plant density and extent.
3. Prevention of new LS introductions. We aim to reduce the spread of LS into new areas within the Columbia Valley through early detection and rapid response and treating known infested areas.
 - a. Though difficult to quantify, because of successful treatments we anticipate a lower frequency of new LS introductions into project areas. The more we are able to contain existing infestations, the lower rate of spread into new areas.
4. Stakeholder engagement and participation. Success can be measured in the number of stakeholders participating in the SIPCOLS Project.
 - a. Through raising awareness of the negative impacts LS has on ecosystem integrity in the Columbia Valley, SIPCOLS has motivated additional stakeholders and land managers to participate in coordinated LS management. Table 1 highlights that over time, we have both increased the number of stakeholders contributing funding to the treatment of LS, but also increased the overall leveraged funding for this project.
 - b. For example, in 2019 CVLCF, MOTI, MFLNRORD, BC Hydro, FWCP/NCC, CWS, EKISC and the Village of Radium all engaged in treatments for LS and other priority invasive plants in high value wildlife areas of the Columbia Valley (compared to solely the CVLCF in 2013). This collaborative effort for invasive species management provides a substantial advantage in managing LS infestations in the Columbia Valley.

Table 2 Examples of sites that have received treatment funding since 2016 and are experiencing a trend in decreased infestation size and herbicide use. Note that the area treated and amount of herbicide used often fluctuates between years, highlighting that LS can sometimes respond to herbicide treatment with increased growth the subsequent year.

Site ID	Treatment Date	Area Treated	Amount of Undiluted Herbicide Used ¹
45787	2019	0.0200	0.0900
	2018	0.0600	0.2700
	2017	0.0100	0.0450
	2016	0.1750	0.7875
230786	2019	0.0300	0.1350
	2018	0.0600	0.2700
	2017	0.0400	0.1800
	2016	0.0900	0.4050



	2019	0.0200	0.0900
263397	2018	0.0200	0.0900
	2017	0.0150	0.0675
	2016	0.0600	0.2700
	2019	0.0400	0.1800
230783	2018	0.0800	0.3600
	2017	0.0050	0.0225
	2016	0.0750	0.3375
	2019	0.0200	0.0900
263397	2018	0.0200	0.0900
	2017	0.0150	0.0675
	2016	0.0600	0.2700
	2019	0.0050	0.0225
300660	2018	0.0300	0.1350
	2017	0.0100	0.0450
	2016	0.0500	0.2250

¹Amount of herbicide mix used varies based on number of sites visited, size and density of site, type of herbicide used and application rate. Less herbicide used does not necessarily mean less density or fewer plants. Amount of herbicide used can also vary greatly at an individual site from year to year due to plant response to treatment.

Figures 2 through 5 illustrate LS treatment locations throughout the RDEK from 2019 back to year 2016, highlighting how contained LS has remained to the Upper Columbia Valley. EKISC's current strategy with LS is to decrease infestation levels and prevent new introductions of the invasive plant leafy spurge (LS) in the Fairmont to Radium Hot Springs area.

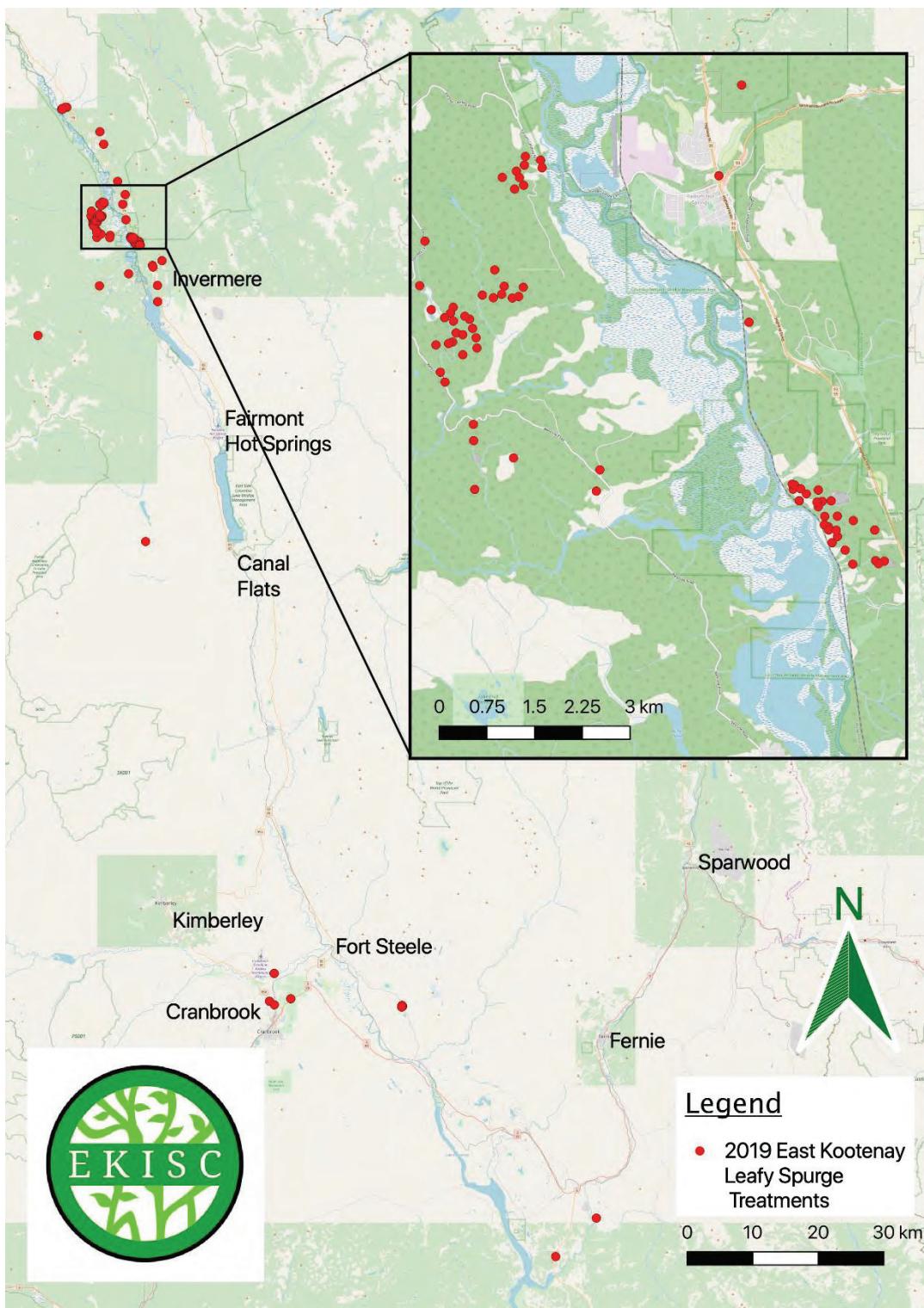


Figure 2 Locations of 2019 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.

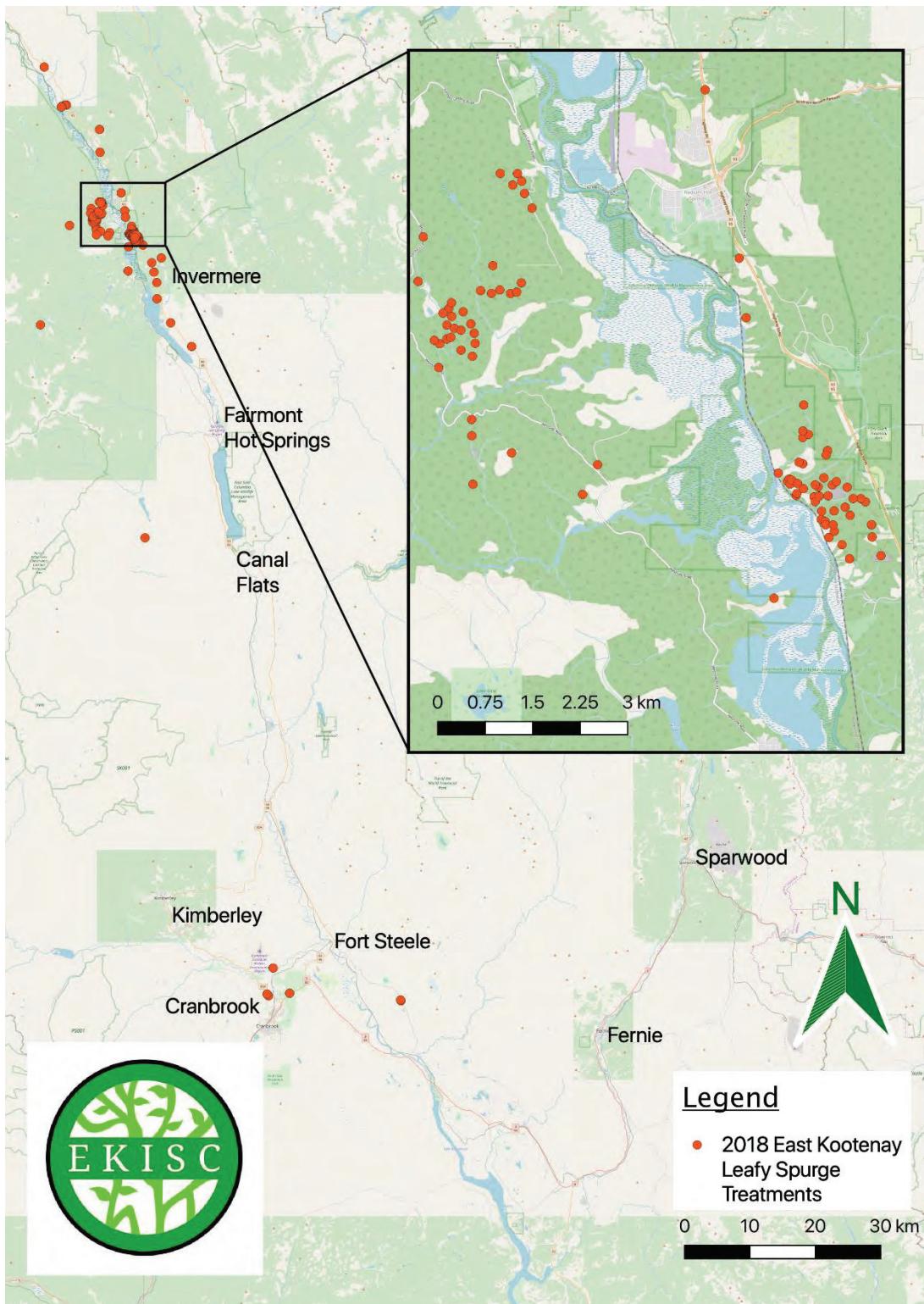


Figure 3 Locations of 2018 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.

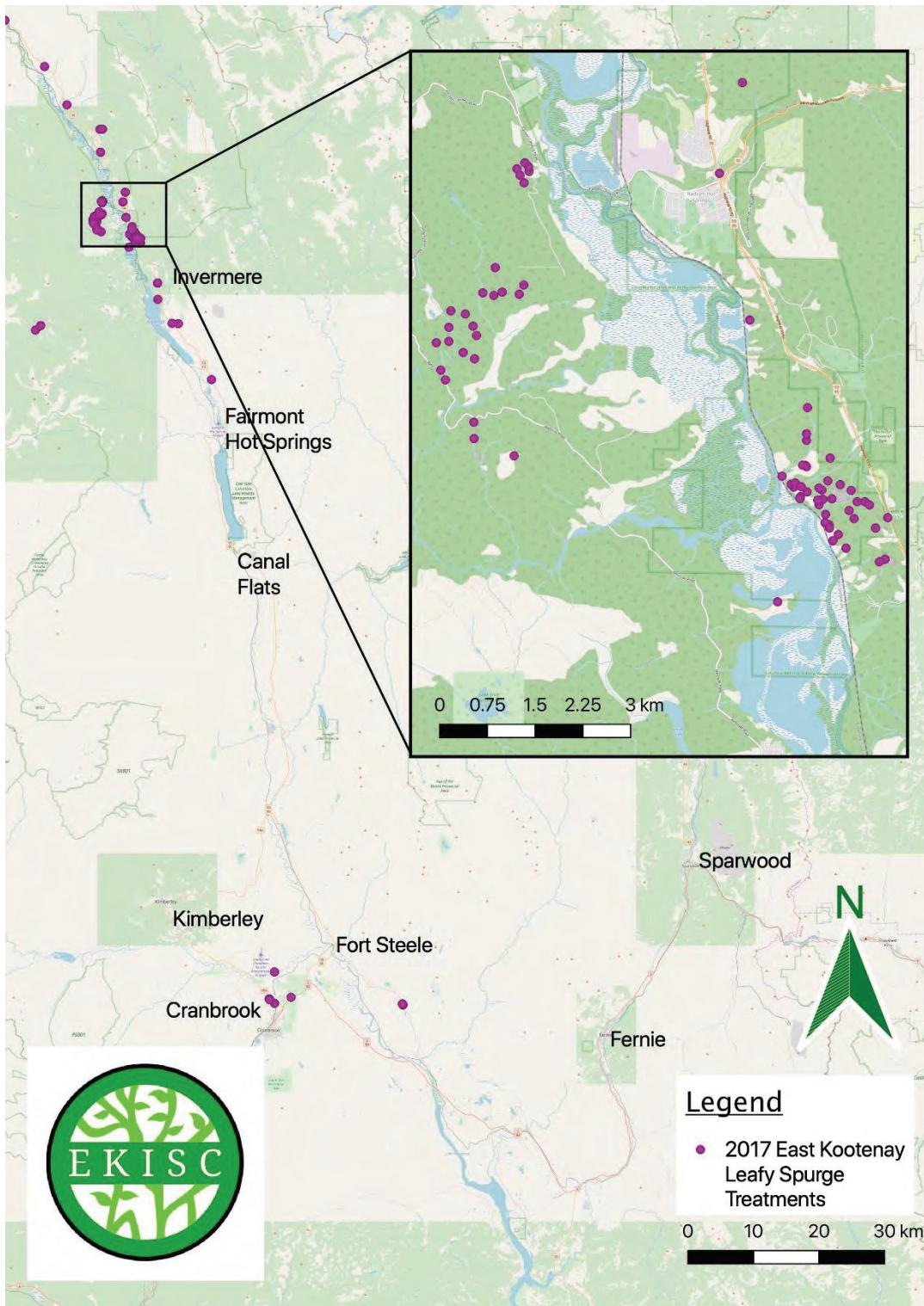


Figure 4 Locations of 2017 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.

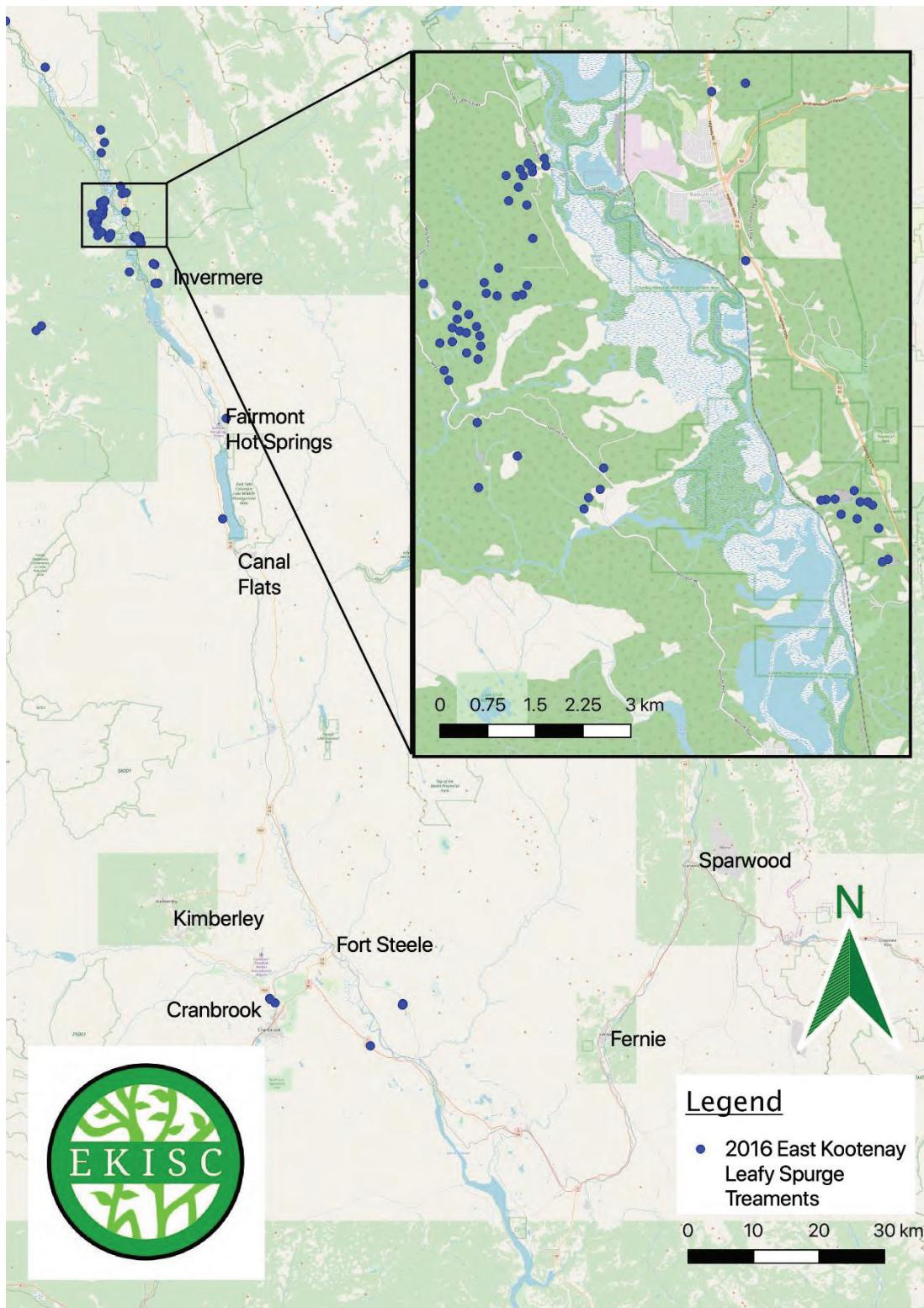


Figure 5 Locations of 2017 LS treatment sites. Treatments outside of Electoral Areas F and G are not treated with CVLCF funds.



Future Recommendations

The SIPCOLS Project is a crucial component in management of LS in the Columbia Valley, utilizing stakeholder collaboration to decrease existing infestations and reduce the risk of spread into high value lands. Although we believe this project is not only containing and reducing the spread of existing LS populations and allowing contractors and EKISC staff to quickly identify and respond to new LS sites, we know that in most years there are areas that we do not have funding to visit or treat. There may be uncertainty around if eradication of LS is possible at some project locations (due to funding restrictions and longevity of the seed bank), but we do know that funds provided by CVLCF are going a long ways in preventing the spread of LS, and ensuring that negative impacts to wildlife (reduced biodiversity and forage quality and availability) and the agricultural community in particular (toxicity risk to livestock, reduced forage quality and availability) are negated as much as possible.

Recommended objectives for 2020 are:

1. Inventory and map all known and newly identified LS sites in the project area.
2. Create a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder invasive plant management plan for LS in the Columbia Valley, focusing on areas that are of high habitat value and pose the greatest threat to adjacent land managers (i.e., Wildlife Management Areas, conservation lands, Shuswap reserve lands, agricultural lands).
3. Treat identified high-priority LS infestations within 1km of private land within the project area. Additional treatments areas, funding permitting, will include:
 - a. Infestations that are adjacent to Shuswap Indian Band reserve lands to assist with on-reserve treatments.
 - b. Infestations that are on crown land near the CWWMA to prevent the further spread of LS away from the main areas of infestation.
4. Complete biocontrol agent inventory at previous release sites and identify two candidate sites for potential release (or re-release) of LS biocontrol agent.
5. Continue to communicate importance of LS control to stakeholders and community members within the Columbia Valley.

Additional details can be found in the 2020 SIPCOLS Project Proposal, submitted to the CVLCF in November 2019.



Appendix 2: EKISC SIPCOLS News



EKISC is partnering for its 9th year with the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund (CVLCF) on its Strategic Invasive Plant Control of Leafy Spurge, or SIPCOLS Project.

The SIPCOLS Project has allowed EKISC to work with partners across the Columbia Valley (including the Canadian Wildlife Service and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development) to reduce the infestation size and prevent further spread of [leafy spurge](#). Leafy spurge, originally introduced to the Columbia Valley in the 1960's, poses a threat to grasslands, pastures, and native ecosystems due to it's ability to aggressively out-compete desirable plant species. Leafy spurge can also be toxic to livestock and wildlife if ingested at high-enough quantities, and is historically a very difficult species to manage. Due to its incredible ability to quickly spread into neighbouring areas once established, it is important to locate and treat new infestations as soon as possible, and make sure containment lines are in place.

Funding from the [CVLCF](#) has supported both the treatment of existing leafy spurge populations, and the inventory and mapping of new infestations. This allows EKISC to make better informed decisions regarding leafy spurge management planning for the Columbia Valley. The SIPCOLS Project has not only been successful in raising awareness about leafy spurge for land managers and user groups, but has also actively worked to reduce leafy spurge populations in the region. This success would not have been possible without the generous support of CVLCF! We are also grateful for the ongoing support of the Kootenay Conservation Program in administering the CVLCF.

Figure 1 Screenshot of EKISC September Newsletter, highlighting support from CVLCF.



EKISC has now completed its 9th year of administering the **Strategic Invasive Plant Control of Leafy Spurge**, or SIPCOLS, Project. The SIPCOLS Project has allowed EKISC to work with partners across the Columbia Valley to reduce the infestation size and prevent further spread of Leafy Spurge, a vigorous invader that was first introduced into the Columbia Valley in the 1960's. Leafy spurge is a great threat to grasslands, pastures, and native ecosystems as it not only aggressively outcompetes desirable plant species, but can also be toxic to livestock and wildlife if ingested at high-enough quantities.

Though the SIPCOLS project is largely made possible by support from the Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund (CVLCF), EKISC also partners with other organizations to apply a coordinated approach to Leafy Spurge management in the Columbia Valley. This includes the Village of Radium, BC Parks, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, FortisBC and the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program. The goal each year is to not only treat existing Leafy Spurge populations, but also inventory and map new infestations. In 2019, a total of 99 Leafy Spurge sites were treated under this project, covering nearly 10 hectares of treatment area; over half of these were directly funded by CVLCF. Although each year we do add new Leafy Spurge sites to our records (due to a combination of the plant being easily introduced to new areas and our capacity to inventory additional locations), this project is helping us to achieve our long term objectives of working with land managers to collaboratively limit the current extent of Leafy Spurge populations, decrease the size of existing infestations, prevent new infestations from establishing, and increase stakeholder engagement.

The [Columbia Valley Local Conservation Fund](#) is a partnership between the Kootenay Conservation Program and Regional District of East Kootenay that provides funding for projects that benefit conservation in the area from Spillimacheen to Canal Flats.

PHOTO: Jeff Van Tine: Rocky Mountain Front Weed Roundtable's Biological Control Program

Figure 2 Screenshot of EKISC January Newsletter, highlighting support from CVLCF.