



Media Release

Lookout for Invasive Knotweed! New Regional Reporting System Launched in the CRD

Date: August 30, 2012

For Immediate Release

Victoria, BC...The Capital Regional Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP), which includes the local governments, announced today the call for residents in the CRD to be on the alert for invasive knotweed and report any sightings through a regional reporting system. For more information and to report knotweed in this region, please visit www.coastalinvasiveplants.com and click the 'Report-A-Weed' button or call 250-857-2472(CIPC).

Local Governments and Land Managers in the CRD have teamed up to deal with invasive knotweed: one of the world's worst invaders which has started to invade the CRD. "In neighbouring regions it is already too late" warns Becky Brown, Invasive Plant Specialist, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operation "these plants are capable of growing through 4 feet of concrete and can reproduce from a fragment no larger than the size of your small finger nail".

Three species of Knotweed, sometimes called ornamental bamboo (due to the stalks), have now been found in this region. In other areas of BC and the world, the effects of widespread Knotweed have been very costly. Becky Brown notes that "the United Kingdom has declared it 'controlled waste' and some financial institutions will not grant mortgages on contaminated lands. It is only a matter of time in British Columbia."

Knotweed species are extremely expensive and difficult to control once they have spread. Becky Brown notes that in neighbouring regions knotweed is "starting to dominate watercourses, prevent access to valuable recreation areas, alter fish habitat, damage infrastructure and contaminate vacant lots." On a positive note for our region: "populations are still small in the CRD and land managers in the Capital Region have an incredible and limited opportunity to eradicate it."

Success in the CRD depends on public assistance. CRD residents are asked to call (above) for treatment and disposal assistance. Treatment of this species is very difficult, so a regional response has been set up. Hartland Landfill is now only taking Knotweed as a controlled waste with permit, but CRISP is providing a regional disposal program for 2012.

For further information:

Coastal Invasive Plant Committee/ Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership
250-857-2472 (CIPC)

Media questions contact:

Rachelle McElroy, Coordinator
Coastal Invasive Plant Committee
Email: info@coastalinvasiveplants.com
Phone: 250-857-2472

Attached: 1 photos and a fact sheet





Invasive Knotweeds:

Japanese, Bohemian, Giant
Fallopia spp (Polygonum spp)

**Invasive
Plant
Alert**



Jeff Hallworth

One of the biggest threats to natural ecosystems in the Capital Region is the spread of invasive non-native plants. The Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) appreciates the cooperation of all residents in addressing knotweed on private property with the assistance of local professionals. This is a unique species requiring special treatment.

For assistance or to report knotweed sites in the CRD:

Please call: 250-857-2472

Local on-line reporting:
www.coastalinvasiveplants.com or

Provincial Report-a-Weed:
www.reportaweedbc.ca



Why is knotweed a problem?

- Considered one of the world's worst invasive species & one of the top-ten invasive species for eradication in BC.
- Dense stands eliminates all other vegetation and is extremely difficult to eradicate
- Ecological impacts include destruction/threat to ecological processes, fish and wildlife habitat, biodiversity, causing bank erosion and clogging waterways.
- Economic/Infrastructure impacts include penetration of pavement and other materials, damaging roads, foundations, other structures and drainage systems.
- Extremely vigorous rhizomes; new plants can grow from small rhizome or stem fragments.

Knotweed species in Saanich: Japanese (*F. japonica*/*P. cuspidatum*), Bohemian (*F. x Bohemicum*) and Giant Knotweed (*F. Sachalinense*).

What does it look like?

- Sometimes called ornamental bamboo; hollow stems 2-3m tall (smaller species) and 5m tall (Giant Knotweed), reddish/purple speckled.
- Leaves egg to heart-shaped with pointed tip, alternate, stalked; approx. 8-10 cm wide/15 cm long except for Giant Knotweed which is twice the size.
- Flowers (August-September) small white/green clusters.

Could be confused with:

- Elderberry (*Sambucus spp.*), which has lance-shaped, toothed leaves.
- Bamboo species.

Distribution:

- Native to eastern Asia
- Outbreaks in many regions in BC including a number of jurisdictions within the Capital Regional District.



Jeff Hallworth



E. Sellenton

Invasive Plant Alert



Habitat and biology:

- Perennial shrub-like herb from rhizomes; Polygonaceae (buckwheat) family.
- Found especially in disturbed soil and open habitats; roadsides, watercourses, gardens and drainage systems.
- Reproduction is primarily by rhizome and some seed production (especially Bohemian); reproduces also from stems fragments and buds in root crowns.
- Overwintering rhizomes spread rapidly and can extend 15-20m laterally and to a depth of 3m; remain dormant up to 20 years.
- Dispersal of this invasive is primarily by rhizome and fragments of stem and rhizome by human activities and by water.

What should you do?

Please report any sightings of this species to the contacts below.

- **Spread the word, not the plant:** don't purchase, grow or trade knotweed.
- **Contact:** There is a special treatment program for this species in the CRD. Please contact the Coastal Invasive Species Committee (below) for assistance with treating and disposing of this species.
- **Avoid:** digging and cutting this species as this can cause further spread.
- **Wash:** plant parts and seeds from vehicles, equipment and personal gear before leaving infested sites.
- **Dispose:** of any knotweed parts and contaminated soils in the proper manner (below).
- **Monitor:** knotweed sites need to be monitored.
- **Soil and gravel:** use soil and gravel that are not contaminated and follow safe procedures to treat or dispose of contaminated soils and gravel.
- **Pesticides:** depending on what jurisdiction you are in, a pesticide permit may be required. This will be addressed through the special treatment program (above).

Proper Disposal

- Disposal of Knotweed at Hartland Landfill is currently by permit as a "controlled waste". See their website for details and the permit form: http://www.crd.bc.ca/waste/hartland/controlled_waste.htm
- In the CRD, Knotweed treatment and disposal is being addressed through a special program. Please contact the Coastal Invasive Species Committee for treatment and disposal.
- **DO NOT COMPOST!** Home composting is likely to increase the spread of this species.

For assistance or to report knotweed (or other invasive) sites in the CRD:

Please call: 250-857-2472

Local on-line reporting: www.coastalinvasiveplants.com or
Provincial Report-a-Weed: www.reportaweedbc.ca

www.coastalinvasiveplants.com

Other resources

Invasive Plant Council of BC
Coastal Invasive Plant
Committee
King County Noxious Weed
Program
Invasive Alien Plant Program

This alert sheet was adapted from the District of Saanich, with permission.
Regional outreach tools are currently under development.