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## **Fraser Basin Council Launches the New Invasive Plant Council of BC Established to Tackle the Spread of Alien, Invasive Plant Species**

The Fraser Basin Council today launched the Invasive Plant Council of BC at the inaugural meeting of the Board of Directors for the new organization. Together, the two groups – working with the provincial and federal government, industry sectors, municipalities, First Nations and numerous weed management and other community groups – are set to tackle the immense problem of alien, invasive plant species.

"British Columbia is under attack from alien plant species, and we've been losing the battle," said Patrick Reid, Chair of the Fraser Basin Council. "Without natural enemies to control their populations, non-native plant species – or 'noxious weeds' as they are often called – destroy fragile ecosystems, reduce biodiversity, harm human and animal health, and severely impact our economy.

"Annual economic losses from invasive plants in BC cost forest and mining companies, ranchers, farmers, utilities, government and the general public tens of millions – and perhaps even hundreds of millions – of dollars each year in lost productivity," Reid said. "We *must* fight back and defeat these alien invaders. The cost of doing nothing is just too great."

Over the past two years, the Fraser Basin Council (FBC) has played a pivotal role in bringing this little known but important issue to public attention in BC. The FBC recently released the ***Invasive Plant Strategy for British Columbia*** – a groundbreaking document that outlines the destructive impacts of invasive plants and outlines an action plan to deal with this important sustainability challenge.

As recommended in the strategy, a non-profit **Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia** has been established to coordinate invasive plant management province-wide, improve compliance with current and new legislation, establish research priorities and coordinate public awareness programs. A Memorandum of Support has been signed by many signatories to the strategy.

**To obtain a copy of the Strategy, go to: <http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/news/index.html>**

### **For more information on the *Invasive Plant Strategy for British Columbia*, contact:**

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*The Fraser Basin Council is a non-profit society established in 1997 to bring people together to find solutions to long-standing issues and conflicts, and take advantage of opportunities to advance sustainability in the Fraser River Basin. The mandate of the Council is to ensure that the decisions we make about the Basin today will protect and advance its economic, environmental and social sustainability into the future.*