

Education

Goal G: Educate the public about invasive weeds and agricultural pests.

Education, awareness and understanding about invasive plants and agricultural pests is paramount to fostering public, industry, and political support for prevention, control, and detection activities. Key stakeholders such as farmers, landscapers, foresters, the nursery and greenhouse industry, are groups that should have first hand knowledge of the impacts weeds and pests can have, and how to prevent their introduction. To date the SWCD, UAF CES, DOF, DOA and local CWMA members have participated in educating these key stakeholders. Engaging these groups is vital for successful community participation in invasive plant and agricultural pest management and prevention.

Alaska's youth are other stakeholders that can provide lasting impacts to community wide participation in invasive weed and agricultural pest prevention, control and detection activities. Invasive weed management groups in Alaska have developed two curricula for invasive weeds, one tailored to grades 9-12 and the other for grades K-6. Lessons are provided to youth in schools and other youth organizations such as 4-H and Girl Scouts of Alaska. Youth in Alaska that receive these lessons take the messages home to their families. They also represent the next generation of stewards of public resources in Alaska (Figure 9).

Other stakeholders that deserve attention in Alaska include industry representatives, agency personnel, and non-governmental organizations that represent various interests. These groups may affect invasive plants and agricultural pests in their regular activities. With education, these groups will likely become participants in prevention, detection and control work.

Figure 9. Educating youth has lasting impacts

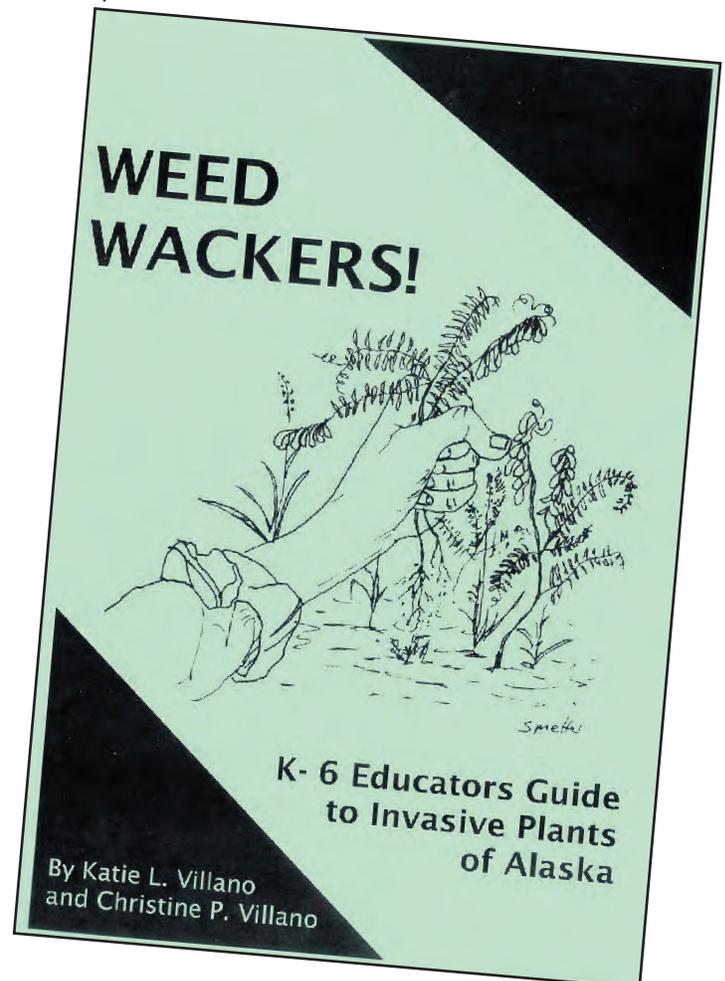


Educating Alaskan youth is an important focus of invasive weeds and agricultural pest managers in Alaska. Shown here are youth receiving education about invasive weeds from the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies and the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District.

Further education focus should be provided to rural communities. Many of these remote communities have few invasive weeds or agricultural pests because they have not experienced the development and commerce associated with weeds and pests in urban areas. These rural communities will continue to grow in Alaska, and with that growth introduction of new weeds and pests may occur. Educating rural communities about invasive weeds and agricultural pest prevention, detection and management will help those communities avoid problems occurring in other parts of Alaska.

Public Identified Priorities

The scoping process identified many audiences as at least "Somewhat Important" to receive education and training. The audiences that were frequently identified as important were nursery, greenhouse and other plant providers, public employees, and agricultural producers. Three topics stood out as the most important education topics were prevention, species of high concern and identification. Respondents felt it would be important for the State to facilitate completion of a K-12 curriculum about invasive plants. The modes of delivery for education with the highest perceived value were curriculum, fairs and public events, general outreach material and workshops.



Objective 1:

Target education work to priority subjects with key groups of people.

Action Strategies

1. Identify five key educational groups for early adoption of prevention, and management, and high priorities to prevent further introductions.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, CWMA, DOA, USDA, DOI, Native Corporations and Associations, NMFS
Timeline: June 2012
2. Develop and provide educational materials and presentations to identified key groups and rural communities.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, CWMA, DOA, USDA, DOI, Native Corporations and Associations, NMFS
Timeline: June 2013
3. Focus education on early detection and prevention providing 5 presentations annually about early detection to key educational groups, including public employees, greenhouses, landscapers, and transporters of freight.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, DOA, USDA, DOI, NMFS
Timeline: June, 2012
4. Identify five key venues for delivery of education.
Suggested participants: DOA, CES, SWCD, CWMA, BLM-CTF, USDA, DOI, Native Corporations and Associations, NMFS-
Timeline: June 2012
5. Focus education on early detection and prevention providing 5 presentations annually about early detection to key educational groups, including public employees, greenhouses, landscapers, and transporters of freight.



Objective 2:

Broaden educational awareness of all invasive weeds and agricultural pest management issues.

Action Strategies

1. Increase educational awareness of agricultural pests other than weeds by developing education materials and presentations for five highly invasive pests which are not plants.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, DOA, USDA, DOA, Native Corporations and Associations
Timeline: June 2013
2. Increase education regarding control measures for invasive weeds and agricultural pests by developing an online control manual.
Suggested participants: CES, DOA, ARS, DEC, USFS, USFWS
Timeline: June 2013
3. Continue placing advertisements discouraging the movement of firewood to Alaska from other states or Canada.
Suggested participants: DOF, DOA, USDA, CES
Timeline: June 2011, and ongoing

Objective 3:

Form lasting awareness of invasive weeds and agricultural pest issues through youth education.

Action Strategies

1. Complete K-12 curriculum for invasive weeds.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, CWMA, DOA, USFS, School District Staff, BLM
Timeline: June 2013
2. Work with the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development to include invasive species topics in the standards for education.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, CWMA, DOA, USFS, School District Staff, BLM
Timeline: June 2014
3. Promote use of K-12 invasive weeds curriculum to teachers and educators around the state holding annual teacher workshops rotating to different areas which are not yet exposed to the curriculum.
Suggested participants: CES, SWCD, CWMA, DOA, USFS, School District Staff, USFWS
Timeline: 2013-2016

