

PRINT EDITION

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THE **VEGETATION MANAGER** *magazine* **2023**



45 YEARS AND GROWING STRONG

MEET THE NEW PVMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THE ABCS OF THE AISC

ALBERTA AGRICULTURE PEST ACT

2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



- LISA RYBCHUK, PRESIDENT PVMA



Wow “45 years and Growing Strong”, what a fantastic milestone! Established in 1978, the former Industrial Vegetation Managers Association of Alberta (IVMAA) was created to provide a unified voice for

the industry. While the primary stakeholders at the time were primarily from the Industrial sector, the organization was rebranded in 2015 as the Professional Vegetation Managers Association (PVMA) to reflect the diversity of the industry. Now, 45 years later, the organization boasts membership from arborists, utility tree workers and technicians, to pesticide applicators, chemical and equipment suppliers, environmental agencies, government reps, utility and infrastructure owners, contractors, and the list goes on.

The PVMA is proud of its diversity and endeavours to represent the interests of all its members.

The most recent undertaking to help achieve this goal was to hire an Executive Director. We are thrilled to have Joanne Ireland on board, with her diverse professional background and positive energy. As the face of the PVMA, she will be connecting with existing membership for constructive feedback, as well as reaching out to other potential stakeholder groups.

In addition, the PVMA meets the educational needs of its members by offering two conferences per year, in the Spring and Fall. The Spring Conference 2023 is on track to be one of the best yet! We have had a fantastic response from the membership and look forward to the diverse presentations and networking opportunities. Here's to another 45 years of growing even stronger!

Lisa Rybchuk, PVMA President



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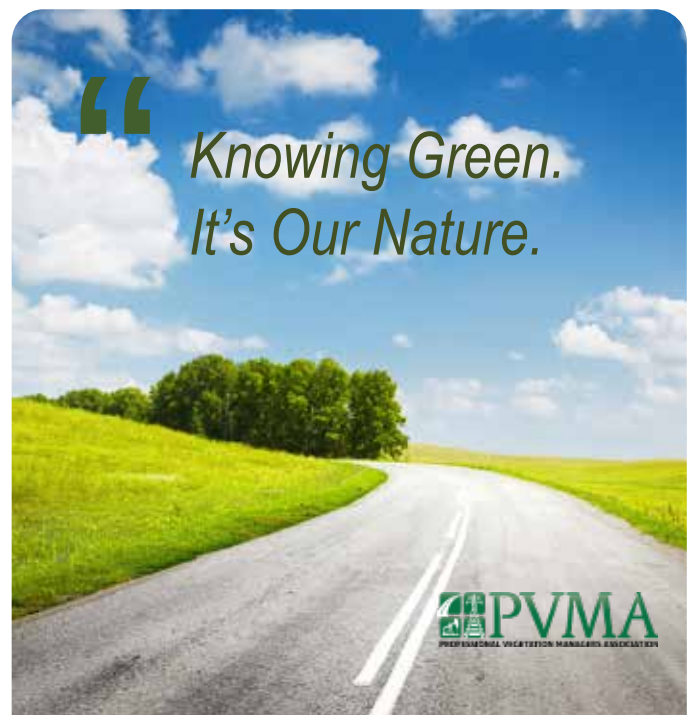


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MEET THE NEW PVMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- SUBMITTED



Joanne has worked in the vegetation management industry from an early age with her family business. Her father started their company to help his children earn money for their post secondary education and to teach them the importance of having a strong work ethic. She spent her summers as an industrial applicator, running spraying crews alongside her brother Richard. She finished her degree in Forest Management at the University of Alberta in 2003. By this time, she had grown to love the vegetation management industry and realized that the work she was doing was also what she wanted to pursue as a full-time career. Her education in forestry helped her develop their seasonal company into a year-round business, specializing in mulching, spraying, mowing, reclamation, and ice road exploration. She loved the flexibility of the work and the challenges it brought. Over the years Joanne became more involved in training and safety and obtained her National Construction Safety Officer designation and Authorized Assistant Trainer Certificate. She also added to her applicator licenses gaining landscape and agricultural certificates. She is passionate about training and mentoring new employees, especially summer students and cannot wait for the day she can pass on her experience to her own children.

Throughout the last 24 years of being in the vegetation management business, Joanne's company has always

been involved with the PVMA. She can still remember the excitement her father brought back (along with some hefty binders) from the first IVMAA conference he attended. The association was this amazing resource full of people just like them, who wanted to do a good job, make a living and be the best they could be in the industry. The education, collaboration, and networking opportunities the PVMA offered has been invaluable to her and her business over the years.

When the job posting for executive director came up in the spring of 2022, Joanne immediately knew it was something she wanted to pursue. Although she was busy with her own roles at Lakeland Vegetation and her son's minor hockey association, she believed a position with the PVMA would be an excellent opportunity to give back to the association that had been integral in developing who she is today. It was not a decision she took lightly, but after much discussion with her staff and getting their full support, she decided to apply. She accepted the executive director position in October and is very excited about her future with the association. She still has a lot to learn about the inner workings of the PVMA but is looking forward to helping any way she can. She looks forward to visiting with everyone at the upcoming spring conference and getting feedback of how she can best serve the association.



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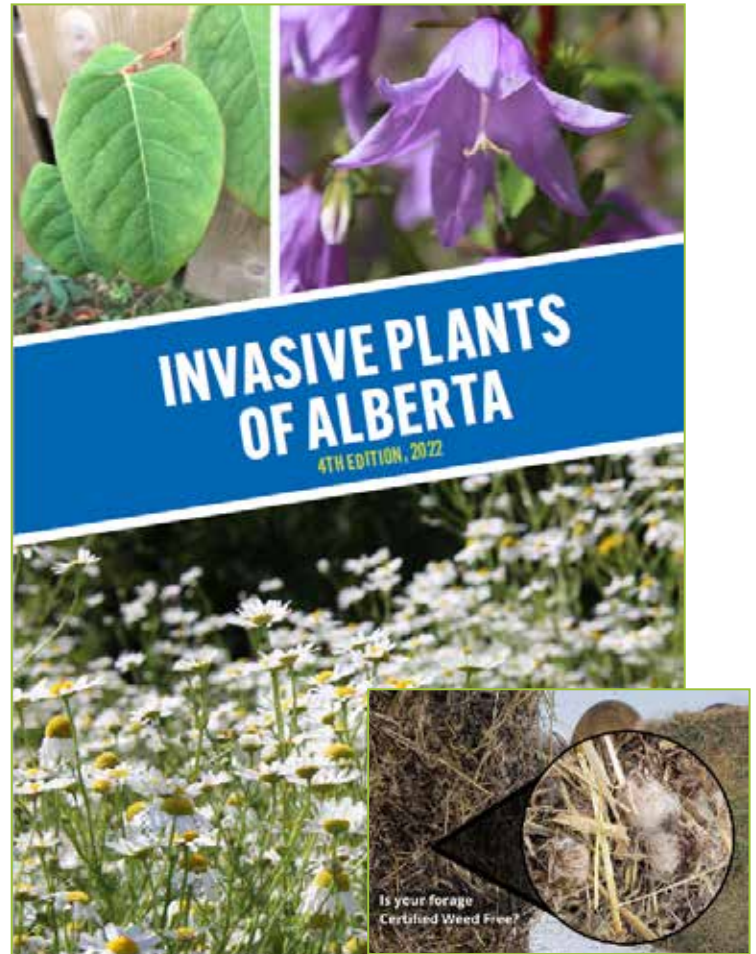
THE ABCS OF THE AISC

- SUBMITTED BY PAIGE KUCZMARSKI OF THE AISC

The Alberta Invasive Species Council (AISC) is the only non-profit organization dedicated entirely to protecting Alberta from the impacts of invasive species. Invasive species come in many forms and are detrimental to our environment and economy; they are known as the second greatest threat to biodiversity, after habitat loss and are estimated to cost Albertans \$2.1 billion each year.

Since 2006, the AISC has been singing the ABCs of invasive species to Albertans and empowering everyone to take action to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species. The AISC has no shortage of resources - their newly launched website is packed full of useful resources to help you identify, report, and prevent invasive species, including the newly revamped Invasive Plants of Alberta Identification Guide. The AISC has worked hard to secure grant funding to be able to offer print copies of the Guides at a subsidized cost. They have over 150 factsheets on all regulated invasive species, which can be accessed through a searchable database. Their website lists upcoming events for those interested in learning more about invasive species, including their annual conference, which will be held in-person on March 7-8, 2023 in Olds, AB.

The AISC conference features speakers who will be presenting on several invasive species topics including aquatic invasive species, biological control, herbicides, terrestrial invasive species, invasive diseases and so much more. You do not want to miss this conference, they are applying for seven pesticide applicator credits, there is an optional Brewery Tour of the Olds College Brewery (limited space, register soon!) and they will be announcing the winner of their exciting 50/50 raffle! Visit abinvasives.ca/news-and-events/2023-aisc-conference/ for details and to register.

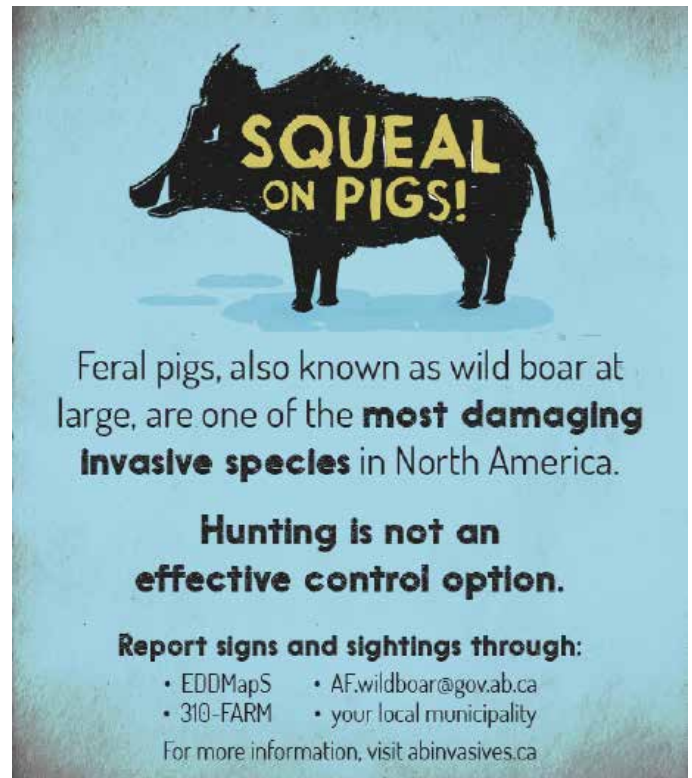


Not only does the AISC work to distribute resources but they also help coordinate specific programs to help individuals with ensuring products are invasive species free, like the Alberta Certified Weed Free Forage program. Through this program, forage can be inspected and certified as weed free per the North American Invasive Species Management Association's Weed Free Products Standards. If you are a producer interested in having your forage certified as weed free, contact your local municipal office or the AISC. If you are a buyer looking to purchase certified weed free forage visit our website for a list of producers with inventory. Full program details can be found here. This project has been made possible by the Government of Canada and the Government of Alberta through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

The AISC launched its 'Squeal on Pigs!' campaign in 2021 to address the growing issue of wild boar at large in Alberta. Wild boar at large or feral pigs are one of the most destructive invasive species on the planet and our goal is to get a handle on this issue before it's too late. Previous efforts to hunt these animals were deemed ineffective as any animals not hunted out of a group learn to avoid being hunted and trapped in the future. You can be part of the solution by 'Squealing on Pigs!' and reporting signs and sightings to 310-FARM, AF.wildboar@gov.ab.ca, your local municipality or using the EDDMapS app! All reports are sent to the provincial wild boar control program (a collaboration between Alberta Pork and the provincial government) where technicians set up remotely monitored corral traps and wait until all animals are inside before swiftly closing the gate. For more information on AISC's 'Squeal on Pigs!' campaign, [click here](#).

Our Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) app isn't just for reporting wild boar at large, you can use this app to report all types of invasive species – plants, animals, fish, invertebrates and diseases! Built into the app are features such as an interactive invasive plant identification guide (iPhone only), all the information included on AISC factsheets as well as distribution maps for each species. But that is not all, reports can be submitted online to the EDDMapS webpage AND all reports submitted are reviewed and verified by experts and added to publicly available distribution maps!

DO YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT INVASIVE SPECIES IN YOUR AREA? DO YOU NEED ASSISTANCE IDENTIFYING AN INVASIVE PLANT? ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING THE AISC BY BECOMING AN ANNUAL MEMBER OR PARTNER? THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED. BE SURE TO FOLLOW THE AISC'S SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES @ABINVASIVES (FACEBOOK, TWITTER, AND INSTAGRAM), VISIT THEIR WEBSITE WWW.ABINVASIVES.CA, EMAIL THEM AT INFO@ABINVASIVES.CA; OR CALL 587 999 0954. HOPEFULLY THIS WAS ABLE TO COVER ALL THE WAY FROM A TO Z IN TERMS OF THE AISC!



A poster with a black silhouette of a wild boar against a light blue background. The words "SQUEAL ON PIGS!" are written in bold yellow letters across the boar's body. Below the boar, the text reads: "Feral pigs, also known as wild boar at large, are one of the **most damaging invasive species** in North America." followed by "Hunting is not an **effective control option.**" and "Report signs and sightings through:" with a list of options: "• EDDMapS • AF.wildboar@gov.ab.ca" and "• 310-FARM • your local municipality". At the bottom, it says "For more information, visit abinvasives.ca".





- SUBMITTED BY BY VAL EICHELT

The PVMA 2022 Fall Workshop & AGM was held once again online on the InEvent platform. We had a great line up of speakers and a great attendance. In an effort to support the Industry with access to credits at no cost to attendees, the workshop expenses were covered again by the Casino Committee.

We started off the day with Randall H. Miller, Director, Research & Development with CNUC. He had an excellent presentation on Electrical Safety for Utility Vegetation Managers. Randy explained why and how utility companies' clear trees from powerlines and reviewed the common mechanical and chemical control options available. Following Randall was Gayah Sieushai, a Pest Regulatory Officer, who gave an update on the Status of Dutch Elm Disease in Alberta. We learned what we can do to help preserve and protect Alberta's Elm trees from Dutch Elm Disease and related pests.

The workshop then moved on to the PVMA General Meeting where our President, Lisa Rybchuk, announced the hiring of our new Executive Director, Joanne Ireland. You can find out more about Joanne in the feature article in this issue of the magazine. Our board members shared updates on what the various committees have been up to and members were reminded of the deadlines for the scholarship and bursary applications coming up.

After a short lunch break attendees returned for a presentation from Devon Smiegielski, a Pesticide Certification Specialist with Alberta Environment and Parks, Devon gave us a closer look at Alberta's Pesticide Certification and Recertification program, manual development and highlighted changes made to the upcoming Industrial Vegetation Manual. Our final speaker of the day was Megan Evans of the Alberta Invasive Species Council, who shared an overview of the Alberta Invasive Species Council (AISC) resources to help in your invasive species management programs. Megan focused on the early detection and distribution mapping systems apps, AISC's factsheets, photo galleries, new Invasive Plants of Alberta Guide, the certified weed-free forage program and more.

We thank all of our speakers for taking the time to prepare and present for us. If you missed the workshop some of our speakers have provided follow up articles to be published in this issue of the Vegetation Manager magazine as well as future issues.

We also want to thank all those who registered and attended the workshop. Finally, thank you to Lisa, the conference committee and the office team for their hard work in preparation and on the day of, as well as our tech team of Brandon Tupper and Sean Hilton.



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ALBERTA AGRICULTURE PESTS ACT & THE DED CONTROL & PREVENTION MEASURES

- SUBMITTED BY JANET FEDDES-CALPAS AND GAYAH SIEUSAHAI

Janet Feddes-Calpas, Executive Director of the Society to Prevent Dutch Elm Disease (STOPDED) and Gayah Sieusahai, Pest Regulatory Officer with Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation were asked to speak at the 2022 PVMA Virtual fall conference. Janet gave an overview of Dutch elm disease (DED), the Alberta DED Prevention and Control Measures DED Response Plan. Gayah covered the Alberta Agricultural Pests Act (APA) and Pest and Nuisance Control Regulation (PNCR) and how DED and the vector beetles are regulated under this act.

STOPDED

STOPDED is a non-profit organization that administers and operates the DED Prevention Program. This is a province wide program consists of monitoring for the elm bark beetles, surveillance for the DED, testing of suspect DED samples, elm wood confiscation, public awareness, elm tree inventory, research, DED Response Plan, and DED Prevention/Control Measures recognized under the APA.

DED OVERVIEW

DED is caused by a fungus that clogs the elm tree's water conducting system, causing the tree to die within one year. The fungus is primarily spread from one elm tree to another by one of the three EBBs: the smaller European elm bark beetle, the banded elm bark beetle, or the native elm bark beetle. The beetles are attracted to weak and dying trees, which serve as breeding sites for the beetles. Once the beetles have pupated and turned into adults, they leave the brood gallery and fly to healthy elms to feed, thus transporting the fungus on their bodies from one tree to the next. Once the tree is infected, it has no chance of recovery.

Using traps and lures, monitoring for the EBB is done annually throughout Alberta by STOPDED. The smaller European and the banded have been found on traps throughout the province in low numbers since 1996. In recent years, higher numbers of the banded EBB have been found in the City of Medicine Hat and now are being found in more municipalities especially in southern Alberta. There have been two isolated cases of DED in the province, one in Town of Wainwright in 1998, and the last, in the City of Lethbridge in 2020. The trees were immediately removed and buried. Elm trees in both municipalities were immediately surveyed for signs of disease in elm trees and elm firewood near the detection sites.

A provincial elm inventory was completed by STOPDED, which indicate at least 900,000 elms valued at 2 billion dollars grow in Alberta municipalities, rural properties, shelterbelts and provincial parks. Up to 50% of the overall elm tree plantings in some municipalities are elms.

LEGISLATION

Under the APA and the PNCR both Dutch elm disease (DED) pathogens, smaller European elm bark beetle (SEEBB) *Scolytus multistriatus* (Marsh), and the native elm bark beetle (NEBB) *Hylurgopinus rufipes* (Eichh) are named declared pests.

As such, landowners have an obligation to prevent the establishment or spread of declared pests on their property. All municipalities, counties and MD's in the province of Alberta have the responsibility and authority under the APA to prevent and control DED and the beetle vectors within their municipality. Local authority needs to appoint a sufficient number of inspectors to carry out the APA and the regulations within the municipality.



ELM LOU-BELGRAVIA, EDMONTON, AUG13, 21

For municipalities without a DED bylaw in place, the APA provides a means for enforcement to prevent the introduction and spread of a declared pest in Alberta. The PNCR under the APA provides a list of declared pests and nuisances. The Regulation restricts the importation, purchase, sale, disposal, transportation, transplanting, or distribution of an infested item or pest and outlines the exceptions and Minister's authority to declare a quarantine

INSPECTORS

Appointed Inspectors under the APA have the powers and responsibilities to enforce the DED Prevention/Control Measures to the landowner. Inspectors can be agricultural fieldman, community peace officer, a municipal officer that has dual municipal and provincial appointments, or an APA pest inspector appointed by the municipality. They can enter land at any reasonable time to take samples, inspect for pests and enforce the Act. It is an offence not to take "active measures" and not to follow an Inspector's Notice. Once a prevention/control measure is included on a notice, it becomes enforceable. First signs of symptoms should be reported to the proper local authority. This can be Ag Fieldman or the municipality, or the Provincial DED hotline. The presence of DED must be confirmed by the provincial lab and the sample must be set to the lab by a municipality, County or MD. Once a sample is confirmed DED positive, the tree must be safely removed and disposed in a proper manner immediately.

STOP ORDER

For third parties a Stop Order is also an option. Only the minister can direct a stop order to a person in contravention of the Act; if the person: (a) has contravened or is contravening of this Act or the regulations, or (b) owns or operates anything that causes the maintenance or spread of a pest. If the Minister is satisfied that a person has or is doing (a) or (b) the Minister may direct a stop order to that person. In a stop order, the Minister may order the person to whom it is directed to cease the contravention specified in the order.

A person who is served with the stop order and fails to comply with the stop order forthwith is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of not more than \$1000 for each day

that the offence continues. A person who contravenes this Act or the regulations is guilty of an offence and liable to a fine of not more than \$5000 and in default of payment to a term of imprisonment of not more than 60 days.

Alberta has been fortunate to remain DED free but is constantly aware of the threat of the disease pressing the Saskatchewan and Montana borders. One of the largest spreaders of DED are the elm bark beetles (EBB) that can carry DED on elm firewood. Beetles can hitch a ride on infected elmwood and be carried by unsuspecting campers and homeowners.

"FIREWOOD ALERT! HELP STOP THE SPREAD OF FOREST PESTS, DUTCH ELM DISEASE AND EMERALD ASH BORER. PLAN TO BUY FIREWOOD LOCALLY, BURN ON SITE, NEVER BRING HOME".



**LOU MORIN AMERICAN ELM
STAND-BELGRAVIA
EDMONTON**

STOPDED asks all Albertans to survey their elm trees in the summer months for DED symptom. Leaves on a DED-infected elm will appear wilted or droop, will curl and become brown. This appears in mid-June to mid-July. Leaves on trees infected later in the season usually turn yellow and drop prematurely. Leaf symptoms are accompanied by brown staining under the bark.

All documents in this article can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/dutch-elm-disease.aspx>

Agricultural Pests Act - Open Government (alberta.ca)

Help keep Alberta Dutch Elm Disease Free

ELM TREES CAN ONLY BE PRUNED OCTOBER 1 TO MARCH 31

The elm bark beetle, which transports the DED fungus, breeds and overwinters in dead and dying elm trees.

- Use correct pruning techniques or hire an ISA certified arborist to prune your elm trees
- Prune all dead wood out of elms
- Ensure wood is properly disposed of at a landfill or by burying, chipping, or burning it immediately
- Never store elm firewood, as it may be infected



Prevention starts at home.

www.stopded.org • 1-877-837-ELMS (3567)



To report a DED, suspect elm tree or for more information, call the STOPDED hotline at 1-877-837-ELMS or check out the web site at www.stopded.org.



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2022 PVMA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Each of these 4 Scholarship recipients received a cheque for \$1,500 and in addition were invited to attend the PVMA 2023 Spring Conference as our guests, where they will be recognized publicly. The PVMA is proud to support students through Scholarships and Bursaries.

2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER – CAROLINE MACDONALD

Meet Caroline MacDonald. Caroline is a 2022 PVMA Scholarship Winner. Caroline is in a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences program with a Chemistry Minor, at the University of Alberta. She is slated to graduate this Spring.

Despite the concerns expressed by her mother and sister she chose a summer position, this past year, working in chemical management of vegetative and aquatic pests in industry, residence, and conservation. In that position Caroline soon learned that it isn't just her family, but the public as a whole, that lack the proper knowledge and understanding surrounding pesticide use and the chemicals themselves. She hopes continue her education in a Masters program related to microbiology with an end goal to work in science communication. Please take time to read Caroline's Essay submission, which we have included in this issue of our magazine. Caroline's essay in particular stood out to the Scholarship Committee.



2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER – TALEN DAMBERGER

I would also like to introduce you to Talen Damberger. Talen is in a Business Administration Majoring in Management at Lethbridge College.

Talen has a family background in Vegetation Management which opened the door to summer employment in the Industry. With exposure to several aspects of the industry he became very interested in re-establishment of native plants on sites that needed to be reclaimed. After graduating high school Talen realized that carrying on and diversifying the family business was what he wanted to do but saw an importance in obtaining knowledge in running a successful business before specializing in one area. After finishing his business Management, Talen plans on continuing his education in the reclamation division.



2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER – EMMANUELLA LOOMIS

Emmanuella Loomis is another of our 2022 Scholarship award recipients. Emmanuella is completing a Bachelor's Degree in Science with a Physical Education major and a Psychology minor at the University of Alberta. Her primary passion lies in the human body, but she has always had a unique interest in nature and the beauty behind the intricate details.

This past summer Emmanuella had the unique opportunity to experience a part of the oil and gas industry through forest vegetation. The junior assistance applicator course gave her further insight into the importance of vegetation control and knowledge of the consequences of improper management. One key takeaway she learnt from the summer was considering the importance of wildlife and being cautious so as to not disrupt them by taking precautions to ensure proper spray techniques and locations.

Emmanuella hopes to take an after-degree and further advance and extend her learning of both nature and humanity and the unique connection between the two.



2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNER – REBECCA WILLIAMSON

Finally last, but not least, I would like to introduce you to Rebecca Williamson. As a 2022 Scholarship recipient she is also enrolled in a post-secondary program at the University of Alberta. She is in her 4th year of an Environmental and Conservation Sciences program.

In school Rebecca had relentlessly studied the protection of flora and fauna and how anthropogenic disturbances are the main driver in their decline. After working as a vegetation management technician, she has grown to learn that this idea was not completely true. She has always been a strong believer that there needs to be human intervention to protect plant species at risk as opposed to those who believe they will naturally recover by themselves. This is what interested her to apply as a vegetation management technician for the summer months. Throughout the summer, she learned that there were vast amounts of noxious weeds in our province and feels she became quite knowledgeable in differentiating the difference and similarities of them. This new interest has now carried on into her schoolwork and she is taking more classes in vegetation as electives. By being a vegetation management technician, Rebecca feels has learned practical skills needed to better her studies and prepare her for the work that she wants to conduct when she graduates.





COMMITTEE REPORTS

- INDUSTRIAL/NATIONAL COMMITTEES

IVMA B.C continued in 2022 with some on-Line webinars such as “what is the cost of a weed?” and ‘Strategic Invasives management of highways and gravel pits”

Current Executive includes Rick Matthe – President, Lisa Jarrett – VP, Gwen Shrimpton Executive Director, and Dan Eddy – Treasurer.

Check out their website at <https://www.ivma.com/> for association information

IVMA -ManSask has no current updates. The organization contracted Val Eichel from PVMA to attempt to get some paperwork and accounts in order in 2022 after a break-in disrupted their bookkeeping records.

Current executive includes Eric bullock - President, Chris Johnson- VP, Murray Froehlich - Treasurer, and Megan Herauf Secretary.

The IVMA Man-Sask website is <http://ivmamansask.com/>

OVMA – Tour and golf tournament was held in Belleville Ont. September 27/28th, 2022. The event was well attended and tour stops included CP rail Storage facility, CN rail yard, a remote operated mowing demonstration, and herbicide product demos. New executive has Chad Horton as President, Brad Hayhoe is Past President, Alana Respondek Treasurer. Keith Lockhart is the Business Manager
2023 plan is for a tour in North Bay ON during the 3rd week of September

Information on the OVMA can be found at <https://www.ovma.ca/>

AVMA The Atlantic Vegetation Management Association (AVMA) held their in-person conference and AGM October 19th – 21st 2022 in Halifax, NS.

2023 AVMA is slated for October 17-19th in St. John's NFLD
President - Jason Pond , VP – Mike Porter, Secretary – Holly Toner, Treasurer – Kyle MacDonald

Information on the AVMA is located at <http://myavma.ca/blog/>

Geoff Thompson, Director in Charge

- EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of our magazine. We have some great follow up articles from the fall workshop. An outstanding essay from one of our scholarship winners. A feature article introducing our new Executive Director and more.

Val Eichel, Committee Chair

- MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The membership committee is looking forward to seeing everyone in person at the Spring Conference and Tradeshow. Please remember your membership is instrumental in promoting environmentally safe vegetation management. Membership in PVMA will allow you to contribute directly to our industry, while promoting environmentally safe vegetation management for the benefit of everyone.

Benefits also include:

1. The opportunity to become acquainted with and learn from fellow professionals in vegetation management, as well as other facets of the industry.
2. Informative meetings with high quality speakers presenting interesting and useful information of key topics in vegetation management. Many of our meetings also have CEC's and CEU's available.
3. A newsletter to provide an opportunity for members to express their views on matters of current interest, as well keeping them informed on recent developments in the industry.
4. A no cost accidental death insurance benefit.

Should you have any questions about membership, please contact the PVMA office or find a membership committee representative at the conference.

Jay Manganaro, Director in Charge

- UTT/UTW BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The BOG met in November and some of the key items discussed were looking at the logbook process for collecting hours and documenting proficiencies. We are talking with developers on potential options to come to a cost-effective alternative that is user friendly for all involved.

Along with this we are marching towards our next intake for the UTT/UTW course. We are excited as we have come through the worst of the Covid challenges and approach this intake with excitement but are still utilizing some of the practices we adopted from structuring the program to meet the challenges Covid brought.

Along with this the committee is looking at other comparable programs as a measuring stick to look at areas where we can improve our own program.

Bob Gordon, Director in Charge

- SAFETY COMMITTEE

The safety committee will be running a safety awareness campaign focusing on some of the information shared with us from the instructors at the last UTT/UTW program.

- The committee will focus on ways to increase safety awareness within the industry covering the mechanical and herbicide sides of our industry.
- Any ideas you have for topics you would like to see covered please send a note to the PVMA office and the safety committee will look at developing an awareness bulletin to go in the magazine.
- As always if you are interested in joining the committee, just reach out to the PVMA office and we will follow up with you.

Awareness Topic : Your Mental Health Matters

- Even on the best days, stress can prevent us from being fully focused and doing our best work. And too much of it can lead to burnout, disengagement, more sick days, and strained relationships in the workplace.
- In the wake of COVID-19, it's never been more critical for business and HR leaders to address the mental well-being of their teams head-on. What can you do to help?

The best way to reduce stress in the workplace is by addressing it. A lot of times you can help alleviate stress by talking about the issues out loud with a supervisor, colleague, family member or friend. [Find some tips for coping with workplace stress on Page 22.](#)

Bob Gordon, Committee Chair

- CASINO COMMITTEE

We are waiting for confirmation on when our next Casino dates will be. We have asked for 4th quarter placement in 2023 and for it to be in Calgary the next time.

Laura Hammer, Director in Charge

- SEMINAR COMMITTEE

The Seminar Committee is excited to return to the 3-day Spring Conference format with the theme of '45 Years and Growing Strong!' The PVMA has much to celebrate and welcomes all attendees to share in the festivities. With over 10 educational presentations on a wide variety of topics, an evening Meet & Greet, a Banquet and guest speaker 'Tyler Smith', and a full Tradeshow floor, there will be much to see and do! We are extremely grateful for the support of the sponsors, tradeshow vendors, and everyone in attendance. Please enjoy the event responsibly!

Lisa Rybchuk – Director in Charge

- GOV'T LIASON COMMITTEE

In Canada, pesticides are regulated by the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. The federal government decides which pesticides are safe to use in Canada and sets minimum requirements for how to use them. The Alberta Department of Environment and Protected Areas (formerly called Environment and Parks) regulates the sale, use, storage, transportation and disposal of pesticides in Alberta under the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act. Pesticides are intended and designed to be toxic to pests; however, if used improperly, they can pose serious risks to human health and the environment. Pesticide regulation aims to ensure pesticide sale and use is conducted in a safe and effective manner.

In March 2022, Alberta Environment and Protected Areas - Pesticide Management Program underwent an internal audit by the Auditor General of Alberta. The objective of the audit was to determine if the department had adequate processes to minimize the risk of inappropriate pesticide use in Alberta. Following the audit, the **Auditor General highlighted three recommendations; 1/ Assess risks and employ compliance monitoring to mitigate them, 2/ Ensure public information is current and accurate, and 3/ Develop performance metrics and evaluate the pesticide program. The full public document is available on the Alberta Government website and is highly recommended reading.** <https://www.oag.ab.ca/reports/oag-environment-pesticide-mgmt-mar-2022>

*Submitted by Lisa Rybchuk on behalf of
Vaughn Leuschen - Director in Charge*

MY SUMMER WORKING IN VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

- PVMA SCHOLARSHIP ESSAY BY CAROLINE MACDONALD



HOW I WILL CONTINUE TO CARRY THIS KNOWLEDGE THROUGHOUT MY FUTURE AS A PROSPECTIVE SCIENCE COMMUNICATOR.

People really do fear the word “pesticide”. My mother and sister, when I told them I took a job in pesticidal application, both insisted I rescind my offer and find something they alleged to be safer. What exactly they were intending on getting me to work in, I’m not sure. They told me all these chemical horror stories they’ve heard from the Internet, or a friend of a friend of a friend. It was a genuine concern they were feeling for me. Who would want their loved one being in contact with what they believe to be immediate cancer-causing, mutagenic, poisonous substances?

This reluctant acceptance of my family members regarding my new job was hardly the last of it. During my months as a vegetation management technician, I had countless interactions with residents with inquiries on my work. Fair few individuals were genuinely curious, however there were instances of hostility that my coworkers and myself experienced. The lack of proper education surrounding pesticide use and the chemicals themselves often lead to these angry and concerned residents. They truly are just scared. It shows in the way they pull the collars of their shirts to their noses as they walk past or cross the street. It shows in the way some turn to the advocacy of banning pesticidal chemicals. All of this is of course not to say there’s no risk as a vegetation management technician. I was very thoroughly educated before beginning at my position. Even before my training, my background as a university chemistry student and experience working in BSL-2 laboratories, I know that workplace hazards are only as dangerous as we allow them to be. The hierarchy of

controls is there for a reason, and when utilized it greatly decreases the possibility of an incident.

Working in the field of vegetation management the past summer was such an eye-opening experience. I truly never realized how important it was for so many industries! Agriculture, conservation, and oil, to name a few. I had never considered the fact that vegetation growth could be a fire hazard or choke out native plant life. In mainstream media, it is portrayed as being useful purely for aesthetic reason. You know, to get rid of unsightly dandelions in your front yard. This misunderstanding on such a large scale is a contributor to the fact that so many individuals want the total banning of pesticides. They aren’t aware of how widespread these chemicals are used; how important they are. I want to play a part in the education and advocacy for pesticide use.

My future involves me finishing my BSc degree at the University of Alberta next April and hopefully going for my Masters in relation to microbiology. In terms of my end goal, I wish to work in science communication. I know that is quite broad, but if there is one thing I love more than science it is to share my passion with others. I am an older sister of 4, as well as a high school science tutor. Quite honestly, I love to talk and I love to teach. Even better if I can do both at the same time!

My favourite thing about teaching is watching the student have that “Oh!” moment. When the concept clicks in their heads, and their eyes light up. When they realize “Oh wow, I get it now. I like this stuff!”.

I want to be the reason that people have a sort of “Oh!” moment when it comes to explaining the importance of pesticide use. I want to be the one to change their minds.



Advantage VM

From our team at AdvantageVM, we would like to thank our dedicated customers for their continued commitment and support.

AdvantageVM was founded in 2016, and since then, we have expanded to serve clients across Canada. Having the chance to share our expertise and knowledge has been an extremely valuable experience, and we look forward to continually serving the Vegetation Management Community with the specialized skill set our team possesses.

We will continue serving you in an affordable and efficient manner – one that not only meets your expectations but exceeds them as well.

So, thank you, once again, from the whole team at AdvantageVM. The dedication and support of our clients means the world to us.



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TIPS FOR REDUCING WORKPLACE STRESS

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

The best way to reduce stress in the workplace is by addressing it. A lot of times you can help alleviate stress by talking about the issues out loud with a supervisor, colleague, family member or friend. Here are some tips and tricks you can use in moments of high stress:

1. TAKE INVENTORY

Press pause and take an honest look at your day-to-day life, “If you keep going 24/7 at 120 miles an hour, you’re never going to get a handle on stress

2. LEAN ON OTHERS

Being around people you trust can calm your body and mind, but unfortunately, loneliness is its own major public health crisis. “During the pandemic, rates of anxiety and depression went through the roof and isolation played a huge role.

3. TRY MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness meditation has been shown to offer a host of stress-busting benefits — from lowering blood pressure to easing anxiety. “With regular practice, you can become less reactive. You’re able to sit back a bit, take a breath, and contemplate before you shoot back a reply to that distressing email.”

4. PRACTICE GOOD SELF-CARE

Stress saps your mental and physical resources, so good self-care can help you be more resilient. Make regular exercise a priority, too. That doesn’t mean you have to have a full-out sweat session every day. “Walking can be great exercise. A healthy diet can also help you combat the toll of stress.

5. SEEK HELP

Sometimes, despite such efforts, we reach a state of complete overwhelm. (An alarming 27 percent of Harris’s survey respondents reported that some days they are so stressed they can’t function.) Seeking professional help from your doctor or a therapist can be an empowering step toward coping better.

UTT/UTW RE-CERTIFICATION COURSE DATES

AS A CERTIFIED UTILITY TREE WORKER OR UTILITY TREE TRIMMER, YOU MUST ATTEND THIS RE-CERTIFICATION COURSE EVERY FIVE YEARS. CONTACT OLDS TO REGISTER.

IN-PERSON SESSIONS: APRIL 19-20, 2023

ONLINE SESSIONS: JANUARY 9-20, 2023 | MARCH 13-24, 2023

UTT/UTW CERTIFICATION COURSE DATES

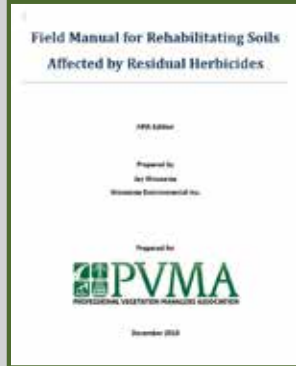
TO BECOME A CERTIFIED UTILITY TREE WORKER OR UTILITY TREE TRIMMER, YOU MUST SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS PVMA-SANCTIONED SAFETY COURSE.

PRE-APPROVAL BY THE PVMA OFFICE IS REQUIRED.

IN-PERSON SESSIONS: APRIL 17-27, 2023 | APRIL 24-MAY 4, 2023

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