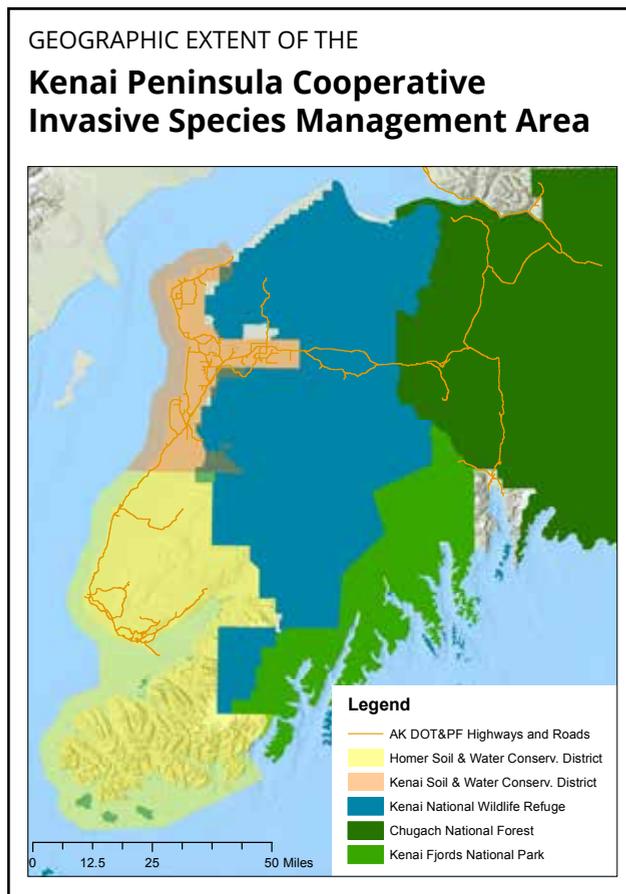




KENAI PENINSULA COOPERATIVE
**INVASIVE SPECIES
MANAGEMENT AREA**

2020 ANNUAL REPORT *and*
PARTNERSHIP ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Introduction



Invasive plant infestations reduce the biological, agricultural, recreational, and economic value of the land, decrease native plant populations, and degrade ecosystems. In order for management efforts to be successful, a broad-scale and coordinated approach is necessary to systematically integrate detection of invasive species and respond rapidly with a variety of control methods to eradicate new infestations.

The Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (KP-CISMA) is a highly organized partnership of agencies and organizations seeking to prevent the spread of the most detrimental non-native species on the Kenai Peninsula. Since our inception as a Cooperative Weed Management Area in 2003, we have worked diligently to reduce the negative effects of invasive plants within the region, using a variety of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies. With the increased threats posed by a variety of invasive species, the partnership chose to broaden our scope to become the KP-CISMA in 2020.

The KP-CISMA embodies and implements this integrated man-

agement approach through numerous partnerships, and is coordinated by the Homer Soil and Water Conservation District (HSWCD). In 2020, thanks to funding from the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the KP-CISMA expanded in capacity to host a full-time Coordinator housed by HSWCD and a Field Coordinator, housed by the Kenai Watershed Forum. Taking a regional approach, we collaborate on surveying and monitoring, education and outreach, and treatment implementation throughout the 6-million acres of the Kenai Peninsula, the 10-mile Kenai Isthmus at Portage, Turnagain Arm, and communities across Kachemak Bay: Seldovia, Port Graham and Nanwalek.

The 2020 field season was especially challenging due to the coronavirus pandemic, but through dedicated partnerships and collaboration we succeeded in implementing control of high-priority invasive plants along state and local rights-of-ways, completed a regional survey for European bird cherry trees, monitored for reed canarygrass infestations along high-risk pathways, and installed multiple boot brush stations.

Primary Goals

Prevent
the introduction
and spread
of invasive species

Reduce
the extent and density of newly
established infestations,
minimizing spread and damage

Implement the most
**economic, effective, and
safe control methods**
for priority invasives

Facilitate cooperation
among those working
to manage invasive species
on the Kenai Peninsula

OUR PARTNERS

**Homer Soil and Water
Conservation Service**
KP-CISMA Coordinator

Kenai Watershed Forum
KP-CISMA Field Coordinator

**Kenai Soil and Water
Conservation Service**

**Cooperative
Extension Service**
University of
Alaska Fairbanks

**Kenai and Alaska Maritime
National Wildlife Refuges**
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**State and Private Forestry,
Alaska Region**
U.S. Forest Service

**Chugach
National Forest**
U.S. Forest Service

**Kenai Fjords
National Park**

**Seldovia
Village Tribe**

**Alaska Department of
Transportation and Public
Facilities**

**Alaska Department
of Natural Resources**

**Alaska Department
of Fish and Game**

**Cook Inlet
Aquaculture
Association**

**Kenai
Peninsula
Borough**

**Natural Resources
Conservation Service**
U.S. Department
of Agriculture

**Kachemak Bay
National Estuary Research
Reserve**

**Alaska Center for
Conservation Science**
University of
Alaska Anchorage

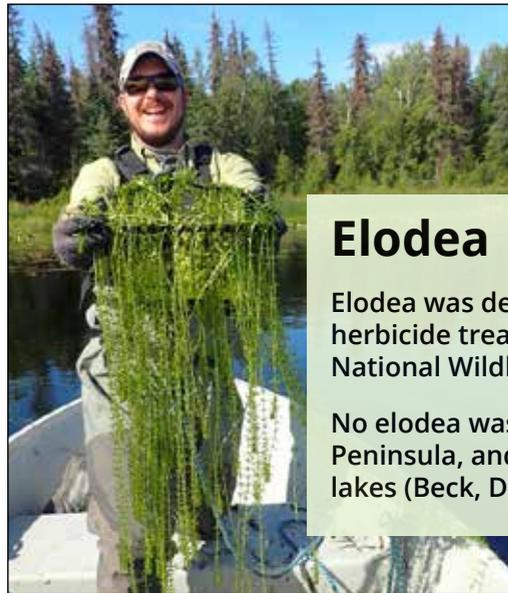
**Alaska Invasive
Species Partnership**

**Copper River
Watershed Project**

**Alien Species
Control LLC**

**Antheia
Environmental**

Project Highlights



Photos by Matt Bowser

Elodea

Elodea was detected in Sandpiper Lake in 2019. Eradication efforts began with herbicide treatments in summer 2020 and will continue in 2021 by the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

No elodea was detected during surveys of 14 highly trafficked lakes on the Kenai Peninsula, and eradication efforts have succeeded at all 5 previously infested lakes (Beck, Daniels, Stormy, Sport, and Hilda/Seppu).



Photo by Maura Schumacher



Reed Canarygrass

A reed canarygrass committee drafted a 2020 annual workplan that prioritized surveys and control at the following sites:

- Russian River Corridor: HEA Powerline
- Bradley Lake Hydroelectric Site
- Nikiski North Road Extension
- Caribou Lake trails and road access
- Monitoring of historic survey data on the southern peninsula
- RCG Annual Report available at kenainvasives.org

Invasive Plant Control	Area Surveyed	Area Treated	Weed-free Gravel Pits Inspected
Terrestrial	765 acres and 18+ miles of trails	52 acres	72 acres
Aquatic	2,948 acres of lakes	73 acres	

Project Highlights

European Bird Cherry Peninsula-wide Survey

Over 650 observations of European Bird Cherry/Chokecherry trees (*Prunus padus*, *P. virginiana*) were recorded peninsula-wide and across Kachemak Bay

Density ranged from 1 to 30 trees per site, and approximately 1900 trees were surveyed.

This survey does not include the residential areas of Soldotna and Kenai.

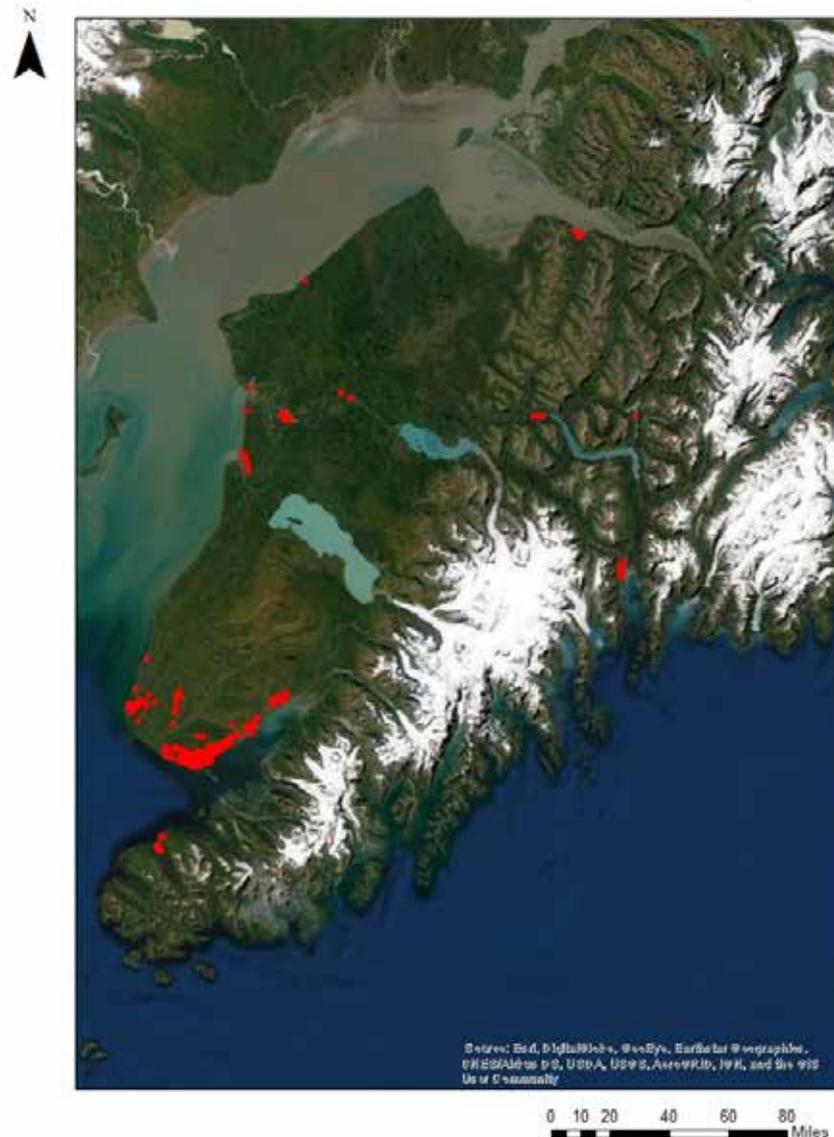
Landowner Removal Program Launched

Over 27 properties participated in the cost-share program in 2020, either by removing their own trees, or allowing HSWCD to remove their trees.

Approximately 90 invasive *Prunus* trees were removed in the Homer area, greatly reducing the amount of cherries adjacent to vulnerable moose and salmon habitat, wetlands and streams.

Over \$5,200 of landowner contributions were leveraged.

Kenai Peninsula Invasive *Prunus* Tree Surveys 2020



STRATEGIC PLANS UPDATED

KP-CISMA Strategic Plan & Priority Invasive Plant List

Comprehensive Non-Native Plant List for the Kenai Peninsula

Elodea Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPM)

Reed Canarygrass Strategic Plan

Summary of Reed Canarygrass Management on the Kenai Peninsula

Annual Reed Canarygrass Workplan

KP-CISMA Outreach and Education Strategic Plan

Project Highlights

Prunus padus eradication

Originally introduced as popular ornamental trees, the European Bird Cherry/Chokecherry spreads aggressively through suckering and resprouting from cut stumps, and the cherries are widely distributed by birds.

HSWCD offered landowner removal assistance through a variety of mechanical and chemical techniques. Proper disposal of cut limbs is critical for eradication to be successful!



Photos by Casey Greenstein and Katherine Schake



Caleb Slemmons



Bugwood.org



Control of terrestrial invasive plants within state and local right-of-ways (ROWS)

Species are prioritized based on aggressiveness of spread, those most harmful to native ecosystems, and the feasibility of eradication.

Orange Hawkweed, White Sweetclover, Bird Vetch, Yellow Hawkweeds, Canada Thistle, European Bird Cherry/Chokecherry, Common Tansy, and Reed Canarygrass were treated with manual, mechanical, and chemical techniques.

Outreach

Number of presentations
(virtual, in-person, and radio)

14 (HSWCD & KWF)

Number of people reached
in variety of media

> 445 people

Facebook engagements

1,306

New boot brush stations in Homer

- 2 installed at Homer Harbor to protect Kachemak Bay
- 1 installed at Homer Demonstration Forest trailhead
- More stations in the works for Seward Harbor and trailheads across the peninsula



Rebrand and new website

In December 2020, the partnership expanded our scope from invasive plants to include all taxa of invasive species.

Thank you to Heather Turning of Turning Heads Design for creating our new logo!

Thank you to Mark Gillespie of Mindfront, LLC for creating our new website: kenaiinvasives.org



Reed Canarygrass abatement in Russian River corridor

Over 14 acres of Homer Electric Association's powerline corridor was mechanically, manually and chemically treated in 2020.

Streamwatch volunteers joined KP-CISMA partners for clipping seed-heads mid-summer.

Chugach National Forest and Kenai National Wildlife Refuge continued annual efforts to eradicate infestations on trails, parking lots and roadsides.



Partner Collaboration



Homer Soil & Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Coordinator of KP-CISMA

Acquires and maintains permits;
Implements surveys and control of
priority infestations

Seeks funding on behalf of KP-CISMA



KP-CISMA Field Coordinator

Implements monitoring and control
of high priority infestations across
the Kenai Peninsula



An orange hawkweed infestation of 30 acres in the Girdwood Valley has been reduced by 90% after two years of chemical treatments. Eradication efforts will continue in 2021.
Photo by Heather Thamm

KP-CISMA
projects are
funded by



COPPER RIVER
WATERSHED PROJECT

THANK YOU!