

2020

British Columbia Spartina Eradication Program Progress Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2020, the British Columbia Spartina Working Group (BC SWG) continued to work towards the eradication of non-native, invasive *Spartina* spp. (*S. anglica*, *S. densiflora*, and *S. patens*) along the coasts of British Columbia (BC) through the BC Spartina Eradication Program. The BC SWG recognizes the potential impacts of *Spartina* spp. on local shorelines and wildlife habitat and strives to eradicate all non-native, invasive *Spartina* spp. along BC's coastline.

In 2020, approximately \$316,000 CAD of in-kind and direct-value contributions were applied to complete program components focused on Monitoring, Removal, Herbicide, Coordination, and Outreach within the Spartina eradication program. Approximately \$38,000 of this funding was provided through the Federal Coastal Restoration Fund which went directly to staff time within the project. Over 200 km of BC's coastline was surveyed for *Spartina* spp. in 2020. Surveying efforts continue to indicate that these invasive species are limited to the Fraser River Delta and Burrard Inlet in the Lower Mainland, and the Baynes Sound area of Vancouver Island. Between 2019 and 2020, the total abundance of *S. anglica* plants decreased by 51%. The leaf area of *S. anglica* decreased by only 9%, while the impacted area by this species decreased by 32%. The area impacted by *S. patens* decreased by 17% between years, and the total leaf area of this species decreased by 19%. *S. patens* remains most prevalent in the Bayne's Sound area of Vancouver Island near the Courtenay River Estuary. The number of *S. densiflora* plants decreased by 52% and we saw a reduction in impacted area by this species of 38%. Far fewer seed-bearing *S. densiflora* plants were found suggesting the number of mature plants is decreasing in BC. 2020 marked the second-year herbicide was used outside of BC's Lower Mainland to treat for invasive *Spartina* spp. on Vancouver Island. These applications were conducted in the Courtenay River Estuary near Goose Spit Park in Comox, BC. Full treatment of the *Spartina patens* population in the Baynes Sound region was not achieved in 2020 and will be a primary goal of the 2021 eradication program.

In 2020, the BC SWG continued to work with the City of Port Moody to monitor sites replanted with *Carex lyngbyei* planted as part of restoration efforts where *S. patens* had previously been present prior to treatment. Left untreated, *S. patens* grows into a dense monoculture meadow in the high salt marsh. Reestablishing native species within the now-bare patches can help prevent reinvasion by invasive species, including *S. patens*. The eradication of *S. patens* in this instance had been accomplished through shading them out with woven Nilex 2002 geotextile fabric as well as herbicide treatment efforts. Most other attempts to shade out *S. patens* with geotextile fabric have not been successful as wind and wave action as well as tampering by the public had uncovered the mats. As such, the BC SWG plans to continue to use herbicide as the primary control method for *S. anglica* and *S. patens* as it has shown effective results. *S. densiflora* will continue to be treated with manual control methods and the effectiveness of these efforts will continue to be monitored to ensure progress towards eradication is being maintained.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	3
LIST OF FIGURES	4
LIST OF TABLES	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
BACKGROUND & ECOLOGY	7
DETECTION	7
METHODS	8
MAINLAND BC	11
CONTROL & REMOVAL.....	16
MANUAL REMOVAL.....	16
<i>S. ANGLICA</i>	16
<i>S. DENSIFLORA</i>	16
<i>S. PATENS</i>	16
HERBICIDE	17
<i>S. ANGLICA</i>	18
<i>S. PATENS</i>	19
RESULTS.....	23
RESTORATION.....	26
OUTREACH.....	27
INFORMATION AND INTERNET RESOURCES	27
FINANCES.....	27
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2021	29
COORDINATION.....	29
MONITORING	29
TREATMENTS.....	29
SCIENCE AND EVALUATION.....	30
RESTORATION.....	30
CONCLUSION	30
APPENDIX A – METRIC & SUMMARY CALCULATIONS.....	31
Appendix B – DATA INTEGRITY OVER TIME	32

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Members of the BC SWG.....	5
Figure 2. All areas searched for <i>Spartina</i> spp. in British Columbia in 2020	9
Figure 3. General locations where <i>Spartina</i> spp. are found in BC: Lower Mainland (Blue) and Baynes' Sound (Green). The approximate distribution of <i>Spartina</i> spp. is shown in Orange.	10
Figure 4. Cell Summaries and Site Summaries example in Comox Harbour, BC.	11
Figure 5. Fraser River Delta, Boundary Bay, and Burrard Inlet areas surveyed for <i>Spartina</i> spp. in 2020.	12
Figure 6. Baynes' Sound area surveyed for <i>Spartina</i> spp. in 2020.....	13
Figure 7. North Vancouver Island areas passively surveyed for <i>Spartina</i> spp. in 2020.	14
Figure 8. Additional Vancouver Island areas passively surveyed for <i>Spartina</i> spp. in 2020.....	15
Figure 9. Manual removal of <i>S. Densiflora</i> using Pickaxe and barrel-pack.....	16
Figure 10. Timeline of <i>S. Patens</i> control methods.	17
Figure 11. 2020 <i>S. anglica</i> treatment areas in Boundary Bay. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more <i>S. anglica</i> plants were treated.	18
Figure 12. 2020 <i>S. anglica</i> treatment areas in the Roberts Bank Wildlife Management Area and Tsawwassen First Nation. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more <i>S. anglica</i> plants were treated.....	19
Figure 13. 2020 <i>S. patens</i> treatment locations in the Burrard Inlet area. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more <i>S. patens</i> plants were treated.	20
Figure 14. 2020 <i>S. patens</i> treatment areas in the Baynes' Sound area. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more <i>S. patens</i> plants were treated.	21
Figure 15. Plant abundance of <i>Spartina</i> spp. from 2004 - 2020.	25
Figure 16. Estimated leaf area of <i>Spartina</i> spp. from 2004 - 2020.	25
Figure 17. Amount of shoreline impacted by <i>Spartina</i> spp. from 2004 - 2020.	26
Figure 18. Funding history of the <i>Spartina</i> eradication program - comparing In-kind donations to total cash expenditures each year since 2004.....	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. List of 2020 participants who helped in the mapping and control of <i>Spartina</i> spp. in BC	6
Table 2. Amount of herbicide used to treat <i>S. anglica</i> since 2013.	22
Table 3. Amount of herbicide used to treat <i>S. patens</i> on the Lower Mainland since 2016.	22
Table 4. Amount of herbicide used to treat <i>S. patens</i> in the Bayne's Sound area since 2019.....	22
Table 5. Summary of <i>Spartina</i> spp. invasion since 2004.....	24
Table 6. Total revenue from all funders towards the <i>Spartina</i> eradication program in 2020.....	28
Table 7. Expenditures related to the <i>Spartina</i> eradication program in 2020.	28
Table 8. Size Classes and their Areal Coefficients	31

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work completed for the 2020 Spartina Eradication Program (SEP) could not have been undertaken without funding from:



The British Columbia Spartina Working Group (BC SWG) is a Collaborative group that formed in 2004. It includes members from both government and non-government organizations. The SEP is primarily lead by the technical committee. However, the success of the programs early detection rapid response efforts is only possible from the entire Working Group (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Members of the BC SWG

In addition, special thanks are extended to the field coordinators and many other individuals and groups who contributed to finding and removing *Spartina* spp. in British Columbia (BC). Many landowners provided access through their properties to map and control *Spartina*, and we thank them for their support. Those contributions to the BC SWG program are acknowledged in Table 1.

Table 1. List of 2020 participants who helped in the mapping and control of *Spartina* spp. in BC

Organization	Participants
City of Surrey; SHaRP Program	The names were not recorded this year; however, the BC SWG is grateful for those that did participate in 2020 efforts. The BC SWG values to continued support and engagement by the City of Surrey and the SHaRP Program.
Corporation of Delta	Kevin Li
British Columbia Conservation Foundation	Katie Calon, Aaron Pichincherro, Jamie Gauk, Lanie Fung, Kara Molgard, Samara Leake, Oona Vaughn
Ducks Unlimited Canada	Matt Christensen, Richard Topp, Ben Kavanagh, Ben Siebert
Environment Canada – Canadian Wildlife Service	Kathleen Moore
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development	Val Miller, Becky Brown, Derek Hogan
Port Metro Vancouver	Kim Keskinen, Spencer Chaisson
West Coast Conservation Lands Management Program	Tom Reid, Curtis Rispin, Shawn Lukas, Sammy Penner
K'omoks First Nation	Cory Frank

BACKGROUND & ECOLOGY

In 2003, Gary Williams, a consultant for Port Metro Vancouver, discovered *S. anglica* growing in the Fraser River Delta while conducting habitat surveys of intertidal areas. This finding raised concerns about the spread of this invasive cordgrass as specimens of this species had not yet been discovered in BC.

Apart from *S. anglica*, two other species of invasive *Spartina* have been discovered in BC. *S. patens* was first identified in 1979 in both Burrard inlet as well as the Courtenay Estuary. *S. densiflora* was identified within the Baynes Sound area of Vancouver Island in 2005. Based on anecdotal evidence, however, this species has been present in the Baynes Sound area for some time.

Invasive *Spartina* spp. are detrimental to intertidal habitats. Throughout their establishment, *S. anglica* and *S. densiflora* convert important mudflat habitat into monoculture stands. These stands accrete sediments, modifying drainage patterns and reducing habitat for waterfowl and fish. *S. patens*, on the other hand, invades the higher salt marsh areas, outcompeting the diversity of salt marsh plants and replacing them with a dense, monoculture meadow that is very difficult to remove manually. Intertidal areas that became dominated by invasive *Spartina* in the state of Washington, USA, experienced large declines in their abundance of shorebirds and waterfowl. As a result, significant expenditures were required to control *Spartina* in the state, costing approximately \$1,000,000 USD per year for more than two decades. The states of Oregon and Washington combined spent approximately \$50,000,000 USD over a ten-year period in a concerted effort to eradicate *Spartina* spp. along their coastlines. It is only recently, with sustained funding and the use of herbicide, that these two states have significantly reduced their infestations of *Spartina*.

Controlling the spread of an invasive species early in its expansion is the most cost-effective approach to its eradication. The Fraser River Delta on its own contains approximately 25,000 ha of tidal mud flats that are internationally recognized as important habitat for fish and migratory birds. The Fraser Delta hosts the highest density of wintering waterfowl, shorebirds, and raptors in all of Canada. Failing to control invasive *Spartina* in BC would result in a massive loss of essential habitats beyond just the Fraser River Delta and would require considerably more resources to manage them in the future. It is crucial to control invasive *Spartina* spp. in BC as early as possible.

The BC SWG formed in 2004 with the intent of eradicating invasive *Spartina* spp. from BC's coastlines. The working group is comprised of members from both government and non-government organizations. The BC SWG liaisons with the San Francisco Estuary *Spartina* Project and the Washington State Department of Agriculture, two USA agencies involved in eradicating invasive *Spartina* spp. along the Pacific Coast. The BC SWG has built on the Pacific Coast Collaborative Agreement as well as the West Coast Governor's Agreement to eradicate *Spartina* spp. from BC's coastlines. The focus of the BC SWG is to employ early detection and rapid response methods to eradicate invasive *Spartina* spp. in BC. In 2020 these methods took the form of mapping and actively controlling for *Spartina* between BC's Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. (Figure 2). Continued pressure is needed to further reduce the presence of *Spartina* spp. in BC. It is a goal of the BC SWG to expand control efforts on all *Spartina* spp. to eventually eradicate the species from BC shores.

DETECTION

The compilation and storage of data of *Spartina* spp. in BC has historically been a joint effort between Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the Community Mapping Network. In recent years, DUC has been responsible for the collection and storage of spatial data for all *Spartina* spp. in BC. The collected data is used for evaluating the progress of *Spartina* eradication between years, as well as for planning future monitoring and control activities. The spatial

data of *Spartina* spp. in BC is uploaded to the provincial Invasive Alien Plant Program (IAPP) database. DUC also maintains a geodatabase of all the collected *Spartina* data since the beginning of the eradication program. The data is available for view through a digital web-atlas accessible through the BC SWG website. For more information on mapping methodology and spatial analyses, please visit www.spartina.ca. The location and approximate distribution of *Spartina* in BC in 2020 is shown in Figure 3.

METHODS

Since 2017, surveying for *Spartina* spp. has been completed using two ESRI¹ applications, *Collector* and *Survey123*. Both products are applications used on smart devices which take the place of Global Positioning System units. *Survey123* records the location and size of each individual plant or clone of *Spartina* spp. *Collector* provides real-time tracking of surveyors as well as preexisting *Spartina* mapping and tracking information. Data from multiple surveyors' *Collector* and *Survey123* applications are routinely uploaded to shared databases which the surveyors can then download onto their *Collector* apps. This process provides surveyors with accurate, updated visual representations as to what areas have already been surveyed as well as when these areas were surveyed. Such information is used to determine where subsequent surveying and control efforts are to be applied. These applications allow the BC SWG to accurately and consistently track populations of *Spartina* spp. over time across multiple regions. These sites are called IAPP sites within the ESRI database. These IAPP sites mirror sites in the provincial Invasive Alien Plant Program database hosted by the Government of BC.

¹ ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) is an international supplier of geographic information system software, web GIS and geodatabase management applications.

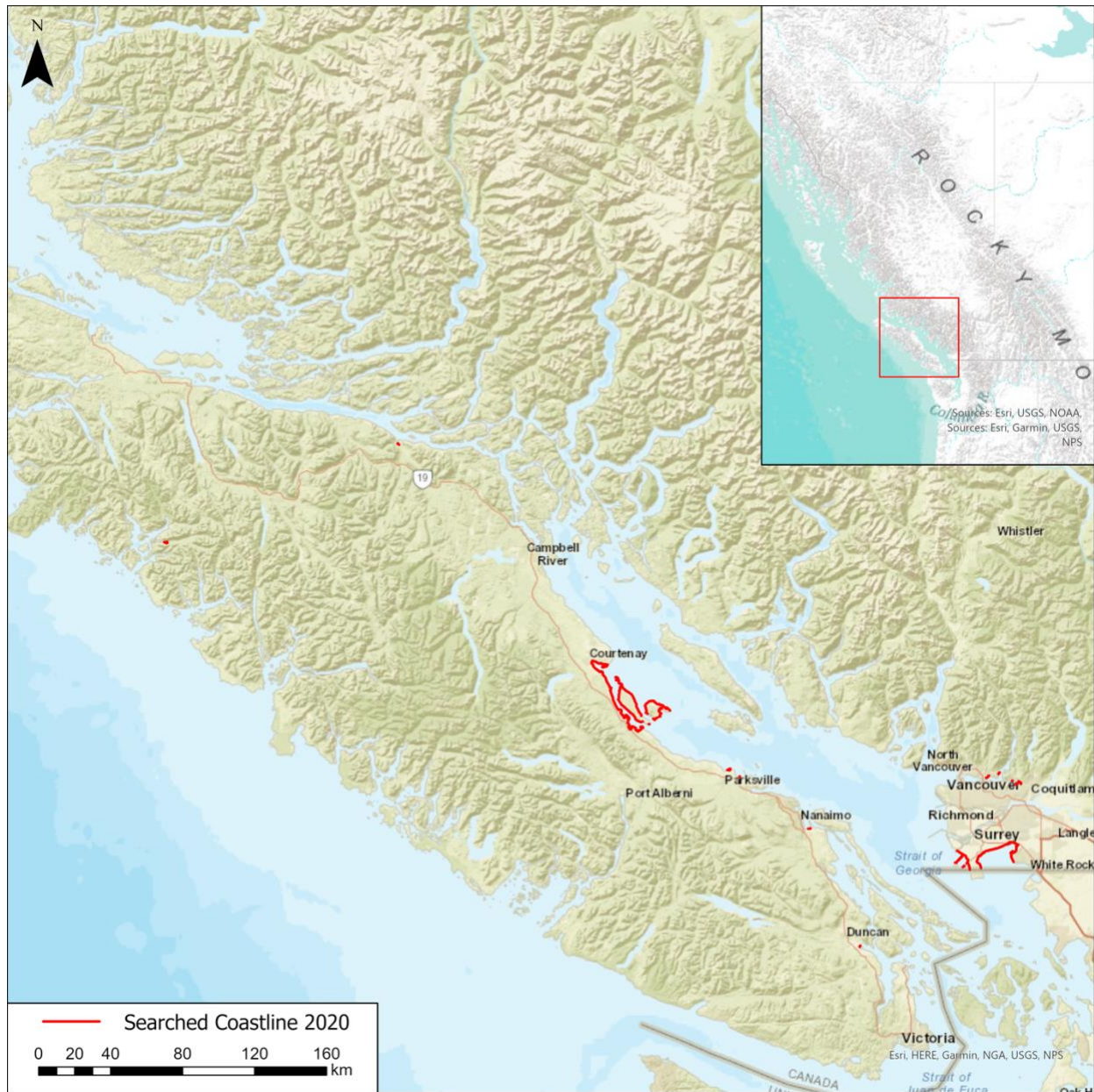


Figure 2. All areas searched for *Spartina* spp. in British Columbia in 2020

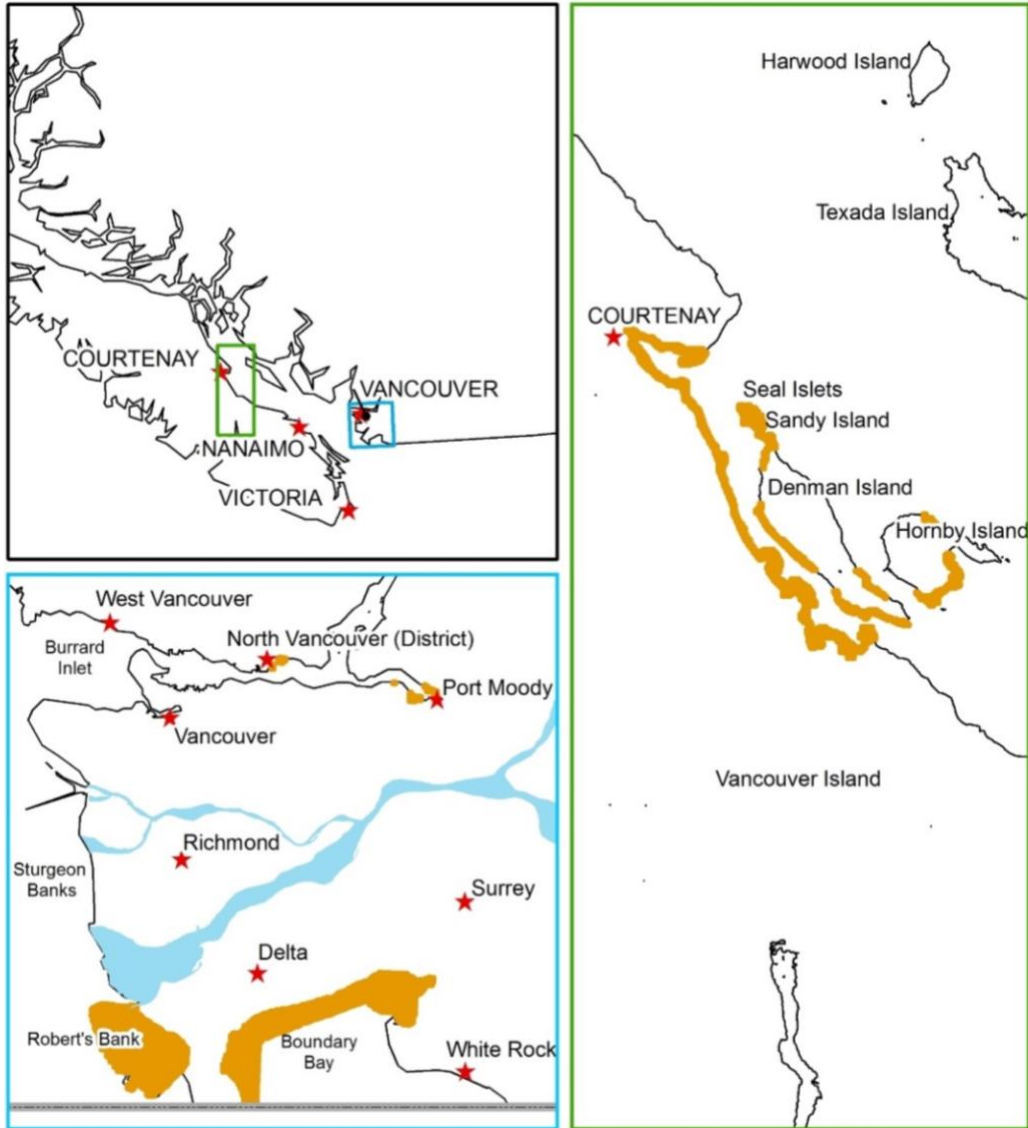


Figure 3. General locations where *Spartina* spp. are found in BC: Lower Mainland (Blue) and Baynes' Sound (Green). The approximate distribution of *Spartina* spp. is shown in Orange.

The BC SWG analyzes the surveyed IAPP sites by using several metrics:

1. The number of plants or plant clones detected
2. The size of each plant or plant clone
 - I. Size S: single plant or seedling
 - II. Size A: plant with diameter less than 30 cm
 - III. Size B: plant with diameter of 30 cm to 1 m
 - IV. Size C: plant with diameter of 1 m to 5 m
 - V. Size D: plant with diameter of approximately 5 m
 - VI. Size M: plant with diameter greater than 5 m
3. The estimated leaf area (number of plants or plant clones detected x size of each plant or plant clone = number of square meters a dispersed colony would occupy if all *Spartina* plants were grouped into a single cluster, see Appendix for full equation)

Each IAPP site is divided into a grid of 1 ha cells. The three metrics are then summarized at a single cell level within the grid as well as an accumulation of all the cells within a site. These summaries are titled Cell Summaries and Site Summaries, respectively (Figure 4). These summaries are generated on a per-species basis each year. With these summaries, the BC SWG determines how much shoreline has been impacted by *Spartina* spp. (how many 1 ha grid cells had one or more occurrences of *Spartina*). Together, the metrics used by the BC SWG depict spatial trends over time. By analyzing these trends, the BC SWG can effectively plan and develop monitoring and control activities for the future. For more information on how these metrics and summaries are calculated, see Appendix A.

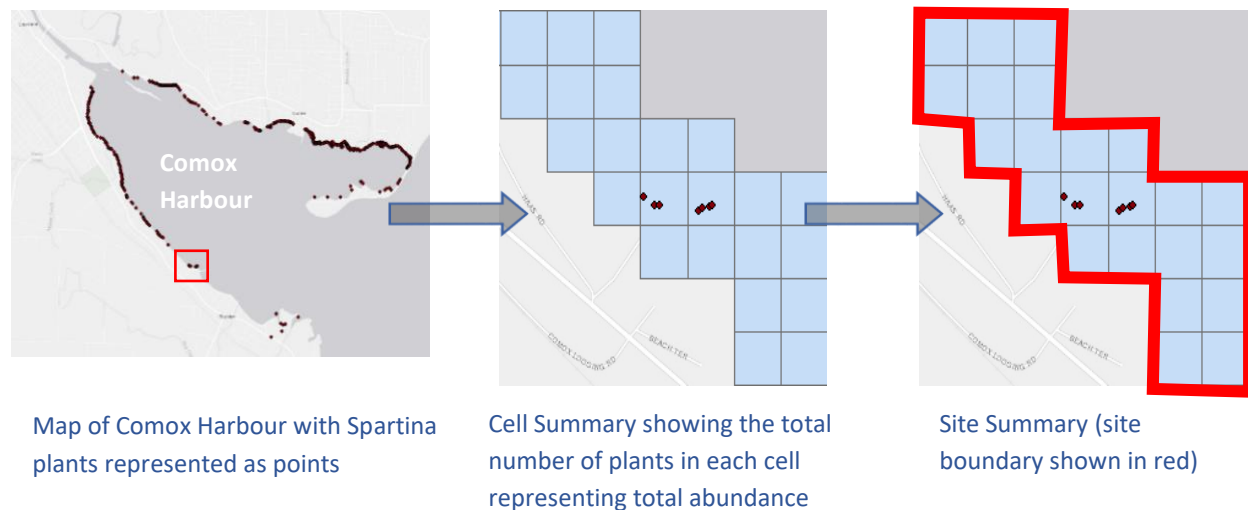


Figure 4. Cell Summaries and Site Summaries example in Comox Harbour, BC.

MAINLAND BC

In 2020, approximately 265 person days were spent surveying the Fraser River Delta, Boundary Bay, and Burrard Inlet areas for *Spartina* spp. (Figure 5). Surveying in the Fraser River Delta occurred from the tip of Robert's Bank, Delta, to the Canada-USA border south of the causeway that leads to the BC Ferries Terminal in Delta. Surveying along Boundary Bay occurred from the Canada-USA border south of Beach Grove Park, Delta, to where the Campbell River joins Boundary Bay in White Rock. Some of the surveying in Burrard Inlet occurred in The District of North Vancouver within the Maplewood Flats Conservation Area as well as in Deep Cove. The remainder of the surveying in Burrard Inlet occurred in Port Moody along the Reed Point Marina, within the Pacific Coast Terminal property, in

Old Mill Park, and in Old Orchard Park. Of all the surveys that took place in mainland BC in 2020, *S. anglica* was only found in the Fraser River Delta and Boundary Bay areas, and *S. patens* was only found in Burrard Inlet.



Figure 5. Fraser River Delta, Boundary Bay, and Burrard Inlet areas surveyed for *Spartina* spp. in 2020.



— Searched Coastline 2020

Kilometers
0 2.5 5 10 15

N

Spatial Reference
Name: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere
PCS: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary Sphere
GCS: GCS WGS 1984
Datum: WGS 1984
Projection: Mercator Auxiliary Sphere

Figure 6. Baynes' Sound area surveyed for *Spartina* spp. in 2020.

A total of 45 person-days were spent mapping the Baynes Sound area for *S. patens* and *S. densiflora* in 2020 (Figure 6). Surveying occurred from Goose Spit Park in Comox to Deep Bay in Bowser. Surveying also occurred around both Denman Island and Hornby Island. *S. densiflora* and *S. patens* were found within the Baynes Sound Area on Vancouver Island and some of the Gulf Islands (Figure 3). Passive surveys conducted during adjacent fieldwork were completed by members of Nature Trust BC in the Cowichan River, Nanaimo River, Craig Creek, Englishman River, Little Qualicum River (Figure 8), Salmon River, and Kaouk River estuaries (Figure 7).

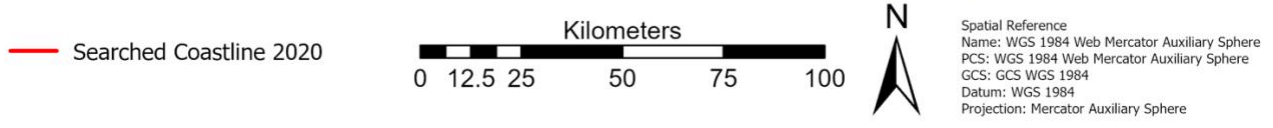
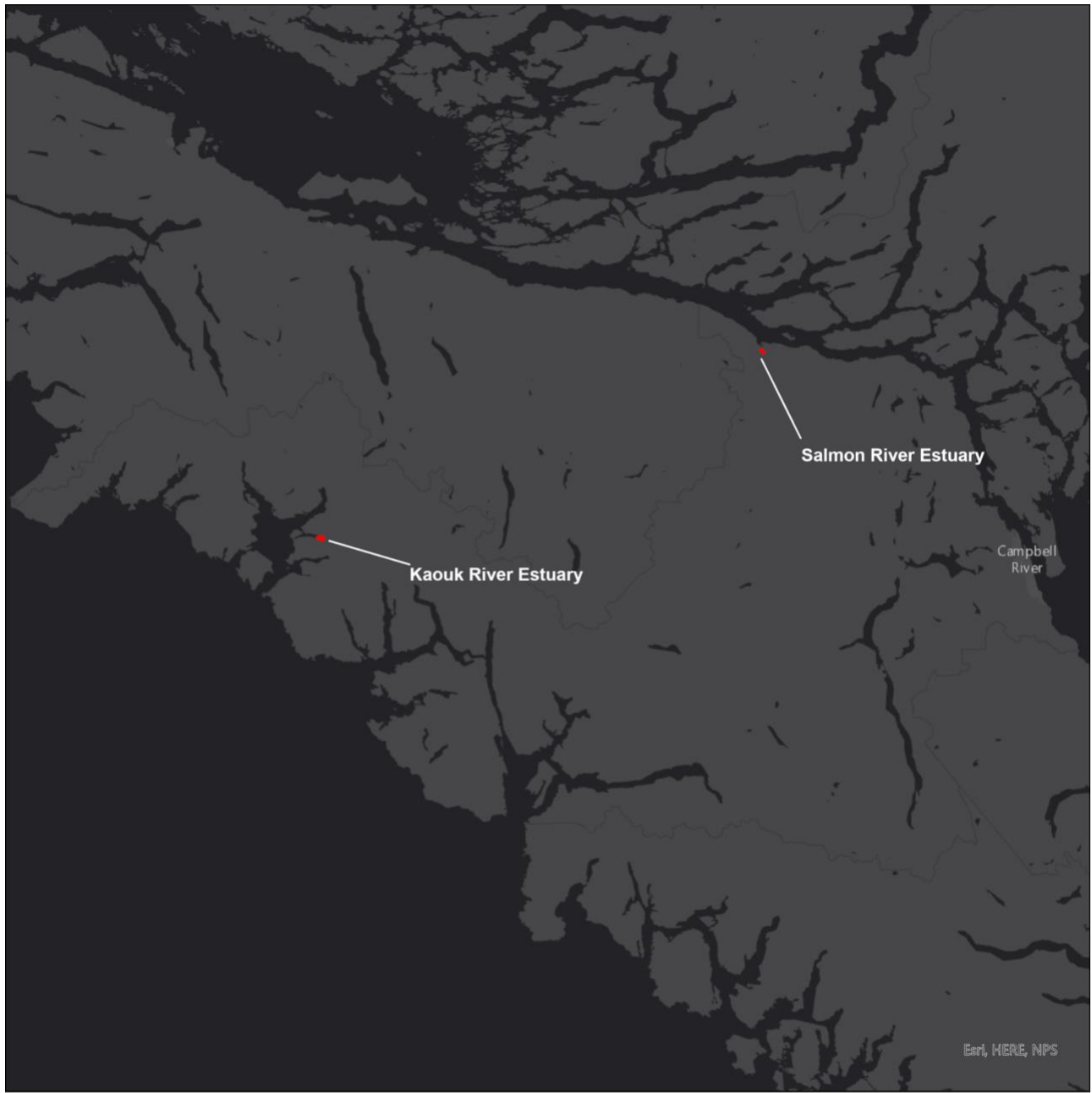


Figure 7. North Vancouver Island areas passively surveyed for *Spartina* spp. in 2020.

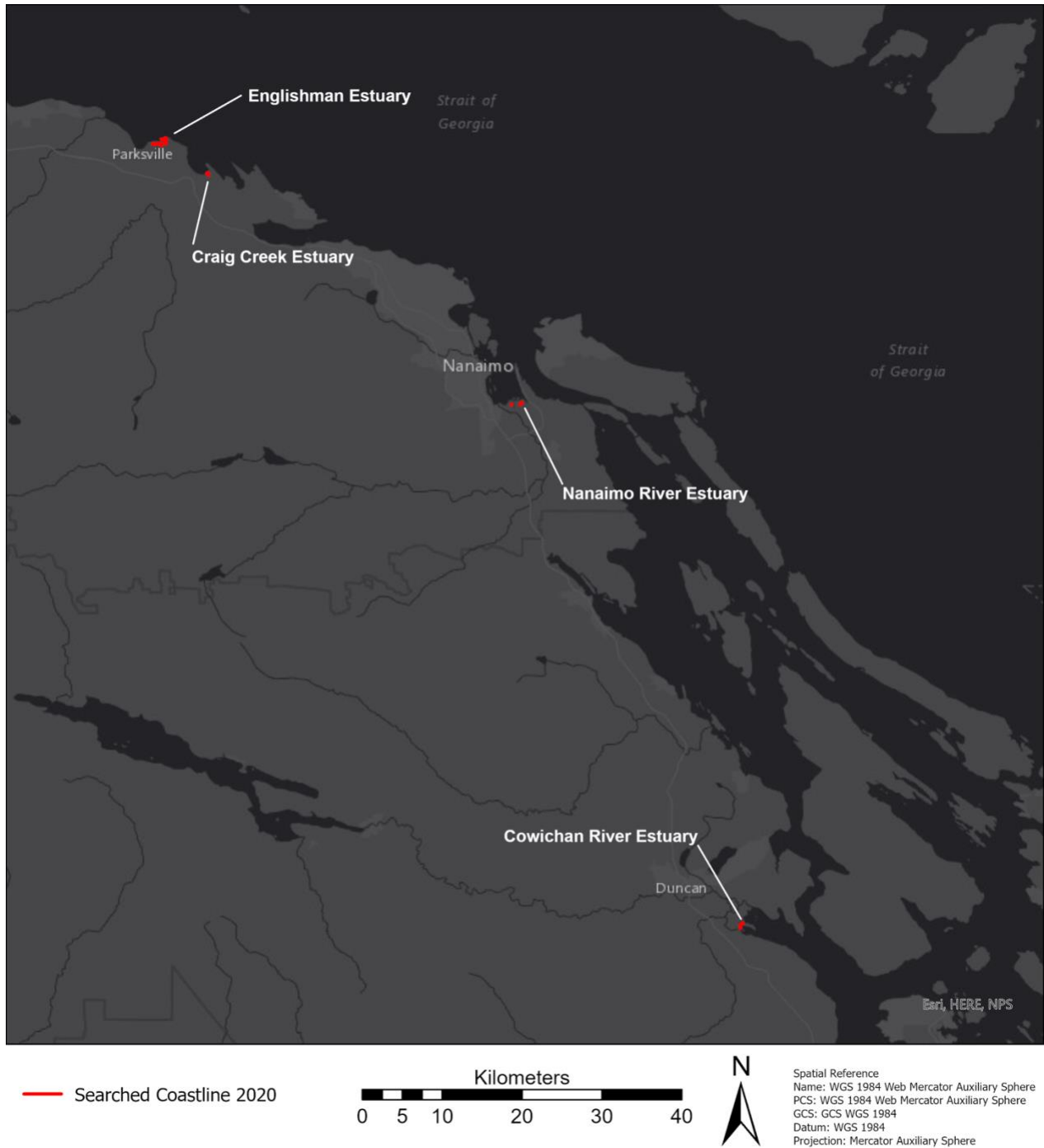


Figure 8. Additional Vancouver Island areas passively surveyed for *Spartina* spp. in 2020.

CONTROL & REMOVAL

MANUAL REMOVAL

S. ANGLICA

Unlike previous years, participants in 2020 did not manually remove size 'S' (single plants or seedlings) plants of *S. anglica* using hand shovels. Herbicide treatment has shown to be most effective at controlling the spread of *S. anglica*, even in the size S category. Removal of *S. anglica* plants by hand was done on a case by case basis where size 'S' plants could be removed easily and where their manual removal would significantly outweigh the effort needed to treat the plant with herbicide.

S. DENSIFLORA

Manual removal continues to be effective in controlling *S. densiflora*. No herbicide was used to control *S. densiflora*. In 2020, technicians on Vancouver Island and adjacent islands within Baynes Sound removed entire *S. densiflora* plants using pickaxes and transported them using barrel-packs (Figure 9). Plants bearing a mature seed head were bagged before being uprooted to reduce seed dispersal during removal. All clones were loaded into heavy plastic bags and dropped off at a local landfill for disposal. *S. densiflora* was controlled during the fall and winter as it is the only standing, green plant in the marshes during these months. The timing of control helped reduce search efforts. A total of 990 kg of plant material was removed over the 2020 season. DUC lead the operations on *densiflora* removals on the East Coast of Vancouver Island with the help of The Nature Trust of BC as part of the West Coast Conservation Land Management Program (WCCLMP). Taking the lead on *densiflora* removals saved money and resulted in *densiflora* removals being completed earlier than previous seasons.



Figure 9. Manual removal of *S. Densiflora* using Pickaxe and barrel-pack.

S. PATENS

Manual control for *S. patens* has historically involved covering mats of this species with a Nilex 2002 geotextile fabric. The intent behind this was to kill the mats by shading them out over a period of multiple years. Nilex 2002 geotextile fabric has been used to shade out *S. patens* in Burrard Inlet and Baynes' Sound as a means of control since 2012 with limited success. Numerous locations, methods and patch sizes have been trialed using the covering method. The fabric was installed over patches of *S. patens* for a minimum of 2 years and has only shown signs of reducing *S. patens* patch biomass before rapid re-establishment, typically within 1 growing season. Baynes' Sound has a more active shoreline, subject to wind and wave action that disturbs and removes the cover fabric, which requires maintenance and monitoring that is impractical. Due to the limited success with eradicating *S. patens* using covering and manual removal techniques and following a small herbicide pilot trial at PCT in 2015, operational scale herbicide treatment was employed on *S. patens* beginning in 2016. No manual removal was applied to *S. patens* in 2020. For a breakdown of the timeline of treatments for *S. patens* by the BC SWG, see Figure 10.

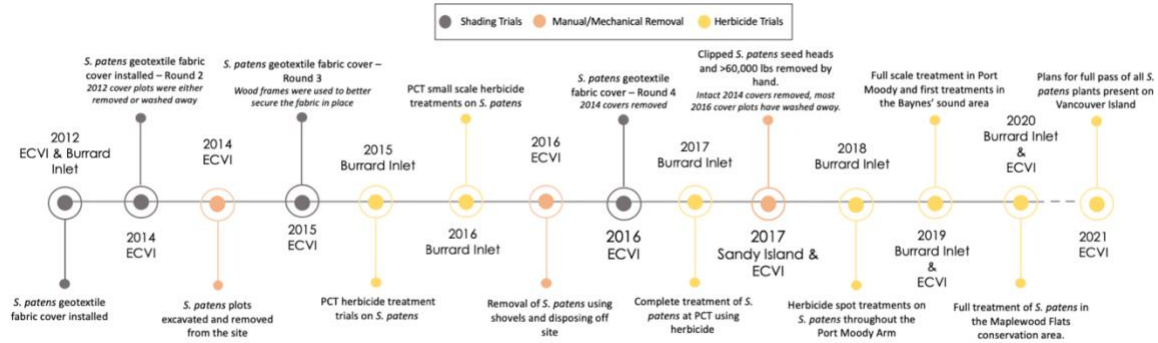


Figure 10. Timeline of S. Patens control methods.

HERBICIDE

For more than a decade, the treatment of *Spartina* spp. solely used non-herbicide control methods with limited success. Since 2010, a sub-group of the BC SWG has worked with federal and provincial Canadian agencies to determine the requirements and process of using herbicide to control *Spartina* spp. in BC. The sub-group evaluated the ecological impacts and best management practices of two herbicides used to control *Spartina* in the states of Washington, Oregon, and California, USA. From these evaluations, it was determined that herbicide was to be used but that the project first required the herbicides be registered with the federal Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) and that a Pesticide Use Permit (PUP) would be required from the BC provincial Ministry of Environment.

As members of the BC SWG, the BC Ministry of Environment and the BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resources Operations submitted an emergency use registration to the PMRA in February 2012 for the use of 2 herbicides with different active ingredients to control *Spartina*. These were Rodeo (glyphosate) and Habitat (imazapyr). The emergency response registration also included proposed methods on using the herbicides as well as proposed evaluation and monitoring processes. The PMRA granted the emergency registration of Habitat and Rodeo on February 13, 2013, allowing for their use until December 31, 2013. The PMRA requires a new application be submitted annually for the emergency use of herbicides. In 2013, it was decided that only Habitat, mixed with the surfactant Ag Surf II, was to be used to treat *Spartina* spp. in BC. This decision was made following consultation with agencies from Washington State, USA, with the purpose of minimizing the use and impact of herbicide to treat *Spartina*. By mixing Ag Surf II with Habitat, the herbicide would bind to targeted plants, reducing undesired spreading of herbicide to the adjacent environment. The decision to use Ag Surf II made by the PMRA following a review of multiple surfactants. The review identified Ag Surf II as having a lower toxicity among the other surfactants.

Annual reports are provided to the Section Head of the Integrated Pest Management Coastal Region by January 31 as a requirement of the PUP. Approval to use herbicides in Boundary Bay and Roberts Bank Wildlife Management Area for the 2019-2021 application seasons has been provided by the West Coast Operations Division of the BC Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations.

S. ANGLICA

In 2020, 62 person-days were spent applying herbicide to *S. anglica* in the Fraser River Delta and Boundary Bay areas. Just under 2100 clones of *S. anglica* were treated over one pass in Boundary Bay as well as in the Roberts Bank Wildlife Management Area (Figure 11, Figure 12). A second pass to treat plants that were missed in the first pass was completed in the marsh area of Robert’s Bank only, no other areas received a second pass in 2020. 224 clones of *S. Anglica* were left untreated due to extenuating circumstances surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic and a lack of access to treatment sites caused by water-main repairs conducted by the City of Surrey. Approximately 0.285 ha, spread over more than 621 ha of intertidal habitat, was treated with 178 L of herbicide mix (Table 2).



Figure 11. 2020 *S. anglica* treatment areas in Boundary Bay. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more *S. anglica* plants were treated.



Figure 12. 2020 *S. anglica* treatment areas in the Roberts Bank Wildlife Management Area and Tsawwassen First Nation. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more *S. anglica* plants were treated.

S. PATENS

Following several years of various manual and mechanical control efforts herbicide became the primary treatment method for *S. patens* in Burrard Inlet in 2016. No manual removal efforts were undertaken on *S. patens* in 2020; any *S. patens* receiving treatment in 2020 was treated with herbicide. Approximately 23 person-days were spent applying herbicide to *S. patens* in the Burrard Inlet. Approximately 1.25 ha of *S. patens* over 43 ha of shoreline in Burrard Inlet was treated with 782 L of herbicide mix in 2020 (Table 3). Herbicide treatments on *S. patens* in Baynes' Sound occurred for the second year; approximately 0.55 ha of *S. patens* over 44 ha of shoreline was treated with 345 L of

herbicide mix in 2020. Application of herbicide to *S. Patens* was postponed after receiving complaints from locals about the use of herbicide on the beaches surrounding Goose Spit park. Herbicide was only applied from Goose Spit Park to Macdonald Wood Park. A remaining 800 patches of *S. Patens* was left untreated in the Baynes sound area spread over 200 ha. (Table 4).

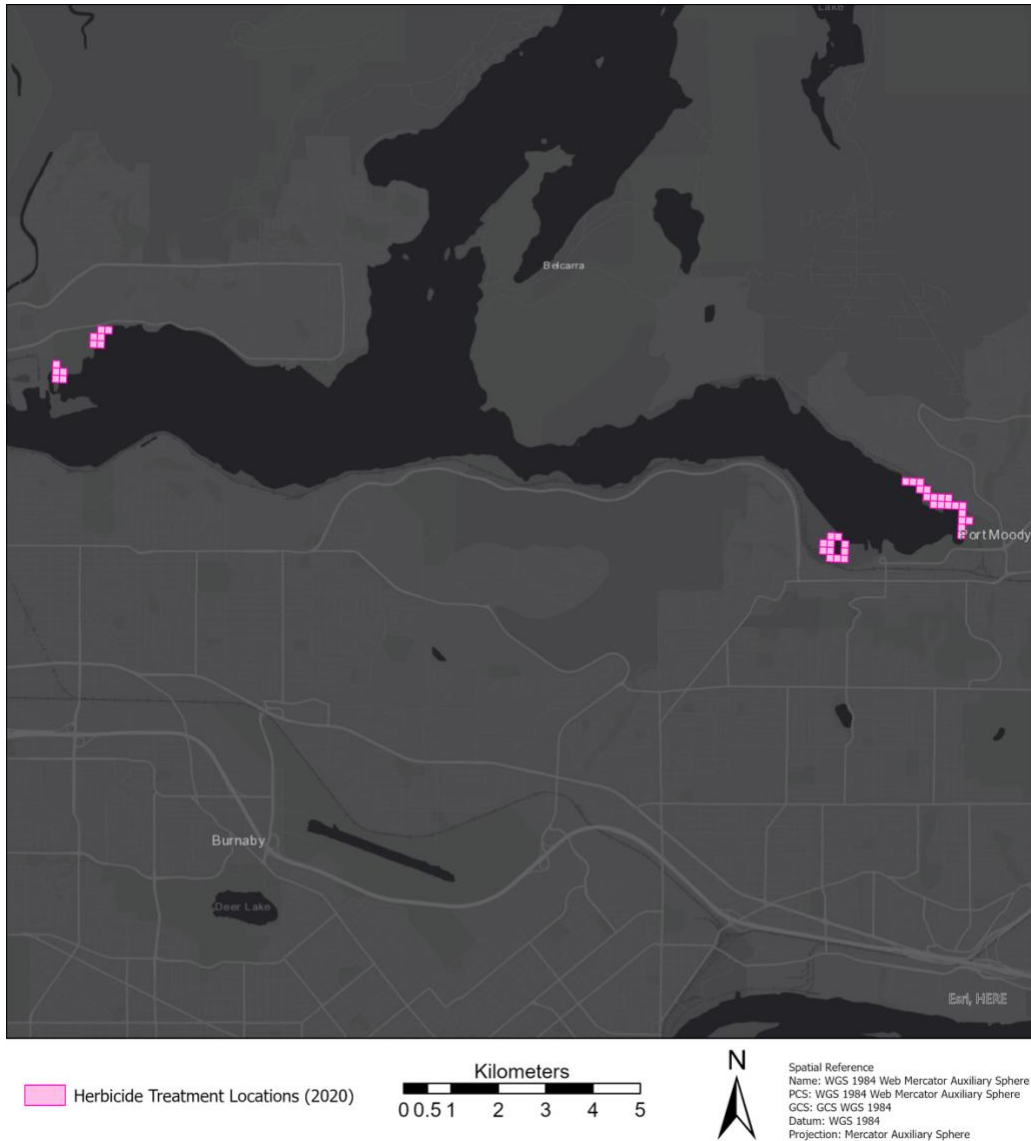


Figure 13. 2020 *S. patens* treatment locations in the Burrard Inlet area. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more *S. patens* plants were treated.

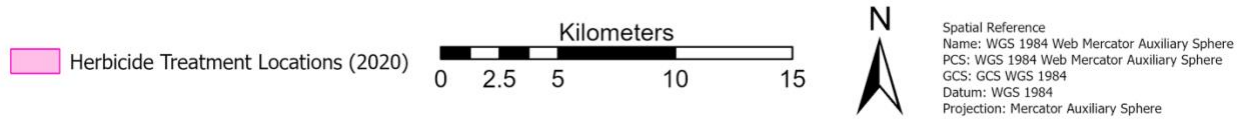
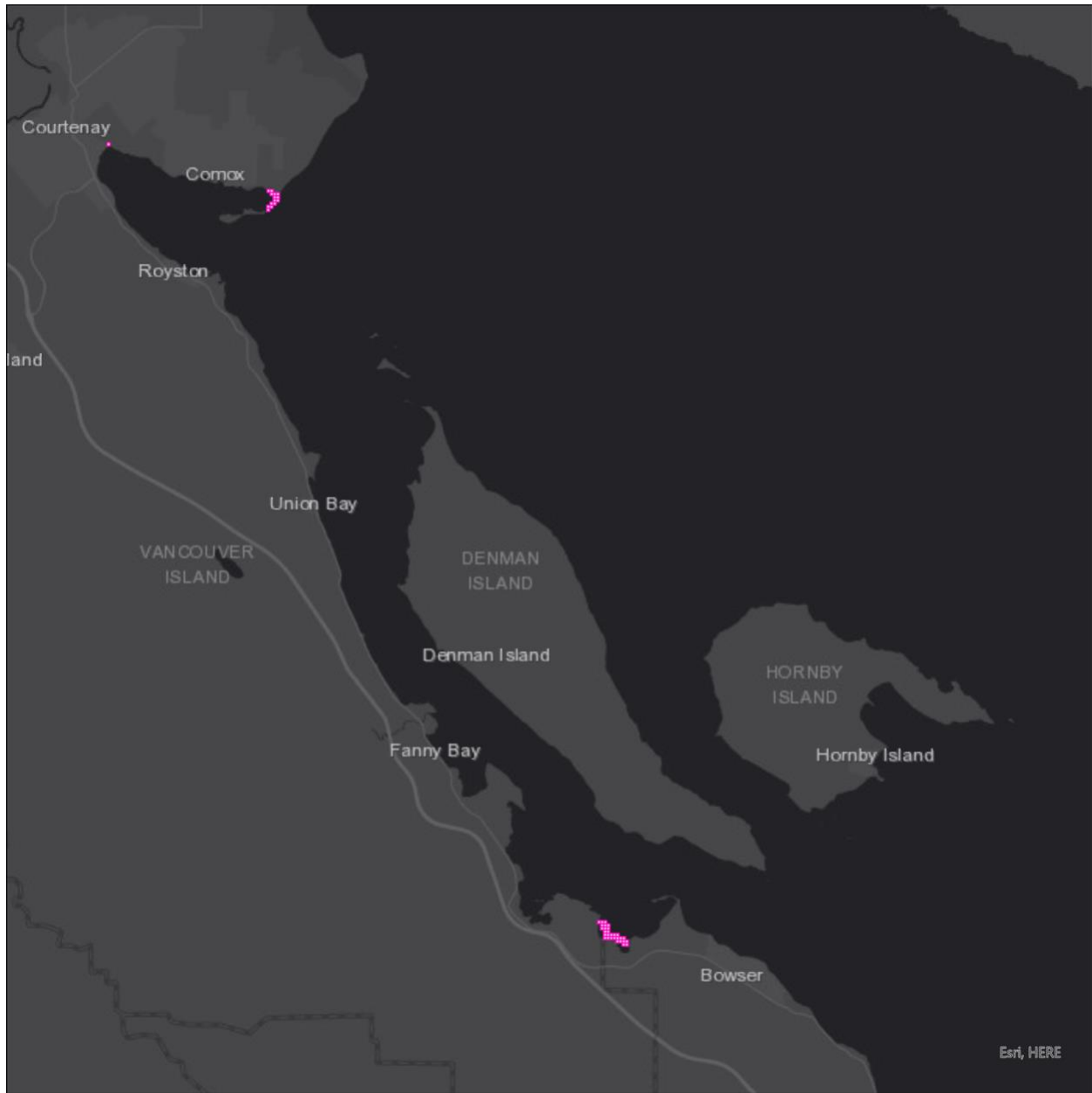


Figure 14. 2020 *S. patens* treatment areas in the Baynes' Sound area. Each pink square represents a 1 ha cell where one or more *S. patens* plants were treated.

Table 2. Amount of herbicide used to treat *S. anglica* since 2013.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Volume of herbicide mix used (L)	1089.5	2595	1949.5	3744	2412	1109	566	177.6
Volume of Habitat used (L)	8.17	19.46	14.62	28.08	18.09	8.32	4.25	1.33
Amount active ingredient (Imazapyr) used (kg)	1.96	4.671	3.51	6.74	4.34	2.00	1.02	0.32
Volume of surfactant Viterra Ag Surf II (alcohol ethoxylate) used (L)	5.44	12.97	9.75	18.72	12.06	5.55	2.83	0.89
Amount active ingredient (kg)	5.01	11.937	8.97	17.22	11.10	5.10	2.60	0.79
Estimated ha	1.75	4.17	3.90	6.01	3.87	1.78	0.909	0.285

Table 3. Amount of herbicide used to treat *S. patens* on the Lower Mainland since 2016.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Volume of herbicide mix used (L)	216	583	17	25	782
Volume of Habitat used (L)	1.62	4.37	0.128	0.1875	5.865
Amount active Ingredient (Imazapyr) used (kg)	0.388	1.05	0.0306	0.0450	1.4076
Volume of surfactant Viterra Ag Surf II (alcohol ethoxylate) used (L)	1.08	2.92	0.0850	0.125	3.91
Amount active ingredient used (kg)	1.17	3.17	0.0923	0.136	3.60
Estimated ha	0.347	0.94	0.0273	0.040	1.256

Table 4. Amount of herbicide used to treat *S. patens* in the Bayne's Sound area since 2019.

	2019	2020
Volume of herbicide mix used (L)	567	345
Volume of Habitat used (L)	4.25	2.59
Amount active Ingredient (Imazapyr) used (kg)	1.02	0.62
Volume of surfactant Viterra Ag Surf II (alcohol ethoxylate) used (L)	2.84	1.73
Amount active ingredient used (kg)	2.61	1.54
Estimated ha	0.912	0.554

RESULTS

The abundance of *S. anglica* plants decreased between 2019 and 2020 by 51%. The estimated leaf area and the impacted area declined by just 9% and 32% respectively. All size classes, with except to size class 'D' reduced in abundance by approximately 50%. Plants with the size class 'D' increased from 4 in 2019 to 38 in 2020. We believe this increase is erroneous and was the combined result of inaccurate surveying, confusing size class descriptions, and a lack of quality control measures. Surveyors likely misinterpreted the Class D description of “~5.0m diameter patch with numerous plants” to mean that if smaller sized plants existed within a 5 metre diameter area, it would be classified as size 'D'. The size class descriptions of both size 'D' and 'M' plants will be changed to remove “with numerous plants” to avoid future confusion.

The number of *S. densiflora* plants decreased by 52%. *S. densiflora* mapping in 2020 found approximately 0.008 ha of *S. densiflora*, which is essentially identical to what was found in 2019. Completion of *S. Densiflora* mapping and removals in the Baynes sound area between Royston and Fanny Bay occurred on October 30th which was earlier than previous years.

S. patens metrics have been the most variable out of the three species of *Spartina* found in BC in part due to its mat-like growth pattern compared to the upright clumps and tufts of *S. anglica* and *S. densiflora*. *S. patens* continues to expand in BC predominantly in the Courtenay River Estuary where the population is the greatest and most widespread. The extensive area that *S. patens* impacts in the Courtenay River Estuary makes it difficult to discern where one patch ends and another begins. Due to the large area *S. patens* covers in the Courtenay River Estuary it is difficult to consistently and accurately measure the area by foot. *S. patens* mapping in 2020 confirmed the extent of the population in BC impacts approximately the same locations as detected in previous years. *S. Patens* is slowly migrating South of the Courtenay river estuary down the East coast of Vancouver Island in the Baynes sound area. Between the Lower Mainland and Baynes' Sound, approximately 4 ha of solid plant cover remain at large.

Table 5. Summary of *Spartina* spp. invasion since 2004.

Year	<i>S. anglica</i>			<i>S. patens</i>			<i>S. densiflora</i>		
	Estimated Leaf Area (ha)	Impacted Area (ha)	Number of Plants Detected	Estimated Leaf Area (ha)	Impacted Area (ha)	Number of Plants Detected	Estimated Leaf Area (ha)	Impacted Area (ha)	Number of Plants Detected
2004	0.0250	105	433	-	-	-	-	-	-
2005	0.0681	194	864	-	-	-	-	-	-
2006	0.2202	137	584	-	-	-	-	-	-
2007	0.1158	75	342	-	-	-	-	-	-
2008	0.1263	125	334	-	-	-	-	-	-
2009	0.1020	184	691	-	-	-	-	-	-
2010	0.2312	261	1217	-	-	-	-	-	-
2011	0.5525	242	2387	-	-	-	-	-	-
2012	0.5785	797	6846	-	-	-	-	-	-
2013	0.8209	940	8511	-	-	-	-	-	-
2014	0.5502	937	13921	-	-	-	-	-	-
2015	1.4353	898	18074	3.3502	107	320	0.2133	197	14090
2016	1.6373	973	23260	3.3892	127	354	0.3992	292	4181
2017	1.1676	900	12512	2.6770	156	823	0.0151	149	2872
2018	0.6362	709	8051	1.1295	165	617	0.4950	200	1836
2019	0.2578	496	4742	3.3382	167	963	0.0065	206	2557
2020	0.2352	338	2317	3.9784	196	977	0.0089	127	1222

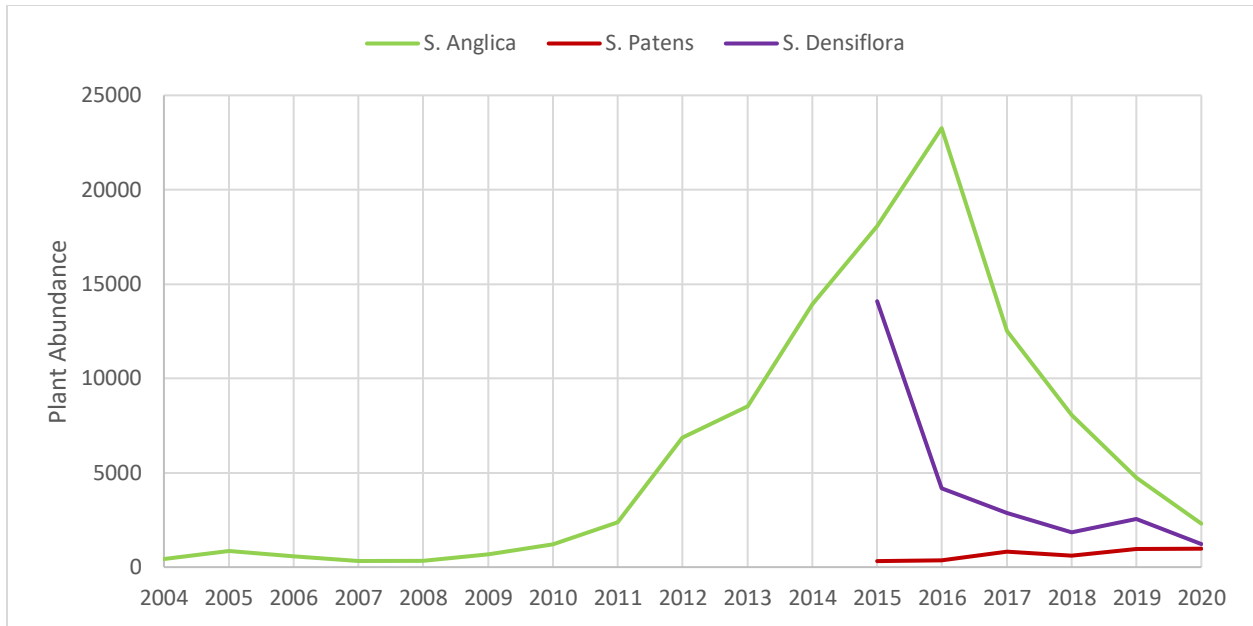


Figure 15. Plant abundance of *Spartina* spp. from 2004 - 2020.

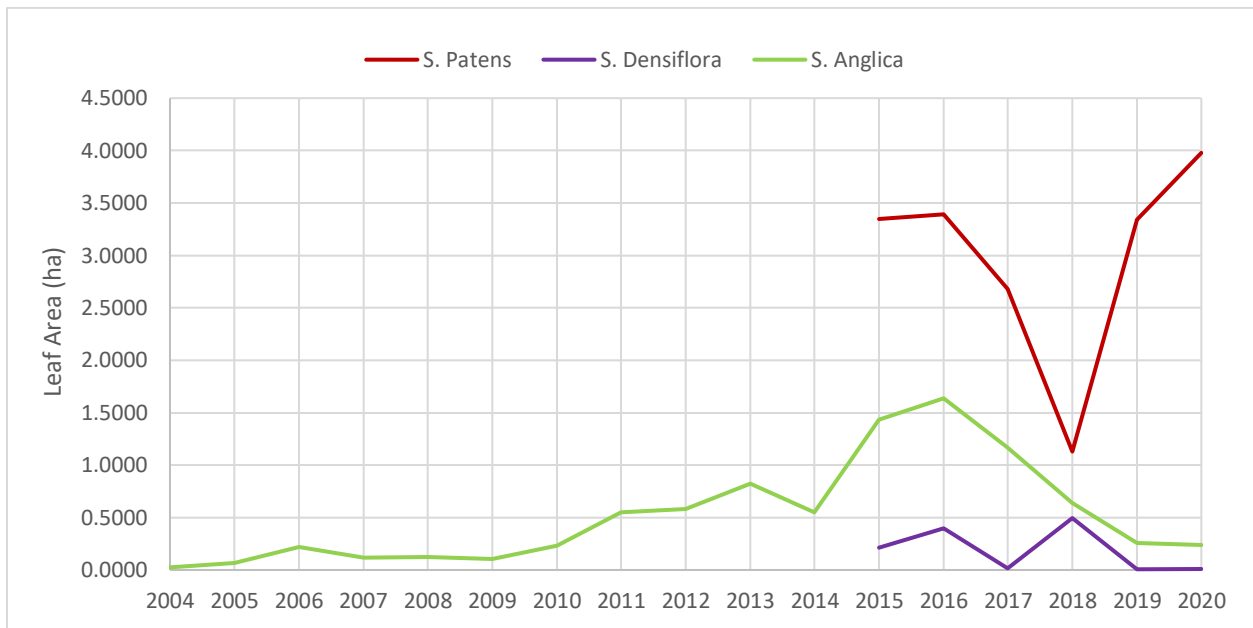


Figure 16. Estimated leaf area of *Spartina* spp. from 2004 - 2020.

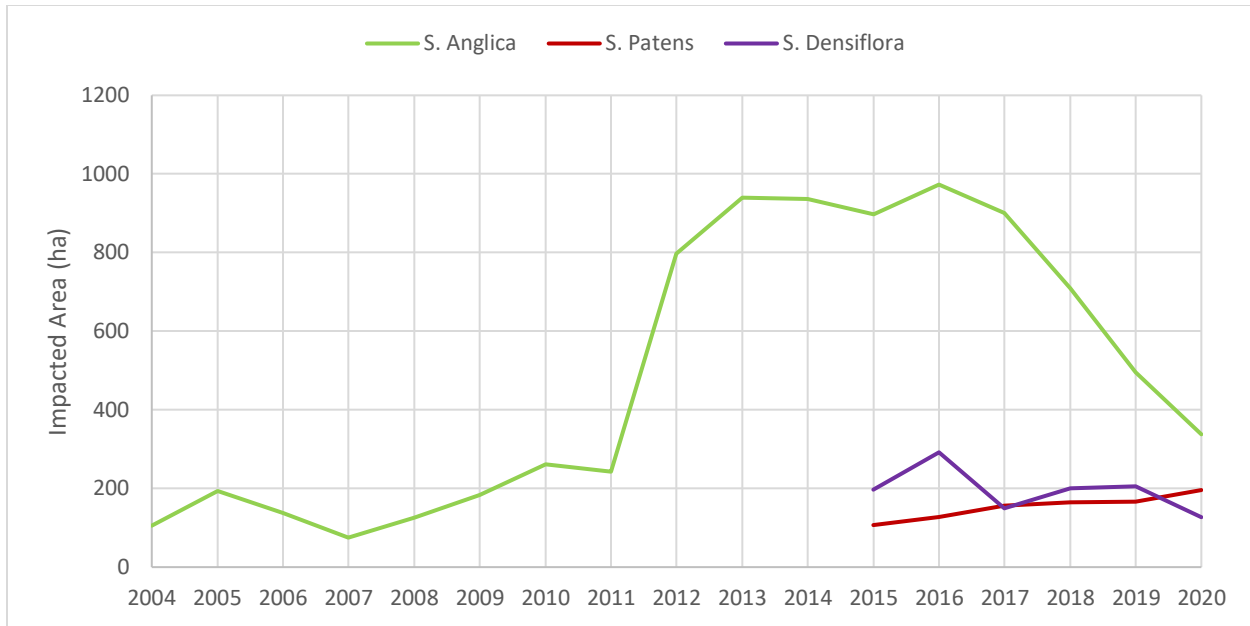


Figure 17. Amount of shoreline impacted by *Spartina* spp. from 2004 - 2020.

RESTORATION

Control and eradication efforts to date on *S. anglica* and *S. densiflora* have been successful without requiring additional restoration efforts. However, *S. patens* requires additional restoration beyond controlling for the invasive species. *S. anglica* and *S. densiflora* invade mudflats and areas of shoreline that typically has limited plant abundance and diversity. Where *S. anglica* and *S. densiflora* occur within native vegetation, it is typically in clusters surrounded by native vegetation that rapidly re-establishes after *Spartina* treatments. *S. patens* tends to invade the high salt marsh where there is a much higher diversity and abundance of native plants. Planting of native species speeds up marsh restoration and prevents re-invasion. The large, barren areas that are left behind following the removal of these meadows are at risk of reinvasion by *S. patens* or another invasive plant species. By planting native species in these now-barren patches, the resilience of these habitats increases and the ability for invasive species to monopolize again is reduced. Considering this, the BC SWG is working with the City of Port Moody to test the planting of nursery *Carex lyngbyei* in areas where *S. patens* meadows have been removed. *Carex lyngbyei* is a dominant species that thrives at low- to middle-elevation tidal zones, which include high marsh elevations where *S. patens* grows. *Carex lyngbyei* was planted at the end of the 2018 program year. Goose grazing is a known pressure on marsh plants and particularly marsh restoration plantings, as such goose ex-closure fencing was installed to minimize these pressures. Regular monitoring and maintenance was conducted throughout 2018 to ensure the goose ex-closure fence remained intact and the plantings took root.

Discussions with the Wild Bird Trust, the Port of Vancouver and Tsleil-Waututh Nation continued in 2020 regarding the treatment of *S. patens* at Maplewood Flats and restoration of this salt marsh. As a part of these discussions some native plant seed from the marsh at Maplewood Flats was collected and propagated at the Wild Bird Trust nursery on site. Additionally, a short proposal has been drafted for a graduate student project; the proposal is targeted for the British Columbia Institute of Technology – Simon Fraser University Master of Science -Ecological Restoration Stream.

OUTREACH

INFORMATION AND INTERNET RESOURCES

- A new website which houses the Spartina Web Atlas has been published. The website provides information on the Spartina eradication program and houses the historical distribution of Spartina spp. in BC: www.spartina.ca
- The Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society uses their web site for volunteer call out, information, and partner links: <http://www.birdsonthebay.ca/>
- Corporation of Delta website: <http://www.delta.ca/environment-sustainability/plants-wildlife/invasive-plants>
- City of Port Moody website: [http://www.portmoody.ca/index.aspx?page=1260#Saltmeadow Cordgrass \(*S. patens*\)](http://www.portmoody.ca/index.aspx?page=1260#Saltmeadow_Cordgrass_(S.patens))
- Coastal Invasive Species Committee website: <http://www.coastalisc.com/priority-invasive-plants>

A new website was drafted and published in 2020. The new and improved website will serve to better recognize funders and program partners, provide a centralized place to access data and information about the program including spatial data, and provide information on what Spartina is and why it's bad- for the public and industry professionals.

FINANCES

The total program revenue in 2020 was approximately \$316,731 through various donors (Table 6). In total \$300,000 cash was raised for the Spartina Eradication Program directly through DUC, all of this was applied to eradicating *Spartina* spp. in BC.

For a breakdown of the revenue and expenditures for the SEP for 2020, see Table 6 and Table 7. The recent history of financial contributions (cash and in-kind) of the BC Spartina Working Group is found in Figure 18. The in-kind contributions were provided by the following agencies:

- BC Conservation Foundation
- BC Ministry of Environment
- BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
- City of Surrey – ShaRP & SNAP Programs
- Vancouver Island Conservation Land Management Program
- Community Mapping Network
- Corporation of Delta
- Environment Canada- Canadian Wildlife Service
- Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society
- K'omoks First Nation
- Port of Vancouver
- City of Port Moody

Table 6. Total revenue from all funders towards the Spartina eradication program in 2020.

Revenue		
Source	Through DUC	Through BC SWG Member
Province of BC	\$237,000	-
Port Metro Vancouver	\$25,000	-
Government of Canada -Coastal Restoration Fund	\$38,000*	-
Government of Canada – Canada Summer Jobs	-	\$16,731
Subtotal	\$300,000	\$16,731
Grand Total	\$316,731	

*Money contributed by the Government of Canada through the Coastal Restoration Fund went towards staff time associated with managing field crews, reporting, and GIS analysis

Table 7. Expenditures related to the Spartina eradication program in 2020.

Expenditures		
Category	Mainland BC	Vancouver Island & Gulf Islands
Travel	\$10,105	\$7,641
Gas, Mileage, Truck Rental	\$11,620	\$11,278
Personnel - Contractors	\$84,240	\$28,705
Personnel - Staff	\$80,557	\$32,307
Small tools, Supplies etc....	\$19,695	\$13,428
Subtotal	\$206,217	\$93,359
Total	\$299,576	

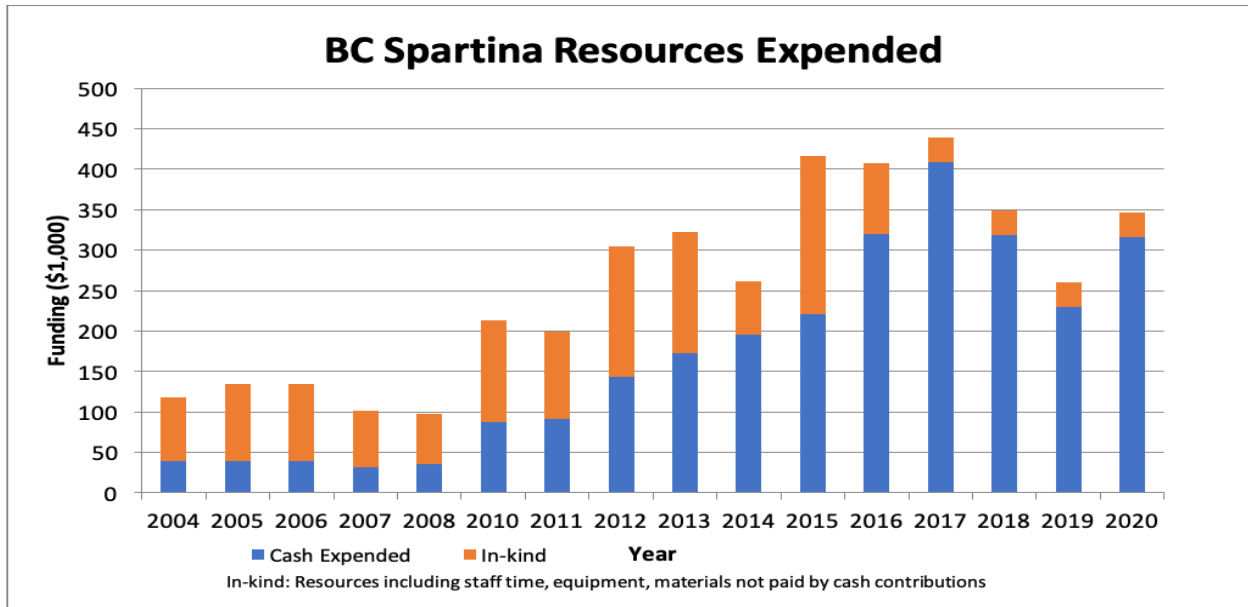


Figure 18. Funding history of the Spartina eradication program comparing In-kind donations to total cash expenditures each year since 2004.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2021

COORDINATION

- Ensure reporting is up to date and on time. Set hard deadlines for reporting one month prior to report due date to ensure enough time to review.
- Resume annual planning meetings. Instead of one planning meeting, host two planning meetings-one for each region.

MONITORING

- Continue to inventory core areas for Spartina species to evaluate control effort success.
- Consider including some metric of distribution/density as an additional evaluation lens for the program to adhere to the IAPP database reporting template.
- Ensure summer crews reach the full extent of previous years efforts in surveying.

TREATMENTS

- Apply herbicide twice over two passes to decrease chances of missing plants.
- Expand herbicide treatment on *S. patens* in Baynes' Sound to the extent feasible without compromising any progress made on *S. anglica* eradication made to date. Identify opportunities to improve herbicide treatment program delivery efficiency between regions given limited treatment season and treatment condition windows (tides and weather).
- Contract two herbicide applicator team, one for each region, to improve coverage of treatment throughout the season.
- Treat all documented *S. patens* at Maplewood Conservation Area and focus on restoration plans for the site. Treat all remaining *S. patens* in Burrard Inlet.
- Work with Tsawwassen, K'omoks, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations to treat Spartina spp.

SCIENCE AND EVALUATION

- Complete an assessment on herbicide treatment efficacy. Include measures to detect any signs of resistance.
- Test aerial detection techniques with new techniques such as remote-controlled, electric, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). These activities would be used to detect large clones and large meadows of *S. patens* in particular.

RESTORATION

- Continue to assess the establishment of *Carex lyngbyei* restoration plantings in Port Moody Arm and monitor for reinvasion of *S. patens*.
- Work with BCIT Ecological Restoration Program to develop marsh restoration plans for *S. patens* in the Mapplewood Flats conservation area.

CONCLUSION

The continued effort towards eradication of *S. anglica* in 2020 proved successful with the continued use of herbicide as well as the use of *Collector* and *Survey123* for inventory and data collection purposes. Plant numbers continue to decline and the area that they impacts is also in decline. The highest levels of infestation for *Spartina anglica* were observed in 2016. Since then, we have reduced the population of *Spartina anglica* in the lower mainland by 90%. While *Spartina anglica* remains the top priority for the eradication program, the decline in infestation will allow the working group to expand monitoring and control efforts to the two other *Spartina* spp. in BC that pose significant threats to the sensitive ecosystems of the areas they infest.

In 2020, increased mapping efforts in Baynes' Sound improved confidence in the BC SWG records of *Spartina* spp. locations and abundance. However, more years of complete surveys are required to more confidently detect trends. Baynes' Sound requires more resources for inventory and increasing control efforts; in particular herbicide treatment of *S. patens* will be the only effective means towards eradication, requiring adequate coverage of the infestation. Achieving full coverage of the *S. patens* population is necessary to restore these high marsh coastal ecosystems to their natural state. Achieving adequate coverage of the *S. patens* infestation within the Baynes sound area will be a primary goal for the *Spartina* eradication program in 2021.

The *S. densiflora* population in Baynes' Sound should continue to be inventoried and our progress towards eradication should be evaluated. If manual control efforts fail in continuing to suppress the population towards eradication, herbicide treatment may be required in the future. For the 2021 season, emphasis will be put on inventorying and removing all *S. densiflora* individuals before they can go to seed in the fall.

The *Spartina* eradication program has continually evolved its methods to match the changes in technology and best practices since the start of the program. The program has seen massive strides towards eradication of *Spartina* spp. in BC since 2016. With more years of intense pressure, we can continue to significantly reduce the presence of *Spartina* spp. in BC and eventually move into the monitoring stage until we can declare *Spartina* spp. as eradicated from our sites. The BC SWG will continue with its partnership approach in striving to protect BC's shores and eradicate invasive *Spartina*.

APPENDIX A – METRIC & SUMMARY CALCULATIONS

The point data for each species of *Spartina* is collated into a spatial database for subsequent analysis using three different metrics:

1. The number of plants or plant clones detected
2. The size of each plant or plant clone (single plant or seedling; patch with diameter less than 30 cm; patch with diameter of 30 cm to 1 m; patch with diameter of 1 m to 5 m; patch with diameter of approximately 5 m; patch with diameter greater than 5 m)
3. The estimated leaf area (number of plants or plant clones detected x size of each plant or plant clone = number of square meters a dispersed colony would occupy if all *Spartina* plants were grouped into a single cluster)

Each IAPP site is divided into a grid of 1 ha cells which is used to summarize the data that has been analyzed through the metrics above. These summaries occur at a single cell level as well as an accumulation of all the cells within the site. They are titled Cell Summaries and Site Summaries, respectively. Summaries occur on a per-species basis. Moreover, with these summaries, the BC SWG determines how much shoreline has been impacted by *Spartina* spp. (how many 1 ha grid cells had one or more occurrences of *Spartina*).

Cell Summaries: The total number of observations for each size class is calculated for each cell on a per species basis. The estimated leaf area of a species in a cell is calculated by multiplying the total number of observations for each size class by the size class's Areal Coefficient (Table 7) and summing the values for each size class.

Site Summaries: The summing of the metrics of all of the cells within an IAPP site.

Table 8. Size Classes and their Areal Coefficients

Size Class	Description	Areal Coefficient (m ²)
S	Single Plant or Seedling	0.002
A	Patch with diameter less than 30 cm	0.071
B	Patch with diameter of 30 cm to 1 m	0.785
C	Patch with diameter of 1 m to 5 m	3.14
D	Patch with diameter of approximately 5 m	19.625
M	Patch with diameter greater than 5 m	38.465

The resulting equation for the estimated leaf area of a *Spartina* species in a cell is:

$$\text{Estimated Leaf Area} = (\Sigma S * 0.002) + (\Sigma A * 0.071) + (\Sigma B * 0.785) + (\Sigma C * 3.14) + (\Sigma D * 19.625) + (\Sigma M * 38.465)$$

For example, a cell with multiple *S. anglica* observations of 10 seedlings (Size S), 3 patches of a diameter of 30 cm to 1 m (Size A), 5 patches with a diameter of 1 m to 5 m) Size C, and 1 patch greater than 5 m (Size M) would have an area of 54.398 m².

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Area} &= (10 * 0.002 \text{ m}^2) + (3 * 0.071 \text{ m}^2) + (5 * 3.14 \text{ m}^2) + (1 * 38.465 \text{ m}^2) \\ \text{Area} &= 0.020 \text{ m}^2 + 0.213 \text{ m}^2 + 15.7 \text{ m}^2 + 38.465 \text{ m}^2 \\ \text{Area} &= 54.398 \text{ m}^2 \end{aligned}$$

Appendix B – DATA INTEGRITY OVER TIME

The methods of collecting, analyzing, and reporting of Spartina data has changed significantly since the start of the program. The method of calculating leaf area, as described in Appendix A, was first introduced in the 2015 season and several IAPP sites were standardized between 2011-2013. We are now at a stage where our methods of collection, analysis, and reporting are consistent between years. As such, references made to previous years' data, regarding infested area, should be taken from the most recent Spartina report or from our online web-atlas.