



Strategic Plan 2019-2024



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GENERAL OVERVIEW

Cal-IPC's mission is to protect California's environment and economy from invasive plants.

As climate change advances, caring for our lands and waters is essential to protecting biodiversity and our own wellbeing. Cal-IPC provides leadership in the community of natural resource management professionals and volunteers dedicated to caring for California's unique natural heritage for future generations.

As a globally-recognized "biodiversity hotspot," California faces pressure from increasing development, pollution, and climate change. As a hub for international travel and trade, California also faces pressure from the continuing introduction of animals and plants from around the world, some of which cause damage by spreading into natural areas where they impact native plants and wildlife, as well as water resources, fire safety, and recreation.

Cal-IPC supports natural resource managers in determining when damage is occurring due to invasive plants, reducing damage by removing plants, and addressing underlying factors like land use, altered hydrology, and climate change.

Cal-IPC brings trusted leadership, innovative programs, and collaborative strategies to addressing this critical landscape-level challenge. By integrating ecological science, field know-how, geographic information systems (GIS), regional partnerships, and active engagement of diverse communities, we aim to secure long-term conservation benefits for California. To strengthen this work for the future, Cal-IPC crafts public policy and works to increase the capacity and resilience of the restoration community.

In a time of environmental uncertainty, Cal-IPC provides vital leadership for conserving the lands and waters that sustain us all.



Cal-IPC builds partnerships to take on landscape-level projects designed to protect ecosystems, from mapping giant reed (*Arundo donax*) along waterways across the entire Central Valley to removing invasive sea lavender (*Limonium ramosissimum*) from San Francisco Bay tidal marshes and containing desert knapweed (*Voluntaria tubuliflora*) near Anza-Borrego Desert State Park before it spreads across the Southwest.



Cal-IPC's long-term goal is to strengthen the systems for preventing damage from invasive plants in California. This means funding a robust network of entities across the state at different scales to work collaboratively. It also means providing the latest science and data about impacts of invasive plants, effectiveness of control techniques, and landscape-level prioritization.

To be successful, this work requires the expertise and perspectives of all people in California. Our initiative on equity, diversity and inclusion aims to ensure that conservation work is undertaken collaboratively in partnership with — and for — all communities in California.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1 Conservation and Science

Implement statewide and regional conservation projects and guide science-based prioritization



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Taking a strategic landscape-level approach is the most effective way to stop the spread of invasive plants in an era of climate change. Cal-IPC organizes regional partnerships to stop the spread of top invasive plants and provides science-based tools to support natural resource managers in setting invasive plant priorities for their projects.



Intended Outcomes

Biodiversity and ecosystem function are protected from damage by invasive plants through effective conservation action based on the best available science.

Goals

1. Coordinate strategic on-the-ground-projects to remove invasive plants.
2. Strengthen early detection and rapid response for new invasive plants.
3. Assess and map invasive plants for prioritization and tracking.
4. Conduct and synthesize research on invasive plants to inform conservation.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1 Conservation and Science

Goal CS 1: Coordinate and support strategic on-the-ground-projects to remove invasive plants.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|---|---|
| CS 1.1 Design and implement strategic invasive plant management projects.* | Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager & Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Completed plans and secured funding for high-priority on-the-ground projects. |
| CS 1.2 Maintain ongoing regional invasive plant management projects.◊ | Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Documented project results and secured funding. |
| CS 1.3 Develop invasive plant management plans.◊ | Cal-IPC Science Program Director & Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Invasive plant management plans for land management entities. |
| CS 1.4 Build regional capacity through partnerships like Weed Management Areas (WMAs).◊ | Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Strong Weed Management Areas. |

Goal CS 2: Strengthen early detection and rapid response for new invasive plants.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|---|---|
| CS 2.1 Design and support early detection protocols.* | Cal-IPC Science Program Director & Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Statewide early detection protocol. |
| CS 2.2 Develop early detection communication and response network.* | Cal-IPC Science Program Director & Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Up-to-date posting of early detection alerts. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1 Conservation and Science

Goal CS 3: Assess and map invasive plants for prioritization and tracking.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|---|--|
| CS 3.1 Maintain a current California Invasive Plant Inventory. ✓ | Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Up-to-date Inventory database. |
| CS 3.2 Increase functionality of the CalWeedMapper decision-support tool. ◇ | Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager & Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Updated CalWeedMapper tool. |
| CS 3.3 Support development of Calflora tools for natural resource managers. ◇ | Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager & Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Collaboratively-designed invasive plant mapping tools available from Calflora. |

Goal CS 4: Conduct research and synthesize data on invasive plants to inform conservation.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| CS 4.1 Conduct research and synthesize data to better inform conservation. ◇ | Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Reports that guide land management. |
| CS 4.2 Convene science experts to advise on key topics to inform management.* | Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Timely summaries of critical topics to guide the conservation community. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1 Conservation and Science

Status and Capacity

Cal-IPC is a leader in coordinating strategic on-the-ground projects and providing decision-support tools. Regional projects are underway in six of 18 regions statewide, and \$2 million has been invested into development of innovative decision-support tools.

Our California Invasive Plant Inventory is the reference for environmental weeds in the state. The Inventory provides a foundation for land managers to assess impacts and set priorities. Mapping tools like CalWeedMapper support landscape-level project design, incorporating information on potential range shifts due to climate change.

A systematic statewide approach makes the network of land managers across California most effective. Meeting our vision of a strong system will require parallel success on the advocacy front to secure public funding and agency leadership. Local, state and federal agency partners have been critical in moving this work forward.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2 Training and Engagement

Train and engage a diverse workforce



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Natural resource management can be a significant source of green jobs, community-building and rewarding volunteer service. Cal-IPC serves as the hub for people caring for California's wildlands, from seasoned professionals and researchers to volunteers, students, and those beginning their careers.



Intended Outcomes

The community of natural resource managers in California is well-trained in current conservation research and practice.

Decision-makers understand the basics of invasive plant management and are able to make informed decisions.

Natural resource management involves contributions from the full range of people and communities in California.

Goals

1. Provide information on invasive plant management to the conservation community.
2. Train a variety of audiences on invasive plant management and build regional capacity.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2 Training and Engagement

Goal TE 1: Provide information on invasive plant management to the conservation community.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|---|--|---|
| TE 1.1 Hold the annual Cal-IPC Symposium. ✓ | Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Successful annual Symposium with continuing education credit. |
| TE 1.2 Publish <i>Dispatch</i> newsletter. ✓ | Cal-IPC Communications Manager | Quarterly newsletters |
| TE 1.3 Maintain content-rich website. ✓ | Cal-IPC Communications Manager | Up-to-date website with extensive use. |
| TE 1.4 Develop Best Management Practice (BMP) manuals. ✓ | Cal-IPC Science Program Director | BMP manuals available to guide natural resource management. |
| TE 1.5 Sell books and brochures. ✓ | Cal-IPC Program Associate & Cal-IPC Communications Manager | Wide distribution of information. |

Goal TE 2: Train a variety of audiences on invasive plant management and build regional capacity.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| TE 2.1 Hold trainings for professionals, volunteers and Conservation Corps. ✓ | Cal-IPC Training Program Associate | Successful, diverse trainings. |
| TE 2.2 Grow the Wildland Volunteer Network. ◇ | Cal-IPC Training Program Associate | Increased engagement in WVN, monthly e-newsletters. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2 Training and Engagement

Status and Capacity

Cal-IPC serves as an information hub for the natural resource management community. For each species listed in our Inventory, the Cal-IPC website provides access to related articles and presentations from 25 years of Symposia and newsletter issues, as well as links to relevant information at other sites, such as UC Davis, Calflora, and the US Dept. of Agriculture.

The annual Cal-IPC Symposium draws 300 natural resource managers and researchers from across the state to share the latest findings on invasive plant biology and management. The venue promotes information exchange on a range of topics, from detailed practitioner tips to evolving restoration perspectives among ecologists. It also provides continuing education credits for those licensed by the state to apply herbicides.

Cal-IPC has conducted numerous trainings on invasive plant management. Some are introductory and others are for experts. Our trainings for conservation corps members and watershed volunteers reach a range of communities.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3 Policy and Advocacy

Strengthen public policy on invasive plants at the state and other levels



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Strengthen public policy on invasive plants at the state and other levels.

Cal-IPC works to secure agency leadership and funding to support systematic programs addressing invasive plants. Our main focus is at the state level, where we advocate for a comprehensive approach to management and early detection activities through a coordinated network of local and regional collaborations such as Weed Management Areas. We also work with industry to prevent introductions of invasive plants through horticulture and with partners across the country on national and international initiatives.



Intended Outcomes

California state agencies fund a robust statewide system to address invasive plants in partnership with Cal-IPC and other entities.

Agencies and stakeholders coordinate to effectively address invasive species.

Invasive plants are not used in landscaping.

Goals

1. Secure state funding for invasive plant management and a coordinated statewide system.
2. Help nurseries work to prevent horticultural introductions of invasive plants.
3. Represent California in invasive species initiatives outside the state.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3 Policy and Advocacy

Goal PA 1: Secure State funding for invasive plant management and a coordinated statewide system.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|---|--|
| PA 1.1 Advocate for funding through the legislature. [◇] | Cal-IPC Executive Director | Funds for invasive plant management projects and programs. |
| PA 1.2 Partner with state agencies to design and implement effective invasive plant management programs. [◇] | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Effective invasive plant management programs. |
| PA 1.3 Work to strengthen the California Invasive Species Advisory Committee (CISAC). [◇] | Cal-IPC Executive Director | Stronger invasive species response. |

Goal PA 2: Help nurseries work to prevent horticultural introductions of invasive plants.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|---|--|
| PA 2.1 Support the PlantRight partnership. [◇] | Cal-IPC Executive Director & Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Voluntary action from nurseries. |
| PA 2.2 Integrate Cal-IPC info into CalGREEN building code. [*] | Cal-IPC Executive Director | Guidance for landscape architects and designers. |
| PA 2.3 Integrate guidelines into national green building code via the National Association of Invasive Plant Councils. [*] | Cal-IPC Executive Director | Guidance for landscape architects and designers. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3 Policy and Advocacy

Goal PA 3: Represent California in invasive species initiatives outside the state.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|---|---|--|
| PA 3.1 Support North American Invasive Species Network (NAISN) efforts to aggregate invasive species mapping data. ♦ | Cal-IPC Executive Director & Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | A shared data repository. |
| PA 3.2 Engage with the Western Weed Coordinating Committee. ♦ | Cal-IPC Executive Director & Cal-IPC Conservation Program Manager | Partnerships with neighboring states. |
| PA 3.3 Participate in the National Association of Invasive Plant Councils. ♦ | Cal-IPC Executive Director & Cal-IPC Science Program Director | Collective action at the national level. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3 Policy and Advocacy

Status and Capacity

Cal-IPC coordinates the natural resource management community to advocate for its needs, such as funding for invasive plant management projects. A statewide system for invasive plant management once existed at the California Dept. of Food & Agriculture and we are actively working to bring it back as part of the state's Biodiversity Initiative.

We have long looked to address introduction of invasive plants through horticulture. We helped form the PlantRight partnership in 2005 and have been core participants ever since. When green building codes are updated at the state and national levels, we participate to promote the inclusion of sensible non-invasive landscaping guidelines.

In 2009, the interagency Invasive Species Council of California and an advisory committee were initiated due in large part to Cal-IPC advocacy, and in 2018 these bodies were codified by AB 2470. Our executive director served as the first chair of the advisory committee, and we continue to pursue systematic coordination for invasive plant management through the body.

Cal-IPC is active with the Western Weed Coordinating Committee, the National Association of Invasive Plant Councils, and the North American Invasive Species Network. We also advocate in support of the development of biocontrol agents by the USDA Agricultural Research Service.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4 Capacity and Resilience

Increase organizational capacity and resilience



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4 Capacity and Resilience

Increase organizational capacity and resilience

Cal-IPC has steadily increased its capacity to undertake projects and be resilient to funding challenges. We continue to take on initiatives to increase our overall effectiveness while also aiming to create a sustainable enterprise for staff and board.

Intended Outcomes

Cal-IPC grows as a conservation leader while maintaining appropriate focus.

Conservation includes all people in the state.

Cal-IPC funding becomes more steady and more flexible.

Goals

1. Identify strategic opportunities.
2. Engage more—and more diverse—stakeholders
3. Maintain strong infrastructure, funding and reserve.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4 Capacity and Resilience

Goal CR 1: Identify strategic opportunities.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|---|--|
| CR 1.1 Review strategy on a regular basis. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | Up-to-date strategic plans. |
| CR 1.2 Investigate and capitalize on new opportunities. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | Responsive task forces providing guidance to the organization. |
| CR 1.3 Cultivate and maintain productive partnerships. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Board of Directors | Joint efforts with partners. |

Goal CR 2: Engage more—and more diverse—stakeholders.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| CR 2.1 Design and implement an action plan for equity, diversity, and inclusion. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | Actions taken to broaden engagement. |
| CR 2.2 Steward and increase membership. ✓ | Cal-IPC Communications Manager and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | Engaged, growing membership. |
| CR 2.3 Exhibit at events. ✓ | Cal-IPC Communications Manager and Board of Directors | Cal-IPC exposure at events. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4 Capacity and Resilience

Goal CR 3: Maintain strong infrastructure, funding and reserve.

| Key Actions | Implementation Responsibility | Deliverables |
|--|--|---|
| CR 3.1 Maintain strong staff and board. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | High productivity, retention and spirit. |
| CR 3.2 Secure grants/contracts including steady role within statewide system. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | Steady program funding. |
| CR 3.3 Cultivate donors and sponsors. ✓ | Cal-IPC Executive Director and Cal-IPC Board of Directors | Increased discretionary support. |
| CR 3.4 Maintain financial and administrative operations. ✓ | Cal-IPC Director of Finance, Operations and Administration | Accurate and timely reporting and recordkeeping in compliance with legal requirements and best practices. |
| CR 3.5 Support the Student Section. ✓ | Cal-IPC Communications Manager and Board of Directors | Active student section. |

STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4 Capacity and Resilience

Status and Capacity

Cal-IPC began as an entirely volunteer board-run organization and existing in this form for the first decade of its existence. During this time, key foundational pieces were put into place: the annual Cal-IPC Symposium, the newsletter, and the Inventory of invasive plants in the state. The Board of Directors, with their core governance committees, numerous active task forces, quarterly meetings, strategic retreats and fundraising campaigns remains the driving force behind the organization.

Cal-IPC's membership provides a huge resource and a wealth of knowledge. Trainings are typically led by expert members from the natural resource management community, and many Cal-IPC projects employ technical advisory committees made up of members and others.

Our staff comprises expertise in ecology, land management, GIS, conservation policy and communications, as well as finance, operations and administration. Our next position may be a Development/Grants Manager to lead our fundraising.

Funding for our work is heavily dependent on grants, an unsteady source which limits productivity. Our discretionary funding — through membership dues and donations — allows us to advocate for a statewide system in which Cal-IPC's role is steadily funded. This will maximize our ability to fulfill our mission, protecting California's environment and economy from invasive plants.



Photo Credits

Page 1 (Left to right) – Student volunteers working together on French broom (*Genista monspessulana*) at Ring Mountain. Photo: Tori Bohlen; Oblong spurge (*Euphorbia oblongata*); Purple starthistle (*Centaurea calcitrapa*). Photo: NPS; Invasive plant management staff treat mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) in El Capitan Meadow, Yosemite National Park. Photo: NPS.

Page 2 – Bull thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) growing in Tioga Pass, Yosemite National Park. Photo: Bob Case.

Page 3 – Volunteers have been an important part of mapping and removing desert knapweed (*Volutaria tubuliflora*). Photo: Pat Mathews.

Page 4 – (Left to right) North Bay Conservation Corps & Caltrans removing invasive sea lavender from HWY 101 in Marin County. Photo: Dana Morawitz; Volunteers use a weed wrench to pull Spanish broom on the American River Parkway taken during Sacramento Weed Warrior's work day. Photo: Frank Wallace.

Page 5 – Monitoring plant growth in the field. Photo: Cal-IPC.

Page 6 – Close up map of Stony Creek as it enters the Sacramento River. Red areas indicate sightings of *Arundo donax*. Photo: Cal-IPC.

Page 9 – Invasive plant management teams work on pretreatment of velvetgrass (*Holcus lanatus*) in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Photo: Rich Thiel.

Page 10 – Cal-IPC hosting a training for the San Francisco Conservation Corps, covering ecosystems, ecology, why plants are amazing, plant life history strategies, how these things determine the way we manage environmental weeds, and the value of connection and community engagement. Photo: Alene Spindel.

Page 11 – Cal-IPC co-hosting a field course at the Los Angeles Community College with partners Generation Water and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps. Photo: Cal-IPC.

Page 13 – The Cal-IPC Symposium gathers colleagues from across the state to network, learn and celebrate our hard work in invasive plant management. Photo: J.P. Marie.

Page 14 – Cal-IPC directs an annual State Advocacy Day to meet with legislators in Sacramento. Photo: Gina Darin.

Page 15 – Taking a break during the annual State Advocacy Day to pose with the California state bear. Photo: Heather Schneider.

Page 18 – Cal-IPC board members walk the halls of the state capitol to meet with our legislators during the annual State Advocacy Day. Photo: Dana Morawitz.

Page 19 – Cal-IPC co-hosting a field course at the Los Angeles Community College with partners Generation Water and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps. Photo: Cal-IPC.

Page 20 – Youth assist with bio assessment during restoration efforts at the Audubon Starr Ranch. Photo: Sandy DeSimone.

Page 23 – Student volunteers celebrate pulling out a stand of pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) in Shelter Cove, CA. Photo: Cheryl Lisin.



[*www.cal-ipc.org*](http://www.cal-ipc.org)

Protecting California's environment
and economy from invasive plants.



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