

# Volunteer Training to Facilitate Public Outreach and Wildland Recovery

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## Background Information

### Mission

Restore, protect, and enhance the ecological health of urban wildlands in a way that fosters compatible human behaviors and inspires connections and partnerships



There are many challenges involved while conducting ecological restoration in urban wildlands, with invasive plants, animals, and insects being among the most critical. In the wildland urban interface, managing invasive species populations while engaging the public is crucial to successful land stewardship and ecosystem health.

Irvine Ranch Conservancy, in partnership with Orange County Parks, Cities of Irvine and Newport Beach, is responsible for the management of over 30,000 acres of protected wildlands. With the need for additional support to meet these management challenges, IRC developed the Invasive Species Control Volunteer Training. This training taps into our existing base of dedicated volunteers and offers a certification to support and lead their own invasive species stewardships.

## Volunteer Training and Deployment

With a robust team of 550+ certified IRC volunteers, IRC is able to support a range of wildland based activities, including recreational, interpretive, and stewardships. Working collaboratively with the Volunteer Management and Community Engagement & Education teams, the Invasive Species Control team developed and offered the ISC Volunteer training in May 2025. Through completing this training, ISC Certified Volunteers make up a dedicated cohort who have the tools to support, lead, and educate the public on invasive species management activities.

Important information covered in this training included:

- Invasive plant species ID
- Priority level for species of concern
- Proper tool usage
- Public activity implementation

Volunteer support can amplify the critical work of invasive species management. They provide a crucial link to the general public, raising awareness around the importance of stewardships and sharing information about our local ecosystems.

The unique biodiversity of our urban wildlands depends upon our efforts to control the spread of invasive, non-native organisms and prevent them from becoming harmful predators, competitors, and parasites of native plants and wildlife. By engaging volunteers and the public in these efforts, IRC is better able to protect, restore, and enhance the health of these native habitats for years to come.



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