



BROOMBUSTERS INVASIVE PLANT SOCIETY

Thank you, ACRD

For helping to pass the

AVICC and UBCM RESOLUTION

“Control of Scotch Broom”

Now what do we do?

And **Why?**



UBCM RESOLUTION NR51 (2023):

WHEREAS Climate Change brings us longer periods of drought and hotter temperatures in which Scotch broom, a highly flammable invasive species with high oil content and dry branches, will thrive and act as a volatile flash fuel, increasing the risk of wildfires and specifically Urban Interface Fires; and

WHEREAS Scotch broom spreads densely and rapidly, inhibiting forests regrowth, and negatively impacting agricultural production and native species, with a 2021 study for the Invasive Species Council of BC (ISCBC) designating Scotch broom as the Top Worse Offender - the invasive species doing the greatest harm to species at risk in BC;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that AVICC and UBCM work with the Province to establish and implement actionable steps to control the aggressive spread of Scotch broom all across BC, including implementing broom-free fire breaks along long stretches of broom; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED, that local governments are encouraged to use bylaws and policies to control and manage Scotch broom near and within urban boundaries.

Fire Danger
Naturally Occurring
Dry Branches
+ High Oil Content

“Scotch Broom poses a significant fire hazard in British Columbia due to its highly flammable nature, rapid growth, and fire-adaptive traits.

The plant's volatile oils make it an easy ignition source especially during the summer months when the plant dries out. Its ability to spread quickly and form dense stands increases the fuel load, impeding the fire management efforts, causing further spread into the natural forests, elevating the risk of wildfires...

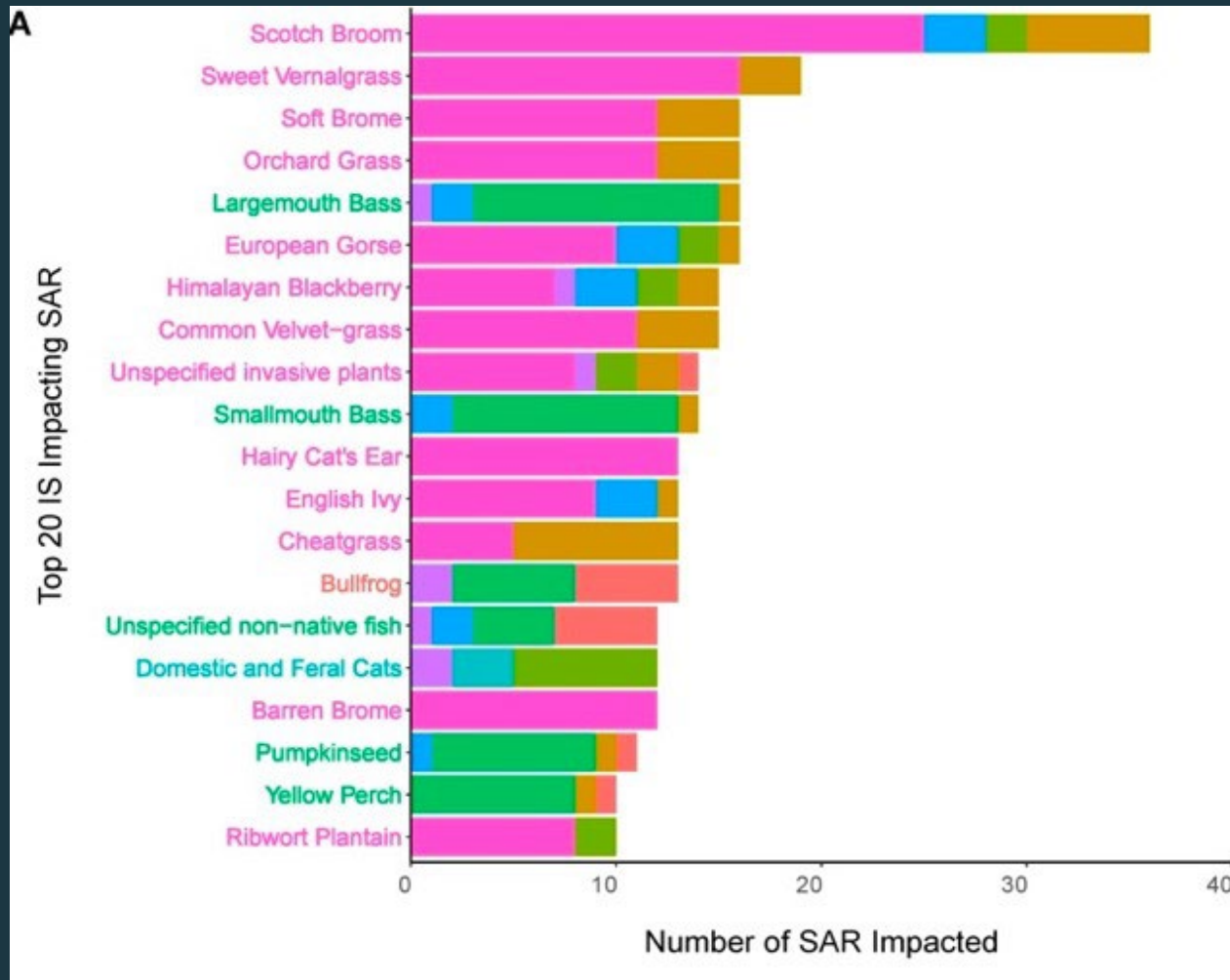
We need to address the Scotch broom invasion promptly and diligently...”

Terry Peters, Retired Fire Chief Powell River



Top Offender of Biodiversity in BC

“Scotch Broom is THE invasive species causing the greatest harm to Species at Risk in BC”



According to a
2021 Assessment
Study for ISCBC.
By *ESSA Tech LTD*

Broom spreads densely and rapidly



and grows HUGE quickly



Huge broom at the Port Alberni SPCA



Alberni Deep Space Port Volunteers
We want to give credit to these partners ~2017-19



Broom Covering Transmission Lines

- Greatly increases **DANGER** that **FIRE could spread** across the island.
- Spreads seeds across island.
- Blocks escape routes.
- Endangers power supply.



BC Hydro does not control broom because
“there is no pressure from governing entities.”

Photo from ISCBC

Negative Economic Impact on Forestry, Farming, Food Security, Recreation and Tourism.



Scotch Broom moves from transmission lines and logging roads into forests inhibiting forest regrowth...

...Broom takes over farmland and trails and is toxic to grazing animals.





WHAT CAN WE DO NOW?



Photos from ACRD



Port Alberni voted to co-sponsor a Broombusting event this spring.



Photos from Port Alberni



Sproat Lake Area D Hosts a Yearly Broom Cutting Event



Relevant fact:

Scotch broom does not resprout from cut branches. Broom spreads only by seeds.



ACRD Waste Management is setting a good example by accepting cut broom at landfills and transfer stations.



Some regional districts now require that cut broom be put into plastic bags for disposal – which is nearly impossible. The result: many volunteers stop cutting broom. While the policy has good intentions, it actually increases the spread of broom in BC .



Redd Fish is doing a massive broom cut in Tofino as their 2024 restoration project for the West Coast Triple Plank. Tofino is supporting them with broom removal.



This is Redd Fish's project. Broombusters will help with tools, signs, handouts, and training. We hope to inspire some volunteers to continue to cut broom in other areas of the West Coast throughout May.



Photos: Tofino airport and airport road.

WHAT ELSE CAN REGIONAL DISTRICTS DO?

BYLAWS educate as well as protect.

Port Alberni has a bylaw. We recommend bylaws for all municipalities.

The Comox Valley Regional District

has a bylaw for invasive plants which includes Scotch broom. This does not mean there is no broom. But in cases in which the spread of broom creates a health, safety, or fire danger, there is a means to deal with it.



GRAVEL PITS: *Keep Scotch broom more than 50 meters from gravel pits*

Josephine County in Oregon has one bylaw - regulating broom near gravel pits.

Driving through a forested area to a campsite in Ucluelet, suddenly there was new bridge surrounded by broom. Most likely, the seeds were brought there with the gravel.

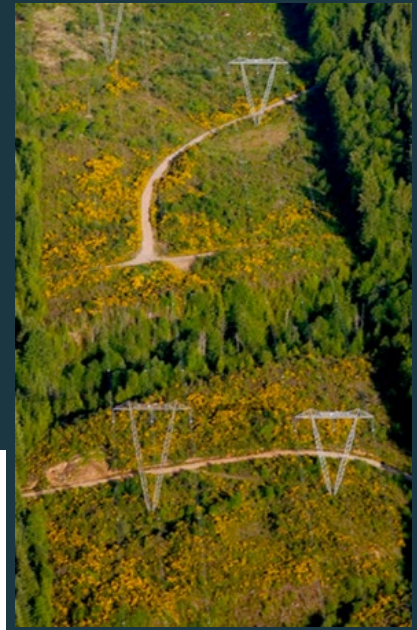
BC Hydro re Fire danger and escape routes.

Current policy is to remove trees but leave the broom.

News Update

Owner of private land used by BC Hydro pressured the company, which eventually cleared his private land & area of broom. Owner then graded the road and put in new gates – which he will keep unlocked.

“If there is a fire or earthquake, roads on powerlines must be clear and available as an escape route. We will have no time to unlock gates. Doing this will save lots of lives.” *j.f.*



Photos Summer 2022

Communication with Residents – Open up avenues of communication with residents about how and why Scotch broom should be controlled on private and public land. Communication from the local government and fire chiefs is a highly effective means of education. Signs, newsletters, alerts, social media, statements for newspapers, etc.



There is definitely a need for education! I have seen landowners remove trees from their property out of fear of fire but then allowing Scotch broom to take its place.





Climate change has changed everything.

We can't leave this problem to future generations.

Let's stop the spread of Broom.

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