

2018  
Jurisdictional Scan: Biocontrols in Protected Areas

**Does your jurisdiction use biological control agents to manage invasive species, and are such releases managed through policies or a regulatory process?**

JURISDICTION	REPLIED	YES/NO	CONTACT NAME
B.C PARKS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES/YES	<a href="#">Jeanine Bond</a>

COMMENTS:

**1. Does your park agency allow the release of biological controls in protected areas?**

Yes, following our Provincial Pest Management Plans, BC Parks has employed biological controls as a tool for limiting the extent of invasive plants in protected areas.

**2. Does your park agency have any regulatory documents addressing the release of biological control agents?**

The release of biological control agents in protected areas is done in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development.

<https://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hra/plants/biocontrol/research.htm> (link no longer active)

BC Parks does not have regulatory documents specific to biological control.

**3. If your park agency allows the release of biological controls, do you conduct any assessments in addition to the standard CFIA approval process? (i.e. environmental assessments)**

Yes, BC Parks has an impact assessment process and policy that would be followed in consideration of release of biological controls. This process would assess the site- specific values and potential impacts in the area of proposed release. The process would rely on the research completed by CFIA to complete the assessment.

**4. Do you have any functional working groups for biological controls?**

BC Parks is a member of the BC Inter-Ministry Invasive Species Working Group. This working group is not specific to biological controls but provides a forum for discussion of this topic, as required by partner agencies, and other topics related to invasive species.

ALBERTA PARKS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES/NO	<a href="#">Angela Holzapfel</a>
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COMMENTS:

**1. Does your park agency allow the release of biological controls in protected areas?**

Yes we allow it. We don't do it as much as we would like to, but we have done some releases in a number of parks in the south and Kananaskis regions.

**2. Does your park agency have any regulatory documents addressing the release of biological control agents?**

no

**3. If your park agency allows the release of biological controls, do you conduct any assessments in addition to the standard CFIA approval process? (i.e. environmental assessments)**

Most releases have been done in collaboration with public land, forestry or the Alberta invasive species council. No assessments on the parks side other than the CFIA approval.

**4. Do you have any functional working groups for biological controls?**

Parks does not at this time, but we do have ecologists who participate in the alberta invasive species council and regional staff work with forestry and public lands on a case by case basis			
<b>SASKATCHEWAN PARKS</b>	X		
<b>MANITOBA PARKS</b>	✓	YES/NO	<a href="#">Kelly-Anne Richmond</a>
<p>COMMENTS:</p> <p><b>1. Does your park agency allow the release of biological controls in protected areas?</b> Yes, use weevils for leafy spurge control in Spruce Wood Provincial Park.</p> <p><b>2. Does your park agency have any regulatory documents addressing the release of biological control agents?</b> No.</p> <p><b>3. If your park agency allows the release of biological controls, do you conduct any assessments in addition to the standard CFIA approval process?</b> No.</p> <p><b>4. Do you have any functional working groups for biological controls?</b> No.</p>			
<b>ONTARIO PARKS</b>	Inquiring Jurisdiction		<a href="#">Amanda Schroeder</a> / <a href="#">Kestrel Wraggett</a>
<p>Original Email: Hello Dawn, An Ontario Parks working group is currently reviewing the regulatory process of releasing biological controls in Ontario provincial parks and protected areas. We are interested in how other agencies utilize biological control agents to manage invasive species, and whether such releases are managed through policies or a regulatory process. We were hoping you could pass on this email to members of the CPC.</p> <p>Please see below for a few questions that will assist us in moving forward with this review. We will share the results of this jurisdictional scan once complete. Thank you for your time and input.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does your park agency allow the release of biological controls in protected areas?</li> <li>2. Does your park agency have any regulatory documents addressing the release of biological control agents?</li> <li>3. If your park agency allows the release of biological controls, do you conduct any assessments in addition to the standard CFIA approval process? (i.e. environmental assessments)</li> <li>4. Do you have any functional working groups for biological controls?</li> </ol> <p>If you have any questions or comments, you can reach me at <a href="mailto:amanda.schroeder@ontario.ca">amanda.schroeder@ontario.ca</a> (705-755-5100) or Kestrel Wraggett at <a href="mailto:kestrel.wraggett@ontario.ca">kestrel.wraggett@ontario.ca</a> (807-475-1266)</p>			
<b>SEPAQ (QUEBEC)</b>	X		
<b>NEWFOUNDLAND &amp; LABRADOR PARKS</b>	X		
<b>NOVA SCOTIA PARKS</b>	X		

<b>PARKS NEW BRUNSWICK</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>P.E.I PARKS</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>GOVERNMENT OF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES PARKS</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>NUNAVUT PARKS</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>YUKON PARKS</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>PARKS CANADA</b>		YES/YES	<a href="#">Patrick Nantel</a>

COMMENTS:

**1. Does your park agency allow the release of biological controls in protected areas?**

YES

**2. Does your park agency have any regulatory documents addressing the release of biological control agents?**

YES. We have Standard and Guidelines on integrated pest management (see below), which covers the use of pesticides and of biological control.

**3. If your park agency allows the release of biological controls, do you conduct any assessments in addition to the standard CFIA approval process? (i.e. environmental assessments)**

YES. There is a basic impact assessment that has to be completed. An integrated pest management plan has to be approved by the Superintendent.

**4. Do you have any functional working groups for biological controls?**

YES. We have an Invasive Alien Species Community of Practice, which is a forum where members can present, discuss, and seek advice on biological control.

**Additional Background**

Parks Canada Integrated Pest Management Guidelines (September 2018) defines biological control as “the control of pests by other living organisms and includes any activity that introduces new biological control organisms or conserves and promotes the activity of naturally occurring biological control agent in the ecosystem”. One example is the use of insects that feed on an invasive plant species to the extent that its invasiveness is significantly reduced.

At present, three national parks are using biological controls against invasive plants, and a few more are planning to use them in the near future.

The need for and the challenge in applying biological control in national parks come from the National Parks Policy in the Guiding Principles and Operational Guidelines (1994) document, which states that “all practical efforts will be made to prevent the introduction of exotic plants and animals into national parks, and to eliminate or contain them where they already exist” (article 3.2.11). Because biological control species generally are native to the same part of the world as the pest to be controlled, and therefore exotic, their introduction appears to be against policy. However, the same National Parks Policy allows for “active management (...) where it is the only alternative for restoring ecological integrity” (art. 3.2.3), under the condition

that “manipulation of ecosystems will be scientifically based, as natural as possible and closely monitored” (art. 3.2.5).

The National Parks Wildlife Regulations (SOR/81-401) prohibits the “release of any exotic wildlife within a park”, i.e. “all wildlife that is not indigenous to a park or that has been declared, pursuant to these Regulations, to be exotic wildlife”. The Regulations’ definition of “wildlife” includes “insects and other invertebrates and any part thereof”, i.e. the typical biocontrol agents. However, “these Regulations do not apply to a superintendent, park warden, peace officer or any other person authorized by the superintendent to carry out functions related to the management of a park while any of those persons is engaged in carrying out such functions”. Biological control in national parks would ideally be authorized by the superintendent through the approval of an integrated pest management plan, which respects the standard and guidelines and requires an impact assessment.

Parks Canada Integrated Pest Management Guidelines states that “only biological control agents already approved for importation and release by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) should be considered for use”. Obtaining and releasing biocontrol agents, and monitoring their population and effects, all require resources, facilities, and specialized expertise that are not readily available within any field unit, nor within the Agency. For that reason, biocontrol projects are often done in collaboration with or under the supervision of other organizations, such as are often done in collaboration with or under the supervision of other organizations, such as Agriculture and Agri-food Canada.

**Response Rate:** 4/13 for **31%**

**Key Findings:**

- Given the format of the request, it is possible that answers were provided that were not captured here.
- Jurisdictions generally allow the use of biological controls in their protected areas.
- Provincial level jurisdictions generally carry out the release of biological controls in collaboration with other entities such as the ministry of forestry, public land trusts, etc.
- Parks Canada has an extensive and thoughtful process for the release and monitoring of biological controls, including an Alien Species Community of Practice dedicated to discussing this type of topic.

**Future Questions to Ask:**

- Is the Parks Canada Model a reasonable structure to adopt in individual jurisdictions, perhaps with the modification of keeping a collaborative approach to release?
- Would Parks Canada be willing to share their guiding documents?

**Links to Resources:**

- None