

SSISC's 2024 Annual General Meeting

Minutes - DRAFT

10:30am – 12:00pm, Wednesday October 9th, 2024
Via Zoom Conference Call (Meeting ID: 889 7788 0148)

More information, and meeting materials here: <https://ssisc.ca/2024agm>

Participants:

1. Micaela Anguita – SSISC Executive Director
2. Leslie Anthony – SSISC Board Member (Chair)
3. Edith Tobe – SSISC Board Member (Vice-Chair), Squamish River Watershed Society (SRWS) Executive Director
4. Derek Jazic – SSISC Board Member, Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), Manager of Resort Operations
5. Caroline Ashekian – SSISC Board Member
6. Jacquie Rasmussen - Lillooet Regional Invasive Species Council (LRISS), Executive Director
7. Erin Galloway – SSISC Field Program Manager
8. Claude-Anne Godbout-Gauthier – SSISC Communications & Outreach Manager
9. Matt Muller – SSISC Field Program Assistant Manager
10. Tina Symko – Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW), Environmental Coordinator
11. Becky Turner – SSISC Education & Outreach Coordinator
12. Penny Nelson – SSISC Board Member, Lions Bay Bird Friendly Team Member
13. Sara Tobias – SSISC Education & Outreach Assistant
14. Robyn Nitychoruk – District of Squamish (DOS), Environmental Specialist
15. Ellie Fox – SSISC Field Program Lead Hand
16. Rene Roddick – BC Hydro, Vegetation/Pest Biologist
17. Erica Mulder – Fraser Valley Invasive Species Society, Program Assistant
18. Heike Stippler – Heike Designs Inc., Owner

Welcome & Introductions – 10:30am

Leslie Anthony, Chair – SSISC

- Welcome & thanks to everyone for attending
- Meeting is being recorded – to help with note-taking – recording will not be publicly available.
- First Nations Land acknowledgement
- First Nations Land Acknowledgement
- Ensure we have Quorum
 - At least 3 directors - confirmed
 - At least 5 members – confirmed

- Meeting package is available here: <https://ssisc.ca/2024agm>
- Zoom reminders:
 - Stay muted during presentations
 - Raise hand, or use the chat box if you have a question or something you'd like to share during the presentations.
 - There will be an opportunity for round table updates as part of the Land Managers and Funders planning session.
 - There will also be plenty of time for questions and discussion during the last 30 minutes of the session
 - If you need technical support during the meeting, please type in the chat box and a SSISC staff member will try and assist you
- Overview of the agenda
- Motion to approve the agenda with a change to move the AGM portion to the beginning of the meeting due to scheduling conflicts put forward by Leslie Anthony – Motion approved by Edith Tobe, seconded by Derek Jazic. Motion approved.
- Farewell to Clare Greenberg and introduction of Mica Anguita, new Executive Director

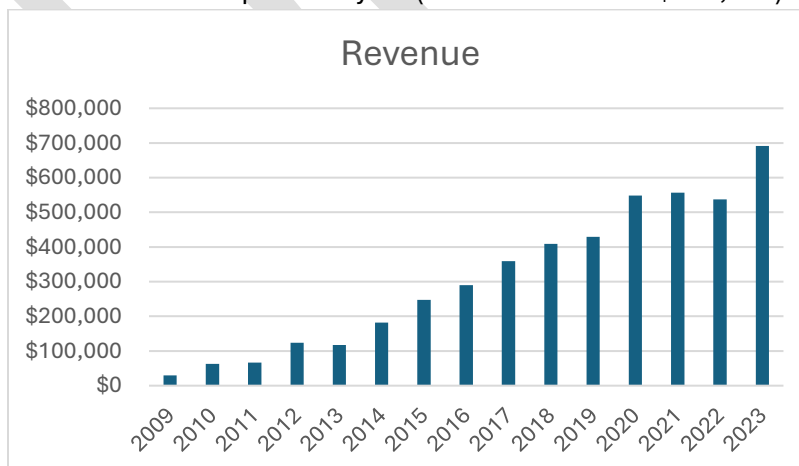
AGM – 10:35am

Review of 2023 AGM Minutes

- Leslie Anthony motioned to approve 2023 AGM minutes
- Motion approved by Derek Jazic, seconded by Edith Tobe, Caroline Ashekian

2023 Financial Report (Caroline Ashekian – Treasurer)

- Copies of 2023 Income and Balance sheet are available here: <https://ssisc.ca/2024agm>
- Total **revenue** for 2023 (from all sources) was **\$691,245.32** which is almost a **29% increase** from the previous year (2022 revenue was \$537,016)



- This significant increase is due to successful wage subsidy applications and an increase in financial support from local governments

- **Some Revenue Highlights for 2023:**
 - Federal government support was mostly wage subsidies for youth
 - We continued to receive funding from provincial government ministries including (MOTI, Min. of Forests, & BC Park), totaling **\$168,800**.
 - The SLRD, RMOW, DOS, Village of Lions Bay and the Village of Pemberton continued to fund our Local Government Partnership Program.
 - The Regional district and municipal government partners continued to be our biggest supporters, providing a total of **\$213,014** to SSISC for education and outreach programming, coordination, consultation, partnership building and of course invasive species management on the ground.
 - We strengthened our relationship with Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation during 2023, delivering on agreements to carry out inventory and control of high priority invasive plant species. **(\$52,144)**
 - We negotiated **\$96,549** in service or grant agreements with industry, including BC Hydro, FortisBC, Innergex, Atlantic Power, Skookum Creek – Sea to Sky Energy Solutions, La Farge, EPCOR and Polygon Homes
 - We continued to receive grant support **(\$39,500)** from the Community Foundation of Whistler for our 2 core programs and were also able to secure **\$1,900** in funding from the Squamish Community Foundation
 - In addition to those grants, we secured grant funding through the TD Friends of the Environment Fund, Habitat Conservation Trust Fund, and the BC Hydro Grassroots grant totaling **\$13,809**
 - Our Private Landholder program, Certification & Training Programs, and the sale our new seed mix brought in **\$7,384**
 - We are very grateful to the generous donors that contributed close to **\$3,650** to our efforts during 2023.
- **Expenditures highlights:**
 - Total expenditures were **\$649,258**
 - Majority of expenses were for people power (Total cost for staff and contractors was close to **\$545,000**)
- **2023 Net income was \$41,986.98**
 - This is slightly more than our aim to retain at least 5% of our annual revenue each year to build up our revenue reserves. The slight increase offsets the previous year's income, which did not meet this retention goal.
- **Balance Sheet**
 - As at 31st Dec, 2023,
 - Our Total Assets = \$320,500.53 (mostly in cash, investments and accounts receivable).
 - Our Total Liability = \$28,031.26 (mostly due to deferred grants, payable vacation, and wages payable and GST owing)

- Total Equity = \$292,469.27
- Our retained earnings for 2023, plus our existing Revenue Reserves (contingency fund), means we are very well-placed moving into the next financial year; and we are close to reaching the goal of having enough in our contingency reserve to support 6 months of operating costs, if we needed it.
- Motion to adopt financial statements put forward by Caroline Ashekian, seconded by Leslie Anthony
 - Motion approved

2024 Directors election

- Thanks to SSISC's 10 directors for serving on the board during 2023
- Candace Rose-Taylor, Arron Marchant outgoing board members
- 6 positions vacant on board:
 - 4 existing directors up for re-election
 - 2 spots remain vacant
- Leslie Anthony, Paul Beswetherick, Karlene Loudon, Derek Jazic, reelected by acclamation
- With regards to the board, at the next board meeting the executive positions will be decided and there will be a discussion for the need to have working subcommittees of a mix of board and staff to address needs of the organization like HR policies, partnership development

Invasive Species Management in the Sea to Sky Region - Year in Review & Plans for 2024 – 10:45am

Mica Anguita, Executive Director - SSISC

- We were able to employ 18 people, with a mix of seasonal, part-time, and full-time staff, as well as one independent contractor
- 2023 proved to be our most successful year, financially speaking. This allowed us to continue working both on the ground carrying out invasive species management, but also monitoring for green crab in Howe Sound, and community events like weed pulls, educational booths, and training workshops.
- We continued to work with local governments on invasive species bylaw development and implementation and continued to build and expand partnerships with Squamish Nation and Lil'wat Nation.
- 2023 annual report can be found on website
- Wanted to take a moment to acknowledge some important partners we work with: We are part of a bigger machine – we continued to collaborate with the network of Regional Invasive Species Organisations across BC – an incredible group of knowledgeable, hardworking and passionate professionals, who have supported us throughout the years\
- Also work with local governments, ISCBC and other provincial ISCs and ISCs across the continent

- Thank you to our other funders

Claude-Anne Godbout-Gauthier, Communications & Outreach Manager - SSISC

- 2023 Season recap
 - Similar to the previous year, we adopted a hybrid work model, where the team worked predominantly from a location of their choice, and met at the office when necessary.
 - The Education & Outreach team combined experienced staff and new hires. This helped us hit the ground running in the spring, while also allowing us to consider new perspectives.
 - The E&O team was comprised of two assistants, one Invasive Species Program Coordinator (who also looked after the European Green Crab Monitoring Program), and myself.
- Invasive-Free Certification
 - We continued to build on our efforts of the last few years and promote the Invasive-Free Certification online course, which was launched in 2021. In 2023, we received requests for in-person training, which we were able to accommodate while also offering an online delivery model.
 - In total, 8 participants complete the online course, and 53 people received in-person training.
 - Two private companies and 3 municipal organizations took part in the program this year.
 - Now for 2024, we are seeing the Invasive-Free Certification gaining traction, with new organizations like SORCA trail builders and new companies coming on board. So far, 65 people have received training across all modalities.
- Aquatic invasives 101
 - We also kept promoting Aquatic Invasives 101, which was launched in 2020.
 - We contacted 22 eco-tourism companies to invite them to promote the course to their staff, and had 26 individuals sign up for the course. However, most sign-ups were members of the general public rather than eco-tourism company employees.
 - I want to underscore the generosity of the local businesses who donated prizes for our monthly giveaways; the total value of the prizes came to \$120.
- Community weed pulls
 - We hosted 16 community weed pulls, including 10 with school groups.
 - We estimate that participants removed over 1,100kg of plants; that's nothing to shake a stick at!
 - We really couldn't have done it without the help of our partners. We collaborated with 7 schools throughout the region, as well as many community organizations, like the Squamish River Watershed Society, the Canadian Wildlife Federation's WILD Outside Program and the Squamish Access Society.
 - In 2024, we planned many weed pull activities (and continue to do so). One of the highlights has been the Earth Day weed pull that we hosted in Rose Park, in

Squamish, where we combined good old weed pulling with crafts, and offered participants to stick around and learn to weave baskets using the ivy that they had just pulled.

- **Banish Burdock**
 - What was formally known as Adopt-a-Trail was rebranded as Banish Burdock
 - Objective: to invite Whistlerites to ‘adopt’ a patch of public land or a segment of the Valley Trail and keep it free of Burdock for the duration of the season
 - 18 participants, 19 sections of trail adopted
 - Presented at ISCBC Annual Forum as part of ‘speedy session’ to share experience with program model
 - In 2024, we experimented with adding more of a social component to Banish Burdock, by organizing meet-ups for volunteers. Banish Burdock is not the most ‘social’ of volunteer program, so we wanted to give participants the opportunity to meet each other.
 - We have also been testing out new ways to stay in touch with volunteers, by creating a private Facebook group.
- **Educators’ Outreach**
 - Hosted 2 hour “teach the teacher” workshop for teacher professional development for 7 participants
- **Plantwise**
 - 7 red flags downloadable resource created. Education about invasive traits in horticultural plants
- **Resource Development**
 - Updated 27 datasheets, 25 factsheets and 30 species profile pages
 - Created 4 new datasheets, 5 factsheets, and 5 species profile pages
 - 20 new website pages
 - 75 blog posts
 - Revamped the Invader Eliminator Kit for hosting community weed pulls
 - 2024 update: play clean go brochure for Whitecap Alpine guests, boot brush installation at Shannon falls, brochure for RV rental companies across BC
- **Communications**
 - Big year for social media
 - 77 Instagram reels including a viral reel
 - Grew Instagram audience by 82%
 - Left twitter for TikTok
 - Radio interview with Radio Canada to cover status of invasive species in the Sea to Sky and what outdoor recreationist can do to prevent the spread of invasives

Erin Galloway, Field Program Manager - SSISC

- **Field Crew**
 - The 2023 SSISC field crew was composed of 4 field crews and 10 members and 1 contractor

- Field team performs inventory, control and monitoring for 2 programs: EDRR species, and established species.
 - Similar crew numbers in 2024
- Surveying
 - Crews observed 60 invasive plant species at 615 different project areas between April and October, 4% of the sites were new project areas
 - 1.4 ha of invasive plants mapped
 - 351 sites had no regrowth
- Mechanical Treatments
 - 2752m² of invasive plants mechanically removed
 - 364 treatments at 192 project areas for high and medium priority species
 - 1900kg disposed at landfill
 - 673m² blackberry, 196m² yellow flag iris, 111m² blueweed removed
- Chemical Treatments
 - 11,800m² chemically treated
 - 279 treatments at 103 sites
 - 3 treatment methods used: stem injection, cut stump and foliar spray
 - 25 different species chemically treated, including Japanese Knotweed, giant hogweed, wild parsnip, tansy ragwort
- Inventories
 - Inventory of high priority species (in our Prevent and Eradicate management categories or on the Weed Control Act)
 - Inventoried 3108ha of land.
 - 6 lakes and 5 sloughs surveyed for yellow flag iris
 - Inventoried and controlled plants at 4 MOTI gravel pits
 - Inventoried and controlled plants at 3 Lil'wat nation reserves for wild parsnip
 - Inventoried and controlled plants at 4 Innergex sites
 - Inventoried and controlled plants at 2 Fortis BC rights of way
- Data Management and Mapping
 - Continued using cloud based mapping system
 - Transitioned from IAPP to Invasives BC provincial databases
 - Uploaded 2935 records to provincial databases.
 - Continued sharing of data with partners
- Invasive Mussel Monitoring
 - Participated in BC mussel defense program, monitoring for zebra and quagga mussels at Alta lake with negative results for all samples
 - Mussel defense program not continued in 2024 at Alta lake, but volunteer program for substrate monitoring was established
- European Green Crab Team
 - Field program took over European green crab monitoring program, hiring invasive animals coordinator
 - 13 volunteers monitored 3 locations, 1 location added in 2024

- Conducted EGC monitoring training for Nicholas Sontag Education Centre staff, continuing support into 2024
- No EGC discovered yet in our region

Guest Speaker, Invasive Cattails in the Fraser and Squamish Estuaries – 11:15am

Daniel Stewart – invasive Cattail

Daniel Stewart is a PhD student at the Martin Conservation Decisions lab at the UBC Department of Forest and Conservation Sciences. Dan has spent the last years studying the effects of invasive cattails in the Fraser River Delta and carrying out invasive cattail management.

- 2015 encountering nonnative Cattails in Fraser river estuary
- *Typha angustifolia* nonnative to BC
- *Typha latifolia* native to BC
- *Typha glauca* hybrid greatest threat
- *T. angustifolia* present in Fraser Estuary since 1980s
- Unknown if hybrid present at that time
- Behaviour in tidal ecosystems unknown
- Establishment level assessed by satellite data
- 4% tidal marshes had *T. angustifolia* present
- 3 distinct morphological/genetic groups in Fraser estuary. i.e. hybrid is present
- Hybrid can be ID'd by morphology
- Majority of invasive cattails in estuary are hybrid, not *T. angustifolia*
- Hybrid 30cm taller than native, 50cm taller than *angustifolia*
- Invasive cattails reduce diversity of native plant species, reduce abundance of benthic invertebrates
- Habitat suitability map suggest huge potential for invasive cattail spread
- 4 year management test, control, one cut in July, 2 cuts in May and July. Also removed leaf litter in some plots
- 2 cuts lead to reduction in cattail height, and rhizome biomass but did not eliminate plants. Did lead to large reduction in seed production.
- Native plant richness also increased in areas with leaf litter removed
- Cutting more effective closer to water's edge where cattail is at its limit
- Complete eradication not feasible, but cutting can be a management strategy at priority sites
- 3 *T. angustifolia* patches in Squamish estuary, one hybrid patch
- Very small compared to Fraser estuary, hopeful

2024 Annual Program Plan – 11:35am

Mica Anguita, Executive Director - SSISC

- We hold annual Land managers planning session to seek input and feedback on priorities included in our workplan
- Finalizing 5 year Strategic and Operational Plan in 2024
- Continuing to work with academics like Dan Steward and others on statistical analysis of yellow flag iris treatment efficacy

2024 proposed budget

- Although budget has increased in 2024, program delivery not significantly increased due to compensatory increases in expenses.
- Main budget \$799,767
- Expenditures \$753,992
- Net income \$45,775
- Actual net income might be slightly less than above projection
- Ideal to maintain \$45,000 net income for contingency planning, inline with goal of 5% savings

Closing Remarks – 11:40am

Leslie Anthony, Chair Board of Directors – SSISC

- Thanks for joining
- Questions or comments can be directed to info@ssisc.ca