

FOR RELEASE
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Yukon signs agreement to control invasive species in western Canada

WHITEHORSE—The governments of Yukon, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have agreed to collaborate to stop the spread of invasive species within western Canada.

"We are aware of the negative impacts invasive species have on biodiversity, infrastructure, economic activity, recreational pursuits and cultural and social values," Minister of Environment Wade Istchenko said. "By joining forces with our western partners, we can respond to this urgent and important issue with coordinated, preventative measures."

Through the agreement, governments aim to identify new or emerging invasive species, limit their spread, and control or eliminate invasive species in western Canada. The first priority will be undertaking specific efforts to address aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels and quagga mussels.

The agreement is set to last three years and is not intended to duplicate or replace existing programs.

"We know that early detection and rapid response can effectively manage the spread of invasive species," Istchenko added. "By sharing information and coordinating our efforts, we can enable each jurisdiction to improve environmental protection."

The agreement recognizes that invasive species are already present in varying degrees in the respective provinces and territory, and that cross border activities including trade and tourism increase the risk of the introduction and spread of invasive species.

Along with sharing research, response efforts and resources, the agreement also notes that education materials for the public and visitors will be coordinated across the region.

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