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For Immediate Release

Date: June 16, 2015

Location: City of Nanaimo, City of Parksville, Town of Qualicum Beach, BC.

## **Central Vancouver Island Municipalities Join Forces to Tackle Aggressive Knotweed**

The provincial government has declared June as invasive species action month and today a new regional program was launched with the City of Nanaimo, the City of Parksville and the Town of Qualicum Beach to get ahead of invasive knotweed. This program will be run in partnership with the Coastal Invasive Species Committee (Coastal ISC). The goals are to verify all knotweed reports within these municipalities and to treat knotweed on select priority sites at no cost to the landowner.

This new partnership on central Vancouver Island will allow efficient use of funding for on-the-ground action and will help local residents who are fighting this invasive plant. Local governments are making a significant contribution in their communities by supporting knotweed control programs this summer. By subsidizing professional treatment services in their community, this will save homeowners dealing with knotweed hundreds of dollars and help prevent further spread.

Considered one of the world's worst invaders, knotweed is a hollow stem shrub that resembles bamboo. It can grow up to 4 cm a day and causes serious damage to foundations, driveways, and septic system, as well as natural habitats. In the UK, Japanese knotweed has spread rampantly and now homeowners cannot secure mortgages or insurance on properties with knotweed.

“The issue of invasive species crosses jurisdictional boundaries, and it will take a combined effort and collaboration to rid our region of destructive plants like knotweed,” said Town of Qualicum Beach Mayor, Teunis Westbroek.

“We are pleased to be working with local municipalities to eradicate knotweed. We recognize it is an invasive and aggressive plant which spreads easily and can impact property values and the environment,” added Marc Lefebvre, Mayor of the City of Parksville.

“It’s always great when communities get together and work towards a common goal. In this case, it’s fighting back the spread of knotweed. This aggressive plant can have a big financial impact on residents who are affected by it and we want to lessen that burden,” said Bill McKay, Mayor, City of Nanaimo.

Coastal ISC is asking the public to help eliminate the threat of this species before it becomes more widespread.

"Knotweed is causing a huge headache across British Columbia, but with your help we can prevent it from taking over our coastal communities. It's an invasive and aggressive plant that spreads easily and can impact property values, the environment, and it can cause safety issues on roadways. This subsidized regional program will save considerable taxpayer dollars. Visit [Knotonmyproperty.com](http://Knotonmyproperty.com), or pick up a booklet from your municipality to learn how to defend your property from invasion" explains Rachelle McElroy, Executive Director of the Coastal ISC.

Local residents can benefit from free treatment by qualified invasive plant technicians through stem injection and are asked to report knotweed on their property until mid-July. Treatments will take place in July and August. If you think you have knotweed on your property, please contact [info@coastalisc.com](mailto:info@coastalisc.com) or 1-250-857-2472.

For more information on how to identify this plant and its damaging impacts; as well as other invasive species that are being managed in your area please visit: [www.coastalisc.com](http://www.coastalisc.com).

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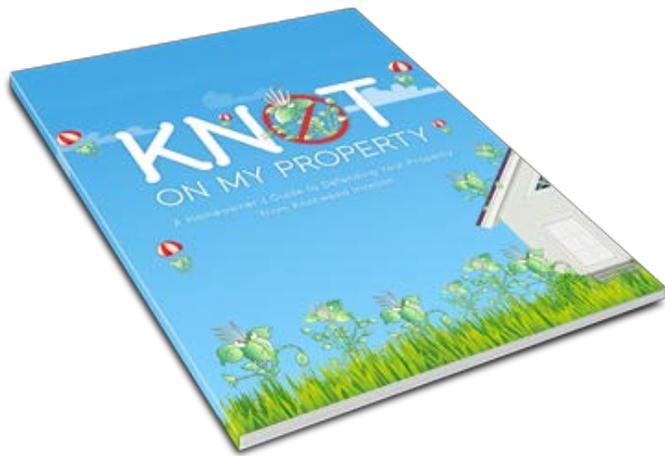
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Photos attached

Asphalt damage caused by knotweed



Knotweed leaves and flowers



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