



PARKS, RECREATION
& COMMUNITY SERVICES

Invasive plant management/Lesser celandine at Bowker Creek

Questions and answers

April 7, 2021

How does Saanich manage invasive plants?

- Saanich uses four categories to manage invasive plants including prevent, eradicate, contain, and control. Lesser celandine is a high priority species for eradication in the region.
- Our invasive species management program targets priority invasive plants on both public and private lands using various techniques as outlined in our best management practices.
- Our best management practices for invasive plant management are set out by the Capital Region Invasive Species Partnership, Capital Regional District, Invasive Species Council of BC, and the Province.

Does Saanich use herbicides for invasive plant management?

- Only a small portion of our invasive plant management uses chemical treatment and we only do so if the best management practices dictates. Saanich Parks takes the use of herbicides very seriously and has reduced our use of herbicides over the last several years including last year.
- We follow regionally and provincially approved species specific best management practices to limit the amount of herbicide use, properly train staff, and ensure the safety of the public and the environment.

What is the best practice for eradicating lesser celandine?

- The provincial and regionally approved best practice for lesser celandine is the use of spot treatment of herbicide. Parks staff treat lesser celandine in late winter/early spring using a very diluted concentration (2 per cent of active ingredient) of Garlon on the plants themselves.

How does Saanich inform the public when it's going to use herbicides?

- As per provincial regulation and the Saanich Pesticide Bylaw, we post information on site when we intend to treat invasive plants with chemicals. We share specific information about the chemical, concentration, species, date range and the reasoning for treatment. The District's signs are consistent with our regional partners. However, in future, more information will be available via a weblink provided on the sign.

What's happening with the Bowker Creek site?

- The Bowker Creek site has been treated for the past six or seven years and as a result we have been able to keep the lesser celandine infestation relatively contained.

- We always maintain a 10 metre no-herbicide use zone in riparian areas. With the small amount of active ingredient used, it is very unlikely that the herbicide would enter the watercourse. There are many small patches of lesser celandine along the Bowker Creek banks that we do not treat with herbicide.

Can you pull the invasive plants instead of using herbicide?

- Unfortunately, someone tried to dig up several patches of lesser celandine at the Bowker Creek site and made a mess. If the entire root system, including the tubers/bulblets can't be removed, then it becomes even more of a spreading issue.
- As this plant is one of the regional species classified as high priority for eradication and it has a high degree of spread once disturbed, eradication via mechanical means requires specific techniques and a high degree of care so as not to make the problem worse.
- Given the current provincial health restrictions, we are not hosting a community work party to pull these invasive plants.