3.10 Facilitate Invasive Species Education and Management

5 Points | 10 Points | 15 Points | 20 Points

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last updated 2020)

Objective

Educate on, plan for, and implement projects to effectively manage invasive species.

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn.

1. Municipal Management of Invasive Species **(10 points)**

   All elements must be completed to receive credit.

   a. Examine your regulations to ensure that your municipality is not unintentionally supporting the use of invasive species. Eliminate all invasive species from lists of acceptable plants (include a review of subdivision guides' approved planting lists).

   Submit: A description of your regulation review process, including which regulations you reviewed and how you amended them (if applicable). You must at least review your Zoning Subdivision Regulations.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

   b. Embed invasive species management practices into your grounds maintenance practices. Invasive species management practices should be environmentally-sound, as opposed to widespread application of herbicides and pesticides.

   Submit: Your community's plan for invasive species treatments and a description of how you have embedded invasive species management (practices) into your grounds maintenance practices. Plans may be informed by sources from other organizations but must be specifically adapted for your municipality.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

   c. Educate municipal grounds keeping staff on invasive species management practices utilized by your municipality.

   Submit: A description, including dates, of the education provided to municipal grounds keeping staff.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

2. Municipal Management of Invasive Species **(5 points)**

   a. Engage in invasive species management practices on municipal properties.

   Submit: A description of the invasive species management practices now being employed on your municipal properties. Include before and after photos (if possible), as well as detailed information about the area treated, when and how it was treated.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

3. Residential Education **(5 points)**

   All elements must be completed to receive credit.

   a. On your municipal website, post invasive species education resources. Provide links to sources (may be external) outlining invasive species identification and removal techniques.

   Submit: A hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s) housing invasive species education resources on your municipal website.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

   b. Host or sponsor an educational workshop for residents about invasive species and removal processes. In addition to general education for all residents, you may enhance chances for adoption of new land stewardship practices by targeting specific groups, like gardening clubs.

   Submit: Title, date of workshop, and where possible, a description of what was covered.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Events, Meetings, Trainings" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim New Action Credit for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for Rolling Credit for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the "Partners Guidance Document".

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from your public works, and parks and recreation departments could be helpful in implementing this action.

In addition, the following committees, community groups or agencies could help implement this action: conservation commission, local garden clubs, watershed organizations, etc.

Funding

For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Sustainable CT Support For Your Town](https://sustainablect.org/support-for-your-town _blank) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Municipal Grant Program (MGP)
- 2021 Sustainable CT Community Match Fund
- Restoration & Resilience COVID Recovery Fund

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE)
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "Invasive Species"
- US Department of Agriculture, "Plants"
- US Department of Agriculture, "CT State Resources"
- CT Audubon, "Remove Invasive Plants"
- US Fish & Wildlife Service, "Frequently Asked Questions About Invasive Species"
- Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, "Invasive Plants in Your Backyard"

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- CT Invasive Plant Work Group
- US Fish & Wildlife Services
- The Nature Conservancy CT

Why This Matters

Invasive species are non-native plants, animals and other organisms that cause harm or are likely to cause harm in the ecosystem where they are introduced, by outcompeting or displacing native species. They oftentimes are fast growing and can spread quickly, so their management requires and all-hands-on-deck approach by municipal staff and residential property owners looking out for and removing invasive species wherever possible. Examples of invasive plants in Connecticut include Oriental Bittersweet, Multiflora Rose and Winged Euonymus/Burning Bush. Invasive aquatics include Zebra Mussels and Curly Leaf Pond Weed. Insects such as the Asian Long Horned Beetle and the Emerald Ash Borer can also cause serious problems to name a few.

Public education and management of invasive species are equally critical elements of a comprehensive plan aimed at protecting native species and their habitats, leading to healthier, fully-functioning ecosystems. The dollar cost to not properly managing invasive species can be quite high, as invasive species may impact commercial fisheries, agricultural operations, and more.

Benefits

By inspiring the community to shift their land management plans, you will facilitate the establishment of small sanctuaries of native species.

Ultimately, this benefits everyone in the community by promoting cleaner air, clean and fully functioning waterways, etc.

CT Success Stories

- Essex - Oct 2019 Certification
- Middletown - Oct 2019 Certification
- Scotland - Oct 2019 Certification
- Vernon - Oct 2019 Certification
- Avon - Oct 2020 Certification