3.10 Facilitate Invasive Species Education and Management

5 – 50 Points

Action Updates

This action was last updated in 2025. A version of this action from the prior program year is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow.

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. Promote Invasive Species Management

   The more you do, the more points you earn.

   a. Examine your regulations to ensure that your municipality is not unintentionally supporting the use of invasive species, including aquatic invasive species, and compile findings in a brief memo. Eliminate all invasive species from lists of acceptable plants (include a review of subdivision guides' approved planting lists). **(10 points)**

   Note: You must at least review your Zoning Subdivision Regulations.

   Submit: A description of your regulation review process, including which regulations you reviewed; a memo of findings (including regulations that may unintentionally support invasive species); a list of approved plant species used by your municipality and subdivisions within your municipality. If your regulation review was completed more than three years ago, also include a brief description of how it is still relevant and used by your municipality.

   b. Create a plan to embed invasive species management practices into your grounds maintenance and maintenance of waterbodies, watercourses, and wetlands (if applicable). Invasive species management practices should be environmentally-sound, as opposed to widespread application of herbicides and pesticides. **(10 points)**

   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 or water management (if applicable). Plans may be informed by sources from other organizations but must be specifically adapted for your municipality. If your plan was adopted more than three years ago, also include a brief description of how it is still relevant and used by your municipality.

   c. Train municipal grounds keeping staff on invasive species management practices utilized by your municipality. ***Note:*** See action Implement Green Grounds and Maintenance Program for resources on how to eliminate the use of inorganic fertilizers and chemical pesticides, including fungicides and herbicides, in favor of ecologically preferable materials in invasive species management. The training must have taken place in the last three years. **(5 points)**

   Submit: The names and titles of the individuals who attended the training, date of attendance, the

organization that provided the training, and an agenda or brief description of the content covered.

2. Municipal Management: Engage in invasive species management practices on municipal properties and in local waterbodies. To be eligible for points, invasive species management practices must have been employed in the last three years. **(15 points)**

   Submit: A description of the invasive species management practices currently 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.

3. Educate Residents on Invasive Species

   a. On your municipal website, post invasive species education resources. Provide links to sources (may be external) outlining invasive species identification and removal techniques. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A screenshot of the website and a hyperlink to the invasive species education resources on your municipal website.

   b. Host or sponsor an educational workshop for residents about invasive species and management processes. In addition to general education for all residents, you may enhance chances for adoption of new land stewardship and water management practices by targeting specific groups, like gardening clubs or fishing and boating clubs. The workshop must have taken place in the last three years. **(5 points)**

   Submit: A brief overview of outreach (suggested 5 sentences maximum), including target populations (if any); date of event; and at least one example of educational materials disseminated, which could include flyers, articles, letters, newsletters, presentations, or digital communications. For websites, submit both a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s).

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
- Sustainable CT Community Match Fund
- State Funding Readiness Project

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Invasive Plant Atlas of New England (IPANE)

- UConn Extension, Connecticut Native Plant and Landscaping Guide
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "Invasive Species"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station"
- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "Aquatic Invasive Species"
- US Department of Agriculture, "Plants"
- US Department of Agriculture, "CT State Resources"
- CT Audubon, "Remove Invasive Plants"
- Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District, "Invasive Plants in Your Backyard"

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- UConn Extension
- CT Invasive Plant Work Group
- US Fish & Wildlife Service, Invasive Species
- US Fish & Wildlife Service, Aquatic Invasive Species
- 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 managing 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

- Lyme - May 2022 Certification
- Darien - Oct 2022 Certification
- Deep River - Oct 2022 Certification
- Vernon - Oct 2022 Certification
- Montville - Jun 2023 Certification
- Glastonbury - Oct 2024 Certification
- Groton - Oct 2024 Certification
- Milford - Oct 2024 Certification
- Southbury - Oct 2024 Certification