

Public Outreach and Natural Resources Professional

Invasive Plant Species Management Program (IPSMP)
Loudoun County, Virginia

Loudoun Soil and Water Control District (LSWCD) is seeking a professional consultant to provide public outreach, communications, and natural resources support with a strong emphasis on applied botany and invasive plant management. The qualified candidate will help residents, HOAs, and community partners better understand invasive plant impacts and take action on their own properties.

About the Role

The qualified candidate will develop and deliver outreach and education products and support staff working under the Invasive Plant Species Management Program (IPSMP) in an effort to:

- Increase awareness of invasive plant impacts, basic plant ecology, and IPSMP resources.
- Drive participation in IPSMP grant cycles and related programs.
- Promote adoption of best management practices (BMPs) for invasive plant control, native plant restoration, and long-term site stewardship on private and public lands.
- Assist staff in conducting field review and analysis to determine appropriate invasive plant species best management practices

This work will be performed in close coordination with the IPSMP Administrator (LSWCD) and County staff.

Key Responsibilities

Field Work and Invasive Plant Identification Skills

- Maintain ability to identify all invasive plant species designated by the Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).
- Perform field visits to active and potential project sites for participation in the IPSMP.
- Prepare site reports describing recommendations for site management.
- Monitor project progress and assist with planning for upcoming review periods.

Program Messaging and Materials

- Review IPSMP documents, plant lists, and web content and develop clear, consistent messages for target audiences (HOAs, landowners, non-profits, community groups).
- Draft and design outreach materials such as fact sheets, one-pagers, FAQs, slide decks, and talking points for County staff, elected officials, and partners.
- Develop plain-language explanations of priority invasive plant species, associated risks, and recommended BMPs, incorporating helpful botanical concepts (growth form, life cycle, reproduction).

Digital Outreach and Social Media

- Create social media copy, graphics, and short video concepts (e.g., before-and-after project spotlights, landowner testimonials, simple “how-to” invasive removal segments).
- Coordinate with County communications staff to align IPSMP messaging with County branding and policies.

Community Engagement and Partner Support

- Identify and prioritize stakeholder groups (e.g., HOAs, conservation NGOs, Master Gardeners, native plant societies, civic associations, faith organizations) for targeted outreach.
- Plan and support outreach events such as webinars, workshops, HOA briefings, community tabling, and site walks at IPSMP-funded projects, including field-based demonstrations of invasive plant identification and control.
- Prepare presentation materials and, as requested, co-present with County staff on program objectives, eligibility, application processes, and on-the-ground lessons learned.

Educational Content on BMPs and Species Identification

- Develop educational content that explains how to identify IPSMP-priority invasive species and common native look-alikes, and provides step-by-step BMPs for safe and effective removal, treatment, and follow-up monitoring.
- Translate technical guidance and botanical references into accessible formats (checklists, infographics, short videos or scripts) for general audiences.

- Recommend ways to integrate BMP and plant ID information into homeowner and HOA communications, including seasonal reminders and pre-application guidance.

Support to IPSMP Stakeholder Engagement Committee (SEC)

- Assist with preparing materials for SEC meetings (issue briefs, outreach strategies, sample products).
- Incorporate SEC feedback so that outreach products reflect stakeholder needs, local plant communities, and site conditions.
- Provide concise summaries of outreach metrics and observations for the SEC and Board reporting as requested.

Metrics, Evaluation, and Continuous Improvement

- Recommend practical metrics to track outreach effectiveness (event attendance, website traffic, social media engagement, inquiries and applications).
- Provide periodic summaries of outreach activities, key performance indicators, and recommendations to improve communication, targeting, messaging, and technical content on invasive plant management.

Qualifications

- Demonstrated experience in public outreach, environmental communications, or community engagement, preferably in natural resources, invasive species, forestry, or related fields.
- Education or professional experience in botany, plant ecology, horticulture, or a closely related discipline, with applied experience in invasive plant identification, control methods, and native plant restoration strongly preferred.
- Working knowledge of invasive plant management and ecological restoration concepts, including the ability to interpret and apply technical guidance (species lists, treatment recommendations, planting plans) and translate it into clear, layperson-ready materials.
- Experience working with local governments, HOAs, or community-based organizations.
- Strong writing and public speaking skills and the ability to tailor messages to diverse audiences, from technical partners to the general public.