

*Please read through the whole form before starting your field survey!!
Things you encounter will not necessarily be in the order listed in the
form. You also do not have to fill out everything. Do your best.*

ANCHORAGE WATERWAYS COUNCIL
Creek Report Card Survey Forms
"No creeks left behind!"

Investigators: _____ Miles Driven: _____

Creek Name: _____

Creek Section Number: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____

Mode of transport: Bike Foot Canoe or raft

Photos taken (please take photos of anything unusual or significant): yes no
Disposition of photos: _____

Start Location (use one of the following):

Latitude (optional) _____

Longitude (optional) _____

Symbol on Map or Aerial Photo _____

Verbal Description _____

Stop Location (use one of the following):

Latitude (optional) _____

Longitude (optional) _____

Symbol on Map or Aerial Photo _____

Verbal Description _____

Weather Conditions:

Rain in last 24 hours

Heavy rain Steady Rain

Intermittent Rain None

Present Conditions

Heavy Rain Steady Rain Intermittent rain

Overcast Partly Cloudy Clear/Sunny

Amount of rain, if known? _____ Current Temperature: _____ F or C

I. STREAM AND SHORE LINE CHARACTERISTICS

Please record the location of any issues you find either directly on your map, aerial photograph, or by GPS coordinates if you have a GPS. We prefer the coordinates in decimal degrees 61.94857, but dd mm ss or dd mm.m will work—just provide the units you are using! Please write neatly so that your observations can be deciphered.

1. Water flow: Present conditions:

- no water present/dry/isolated pools
- low flow in channel
- flow in channel
- creek bed filled to top of banks
- water flooding over banks
- other observations: _____

2. Water odor:

- natural/none
- sewage
- rotten egg
- other: _____
- gasoline
- chlorine
- chemical

3. Water surface:

- clear
 - foamy
 - oily sheen (petroleum product vs. natural*)
 - other: _____
- *natural sheen can be "broken up" with a stick, whereas a petroleum product is likely not to separate

4. Water clarity:

- turbid – suspended matter in water
 - sediment
 - blue/green algae
 - other
 - tannic – clear water that is naturally stained orange/brownish due to organic acids in the water
 - clear - no staining/no suspended matter
 - other (i.e. chemical discharge, dyes)
- Comments on water clarity: _____
- _____

5. Unusual objects in creek (mark location on your map!):

- tires
 - vehicles
 - motorcycles
 - bicycles
 - shopping carts
 - boats/rafts/canoes
 - 55-gal drums (see if you can find a label but don't handle)
 - firearms (don't handle)
 - military debris (artillery rounds—don't touch military objects, communications wire, etc.)
 - dead wildlife or fish
 - electronics
 - appliances
 - mattresses
 - tarps
 - construction materials (plywood, cement blocks, etc.)
 - other unusual objects: _____
- _____

6. Trash (mark location on map or aerial): yes no

Type of Trash:

- residential
- industrial
- yard waste (grass clippings, tree limbs, discarded plants)
- shopping bags
- floatables
- furniture
- other: _____

Amount of trash: _____ (bag[s], pick-up truck loads)

Other measure: _____

Is trash confined to? single site large area spread along complete section of creek

Is the trash in a location for possible cleanup by volunteers? yes no

7. Homeless camps along creeks (mark location on your map but DO NOT DISTURB!):

yes no Are the camps: neat trashy

Estimate of size or number of tents: _____

8. “Unofficial” human modifications of the creek or creek banks (mark these locations). A bridge constructed by the Municipality or other agency is “official” while something constructed by an individual is “unofficial.”

- rock dams foot bridge ATV bridge structure
- roads or other driveways across creeks ORV crossings
- trees or vegetation cut to within 25 feet of the creek bank (not in the park or greenbelts)
- grass cut to within 25 feet of the creek bank (in parks or greenbelts)
- other: _____

9. Orange floc on the bottom of the Creek?

There are a number of natural and human causes for orange floc.

Yes no If yes, mark on map or aerial photo.



10. Dog poop along creek bank or trail (best guesstimate of amount):

Yes, lots Yes, some poop Yes, a little poop None seen
Is there a dog poop bag dispenser close? Yes No. Would this be a good place for one?

11. Interpretive signs or mileage markers with graffiti:

Yes No
If Yes, mark location on map so it can be reported to the Municipality for cleaning.

12. Stormwater outfall (culvert or ditch): Present (Mark on your map) None seen

If Yes, note condition clogged with debris, perched, flowing freely, or noxious discharge, other _____

13. Erosion- describe: [natural waterway meandering or human induced] (mark location on map or aerial photos). Please elaborate on the type of erosion and extent. Is it bank trampling over a large area (approximate size) from fishing, wading, a trail, or ???

14. Other threats to Creek--describe (mark location on map or aerial photos):

II. VISUAL BIOLOGICAL SURVEY

1. Wildlife or evidence of wildlife in or around the creek:

- waterfowl & other birds dippers or water ouzels mammals freshwater clams
 aquatic insects

2. List the species you can identify and relative abundance:

Location

Species & abundance

3. Fish in the stream: *(Check all that apply)*

- no yes, but rare yes, abundant
 small (1-2") medium (3-6") large (7" and above)

Are there barriers to fish movement?

- none beaver dams waterfalls > 1ft culverts perched culverts (culverts above water level)
 dams (officially constructed) dams (temporarily built for access or by kids)
 road barriers adventitious roads across creeks [Adventitious roads are those arising sporadically or in other than the usual location. They are often created by ORVs.]
 other: _____

Location

Barrier

4. Invasive plant species. Please list any invasive species that you feel comfortable in identifying that you see during the survey or later in the year. (See attached guide for common species):

- Bird Vetch Common Toadflax (Butter & Eggs) Canada Thistle Bull Thistle May Tree
 Others: _____



Bird Vetch (*Vicia cracca*)

Pea Family



Common Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*)

Figwort Family

Bird Vetch (*Vicia cracca*)

Pea Family

Related Species: Hairy Vetch (*V. villosa*)

- Perennial which reproduces by seed and vegetatively by underground rhizomes. Multiple, branching vine-like stems have small tendrils and alternate, pinnately-compound leaves with 8 to 10 leaflets. Bilaterally symmetrical purple flowers are arranged on a one-sided spike. Flowering occurs from spring to late fall. Seeds contained in inch-long, brown, lance-shaped pods.
- **Bird vetch aggressively climbs fencing, trees, bushes, and other vegetation, monopolizing sunlight, space, and moisture. Spreads along roadsides, trails, and other disturbed areas.**

Common Toadflax, Butter & Eggs (*Linaria vulgaris*)

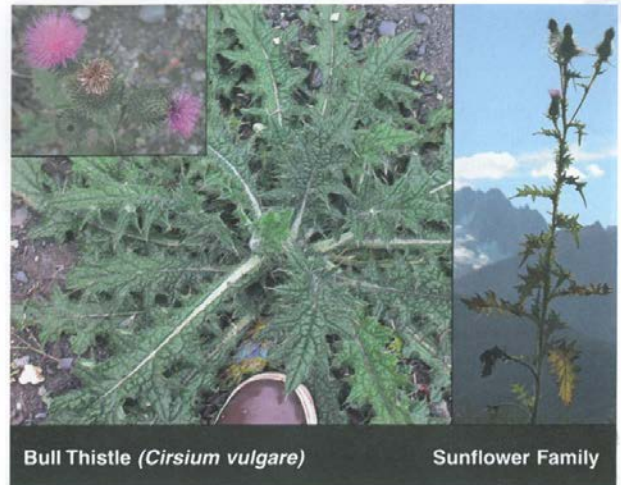
Figwort Family

- An aggressive perennial that can reproduce by seeds or rhizomes, with 1 to 25 stems per plant. Woody, smooth, erect, leafy, often in clumps to 2 feet tall. Numerous pale green leaves to 3 inches long, alternate, narrow and pointed at both ends. Flowers borne at the end of each stem in spike-like clusters, yellow, with central bearded orange patch, one inch long, similar to snapdragons with a spur extending below the lower lip of the corolla.
- Common in roadsides, waste areas, lake shores, beach meadows, pastures, and edges of forests.
- **A persistent, aggressive invader, capable of forming dense colonies. Toxic to grazing animals.**



Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

Sunflower Family



Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)

Sunflower Family

Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

Sunflower Family

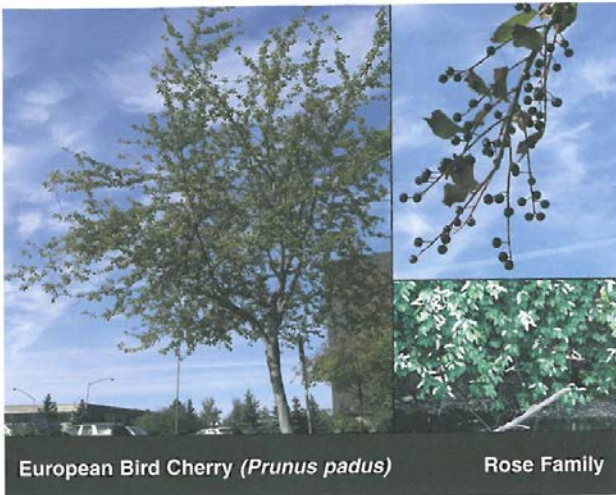
- A perennial that grows to five feet tall with erect, ridged, branching stems. Leaves curled, wavy, oblong, alternate on stem with woolly hairs on underside. Leaves arise directly from the stem without a distinct leaf stalk. Flowers are purple-pink in clusters at the ends of branches.
- Forms colonies via an extensive horizontal and vertical root system; can eventually cover acres. Also spreads by wind-blown seeds. Young plants appear as basal rosettes that bolt in late summer. Grows in fields, pastures, forests, and along roadsides, ditches, and river banks.
- **Restricts recreational land use, scratches and infects animal skin, and produces allelopathic chemicals to suppress surrounding vegetation. Very difficult to eradicate once established.**

Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)

Sunflower Family

- Biennial erect plant rises from a fleshy taproot. A large, flat rosette forms in the first year, and flowers and stems elongate in the second year. Stem grows 2 to 5 feet tall with many spreading branches. Leaves hairy and prickly on upper side, and cottony underneath. Stems have irregular spiny "wings." Flower heads are 1.5 to 2 inches, urn shaped, purple ray florets. Bracts under flowers are fleshy and tipped with spines.
- Found on disturbed sites, roadsides, and riparian areas. Found in Anchorage and Southeast Alaska.
- **Restricts recreational land use, decreases land value, and competes with native vegetation for water, space, and light.**

May Tree or European Bird Cherry



European Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*)

Rose Family

European Bird Cherry (*Prunus padus*) Rose Family

- A low-branched tree which spreads by seed and can reach up to 35 feet in height. Produces showy white flowers, borne on 5-inch long spikes, and a large number of small black bitter fruits in late summer. A favorite of some birds, who spread the seed along streams. Purplish gray to greenish bark. Leaves elliptic to obovate, with sharply serrate margins.
- A favorite ornamental in Alaska. Generally, moose do not browse this tree. It is now spreading freely into riparian zones in Anchorage and Fairbanks.
- **Along urban rivers and streams, it is the dominant understory seedling and sapling, replacing native trees and shrubs.**



III. CREEK REPORT CARD

1. **Human impacts along this section of the Creek:** [Are there minimal or major human impacts.]

Few 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Many

What impacts contribute or detract from the naturalness?

2. **Recreation opportunities along this section of the Creek:**

Good 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Bad

canoeing/rafting/tubing wading fishing solitude
 biking walking other: _____

3. **Overall quality of this section of the Creek:**

[What is your opinion of the over all rating of this section?]

Good 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Bad

4. **Would you recommend to a good friend that they visit this section of the Creek?**

Yes No Why: _____

5. **Additional comments/observations/sketches**

