

YRPC Weekly News

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YRPC Stream Monitoring Team Upgrades the Fight to Protect the Yellow River

By: Arnie DeWitt, YRPC Stream Monitoring Coordinator

Arnie, YRPC's Stream Monitoring Team is taking water conservation to the next level—and they need your help on the front lines.

While dedicated volunteers conduct monthly water testing across 12 strategic sites from May through October, their boots-on-the-ground inspections cover only about 200 yards per site when looking for invasive species such as Hybrid Cattails, Purple Loosestrife and Yellow Iris across the river's expansive 77-mile stretch, that means standard baseline monitoring catches just **1.8 percent** of the shoreline.

To bridge that gap, YRPC is calling on riverfront landowners, kayakers, and outdoor enthusiasts to transform into active field researchers.

How You Can Turn Your Next River Trip Into a Recon Mission

Spotting invasive species along the shore? You can report sightings directly to **news@yrpc.ltd**.

If you encounter an invasive species while paddling or exploring off the beaten path, tracking the precise location with your smartphone takes just a few quick taps:

1. **Drop a Pin:** Open Google Maps, tap and hold your current position on the map until a **Dropped Pin** appears.
2. **Grab the Coordinates:** Tap the location bar at the bottom to view the exact latitude and longitude.
3. **Send It In:** Take a screenshot of the coordinates and email it to **news@yrpc.ltd** alongside a photo and a brief description of what you found. (Property owners reporting from home can simply provide a postal address).

YRPC's Stream Monitoring Team will log every report into a central database to build real-time invasive species coverage maps, which will be accessible to the public on the YRPC website.

High-Tech Digitization Meets the Cattail Invasion

Beyond crowdsourced mapping, YRPC is rolling out advanced digital imaging to measure the spread of aggressive **Hybrid Cattails**.

In 2024, researchers established a digital baseline along a 2.5-mile stretch between Emerson Bridge and Normans Landing. This month, the team is re-scanning that exact section and more to measure how much surface area these invasive plants have captured over the last two years.

Unlike native species, Hybrid Cattails grow significantly taller and spread more aggressively forming dense, impenetrable thickets that choke out native plants such as wild rice and can completely block scenic views from the shore.

Stay tuned to the YRPC website for map updates, and keep an eye out for invader species during your next outing on the water!

Field Identification Spot Check: The picture below of Cattails was taken at Gaslyn Landing on July 31st, 2026. Gaslyn Landing is in the Sand Lake Sub-Watershed which has the highest Health Index score of all Sub-Watersheds in the Yellow River watershed ([see YRPC Home Page for a list of Sub-Watershed Health Index Scores and How the DNR Measures them](#)). Hybrid Cattails grow much taller than native cattails. Their towering height can block scenic views from the shore.

