

OS Gorse Project: Communication and Engagement Meeting, 7.17.17

Goal: Increase understanding of gorse including the economic threat and fire danger it poses and create a pathway of knowledge that can lead to action.

Attendees: Marie Simonds, Frank Burris, Jim Seeley, Liz Gali-Nobel, Michelle Martin, Will Bailey, Norma Kline, John Bragg, Robert Franson

Heidi reported about a meeting with Greg Wolfe. We reviewed SOD funding that has come through the state legislature and Dept. of Forestry. Jim reported that we have an economic impact assessment of gorse and is major.

PR firm - JWA specializes in helping find legislative solutions. Jim and Marie discussed the need for a variety of audiences, messages and a train the trainer model so we all use the same language. Need someone that can represent a broad regional area and not only the S. coast. For example, Lane has been tracking gorse since 1980's.

Next steps: Determine cost and what representatives they would bring to the table. Jim will run this by Invasive Species Council.

The Science team has a three-pronged approach: keep it contained, attack outliers, attack core (Coos/Curry).

Science team call: Marie reported that next steps will entail technical experts from ODA that will do a deep dive on data and make recommendations for next steps.

Communication via website: where should it live, who responsible for content and for keeping it up to date. Where will data and website be housed?

Discussion: Would like citizen scientists to find and report gorse through the website. Sharing data currently occurs through EdMap that Liz can access. Itsi? Liz has talked with Carrie, Tim Butler, BLM, Forest Service and several others.

Liz is willing to host the website and will volunteer her staff to support the data and work of it. Liz expressed that she thinks the website would be best housed in an academic institution or local municipalities that has legal authority. There has to be a clearinghouse to get it under one roof.

Next step: Frank will ask OSU and approach Sam (Sea Grant) and follow up. Jim will approach Nature Conservancy and PSU? Once the location is secured, Liz's organization can pay a small amount of funds to put framework together.

Science team next steps: Data expert from ODA will look at all that GAG has and other information that exists regarding data, and will provide recommendations to the project team.

Discussion: Data resources such as Nature Conservancy has GAG data, Oregon Explorer has additional information. Consider pulling together coastal community leaders can support once we have

Discussion: Can OS help us couch this and access governor's office and decision makers? Consider holding a Gorse conference next year?

Next steps: USDA RCDI (annual grant): Grant is due July 25 and has a 1:1 match. Ask for 50,000 and match with 50,000 – WRCA can commit to this. Neighbor Works Umpqua will take the lead. In-kind match also can be included. Funds could be used to hire a PR firm, train the trainer, education for homeowners, donut hole potential for housing, train citizen scientists to find and report gorse. The 100K would be phase one this year to get information out and evaluate effectiveness. Phase 2 is to apply for a larger amount next year based upon results of this year.

Discussion: Ask city of Bandon, Coos County to identify if they can come up with cash match to access more funding through the USDA RCDI grant? Can current actions happening be shown as a cash match?

Discussion: Health impact related to allergies, asthma and illnesses caused by gorse. This could a potential need to accessing funding. What other needs/impacts might be there that could galvanize additional resources?

Jim and Marie reported on their presentation to the Coos County Commissioners. They reported about the million dollar economic impact of gorse and fire hazard that threatens 80,000 people and 30,000 structures. Commissioner Sweet said that this effort is gaining more visibility and has the potential to impact the population more than any other effort he has seen.

Next steps: Include in PR the need to develop the agriculture, health, and water story that people can understand.

Discussion: What is the connection between nitrogen, lead and coast water? John will follow up with South Slough to ask if there has or is an interest in exploring this question. Frank offered to do the research on nitrification?

Liz reported on several grants through Coos Watershed: got a 2nd grant for about 30K to treat species beyond watershed, including gorse. Coquille gorse removal went through Coos Watershed, another 8K came to additional gorse control at Coquille point. New grants: approached by Neighbor Works Umpqua to help with grant, will launch internal Edmaps. BLM asked to target to coordinate a tri-county CWMA multiple species. Applied for a federal pulling together initiative and applied for 75K with additional match included to expand the gorse CWMA to a full CWMA. The message is that the federal government wants to see multiple species addressed and not one single species. The Coos Watershed is happy to do both. Liz can contribute staffing and herself for a period of time.

Discussion: Liz suggested that we need a plan to advocate for funding and awareness with decisions makers. For example, meeting with the Governor's advisor on natural resources, gain support from state decision makers and lobby federally.

Discussion website: Tillamook Design did Bandon Chamber of Commerce that was 35K and recently won an award. Other suggestions were discussed.

Next steps: John offered to draft survey to identify if we are missing people or needs to bring back to this subcommittee.

Next steps: Jim, Michelle and Liz will interview PR and web site folks. Inquire about the website interfacing with mobile functions.