

**Gorse Action Group**  
**Conference Call**  
**Friday, October 14, 2016**

Attending:

Alexis Brickner – Coos Watershed Association

Jim Seeley – Wild Rivers Coast Alliance

Christy Day – Wild Rivers Coast Alliance

Hannah McDonald – South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve

Will Bailey – Private citizen of Bandon

Darcy Grahek – Go Native Plant Nursery

Erin Minster – Curry SWCD

Norma Kline – OSU Extension

**Oregon Solutions**

Jim, Marie, and Alexis have been working Heidi McGowan, of Oregon Solutions, since August to get ready to request that Governor Brown designate gorse as an Oregon Solutions project. Heidi feels very positive that gorse will become an Oregon Solutions project. Jim presented on gorse and GAG to the South Coast Umpqua Regional Solutions Advisory Committee. This is a group of representatives from Curry, Douglas, Coos County and include several types of seats (Governor's representative, philanthropic seat, etc.) The group voted unanimously to recommend this project to the Governor. The next step is complete a letter to the governor and Alex Campbell, of Oregon Solutions, will get the regional solutions signatures showing support. Jim is also hoping to get a Coquille Tribe signature. Jim and Alexis will send their edits to Heidi today for the draft letter to the Governor. We hope to get signatures from as many supporters as possible. Once the project gets underway, Jim & Alexis will be co-conveners to communicate between GAG and the Governor's office. One of the main selling points was how much positive work can come from a broad collaborative. Darcy asked if we had representation from BLM, specifically from New River ACEC. Chelsea is the new intern for New River, working on invasive species education. Alexis will contact Chelsea.

**Demonstration Project Update**

The Coquille Point demonstration project is underway, beginning with a pilot demonstration on a section of the cliffs close to Madison Avenue. All Terrain Brushing and By-the-Sea Gardens took the lead on the removal efforts. Liza Ehle of By-the-Sea Gardens led a Shutter Creek Inmate Crew to perform manual control after Rick Berello from All Terrain mechanically brush gorse plants on the steep cliff. The project will continue in December.

Jim stated that the purpose of this project is to show how serious gorse is and to show how it can be controlled on steep slopes. Landowners on Coquille Point are very concerned about erosion after gorse removal so this project will provide a good example of what can be done steep slopes for gorse control. Through all of this, Jim found that the one legal use of gorse is as bank stabilization on steep slopes. Follow-up control will

occur at Coquille Point through herbicide application of any regrowth, spreading grass seed, and planting native shrubs.

Will said that gorse can weaken slopes because there are no other plants in between the gorse plants. He suggests that more research should be done on this subject.

Darcy suggested that this would make a good education piece. And she suggested planting coyote bush, a pioneer plant, that will spread itself across those slopes. Darcy said teaching people what plants should be there instead of gorse is a great education campaign and could result in a pamphlet.

Jim said that one of the most pressing needs is a comprehensive education program to explain how big this problem really is

Additionally, Alexis said that Jim has been working with the Coquille Tribe for gorse control at the Pacific View Living Center. They have stated concerns about erosion. Jim said that the current demonstration project can be used to show how gorse can be controlled on slopes and we should use recent fire information to convince them to participate in a control project

Erin asked if anyone has had experience with black willow? It is more of a tree form willow, as opposed to the shrubby type that can take over. It may good a option for planting after gorse removal.

Leesa Cobb, Executive Director of the Port Orford Ocean Resources Team has contacted us about a potential control project on her family property on the Elk River. Jim said that this property used to be ranch land and was turned into a RV park on the Elk River. The grazing ground turned into gorse and would be a great control project. It could be the next project to develop and find funding for. Alexis will work with Leesa on this potential project.

### **Fire resistant plant demonstration**

The garden will be installed at the Bandon Youth Community Center, just off of Highway 101 on 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The plan is to have the garden completed in November. This will be a great youth project, they can help plant and maintain the garden after school. It is also close enough to the high school for a quick field trip. Alexis will work on a pamphlet that details the plants in the gardens for residents to take home. They can use the guide to select plants for their yards, especially after gorse control.

### **Outreach**

Alexis and Will Bailey put together a draft handout on understanding and controlling gorse. Jim said he passed it out at the Regional Solutions meeting.

Will stated that it was our first attempt at a guide to education people about gorse and what to do with it. Should we include reference citations throughout the document? Alexis said it is a bit wordy and could be reformatted in a different program than Powerpoint.

Jim suggested including a recent photo of gorse fires. He said that the WRCA marketing staff member pointed out that the trifold pamphlet created for GAG looks a bit like we are promoting gorse and suggested adding some “x’s” through the gorse plants.

Will stated that we need to be careful when talking about herbicides, especially when making recommendations

Erin said she liked the 2 page format because it’s better for getting online, once we establish a website.

Darcy said we could put together both styles, one for a website and one for putting at locations around town.

Will said we will add in something about burning and the fire risk

Darcy said this was a good idea because the seeds are fire resistant but people often think burning kills the seeds.

Alexis and Will will continue to edit the pamphlet.

Darcy reported on a new Go Native program pollinators which also involves invasive species, specifically gorse. The inspiration for this project was dune habitat that was lost to gorse. The group will hear on Dec 3 if they will receive a grant for a large art project about pollinators. The idea behind the grant is “art builds community”. The class will paint a mural, create artistic signage for the boardwalk, and measure the impact made during tourist season next year – Farmer’s market through Cranberry Festival. The group will ask questions to people attending the market about gorse and invasive species. This will be an awareness campaign for habitat loss and how invasive gorse is. There is potential for GAG to partner with Go Native on helping measure awareness. Alexis will work with Darcy, if and when they get funding.

Alexis suggested waiting until January for a public meeting. At this point, the Coquille Project and garden will be complete, as well as hopefully the Oregon Solutions designation. The group agreed it was better to wait.

Jim stated that he is still working with Neighbor Works Umpqua, a group that addresses low income housing problems throughout Oregon. We are hoping that can partner with us on donut hole gorse removal.

### **Next Meeting**

Alexis will send out a Doodle poll for a conference call in November.