



## **Gorse Control in Bandon: Frequently Asked Questions District Abatement Plan**

**How soon will the ordinance/abatement plan go into effect?** The new “noxious weed ordinance” (Bandon Municipal Code 8.08.015) went into effect in 2019. However, the coordinated plan for abatement is going into effect over the coming year, and is expected to complete within a decade of progressive steps. Remember, if there is a complaint about your property submitted to the city at any time, you will be asked to file a vegetation management plan and begin to correct the situation even if your district is not in an abatement district yet. Once the district abatement plan begins, each district will have several months notice about the timelines, plenty of specific information and resources to help you get a plan put together for your property within your district or neighborhood.

**Will a district be doing the exact same thing at the same time?** More or less, but each property may require slightly different methods within the specified timeline for the district. Weather, fire season and other factors may cause delays but removal equipment in the initial phase of a district should be most active for about 4-6 weeks. After that, monitoring, herbicide or control methods will differ slightly depending on height of the new growth, etc. Your individual plan will be designed to start with the district and continue in a reasonable progression through the five steps of control.

**What about publicly-owned properties near my home?** We don’t want noxious weeds to have a foothold anywhere so publicly-owned land will be on the same district plan as you and your neighbors. If there is a high degree of risk for erosion or other factors like endangered species or a cultural site, your district will have solutions built into it case-by-case to avoid issues. The VMC (vegetation management coordinator) will help assess the issues within a district, and use our best technical advice from the GAG partners to help craft workable solutions for any issues encountered in your district. Districts will often have similar topography, soils, access/erosion, etc. so this is another reason for cooperating within a coordinated district plan.

**Why didn’t the City of Bandon include citizens and neighborhoods in the decision to revise the City Vegetation Ordinance to remove gorse exemptions?** Fast moving fires impacting urban communities is on the mind of many homeowners. Gorse and fire have a long history in Bandon. Gorse would be a contributing factor to hotter and more intense fires threatening Bandon today. For decades, the City of Bandon has struggled with how to both address the fire risk that gorse poses and handle enforcement. The many exemptions to gorse removal have been an obstacle for forward progress in comprehensive gorse removal in Bandon. Seeking funds to assist homeowners in gorse removal is hindered by the gorse exemptions. For years, the City Council has discussed possible changes to the Vegetation Ordinance as it relates to gorse. In more recent years, the Gorse Action Group (GAG), a locally-led collaborative gorse management group, has been in dialog with land and homeowners in Coos County. More discussion and dialog are most certainly in order. GAG is coordinating an outreach campaign to address concerns, provide technical expertise, and assist homeowners in developing gorse management plans for their homes and neighborhoods. Further, GAG is working with the City of Bandon in implementing a staggered implementation plan that will be based on districts which will allow for a more strategic and cost-effective way to address gorse removal.

## ▶ **Gorse Control in Bandon: Frequently Asked Questions** **General**

**Will gorse removal destabilize steep slopes putting my home at the top of the bluff in danger?** The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service partnered with the Gorse Action Group, a locally-led collaborative gorse management group, to remove invasive plants from Coquille Point. The project removed several invasive species from 19 acres of land, including: gorse, Scotch Broom and blackberry. Operations largely consisted of mechanical removal in the fall and winter of 2016 and 2017. After removal, the area was reseeded with native grasses. In 2018 and 2019, a contractor was hired to spot spray gorse seedlings and crown re-sprouts. As the competing vegetation fills-in the open spaces, a very limited amount of herbicide is needed to treat the remaining gorse sprouts. The goal is to promote a more natural system that keeps gorse out. Please join us for a tour of this project area to learn and see first-hand about methods used that are compatible with removal of gorse on steep slopes. Visit the GAG website to learn about upcoming tour dates.

**What if I cannot afford to control noxious weeds on my property?** The vegetation management plan and district abatement coordination is designed to save you confusion, time, and money. When your vegetation management plan is implemented joining with neighbors can help to minimize costs with contractors, and there may be other cost-share opportunities such as the Coos County Noxious Weed Control District's herbicide cost -share program. By working one district at a time, the plan is designed to focus equipment, manpower, resources and help in your neighborhood when you need it. Do-it-yourselfers may want to share rental equipment or offer to pay part of one neighbors' cost in return for access or other needed resources.

**Will gorse removal destroy sensitive dune habitat?** Coastal dunes provide habitat for many native plants and animals. State Parks has been reclaiming gorse infested dunes for sensitive native plants such as silvery phacelia, pink sand verbena and the threatened western snowy plover. Bullards Beach State Park is a great example of successful dune habitat restoration. About 50 acres of dune habitat have been reclaimed since 2009. Dunes have been reclaimed using an integrated program including: large mechanical equipment, herbicides, and replanting of native dune grasses. Methods used by State Parks serve as a model in how to successfully reclaim acres of gorse infested land. For more information about dune restoration on State Parks lands, visit the GAG website.

**Will the herbicides being promoted for gorse control be harmful to my dog?** Herbicides are an important tool in gorse control. Triclopyr products (Garlon 3A, Garlon 4, Vastlan, etc.) are effective especially when combined with mechanical removal. Dogs and cats may be exposed to herbicides if they get into recently treated areas. To reduce the risk to your pets, do not allow them into treated areas until the herbicide has dried completely. To learn more about using herbicides around pets, please read more at the GAG website.

**Will Round-up be sprayed all over Bandon?** Glyphosate is the chemical in Roundup® that kills both grasses and broadleaf weeds. In general, Glyphosate is not that effective in killing gorse. In addition, it is not selective and kills important competing plants that help keep gorse seedlings suppressed. For these reasons, the Gorse Action Group is not recommending widespread use of this product for effective gorse control.