

2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT SUMMARY

Gorse is considered one of the most invasive plant species in the world and is now found on all continents. While management of gorse is occurring in many areas on the south coast, long-lived infestations continue to expand and spread. In addition to being a significant fire hazard, gorse rapidly invades land, impacting farming, grazing, and other land use activities.

The Gorse Action Group exists to bring together and support the combined efforts of partners working to minimize the economic and environmental impacts of gorse across a regional scale. The Gorse Action Group's highest priority is to stop the spread of gorse with specific objectives to prevent new infestations, control source populations, and build capacity for coordinated efforts.

OVERVIEW OF 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PREVENTION OF NEW INFESTATIONS

Activities spanned working with diverse partners and landowners across the region to survey and treat public and private properties. Additionally, partners implemented best management practices to reduce the spread of gorse. Specific activities of the partners include:

- Coos Watershed Association surveyed 166 acres for new gorse plants and 10 outlier and/or EDRR sites were treated. Coquille Watershed Association surveyed 154 acres for new gorse plants and 4 outlier and/or EDRR sites were treated.
- Curry Watersheds Partnership treated 166 outlier and/or EDRR sites and an additional 100 sites were found to have no sprouts or regrowth as the result of previous treatment efforts. This accounts for approximately 60 acres of gorse treated across 503 acres of land.
- Through the EDRR program, Coos and Coquille Watershed Associations participated in the Coos County Noxious Weed Advisory Board training in July 2020 for Cost Share Applicants on identifying and treating weeds.

- Coquille Watershed Association developed a relationship with the Bandon Airport staff and Salem managers who are on board with clearing gorse at the airport and will look into future internal grant opportunities.
- Coos Watershed Association worked with the City of Coos Bay and Coos Bay-North Bend Waterboard to survey and treat outlier gorse populations as well as recommend best management practices for continued treatment.



Before (left) and after treatment (right) of outlier gorse in northern Curry County.

Photo Credit: Dustin Williams

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND LINKS TO FULL
RESOURCES VISIT: [GORSEACTIONGROUP.ORG](https://gorseactiongroup.org)**

► STRATEGIC CONTROL OF SOURCE POPULATIONS

Activities spanned conducting on-the-ground treatment in core infestation areas to reduce the risk and impact to the local community and environment. Expansion of new and innovative capacities for gorse treatment also continues to be a priority. Specific activities of the partners include:

- Coos Watershed Association treated 1.25 net acres of source gorse populations and Curry Watersheds Partnership treated 48 sites within their core gorse containment area. An additional 18 sites were found to have no sprouts or regrowth as the result of previous treatment efforts.
- Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) treated approximately 10 acres of gorse along Highway 101 between Bandon and Coos Bay and focused on mowing mature gorse in the core infestations off Highway 101 in Curry County with follow up spraying planned.
- Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) established gorse thrips nursery sites at 8 locations around Bandon. This included initial releases and follow-up monitoring of populations throughout the season with Coquille Watershed Association.



After photo of cut/stump treatment of scattered gorse plants at a site on the margin of a core containment area.

Photo Credit: Erin Minster

- In the Fall of 2020, Oregon State University Extension and ODA collected the final data set at the gorse removal demonstration area just south of Bandon that looked at 19 different combinations of management options for controlling gorse. Two and a half years of data will be analyzed and compiled for publication and distribution.
- In October 2020, the US Forest Service and Air Burners, Inc. held a demonstration of the Char Boss, an air curtain burner, at Bandon Dunes Golf Resort. This unit is designed for high temperature burning of forest slash, agricultural vegetative waste, land clearing debris, green waste, storm debris, invasive species, and other combustible waste streams. Gorse was the test feedstock for the demonstration and afterwards the resulting bio char product was sent to a laboratory for testing and research on outcomes for useable products.





CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR COORDINATED EFFORTS

Activities spanned facilitating partnerships, seeking funds, and information sharing between 35 active Gorse Action Group partner organizations to enhance their capacity to tackle complex issues created from gorse infestations. Specific activities of the partners include:

- Coquille Watershed Association held 2 in-person presentations during their Winter Workshop series.
- Two flexible outreach materials were created to help communicate and highlight the work being done by the Gorse Action Group and its partners to manage gorse, including a Strategy Infographic Map that was created to help showcase gorse management strategies across priority management zones and a Project Highlights Template & Mockup which was created to help communicate the many different projects across the region in a way that can be customized to individual partner needs.
- Curry Watersheds Partnership increased awareness by presenting “Curry’s Most Wanted” noxious weeds, including gorse, to the Curry County Board of Commissioners in a public meeting and participated in a follow-up article in the Curry Pilot newspaper. A similar version of that presentation was also presented at the Vegetation Management Series, presented by Windward Gardens and aimed at local vegetation managers. The series qualified for CEU hours for herbicide applicators which supports the local workforce that provides vegetation management.
- New resources were added to the Gorse Action Group website and a minor revamp of the website’s structure was completed to better consolidate resources and add flexibility as projects evolve.
- Curry Watersheds Partnership submitted an application to the Western Landscape Scale Restoration FY21 grant program funded by USDA Forestry Grants and was awarded \$300,000 to help match ongoing efforts to control gorse in the Elk River & Port Orford watersheds.



Summer intern, Hunter Grove, with gorse that was stump cut and treated with herbicide on Waterboard property.

Photo Credit: Lucy Allison

LOOKING AHEAD: 2021 – 2022

Gorse remains a high priority and unrelenting threat in the state among other noxious weeds. Currently, partners are actively seeking funds for Johnson Creek gorse control, including County Park and Rosa Road, and are in the process of securing funds to control gorse on the Whiskey Run Beach area with Bandon Dunes and Coos County as potential collaborators. Curry Watersheds Partnership also secured over \$230,000 in February 2021 from the Oregon Department of Forestry Partnership & Planning Program utilizing Oregon Legislative Emergency Board (E-Board) funding, which will be used for on-the-ground gorse control to reduce wildfire risk and create strategic fuel breaks by reducing mature gorse in the WUI and along roads. With additional funding that was awarded from federal partners, ODA plans to rapidly expand gorse thrips project activities in 2021. Immediate next steps include making additional updates to the Gorse Action Group website and putting the E-board funding towards gorse treatments on cliffs using rappelling crews with ODOT and Oregon State Parks. Gorse Action Group partners will also continue working on mapping outlier populations of gorse and engaging additional landowners.