



# San Luis Obispo Weed Management Area

Seasonal Newsletter - January 2022

“To better serve the SLO WMA community in efforts to educate, coordinate, promote & implement special and ongoing pest management projects.”

The County of San Luis Obispo Department of Agriculture/Weights and Measures (SLO CAC).

## SLO CAC Work Updates

### Arroyo Grande Creek Channel Waterway Management Program

In October 2021, SLO CAC provided support to County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works by spot treating a large population of English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) in the Arroyo Grande Creek Channel with herbicide. Public Works is working through a multi-year restoration project in Arroyo Grande Creek to improve native plant species survival and flow capacity of the channel. Below lists the invasive species selected for eradication in this project:

- English Ivy (*Hedera helix*)
- Cape Ivy (*Delairea odorata*)
- Giant Reed (*Arundo donax*)
- Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*)
- Periwinkle (*Vinca major*)
- Common Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*)
- Poison Hemlock (*Conium maculatum*)



@ 2021 Jocelyn Prieto

SLO CAC used Roundup Custom at a rate of 4%, following the Aquatic Pesticide Application Plan. Follow up surveys to the treated area have shown that the October treatment was not sufficient to control the population. Currently, an effort is being made to amend the pesticide plan to allow use of different products on the *H. helix* in the creek.

## *Dittrichia graveolens*, Stinkwort

*Dittrichia graveolens* (stinkwort) is a prevalent weed species in the County of San Luis Obispo. Stinkwort is a nonnative species in California and blooms through the months of September through November. The SLO CAC has surveyed areas with previous alerts of its presence and removed stinkwort where found. Current work has been in the following surrounding areas:

- Airport Road Paso Robles
- HWY 46 Cal Trans Lot
- Buckley
- Hoover
- Santa Fe
- SLO Airport



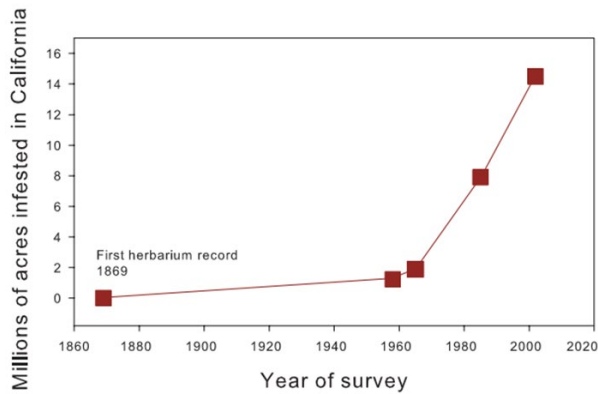
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## Jubata Grass Grant Project

In 2019, the SLO CAC, secured a grant to map, treat, and provide outreach for infestation of *Jubata cortaderia* (jubata grass) in and around the Los Osos Township. Work on the grant project began in July 2020 and is currently nearing completion. During this project, several unknown populations of *J. cortaderia* were discovered in the Los Osos area and mapped. SLO CAC provided outreach to Los Osos homeowners and large landowners who were found to have *J. cortaderia* on their property; as a result of this outreach, many large landholders provided their own treatment or allowed SLO CAC staff to provide treatment to control the *J. cortaderia* discovered. SLO CAC hopes to secure future grant funding to continue work in this area.



@ 2021 Patrick Z. Wall



**Fig. 1. Expansion in California.** A comparison of estimated infestation area in California shows a rapid expansion over the last 50 years (Pitcairn et al. 2006).

@2006 Cal-IPC

Yellow star thistle at spiny stage @2006 Cal-IPC



## Roadside Applications

*Centaurea solstitialis* L. commonly known as yellow star thistle, is one of the most pervasive noxious weed species in the Western United States. Originally brought to California in the 1850's, it is now infesting over 15 million acres of land. In the County of San Luis Obispo, it is commonly found in rangelands, wildlands, and along our roadsides. Yellow star thistle reduces the economic value of rangeland, reduces the biodiversity of wild land ecosystems, depletes soil moisture, and is toxic to some animals.

The SLO CAC controls yellow star thistle on county roads to limit the spread of this invasive plant and improve the economic value of neighboring rangeland. Roadsides are the biggest pathway for yellow star thistle to spread. In fall 2021, SLO CAC surveyed and treated approximately 15.72 acres along 53 miles of roadway on 24 separate locations with Milestone, an herbicide chosen for early season control to provide long residual pre-emergent and post-emergent weed control. Follow up is required on an annual basis as yellow star thistle has a seedbank of approximately three years. Controlling yellow star thistle is an ongoing project that requires persistence and diligence but is worthwhile due to the negative impact this weed has on the county.

## Additional Fall Work Summary

**Artichoke Thistle:** Surveyed and treated or hand removed approximately 20.39 acres on 8 separate locations.

**Cape Ivy:** Surveyed and treated or hand removed 0.64 acres on one location.

**Castor Bean:** Surveyed and treated or hand removed 0.29 acres on 5 locations.

## Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District Update

### Oceano Dunes – Management of invasives, restoration, and dust control for the Oceano Dunes SVRA

#### Restoration:

- Completed 24 vegetation cover surveys alongside State Park Employees.
- Seed collection is 53% complete for the season, next priority species; Mock Heather, California Aster, and Dune Mint.
- Working to clean seed.

### Dunes Protected Areas - Priority areas designated by the Dunes Collaborative for restoration of dune scrub habitat and endangered species habitat (Nipomo Mesa Lupine and Giant Coreopsis)

- 2 final treatments at Phillips 66 (Aerial/Manual) planned for Jan/Feb 2022 for the Lupine DPA
- Aug 23-27, Sep 1, 7, 8, 16, Oct 13--Parks & RCD hand removed veldt grass to historic population locations.

### PG&E Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan Mitigation funding

- Sweet Springs MSS proposal canceled due to lack of MCAS interest
- Developing MSS habitat enhancement proposal for Morro Dunes State Park sandspit

### HSP Demo at Chorro Creek Ranch

- \*\*Re-staked the site, collected soil samples on 10/11/2021
- Had successful first outreach event “Chorro Ranch Virtual Field Day”
- All year 1 data has been analyzed- no difference between the treatment plots so far.

## California State Parks Update

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife contributions by PG&E had provided local grants to help remove ice plant. These grants also provided for native plant species plantings and fire fuel load reductions.
- The herbicide products “WOW – Wack Out Weeds” and “EcoMight Pro” herbicides, had glyphosate added to the ingredients after it had stated it was organic. The California Department of Pesticide Regulations has since pulled the products from sale.

## *Ononis alopecuroides*, Foxtail Restharrow

### **Foxtail Restharrow, *Ononis***

*alopecuroides*, is a woody annual (family Fabaceae) whose current distribution in California is limited to one location in San Luis Obispo County. It is listed as a CDFA “A” rated noxious weed. The Mediterranean native was found in a pasture in Southern San Luis Obispo County in 1999. It likes disturbed places, such as fields and pastures, as well as grasslands and oak woodlands. This the only known population in the continental U.S. and is almost completely eradicated. It has the potential to be a highly aggressive invader, forming dense stands that outcompetes native plants. Seeds are viable for over twenty years. Though it has a pretty flower, it is from northern and central Europe and is considered very weedy, thus the name “restharrow”, because dense stands can stop (rest) a horse drawn plow (harrow). Currently SLO CAC treatment is annual hand pulling and the population is down from about one-half acre in 1999 to this year when three plants were hand removed.



Photo Credit: Joseph DiTomaso

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## Events

Next WMA meeting will be on  
January 19, 2022, 1-2:30pm