

Trees, Brush, Noxious Weeds and Vegetation Committee

Noxious Weeds in Surfside

In August 2012 Laura Frasier called me and asked if I could help with some noxious weed complaints. I went to area of complaint to observe what was happening. There was gorse on several lots. Since the tree committee and compliance officer had worked with the county noxious weed board in the past I called Mike Nordin, the Director of the Pacific County Weed Board.

He came to Surfside along with Mike Johnson with the Pacific Conservation District and did a quick survey of the Southern part of Surfside. In a tree committee meeting we discussed what we could do to help inform the members. We started running information in the weekender about noxious weeds. In April of 2013 I called Pacific County Vegetation Board and made contact with Jeff Nesbit, their new board director. Since that time, Jeff has been to three tree committee meetings. He and I made one assessment of Surfside together. We did talk about grants and as of August 9, 2013 there is no grant money available. The county is trying to get a matching grant program but it is for gorse only and for individual property owners only.

Myself and another committee member went out over a three day period and did a survey from 300 St on the South to 357th St on the North and from J place to Upland ownership line to the West. There are noxious weeds on 500-600 of the approximately 1800 lots we looked at. This about one third. They are gorse, Scotch Broom, Tansy Ragwort and Butterfly Bush. This survey was done by driving all the streets. If we were to do a more in depth survey I feel certain there would be more.

In talking with Mr. Nessbitt we learned that the best way to slow the growth or try to kill it is to spray it with a chemical after cutting it down. This is for both gorse and Scotch Broom. Tansy if found in small patches can be hand pulled, placed in plastic bags and disposed of. If it is in a larger area it will probably need to be sprayed. Butterfly bush is a noxious weed that is also classified as an ornamental. If not properly maintained this plant can spread rather quickly. Gorse and Scotch Broom, after cutting and treating should be left to set for a short time then cut into small enough pieces to be put into plastic bags. Peninsula Sanitation will only accept it treat this way. The chemicals that the county suggests using must be applied by a licensed, certified person. The products that you buy at the local nursery do not have the same effectiveness as those used by the county. The other method of disposal suggested by Jeff is to burn. Burning does not destroy the seeds so should be done prior to seeds setting on the plant. This is something that can take many years to get under control.

In the past couple of years we have had members cutting their trees to the ground. These lots are now a new area for noxious weeds to grow. The seeds from these weeds can be carried by the wind, water, animals or people. This is something that will be very costly to the members and could be costly to the HOA. My question is "Does anyone have any good suggestions that could help the members out?"

If you have any questions or suggestion please contact Larry Raymer 360-665-2685

Submitted by committee chairperson, Larry Raymer