

Gorse eradication methods

Control: "Control of gorse can be considered in two stages. First is the control of established plants. Second is the control of new plants emerging from seeds that may last more than 30 years in the soil. The most effective control program usually includes a combination of herbicides, burning and cultivation or mowing. Establishing competitive pasture species, forest trees or other crops helps resist gorse invasion as well as other weeds. When using herbicides, it is crucial to thoroughly wet the foliage. The best time to apply herbicides is after bloom drop, but applications at other times usually give good control also." (William et al., 2000 – from the 2000 PNW Weed Control Handbook).

Response to Herbicide: Several herbicides are recommended for gorse control, including Garlon 3A, Garlon 4, Vine X, Crossbow and Round-up.

Response to Mechanical Methods: Hand pulling - effective on seedlings and plants up to 1 meter or so tall, and before seed production. Seedlings are easiest to remove after rain, when the whole root system is removed. Hand hoeing – effective when gorse is growing with beneficial vegetation nearby. Hoeing, and cutting off the top of plants will expose them to the sun, drying them out. Cutting – before seed production will prevent further dispersal, but the plants will resprout from the stump. Cutting is a necessary step when working with large plants, to remove the above ground portion. Hand-digging – effective on small infestations, is one way to control a plant the capability to resprout from the roots. Chopping, Cutting or Mowing – an option for flat areas. Several mowings may be necessary to deplete root reserves; if only one cut, it is recommended to use before flower production. Cutting is recommended before herbicide application. A cut gorse plant will resprout from the crown in greater density if herbicides are not applied. (Hoshovsky 1989).

Burning: Burn permits required. Please contact the City of Brookings Fire Department at 541/469-1141 for additional information.