

Working Together for Noxious Weed Control in Santa Barbara County

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Caltrans vegetation control specialists and advisors implemented an Integrated Vegetation Management Program that consists of seven distinct methods for vegetation control. We must consider the correct method or combination of methods for each situation. In this presentation we will focus on four of the seven methods, manual, mechanical, cultural and chemical.

When choosing to partner with others for noxious weed control Caltrans must take into account many factors. Safety for our maintenance workers, safety of the traveling public and effectiveness of the chosen methods.

In the development of the Pampas Grass removal project on highway 225, Santa Barbara County. All of these factors were met:

- * Sight distance was restored
- * Drainage has been reestablished
- * The target pest is under control
- * Native habitat has returned and native species restored

The Arroyo Burro Watershed Enhancement Project would not have been possible without all the partners involved. Caltrans, Santa Barbara County Ag., County of Santa Barbara Coastal Resource Enhancement Fund, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, Elings Park, Channel Islands Restoration, Enviroscaping, Darlene Chirman, Santa Barbara Audubon Society and Growing Solutions.

The mulch project along highway 154 at the highway 101 on ramps achieved our desired goals:

- * Target pests are under control- Lambs quarter, Marestail, Italian thistle, Puncture vine.
- * Sight distance was restored
- * Decrease in chemical applications
- * Homeless population relocated
- * Sidewalk is now fully usable by the public

Caltrans has limited resources and with the use of the large mulch blowing system and our partnering with California Conservation Corp personnel this area is now safe for

maintenance personnel, pedestrians and the traveling public while being aesthetically pleasing.

Our future partnership with Vandenberg Air Force Base contractors will be a challenge but when the restoration is complete there will be acres of wildlands restored to its native inhabitants.

Remember early detection and rapid response to identified pests will make the treatment and control easier and less costly.

Caltrans has taken a new approach when thinking "**Alternatives**" we now "**ALTER**" to "**NATIVES**" join us in combating exotic species.