



Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District

R-16-21
Meeting 16-05
March 09, 2016

AGENDA ITEM 7

AGENDA ITEM

Ten-year Status Report and Recommended Continuation of a Slender False Brome Integrated Pest Management Program

GENERAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Continue the Slender False Brome Program on District preserves and nearby private parcels for an approximate program cost of \$1,250,000 over the next ten years.

SUMMARY

On December 14, 2005 (R-05-122), the District's Board of Directors approved a ten-year plan to control slender false brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*, 'SFB') from the Thornewood Open Space Preserve and the surrounding Woodside neighborhoods. Four major tasks were approved under this work plan: 1) reclassification of SFB as a noxious weed by the state of California; 2) treatment and monitoring of SFB on District land; 3) treatment and monitoring of SFB on adjacent lands; and 4) pursuit of grants for SFB control. Task 1 was completed in 2006. This progress report will focus on tasks 2 through 4 and recommends an approach for the next ten years. Treatment of SFB has largely been successful; however, the infestation area is larger than originally estimated. The General Manager recommends continuation of the program, estimated to cost \$1,250,000 over the next ten years, with a program focus on treating SFB on District preserves and on properties most likely to infest District preserves, while at the same time encouraging partners to control SFB on other properties.

DISCUSSION

Population size and range of SFB

Increased efforts at detection have revealed that SFB is more widespread throughout San Mateo County and the Santa Cruz Mountains than originally believed. In 2009, the total net area of land infested with SFB was believed to be 100 acres (40 acres of District land and 60 acres of adjacent private lands). The estimated population of SFB is now known to be at least 250 acres (75 acres of District land and 175 acres of adjacent private lands and other land management public agencies). However, the full extent of population size and range on lands not owned or managed by the District is unknown.

Treatment and monitoring of SFB on District land

As of December 2014, the SFB program has been incorporated into the District-wide Integrated Pest Management Program. District management efforts thus far have involved the removal of SFB from woodland areas but have not addressed treatment options for the removal of SFB from sensitive riparian habitats due to ongoing consultation with regulatory agencies for potential impacts to California red-legged frog.

Treatment and monitoring of SFB on adjacent private lands

Since 2009, 103 property owners have had their land surveyed for SFB; approximately 200 infested acres have been treated between one and six times, and a total of \$173,114 has been issued in reimbursements to those property owners. Monitoring on private parcels has led to a greater understanding of treatment efficacy on the population of SFB. Multiple grant funds (2008 through 2011) were directed toward controlling SFB on private property, but these funds are no longer available.

Collaboration with Other Agencies

In the early stages of the outbreak of SFB, the San Mateo Weed Management Area working group assisted in the monitoring and mapping efforts, as well as the education and outreach of the general public using state funding. In 2011, funding for the CDFA Noxious Weed Program was eliminated from the California State budget. At this time, two other public agencies have known populations of SFB: County of San Mateo and Redwood National and State Parks. Observations and mapping is shared among agencies and the general public through the web-based database Calflora (www.calflora.org). The RCD has received funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to address SFB infestations in the La Honda area, which is currently the only source of governmental funding for SFB control besides the District's funding.

Recommendation for Continuation of the Program

Staff recommends that the future SFB program on District lands continue until regrowth no longer occurs. Treatment at creekside areas in Thornewood and La Honda Creek OSPs is already permitted and will be implemented this fiscal year. Treatment at creekside areas District-wide will be implemented once the Fish and Wildlife recovery permit has been received (anticipated in Spring of 2016) and as staff capacity allows.

Staff recommends that the future program also continue to focus on treating infested properties immediately adjacent to District lands and parcels which otherwise have the potential to infest District preserves. Use of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District IPM Program's modeling for invasion pathways will determine priority properties.

FISCAL IMPACT*Cost of Program since Inception*

When the District Board of Directors approved the ten-year plan for SFB in 2005, it was estimated to cost \$1.2 million. As of December 1, 2015, the entire program is estimated to have cost the District \$809,500, which includes staff time.

Existing San Mateo County RCD Contract

The District contracted with the San Mateo RCD in March 2014 (see R-14-48) to implement SFB control on private lands with potential to infest District lands. This contract was for a total amount not to exceed \$311,866 and \$191,500 is remaining on this contract to continue work through March 31, 2017. These funds will be proposed in the Natural Resources Department Budget for FY2016-17.

Continuation of Program Costs

Yearly costs to control SFB on District lands is estimated to cost \$25,000 per year. Control on private properties, administered by the RCD, will amount to an additional \$100,000 per year. The RCD will continue to pursue additional grant funding for this work. Funding for this

program will be requested in future year budgets to continue the services outlined in this report. The total cost of this program for 10 years is anticipated to be \$1,250,000.

BOARD COMMITTEE REVIEW

On January 19, 2016 the Ten-year Status Report and Recommended Continuation of a Slender False Brome Integrated Pest Management Program was brought before the Planning and Natural Resource Committee. The Committee recommends to the full Board of Directors a continuation of the Slender False Brome Program on District preserves and nearby private parcels for an approximate program cost of \$1,250,000 over the next ten years.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice was provided as required by the Brown Act. Notices were also sent to persons requesting notice of resource management activities and to property owners and residents near Thornewood, El Corte de Madera, and La Honda Creek Open Space Preserves.

CEQA COMPLIANCE

The continuation of the SFB control program is covered under CEQA by the Final Environmental Impact Report for the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District IPM Program approved in December 2014.

NEXT STEPS

If program continuation is approved by the Board of Directors, next steps will include:

- Yearly treatment and its potential environmental impacts will be evaluated as part of the District-wide Integrated Pest Management Program.
- Staff will investigate and implement additional Integrated Pest Management techniques and mapping efforts.
- Staff will investigate a Memorandum of Understanding with the San Mateo County RCD for a long-term commitment to oversee work with private property owners on parcels which could potentially infest District lands.
- Staff will continue to encourage and develop partnerships with other agencies to address SFB infestations, which do not pose a threat to District lands.
- Provide assistance to the San Mateo RCD to pursue grant funding for SFB management.

Attachment(s)

1. Slender False Brome Project Area

Responsible Department Head:

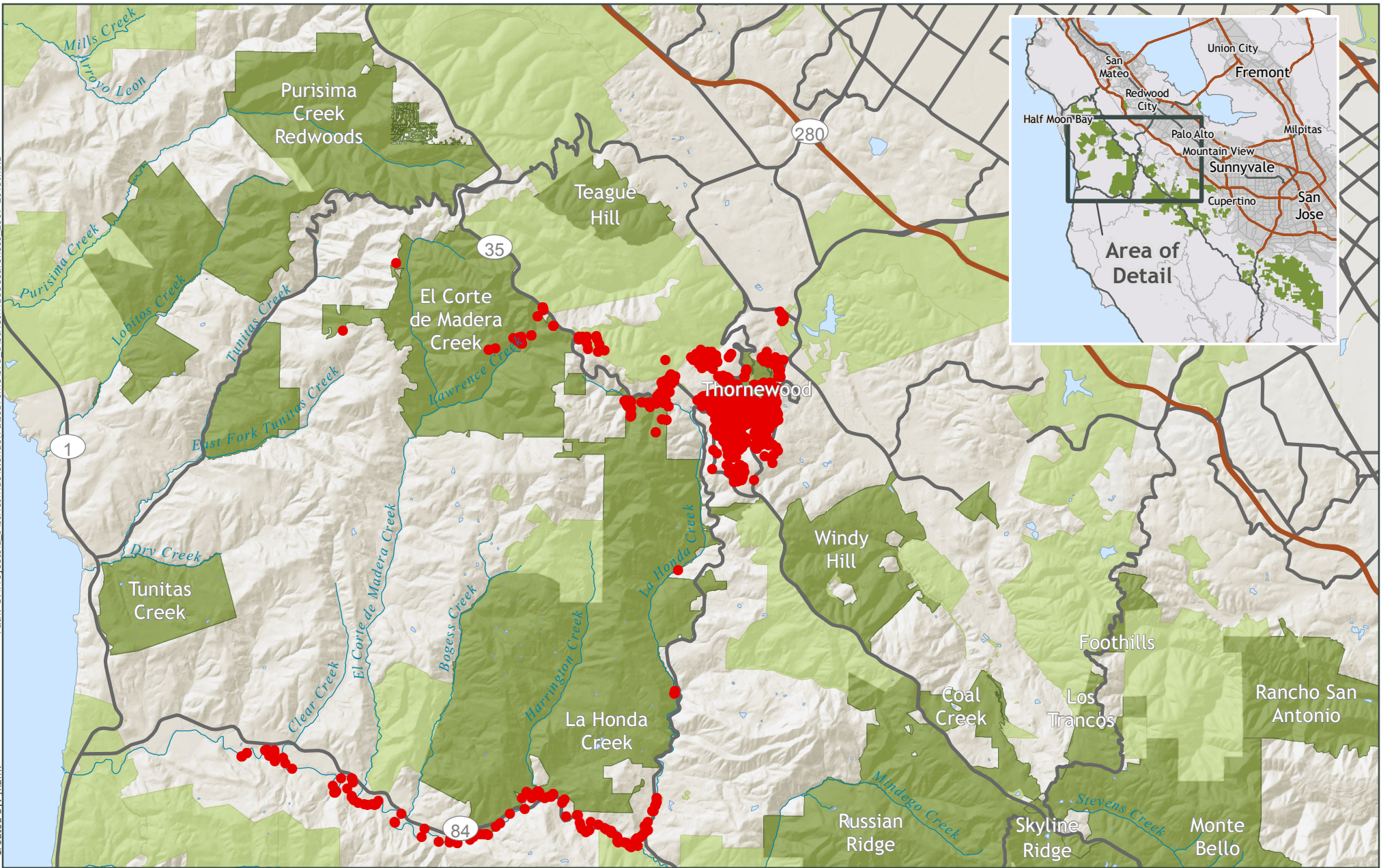
Kirk Lenington, Natural Resources Manager

Prepared by:

Coty Sifuentes-Winter, IPM Coordinator, Natural Resources





Graphics prepared by:

Jamie Hawk, GIS Technician



Slender false brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*)*

*Excludes Saratoga Gap Open Space Preserve

-  MROSD Preserves
-  Other Protected Lands
-  Private Property
-  Slender false brome observation (2009 - 2013)

Midpeninsula Regional
Open Space District
(MROSD)



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January, 2016