

22.7.2010 Smoke watch

Sun Jul 25, 2010 2:41 am

Perth burns continue. This smoke can be seen coming into Launceston. It would seem gorse is being burnt and the smoke is not primarily coming from wood heaters. The burning of any gorse where no useful purpose is served and where it is not intended to pursue the eradication process further is foolish ...

Every time mature gorse is fired, more gorse is brought to life ...-Gorse National Best Practice Manual

An experienced cut and painter's approach Greg Taylor, from the Cradle Coast NRM in northwest Tasmania, has overseen more than 5000 hours of gorse control on The Nut, at Stanley.

Greg has developed a highly efficient cut and paint method based on this experience. He cuts with secateurs and a bow saw. He says that chainsaws and brush cutters are uncomfortable to work around (noisy), hazardous and exhausting to carry on difficult terrain.³⁷ In practice, a bow saw is faster than an expert-operated chainsaw over large areas. Secateurs deal with stems too small for the saw, so loppers aren't needed. Greg paints with a 450 ml "Plaspak Selectaspray" trigger spray bottle. The bottle is reliable, doesn't leak and holds the right amount of herbicide to use in a session between breaks. The herbicide used is a glyphosate 360 g/L product mixed at 1:1 with water, with red dye added. Greg stresses the importance of wearing safety glasses. He uses two pairs of "Nitrilite" gloves, which offer protection against spines and herbicide.

Greg has trialled different ways of getting rid of the cut plants. He said that burning off the trash was possibly the biggest mistake he made in trying to control gorse on The Nut. The fire promoted massive seed germination, which required a second round of treatment. Greg now deals with cut plants by piling them back on their stumps, where they form a mulch which suppresses new gorse seedlings. Greg observes that fire is a risky tool to use on cut gorse. Choosing to burn cut gorse makes site management more complex, involves more work and generates emissions.

Using fire to remove cut and paint trash from native vegetation generated smoke, triggered massive seed germination and necessitated a second round of treatment- GNBPN



Launceston is in about the middle of the photo taken at 11.22 am from Grindelwald. I was in this smoke!

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