

Closeout Report October 2023: Q2175066
Dune Restoration at Montaña de Oro State Park

This final report is for the dune restoration project at Montaña de Oro State Park to remove invasive iceplant on 171 acres of barrier dunes. As of this final report, we are considering all work for project Q2175066 complete, and all remaining funds relinquished back to CDFW.

Following the 2022 western snowy plover nesting season, our contractor was able to treat all 171 acres of iceplant on the northern most plots of the Natural Preserve. This completed the first ever comprehensive iceplant control effort of all 660 acres of State Park owned dunes within the Natural Preserve at Montaña de Oro State Park. State Park staff has been out spot treating iceplant in previously treated areas and mapping the extent of iceplant remaining following contractor work.

State Park staff conducted snail monitoring prior to herbicide treatments under USFWS Recovery Permit TE082237-7. The presence of Morro Shoulderband snails throughout the project site was documented and mapped for future reporting to CDFW and USFWS.

In between the winter 2022 treatment and now, State Parks has been securing additional funding to continue the treatment of iceplant across the entire 660 acres. To date have been secured \$235,595.10 from our Natural Resources Division and an additional \$175,000.00 from PG&E to continue the control efforts in the dunes. With this new round of funding, we will be able to re-treat the entire project site. Drone imagery and site visits have identified many areas of iceplant that are returning post treatment and continue to expand to greater than 1% infestation. The population has been significantly reduced from original infestation levels, but further treatment is needed to prevent reinfestation. In addition to State Parks funding, the Morro Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) has secured funding to treat the City of Morro Bay owned northern portion of the sandspit consisting of approximately 190 acres. This collaboration will further reduce the likelihood of re-infestation on the Natural Preserve. The NEP will conduct treatments this November and December. We will be going out to bid later this year with a predicted re-treatment date of October 2024 through February 2025.

This grant was \$64,956.85 for the project duration. Diverse Pest Management Inc was awarded a contract for \$59,330.00, leaving \$5626.85 unspent. That portion of the funding we will relinquish back into the CDFW EEF program for another grantee. The project agreement indicated our match would be \$62,042.48. To date we have allocated \$62,680 for staff treatment and monitoring of the project with treatments continuing until March 1st, 2024, when plover season resumes.

Following this text, you will find photos from the project. The Morro Dunes Natural Preserve is one of the crowning jewels of our District, State Parks, and the central coast. The work to restore the area to a naturally functioning ecosystem free of iceplant is one of our top priorities and the efforts to date show great progress. Thank you for the funding.

Closeout Report October 2023: Q2175066
Dune Restoration at Montaña de Oro State Park



Freshly treated iceplant with the estuary and several of the morros in the background



Morro Dunes Natural Preserve with Morro Rock and Cayucos in the distance. Dead iceplant post treatment is noticeably grey.

Closeout Report October 2023: Q2175066
Dune Restoration at Montaña de Oro State Park



Morro Dunes Natural Preserve with Morro Bay estuary and several of the morros in the background.



Early October on the Natural Preserve looking north. It's a magical place that deserves to be free of iceplant.

