

**Return of the Natives**  
Salinas River State Beach Dune Restoration Project  
April 2001-May 2003 Report



*Objectives Met:*

**April 2001 - August 2001**

Initial GPS mapping of native plant and iceplant populations was completed by CSUMB student Amanda Topp, RON Staff and Initial Project Director Jon Detka and High School Monterey Academy of Oceanic Science Intern Jon Johnson.

Plant inventory and herbarium specimens were collected by Summer Youth Employment Interns and archived in the Watershed Institute herbarium. A site inventory of plant species was created by Seaside High School intern Josh Deese. In addition M.A.O.S. student Katie Payne created interpretive takeaways for R.O.N. teachers to use. (both are attached and available for viewing at <http://watershed.csumb.edu/ron/html/mosslanding.html>)

Seed collection from Unit 1 site was initiated in October by Jon Detka and Summer Youth Employment Program Interns.

Removal of iceplant from around existing native species beginning at northern edge of site was initiated by Jon Detka.



### **September 2001 - December 2001**

Project Director Laura Lienk and Jon Detka led a workshop on the "Restoration Cycle" curriculum to prepare teachers and students for their dune out-planting experience.

Jon Detka and Moss Landing Marine Lab (MLML) staff assisted State Parks eradicating approximately 2800 square meters of iceplant, *C. edulis*.

School greenhouse propagation of dune species for out-planting on dunes involved three Return of the Natives school greenhouses and 320 students from Salinas and Castroville area schools. 2000 native dune plants (*E. latifolium* and *L. arboreus*) were grown for re-vegetation efforts. Due to our inability to acquire a seed collection permit until October 2001 and the resulting late sowing, these were not suitable for planting until February of 2002.

### **January 2002 - February 2002**

Two school planting days were completed. 120 students from local area schools planted 840 native dune plants from MLML plant stock.

*Wednesday, January 30 (Salinas River State Beach Dunes)*

*10:00-12:00 60 students from Kate Foster, Ohlone School*

*Friday, February 1 (Salinas River State Beach Dunes)*

*9:00-11:00 60 Students from Aida Ramirez, Castroville School.*

The 4 remaining school days postponed due to the State Parks concern about the negative effects of “trampling” by student attendees.<sup>1</sup>

Plant survivability study was postponed due to lack of plant material installed and high mortality due late season planting and unexpected low rainfall.<sup>2</sup>

Interpretive and warning signage designed by CSUMB student Paul Watters, editing, printing and installation currently in progress.

### **March 2002 - May 2002**

Drew Ready, Return of the Natives Project Coordinator took the reins as project manager.

Infestations of ripgut brome, burr clover, thistle, wild radish and other annual weeds were hand pulled by RON and MLML staff.

A GIS/GPS map update of site and major weed eradication areas were marked and area eradicated measured. It is approximated that an additional 300 square meters of weeds were eradicated. These weeds were in small patches and too small to GPS.

Drew Ready attended the Jepson Herbarium Workshop in California Coastal Dune Ecology, Restoration, and Flora led by restoration ecologist and dune restoration authority Andrea Pickart.

We will be continuing work on this project through the end of the year in attempt to meet our original objectives; our plan follows.

### **June 2002 - Sept 2002**

Interpretive signage was designed by three CSUMB Students in cooperation with RON Staff. Signage is going under review with State Parks for a potential future installation.

Remaining plants were transplanted to larger “d-pot” style containers for later installation by RON Staff and High School Interns.

### **Sept 2002 – May 2003**

On **January 6<sup>th</sup>** Peter Slattery and Sue Shaw oversaw an inmate crew of 17 as well a paid crew of 6. Holes were dug for Bush lupine planting adjacent to the beach access trail.

On **January 7<sup>th</sup>** we had an inmate crew of 17 as well a paid crew of 5. 900 Bush lupine were planted and Mock heather seed was scattered along the back dune.

On **January 8<sup>th</sup>** we had an inmate crew of 17 as well a paid crew of 5. Fences around the Bush lupine were installed to deter rabbit damage.

On **January 9<sup>th</sup>** we had an inmate crew of 17 as well a paid crew of 5. More rabbit fences were installed, 10 1gallon Beach sagewort, and Coast buckwheat were planted.

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On **January 10<sup>th</sup>** 6 crew planted 100 Gum plant and 300 Bush lupines.

On **January 27<sup>th</sup>** 6 crew planted 100 Bush lupine, 200 Beach burr, 100 Lizard tail and 100 Gum plant.

On **January 28<sup>th</sup>** 5 crew planted 100 Silver bush lupine, 100 Beach burr, 100 Bush lupine, and 100 Coast buckwheat.

On **January 30<sup>th</sup>** 6 crew planted 150 Silver bush lupine and 150 yellow bush lupine.

On **January 31<sup>st</sup>** 3 crew watered all recently planted dune plants.

On **February 3<sup>rd</sup>** 7 crew watered dune plants and maintained rabbit fences.

On **February 10<sup>th</sup>** 5 crew maintained rabbit fences.

**Saturday, March 1<sup>st</sup>** we had 3 staff and 8 volunteers at our Salinas River State Beach Planting Day.

On the rear dune on the ocean side of the paved trail, we planted 105 Coast buckwheat (in proposed rear dune 'patches'), 120 Gum plant and 40 Mock heather and pulled Ripgut, Thistle and Bermuda-buttercup.

Coast Buckwheat 'habitat patches' were planted in 6 groups of ~17 plants per group. The perimeter of each group was then flagged with pink pin flags.

Planted (3/1/03)  
120 Gum plant  
40 Mock heather  
105 Coast buckwheat

**On March 8<sup>th</sup>**, our second public planting day at the Salinas River State Beach Sandholdt Road site we had 4 staff and 6 volunteers.

On the rear dune we continued planting Gum Plant and Mock Heather and installed and pinflagged the remaining Coast Buckwheat (*E. latifolium*) 'habitat patches'. We also planted Gum plant along the channel side of the site where ice-plant had been previously pulled along the river channel.

Planted (3/8/03):

80 Gum plant  
48 Mock heather  
48 Coast buckwheat

**On April 17<sup>th</sup>** 2 staff spent four hours each hand pulling Ripgut brome, Oxalis and Thistle.

**On April 22<sup>nd</sup>** 1 Staff spent four hours hand pulling Filaree adjacent to the beach access trail.

**On May 6**, 1 Staff spent three hours hand pulling Filaree adjacent to the beach access trail.

**On May 13**, 1 Staff spent two hours hand pulling Bull thistle, Mustard, and Radish along the East most perimeter of the site.