

Goliad County Groundwater Conservation District News

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BRUSH MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

GCGCD is charged with conserving, protecting, preserving and managing the groundwater in Goliad County. As part of this charge the District educates the citizens of Goliad County of ways to conserve water throughout the county through publication of articles in the local newspaper and through educational programs. Brush control is one of the areas where the District can help to educate the citizens of the county. Brush control is extensively practiced in the county and the practice is encouraged by the Farm Service Program and GCGCD. Since the Texas Legislature has charged water districts with conserving water, the GCGCD would like to encourage landowners to consider using the Individual Plant Treatment or IPT to control huisache and mesquite as well as mixed species of brush. By controlling brush encroachment this frees up water for grass as well as recharge of underground water. Goliad County has a large acreage of semi-open pastures that have small brush plants popping up; this is where IPT comes in as an easy, inexpensive and environmentally responsible method for control of unwanted brush.

Texas Agricultural Extension Service has a plan called "BRUSH BUSTERS" for the control of small as well as large brush plants, using the IPT method. It is a simple practice that can be done through a large part of the year as long as plants are actively growing. You can spray for as long of time as you have, come back next weekend, see brown plants, spray what you missed and continue on. This is a practice that is found to be very flexible time wise. We would recommend that you start out on small plants to see how the plan works then move to larger plants as you gain confidence.

Brush Control is a part of the State Water Plan as seen in this quote from the Texas State Water Plan for 2012. "Brush control and other land stewardship techniques have been recommended for many areas in the western half of the state. Removing ash juniper and other water consuming species has been shown in studies to restore spring flow and improve surface water runoff in some cases. However, since water produced by this strategy during a drought when little rainfall occurs is difficult to quantify, it is not often recommended as a strategy to meet municipal needs. Brush control is recommended to supply approximately 19,000 acre-feet per year in all decades between 2010 and 2060."

The websites below can be valuable sources of information about brush control or management:

www.tsswcb.texas.gov/en/brushcontrol

www.fsa.usda.gov

www.nrcs.usda.gov

www.agrilifeextension.tamu.edu