

## LANDSCAPE PROFILE

### ROSE HILLS

Oakwood's 600 burials a year pale in comparison to Rose Hills Memorial Park, which conducts about 30 services a day. Rose Hills is one of the largest—if not the largest—cemeteries in the country with 400 acres of lawn, 2,400 undeveloped acres and 20 entrances. The Whittier, Calif., cemetery has enough acreage to last another 175 years.

"John Gregg, the founder, used to tell us he had a dream," says gardening foreman Joe Hernandez. "He wanted to make this the biggest mortuary in the country."

Gregg passed away in 1959, but his dream lives on. Rose Hills conducted its 200,000th burial last fall.

"I enjoy the job," notes Hernandez, who has been at Rose Hills since 1958. "This is an entirely different ballgame than most landscape management. You have to be very careful what you say to the public and you have to be a little more respectful.

"People who come here are in a different frame of mind; they're not here for fun. But you get used to it like anything else."

The rose garden for which the cemetery is named contains 7,000 flowers. In addition, each of four churches have gardens, there is a Japanese garden and a garden at the Memorial Chapel.

"Roses do real well here," Hernandez observes. "But in April and May, it occasionally gets overcast and we have to fight mildew; in July and August we're fighting mites."

Most of the landscape is bermudagrass and kikuyugrass, though some poa annua exists. Grass is cut at 1¼ inches. The kikuyu gives Hernandez headaches.

"We tried to kill it out with Roundup," he says. "It seems like you burn the area out, but the darn stuff comes back."

Trimec and Mecomec are also Hernandez favorites. They are used for clover control. "I try and stay away from the stuff you need a permit for," he says.

Dallisgrass used to be a problem, but no more. "We were the first to use MSMA 20 years ago," remembers Hernandez, "but now we find that Roundup is just as good."

Rose Hills employs 20 landscape



Above, the Rose Hills mausoleum, which features one of four gardens on the 400 acres of lawn. There are 2,400 undeveloped acres and 20 entrances at the Whittier, Calif., cemetery.



For 28 years, Joe Hernandez has roamed the almost 3,000 acres at Rose Hills cemetery.

maintenance personnel, including regular crews for gopher control, tree maintenance, rose garden maintenance, and hand watering. ("Most of my boys have been here more than 20 years," he says. "My lead man has been here 30 years.") An additional 60 contracted workers of United Park Services help care for the cemetery's landscape.

Before contracting landscape maintenance to United Park Services, Rose Hills used seven-gang mowers. Now, it's strictly a few Locke walk-behinds and 30-inch Promasters, plus some 3-hp hand edgers and Weed Eater string trimmers.

Hernandez began as a temporary gardener/mower at the cemetery.

"I figured the Army was going to catch me," he recalls. "But my wife caught me first."

Mary Helen, his bride of 28 years, saw a career for her new husband. She visited Fullerton Junior College and registered Joe for horticulture courses. "I took the entrance exam and enrolled," Joe says. "Once I took the identification course, I really got interested. It snowballed. I went to night classes for 13 years, two nights a week."

His favorite task is visiting nurseries to buy specimens.

"I'm on the freeway a lot," he admits. "I look for plants ahead of time and like to spread my business around."

—Jerry Roche

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## LANDSCAPE PROFILE

### HILLCREST/WEST LAWN

The policeman walked into the office and solemnly announced, "You're under arrest."

There must be some mistake, Hans Bross thought. But he looked out his door and saw his foreman with a camera. He knew it wasn't a mistake, just a practical joke.

His crime? Showing too many pictures of his grandchildren.

It was all to raise money for the American Cancer Society.



Park super Hans Bross.

You have to have a sense of humor to work in a cemetery, Bross says.

Bross had visited his father's grave at Hillcrest Cemetery in Omaha, Neb., for years. As the owner of a landscape business, which he had inherited from his father, he always noticed the poor quality turf and the trees in desperate need of pruning.

When he tired of his business, he answered a blind ad in the local paper, and soon became park superintendent at Hillcrest and West Lawn.

"He (the general manager) asked me if I had any qualms about working in a cemetery," Bross says. "I never had given it any thought. I had a bit of a misgiving that it would be a boring job. But I've been here 11 years and I haven't been bored yet."

The two cemeteries total 185 acres and are divided only in that flat markers are used at Hillcrest, while upright monuments mark graves at West Lawn. A crew of 10 full-time and about five part-time in

the summer maintains both sites.

The biggest challenge? Trees. About 1,500 by Bross's estimate. At one time his crew removed about 40 Austrian pines. A recent wind storm ripped down five trees, including several rare American elms.

Just as a golf course superintendent essentially has every member as boss, a cemetery manager has to answer to every plot owner. And some do complain.

Buffalograss sparks many of the complaints. "It greens up late and turns brown early," he explains, his Paul Newman-blue eyes sparkling. "They think it's a weed. It's scattered. If it were all in one place I could explain it."

The other problem with buffalograss is that the sod can't be saved and replaced after the crew digs a grave. Most of the cemetery is a fungus-resistant blend including Baron, Georgetown, Fylking, and Benson A-34 Kentucky Bluegrass with some fine Manhattan rye. Bross is even growing a small sod field to save on costs of replacements.

When saving the sod, it's easy to pinpoint grub and sod webworm problems. A dose of diazinon or Oftanol usually takes care of it.

Although he's experimented with PGRs around headstones, his crew uses Weedeaters.

Another major concern is staining the stones with fertilizers. After trying several, he settled on slow-release Nitroform-Blue Chip from BFC Chemical or Par-Ex brand.

Only the new sections of the cemetery are irrigated. About 30 acres remain undeveloped, although Bross develops and seeds a new section about every two years, based on plot sales.

Besides his landscape duties, Bross takes care of cremations.

Bross, a member of the Board of Directors of the Nebraska Turfgrass Foundation, says the cemetery industry has a long way to go. "Until this industry starts to recognize that there are professionals out there and will pay accordingly, they're going to have problems," he says.

He'll work for the cause now, but he talks frequently of retiring, taking off in a motor home, and spending winters traveling through the South with his wife Eleanor. Of course they'll always return to Omaha to be near the grandchildren.

Want to see their pictures?—

Heide Aungst

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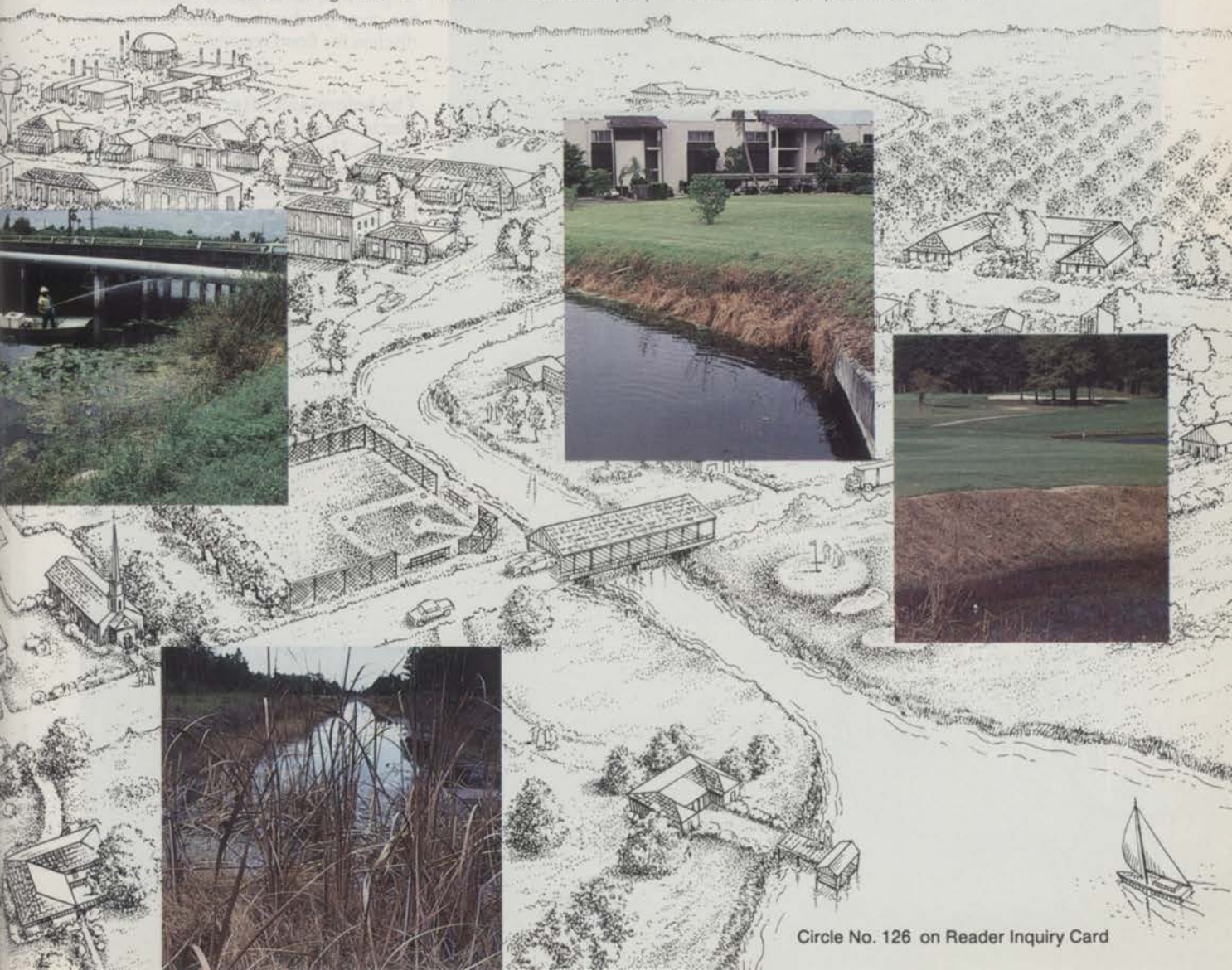
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# CURING WATER WOES

Many methods exist for control of undesirable water weeds. Your choice depends on your individual situation.

**T**he development of populated areas has imposed ever increasing demands on the world's water systems.

The need for clean and open water for drinking, transportation, livestock watering, irrigation, and power has become more significant. In addition, recreation has furthered the need for water systems that are clean and weed free.

Over the years the clearing and farming of land has changed the rate of nutrient runoff to water systems. Fertilizer, sewage, and industrial wastes have thrown natural water bodies out of balance, accelerating the growth of many undesirable aquatic plants.

In addition, the introduction of ex-

otic plants (plants not native to an area that have no natural checks on their growth such as insects, fish, or disease) often out-compete native plants which do have natural growth restraints.

Some plants are essential to the aquatic environment, producing oxygen and serving as food and habitat for fish and other forms of life.

These plants become problems when they interfere with our water usage. Aquatic weeds can clog intake screens and turbines used in the production of hydroelectric power. Weed infestations provide a breeding site for mosquitos and other vectors of human and animal disease.

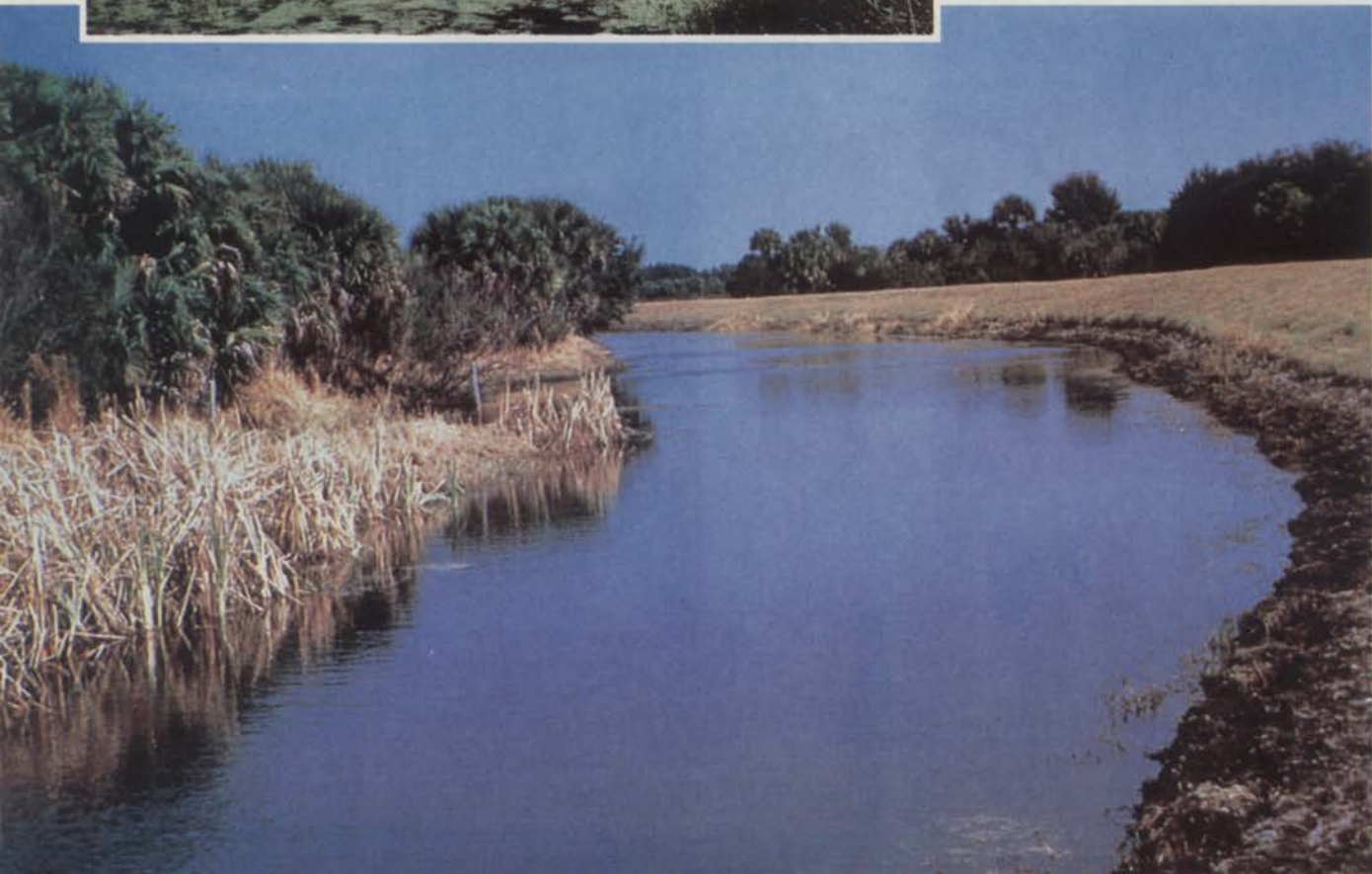
In water reservoirs used for drinking purposes, certain vegetation can impart an undesirable color and/or odor to the water. Navigation lanes can be hindered, even closed.

Recreational activities such as boating, fishing, swimming, and water skiing can be restricted. Weed problems can reduce the value of property and businesses near bodies of water.

Aquatic weeds may also reduce or severely restrict water flow (as much as 90 percent) in irrigation canals needed for crop production, and in drainage ditches for flood control.

*continued on page 50*

**The before-and-after of a south Florida canal treated with Elanco's Sonar. The product is EPA-approved for use as an aquatic herbicide with no restrictions on swimming or fishing.**



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**SUBDUE**

To combat the potential hazards of aquatic weeds and to manage a water system, man has used a variety of methods.

Among those are mechanical removal (dredging), which can be expensive and often inefficient. In many cases, dredging removes important nutrients from the soil, nutrients needed for the growth of desirable plants.

Another mechanical method is weed harvesting, a good temporary solution but lacking in long-term effectiveness.

Weed removal (actually removing the root systems from the soil) can be effective but is laborious.

Mechanical aerators can help in the weed war (see accompanying story).

### **A promising method**

A promising management alternative is chemically treating weeds with aquatic herbicides. (Before considering use of an aquatic herbicide, make sure it is labelled for use in aquatic systems.)

Through technological advances in recent years, many chemicals—including diquat, copper-containing compounds, acrolein, 2,4-D, endothall, and Rodeo—have been developed for aquatic weed control.

Chemical weed management provides long-lasting results and is economical.

Environmental effects on invertebrates and small sport fish with the use of herbicides is often less than the effects with mechanical removal of aquatic vegetation.

Also, certain chemicals may be selective for target species, helping to control the unwanted plants and allowing desirable vegetation to survive.

### **No. 1: identify the weed**

The aquatic manager has several options available for controlling unwanted aquatic vegetation. How does one decide which herbicides to use? Here are some points to consider:

- Of utmost importance is proper identification of the weed species present. It is imperative that the weed species susceptibility coincide with the herbicide selected to insure desired control.

- Be certain the herbicide you choose is approved in your state and that permits are acquired before treatment, if necessary. (Always read the entire herbicide label for use directions, cautions, and precautions before using.)

- Determine the size of the treatment area.

- Purchase the correct chemical and amount needed for the treatment.

- Select the appropriate application equipment.

- Post water use restrictions if necessary and inform the residents of the area to be treated that these restrictions are in effect.

- Always wear protective clothing when handling and applying chemicals.

- Apply the herbicide through approved equipment, delivering an even application.

- Triple-rinse containers in the water and dispose of properly. Store

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*Aquatic weeds (may reduce or severely restrict water flow (as much as 90 percent)....*

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unused chemicals in a safe place in their original containers.

One recent entry into the aquatic weed control market is Elanco's Sonar (fluridone). Sonar is an aquatic herbicide that provides effective management of vascular weeds in ponds, lakes, drainage canals, and rivers. It controls a broad spectrum of floating, emersed, and submersed weeds as well as shoreline grasses at low application rates.

Sonar is a slow-acting herbicide, requiring 30-90 days for the desired management of aquatic weeds. Due to its slow activity, the rate of vegetation decay is slow, there is no sudden depletion of dissolved oxygen in the water, and the potential for a fish kill is minimized.

Sonar is EPA-approved for use as an aquatic herbicide with no restrictions on swimming, fishing, or domestic use.

Monsanto's Rodeo (glyphosate) aquatic herbicide is a non-selective, broad spectrum, post-emergence herbicide that offers control of more than 90 varieties of emerged grasses, broadleaf weeds, and brush growing in and around aquatic sites.

Rodeo is foliar absorbed within a few hours after treatment, creates no residual soil activity, and is biodegradable.

Plant response after application may not be visible on annuals for two to four days while response on perennials usually takes one week.

Rodeo destroys the plant—leaves, stems, and roots.

The timing of treatments and the choice of formulations can allow the user to be somewhat selective in the

types of vegetation he controls. Elanco's Sonar is extremely effective on hydrilla, milfoil, pondweeds, duckweed, cattails, and some grasses.

### **Floating weeds**

The most widely-used aquatic herbicides for floating weeds are 2,4-D, diquat, Rodeo, and Sonar A.S.

Treatments should be made during the active growing season of the weed species for best results.

A foliar application is necessary to control floating weeds. All of these treatments are liquid formulations and even coverage is recommended.

Any type of liquid sprayer that can be calibrated to deliver the herbicide accurately can be used. Always follow the product label for rates and water use restrictions

### **Submersed vegetation**

For treating submersed vegetation, the most commonly used herbicides are endothall products, diquat, granular 2,4-D, Sonar A.S. or Sonar pellets, and copper-based compounds.

The liquid products can be surface applied but a sinking agent should be added for improved efficacy.

Generally speaking, the contact herbicides for submersed vegetation are not very selective, although 2,4-D is more selective than diquat or endothall. Read the entire herbicide label for use directions, cautions, and precautions for each product.

Some of them are quite specific: for example, endothall requires a water temperature over 65 degrees F for best results. When treating for algae, you must choose between chelated copper or copper sulfate. Water pH and hardness are factors to consider when making your decision.

### **Emersed vegetation**

For emersed vegetation, the most commonly used herbicides are Rodeo, diquat, and 2,4-D.

To control emersed vegetation, a foliar application is necessary. Treatments should be made when the wind is calm and no rain is expected.

### **A sensitive environment**

The water system is a uniquely balanced and sensitive environment. When that balance is interrupted, problems almost inevitably surface.

The best way to manage aquatic weed problems is through a licensed, qualified aquatic weed control applicator. He has the expertise to prescribe the best treatment and carry it out properly.

In the case of aquatic weed control, it is best to leave it in the hands of a professional. **WT&T**