

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Cheatgrass Restoration to Native Bunchgrass at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS

Discipline: Natural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Montana
Effective Dates: August 15, 2008 - August 15, 2013
Funding Amount: \$11,564

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: The University of Montana (PI Peter Rice) will provide technical assistance on site preparation, herbicide prescriptions, reseeding methods, experimental design, and response sampling at Grant Kohrs Ranch NHS, Deer Lodge, Montana to assist with control of cheatgrass and restoration of native bunchgrass. The general approach to weed control combines litter reduction, herbicide, and planting treatments. The first step will be to use intensive grazing and/or mowing to reduce the litter layer on up to 10 acres impacted by cheatgrass. Burning may be evaluated as a third litter reduction alternative if this option becomes available with revision to the Fire Management Plan. A specific work plan/treatment schedule will be developed in winter 2008/2009 after a fall 2008 detailed inspection of the site by Rice and Smith. Treatments will be started in spring and fall 2009 and will continue annually, with follow up monitoring to determine weed response to various treatments. This work will continue through summer, 2012, with a final report due in August 2013.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: Treatment of up to 10 acres of cheatgrass and restoration with native bunchgrass; final report of the operational study that will give quantitative results that can demonstrate why control did or did not work and how cheatgrass management can be improved at GRKO and applied to other parks

Keywords: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, University of Montana, cheatgrass, weed control, herbicides, native bunchgrass, restoration