

RM-CESU -Project Report, FY 08

Project Title: Tehabi Intern

Park: Bighorn Canyon NRA

Funding Source: Rocky Mountains CESU Tehabi Funding

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Student: Joseph Parsons

Project Description: Map fences in the Yellowtail Wildlife Habitat Management Area (YWHMA). Prioritize fence for removal. Remove unneeded fence with the help of Montana Conservation Corps crews.

Objectives and Methods: The YWHMA was farmed historically, and a large number of barbed wire fences remain in the area. These fences have deteriorated and are a hazard to wildlife, hunters and their dogs. Joe's project was to map the fences, work with NPS and Wyoming Game and Fish (WDGF) to identify which fences are high priority for removal, which have historic value and which are currently used under grazing plans. Once fences for removal were identified they were removed with help from the Montana Conservation Corps.

Project Results:

More than 12 miles of fence were walked, mapped and classified. WDGF and NPS maps were combined and 1.9 miles of very overgrown fence was removed. YWHMA managers now have a map of fences with condition information and plan for future fence removals.

High water and exceedingly high mosquito populations made this work more complex than expected. When chased from the habitat by floods and mosquitoes Joe also had time to learn about a wide range of park operations, including working on historic structures, helping with resource building construction, seeding natives and treating weeds in a burn, leading an MCC crew in trough installation, GPSing archeological sites, making maps, completing Tehabi objectives and generally helping out with whatever project was at hand.