

Effectiveness of Native Plant Material for Re-vegetation of Decommissioned Roads

(FY2007) Accomplishments

This project (Grant No. 07-CS-11015600-077) is an investigation of the effectiveness of different seed mixes and application rates for re-vegetation of newly decommissioned forest roads in the inland Northwest. The research is proceeding according to schedule, and no deviations from the proposed work plan have been made.

Research accomplishments to date include:

- developing study methods and sampling protocols;
- establishing thirteen field sites on the Kootenai (MT) and Clearwater (ID) National Forests;
- meeting with FS staff from Region 1 and the Kootenai and Clearwater National Forests to ensure that research objectives fit with the needs of the Forest Service's road decommissioning programs;
- conducting pre-treatment (i.e. before road decommissioning) sampling of vegetation, both on the road bed and in adjacent reference sites; and
- installing experimental treatments (see below).

Factors that are being tested with experimental treatments include:

- type of seed mix - three levels: 1) conventional non-native mix, currently used by the FS in Region 1; 2) native graminoid mix; and 3) high-diversity native mix that includes forb, shrub and graminoid species); and
- density of seed application - two levels: 1) high (30lbs/acre) and 2) low (15lbs/acre).

In addition, on the Kootenai NF, an experimental treatment with fertilizer was added at each site. Forest staff are interested in comparing vegetative responses between fertilized and unfertilized plots.

This coming year, we will conduct 1-yr post seeding vegetation surveys, analyze results, and communicate results to FS personnel and the scientific community.



Gus Creek road, Kootenai NF, before (above) and after (below) decommissioning.



Year Awarded: 2007

Project completion: 2009

Report number: 1 of 1

Expenditures:

- FY07 funding: \$63,000
- Expend: \$15,078
- Remaining: \$47, 922
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Partners/Contractors/Coop:

- Univ. of Montana, Missoula, MT
- Wildlands CPR, Missoula, MT

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