

Sioux Ranger District Native Vegetation Recovery Project, Custer National Forest

2009 Accomplishments

The Rabbit Creek Reservoir Riparian Exclosure Project was implemented in 2006 – 2008 to restore and protect a recreational fishery and associated riparian habitat. The 57 acre exclosure includes a 17 acre impoundment as well as a spring fed stream (Rabbit Creek), a four acre wetland, riparian and upland wildlife habitats, and lower segments of several woody draws. Native plant restoration of this area was initiated in 2009 by obtaining native plant material from local stocks of prairie cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*) and green ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) from the Sioux District of the Custer National Forest and the Grand River District of the Dakota Prairie National Grassland. Over 35 lbs of prairie cordgrass seed and 40 lbs of green ash seed were harvested in summer/fall 2009 and shipped to the USFS Coeur d'Alene Nursery. There, the cordgrass stock will be increased through seed plots. Also, 1,500 green ash seedlings will be grown out. In 2010 and 2011 cordgrass seed produced at the nursery will be sown throughout the exclosure site and green ash seedlings will be planted along the riparian corridor and in lower segments of decadent woody draws. Restoring native grass and tree species to this area will not only provide a wild seed source for future projects, but will aid in stabilizing stream banks, filtering sediment, creating wildlife habitat, increasing water-holding capacity, and may foster beaver introduction or natural re-colonization.



Figure 1. Prairie cordgrass seed collection



Figure 2. Rabbit Creek Reservoir exclosure area.

Year awarded: 2009

Project completion: 2011

Report number: 1 of 1

Expenditures (through 10/2009):

- **FY09 total funding received \$10,500**
- **total expenditures and obligated \$9,750**
- **\$750 total remaining**

Partners/Contractors/Coop: South Dakota Game and Fish Department & Coeur d'Alene Nursery

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