

Mill Creek Shrub Post-Fire Planting within the Wicked Fire Area - Gallatin National Forest

2010 Accomplishments

The project goal was to accelerate revegetation of dominant shrub communities in the 2007 Wicked Fire area which burned approximately 26,500 acres within the greater Mill Creek drainage south of Livingston, Montana. Approximately 55% of the Wicked Fire area burned at moderate or high intensity with high soil severity including riparian zones.

Vegetative recovery of grass and forb communities was robust. However, desired native shrubs showed little sprouting post-fire except for willow species in areas of high moisture availability.

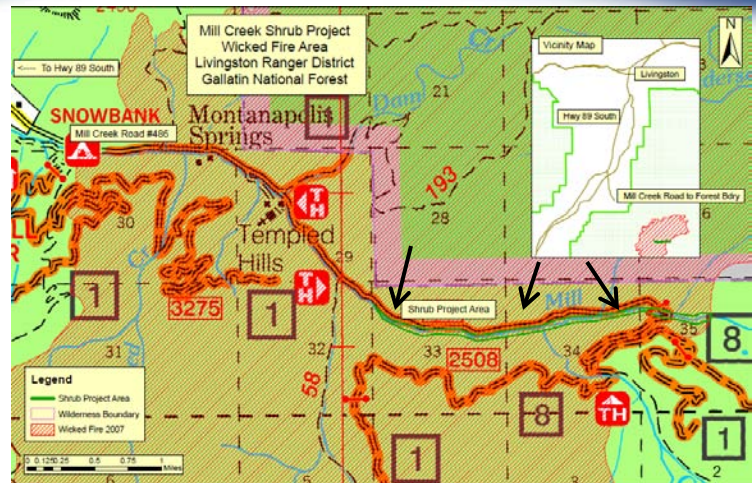
Streambank willow (*Salix exigua*), redosier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), and Geyer willow (*Salix geyeriana*) cuttings, and seed from Sitka alder (*Alnus sinuata*) and water birch (*Betula occidentalis*) were collected from nearby locations, propagated in local nurseries, and planted along a narrow riparian corridor within the fire perimeter.



2010 planting--Pacific Oasis, Inc. employee clears an area of ground, plants the shrub, and then places a log next to it for shade.



Photo from Livingston Enterprise, June 24, 2010. "Stan Cook, right, contracting officers' representative for the U.S. Forest Service, talks with Yellowstone District Wildlife Biologist Rachel Feigley in the Wicked Creek Fire area of Mill Creek, Tuesday. Crews are planting trees and shrubs to help speed revegetation in the area that burned in 2007."



Map of Mill Creek Shrub Project area

Approximately 20 acres were planted with 15,000 shrubs along three miles of stream edge in the spring of 2010. Baseline photo points were established in the fall of 2009 and taken again in 2010. Photo points will continue to be monitored over time to determine the long term success of this restoration project.

A news release was provided to both the Livingston Enterprise and the Bozeman Chronicle who in turn visited the site and developed full articles with photos. The Bozeman Chronicle article may be viewed at http://www.bozemandailychronicle.com/news/article_69353e0e-7d8e-11df-b61d-001cc4c03286.html.

This project demonstrates the use of locally adapted native vegetation, along with local partners, to regenerate fire areas when burn intensity is severe.

Year awarded: 2009

Project completion: 2010

Expenditures: Shrub cutting/propagation/grow-out, storage, planting, and monitoring with photo plots

Total funding expenditure (2009-2010) = \$48,547 NFN3

Partners/contractors/coop: Westscape Wholesale Nursery, Oasis Native Nursery, and Pacific Oasis, Inc.

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