

Hermes Copper Habitat Restoration Cleveland National Forest

2010 Accomplishments

Hermes Copper butterflies are endemic to the foothills of San Diego County, California. This butterfly species has lost much of its original habitat to wildfires and development. Due to the very restricted range of this species and the dwindling amount of habitat available, this species has been petitioned for Federal listing and is currently being considered for Federal listing as Threatened or Endangered. The Cleveland National Forest (CNF) supports some of the largest remaining populations of this butterfly species.

The firestorm of 2007 burned thousands of acres on the CNF. Following in the wake of many drought years, the fires of 2007 seriously damaged some vegetation types and were particularly effective in extirpating buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*) from many burned areas. Buckwheat is the primary nectar source for the Hermes Copper butterfly in most areas.

In 2010, the CNF collected buckwheat seed from local, genetically appropriate sources. This seed was used to help reestablish buckwheat in important Hermes Copper habitat at Barber Mountain. Seed was hand scattered and raked to facilitate establishment. This project will hopefully assist in the recovery of Hermes Copper at this site.

Additional restoration of several other sites is needed because of the widespread loss of Buckwheat after the 2007 fires.



Figure 1. Hermes Copper Butterfly

Year Awarded: 2010

Project completion: 2014

Report number: 1

Expenditures: FY 2010, \$1,000

Partners/Contractors/Coop: Tim Cass



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