

# Sheep Mountain Grass-Forb Montane Restoration Project on the Lolo National Forest

## 2009 Accomplishments

Sheep Mountain Restoration Project is a multi-year effort initiated in 2007 to test methods for restoring a native grassland community in western Montana. The grassland originally was infested with cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*). The restoration project involved collecting native grass and forb seed in 2009, treating cheatgrass with herbicides (Plateau), and reseeding with native seed. Monitoring was also conducted in 2009 to determine cheatgrass frequency in the plot.

Cheatgrass is the dominant threat to the native grass/forb community at this site. In 2007, cheatgrass occurred at 67% frequency in the sampling plots. In the fall of 2008, following herbicide application and use of native seed, cheatgrass was at 0% frequency (Figure 1).

In the spring of 2009, cheatgrass again returned to the site, but to a lesser extent than 2007 and at only 28% frequency. Native grasses and forbs were vigorous in 2009, and we decided to wait to fall 2009 to spray with Plateau (Figure 2). Native wildland seed was again collected in summer 2009 to use on-site.

We plan on monitoring the site the spring of 2010 and treating the cheatgrass with herbicides when it is actively growing. We will also seed with native seeds collected in 2009.



Figure 1. Plot monitoring following a 2009 herbicide treatment for cheatgrass



Figure 2. Native forbs and grass returning to the site in 2009

Year Awarded: Multi-year project with initial award in 2007

Project completion: On-going

Report number: 2

Expenditures (through 2009):

- FY07 funding \$14,000, expend. \$14,000 \$0 remaining
- FY09 funding \$5,750, expend. \$5,750; \$0 remaining
- Total funding \$19,750, total expend \$19,750;**
- \$0 total remaining**

Partners/Contractors/Coop: Missoula Weed District Coordinator, RI Native Plant Program Manager, Coeur d' Alene Nursery

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