



United States Department of the Interior



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
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June 1, 2006

To: Files

From: Refuge Manager, Red Rock Lakes NWR
Lima, Montana

Subject: Winslow Fire Final Accomplishment Report

During Spring and Summer 2004 Refuge staff and The Nature Conservancy staff conducted monitoring of the Winslow Fire burn area. The monitoring was aimed at detecting and eliminating any noxious weeds that might get established in the burn area on the Red Rock Lakes NWR (Refuge). In addition, a bulldozer line that was created during the fire was monitored by Refuge staff. The bulldozer line was not directly located on the Refuge but was created directly adjacent to the Refuge boundary. Monitoring the bulldozer line was done to prevent any noxious weeds that might establish from spreading onto the Refuge.

Based on our monitoring this summer we determined that the Winslow Fire burned approximately 350 hectares (864 acres) on the Refuge. To monitor this area we established monthly checks of 26 plots that had 32 meter radius. This resulted in approximately 0.79 acres surveyed per plot (~20.5 acres). In addition, 10 kilometers of transects (5 meter wide transects) were monitored on the Refuge (for an additional 12+ acres monitored). Establishing these plots and transects allowed for approximately 32.5 acres of burned area on the Refuge to be monitored for noxious weeds.

To date, no noxious weeds were found in any of our monitoring efforts; including the bulldozer trail. As a result, treatments of the burn area were not necessary during Summer 2004. We plan to continue monitoring the burn area for the next two summers (through 2006) and conducting control of noxious weeds as noxious weeds are located.

Budget expenses:

Refuge Staff Salary:	\$8,976.00
TNC Staff Salary & Monitoring Plan/Report:	\$1,640.00
Weed Control Supplies *	\$1,669.00
TOTAL	\$12,285.00

*Fencing supplies, although part of the original budget submitted, were not purchased this year. We focused our efforts on finding and controlling noxious weeds. As a result, weed control supplies were purchased to have on hand (at the ready) because we were anticipating noxious weeds to be found and for treatment to take place immediately.

During summer 2005, Refuge staff conducted monitoring of the Winslow Fire burn area based on protocol developed by Nature Conservancy staff in 2004. The monitoring was aimed at detecting and eliminating any noxious weeds that might get established in the burn area on the Red Rock Lakes NWR (Refuge). In addition, a bulldozer line that was created during the fire was monitored by Refuge staff. The bulldozer line was not directly located on the Refuge but was created directly adjacent to the Refuge boundary. Monitoring the bulldozer line was done to prevent any noxious weeds that might establish from spreading onto the Refuge.

Based on our monitoring effort, we determined that no significant amount of noxious weed invasion had occurred. In some areas along the bulldozer line, there was evidence of Canada thistle encroachment. Mechanical control was conducted by physically pulling these plants. No other control occurred. Details of the monitoring are outlined in the attached report. Based on these results, we do not anticipate needing funding for rehabilitation from fire control measures conducted during the Winslow fire of 2003.