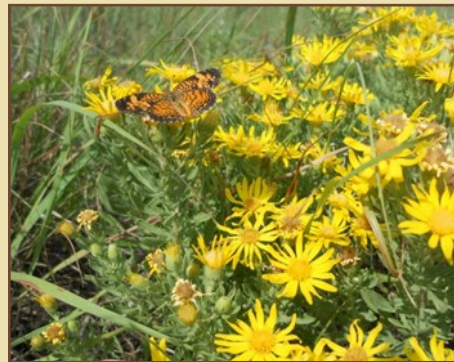




Interseeding Native Forbs and Legumes

PURPOSE:

Native forb (broadleaf flowering plants) and legume (nitrogen fixing broad-leaved plants, such as alfalfa and clovers) interseeding is used to increase plant diversity in native warm season grass plantings and pastures. These flowering broadleaf plants create excellent brood habitat for upland wildlife during summer months by attracting a diverse array of insects that many young mammals and birds feed on. Most native forbs and legumes also produce seeds that are a beneficial food source for wildlife throughout the fall and winter months when high energy carbohydrates are needed.



SPECIFICATIONS:

- Interseeding is most successful after grass competition has been reduced. This can be done with properly timed management practices such as prescribed burning, strip disking, prescribed grazing and herbicide spraying. Most broadleaf plant seeds are not able to compete with established native grasses. Thus, it is important to set these grasses back in order to give the seeds a chance to germinate and thrive. Warm season grass suppression using these management practices is best achieved during the summer months when the grasses are actively growing. An acceptable seedbed will have at least 50 percent bare ground.
- To ensure a diverse stand of forbs and legumes, a suggested seeding rate of 3 to 5 pounds of Pure Live Seed (PLS) per acre should be used. At least 9 different species should be utilized in the mix. No single species should exceed 15% or be less than 1% of the mix, and always be sure that noxious weeds, such as *Serecia lespedeza* and crown vetch, are not used.

- Recommended seeding dates for native forbs and legumes are November 1 through May 15. Dormant seeding (December-February) is the preferred method as many native species require several weeks of cold, moist stratification before they are able to germinate.
- Seeds can be broadcast in late winter and allowed to naturally work their way into the soil as the soil freezes and thaws. Alternatively they can be planted with a drill. When using a drill it is very important not to drill the seed too deep. Seeds should be planted no deeper than ¼ inch deep.
- Forb and legume seeds vary greatly in size, shape, and weight. They range in size from large sunflower seeds to seeds that resemble fine dust. It is typically necessary to use some type of carrier like cat litter, sand, saw dust, cracked corn, wheat, or sorghum to ensure even flow and distribution through the drill or broadcaster.

MAINTENANCE:

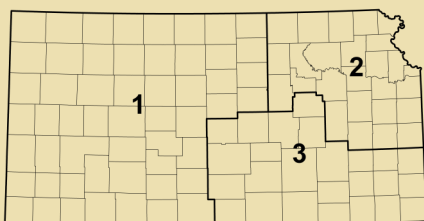
- After seeding, continue to disturb native grass fields on a two to five year rotation (depending on location within the state) by burning, disking, haying or grazing. These practices setback grasses and create bare ground allowing the native forbs and legumes to continue to thrive. If possible, only disturb one-quarter or one-third of the field per year and rotate around the field each year to create a mosaic within the field.
- Spot spray with approved herbicides to suppress invasive vegetation and control noxious weeds.
- Seeding rates and mixes will vary depending on location within the state. Consult with your local KDWPT biologist or USDA office for recommendations.

**Consult with USDA before conducting any management activities on lands enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) or any other USDA conservation programs. Modification of the contract may be necessary.



*Sprayed late summer and interseeded the following winter.
Notice untreated area in upper right corner of photo.*

January 2016



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