

## **Scoping Notice Proposal to Conduct Cheatgrass Herbicide Treatments**

### **Project Summary**

The Bureau of Land Management's Worland Field Office is proposing to treat with herbicides about 250 acres of cheatgrass. The proposed treatment areas are located in various sections of: Townships 42 , 43, 44, and 45 North, Ranges 90,91, and 92 West.

The proposed projects are in areas that have experienced numerous wildfires over the past decade where cheatgrass abundance is increasing. The herbicides would be approved for use on BLM and private lands and have no grazing restrictions. The treatments would be conducted by the BLM in cooperation with the authorized allotment permittees.

The project would take place in the spring and/or fall of 2007, 2008, and 2009 unless weather conditions cause a delay. The objectives of this project are to: 1) prevent seed set in cheatgrass that is present, 2) deplete the seed bank of viable cheatgrass seed, 3) decrease the fuel load of flammable cheatgrass, and 4) promote the establishment of less flammable perennial grasses and forbs.

### **Issues**

Cheatgrass is a major cause of wildfires in rangeland. Cheatgrass cures earlier than perennial grasses and is flammable by mid-May and early June. When wildfire starts, dense stands of cheatgrass near and under sagebrush encourage crown fires that spread rapidly. With each fire, cheatgrass becomes more prevalent, eventually changing the landscape from a sage brush/bunchgrass community to a monoculture, unfit for sage brush/bunchgrass obligate species and livestock.



Figure 1. Cheatgrass invaded sagebrush/bunchgrass communities loses plant diversity and is susceptible to recurrent wildfire.



Figure 2. Recurrent wildfires on cheatgrass invaded rangeland moves the system to a monoculture in which native perennial grasses and forbs cannot establish.

Please contact Eve Warren of the Worland Field Office at 307.347.5109 or [worland\\_wymail@blm.gov](mailto:worland_wymail@blm.gov) if you have concerns about the project or would like to participate in its planning.