

**ARIZONA GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT
HABITAT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM**

HABITAT ENHANCEMENT AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title: Piñon-Juniper Tree Thinning and Slash Treatment on the Black Mesa Ranger District		Project No. 09-107
Region/GMU: Region 1, GMU 3C		HPC: Show Low
Project Type: Juniper Slash Mastication		
Project Description: The Park Day Allotment Management Plan authorized grassland restoration across approximately 4,300 acres in GMUs 3A and 3C. Approximately 3,250 acres of piñon-juniper woodland in GMUs 3A and 3C were sold to commercial fuel wood cutters or pushed in the mid to late 1990s. Slash and carcasses from these activities were left on-site to promote the growth of cool season grasses and browse species. These objectives have been met and the desire is now to grind the slash and carcasses to improve pronghorn, mule deer, and elk access to forage. This project would utilize equipment to grind fuel wood slash on about 994 acres. A skid-steer or other rubber-tired machine and Fecon grinding head will be utilized to complete the work. Removal of slash and tree carcasses will encourage resident pronghorn to use the area and improve mule deer and elk access to winter range habitat.		
Wildlife Species to Benefit: Pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and elk		
Possible Funding Partners:		
Implementation Schedule: Beginning: Spring 2010 Completed: Spring 2012	NEPA Compliance: (if applicable) Completed: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Projected Completion Date:	

PROJECT FUNDING

SBG Funds Requested: \$ 50,625
Cost Share Funds: \$ 102,000 (USFS)
Total Project Costs: \$ 152,625.00

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Applicant: Rachael Vaughn Telephone: 928-535-7319	Address: Black Mesa Ranger District P.O. Box 968 Overgaard, AZ 85933
AGFD Contact and Phone No. (If applicant is not AGFD personnel)	
Coordinated with: Paul Greer, GMU3A/C Wildlife Manager; Brian Dykstra and Kendell Hughes, USFS; Monte Hancock, grazing permittee	Date: 8/26/09
Applicant's signature: /s/ Rachael Vaughn	Date: 8/28/2009

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:

Ron Thompson
Arizona Game and Fish Department
Attn: Game Branch
5000 W. Carefree Highway
Phoenix, AZ 85086
(623) 236-7354
Email electronic copies to Ruth Gregory at:
rgregory@azgfd.gov

WAS PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE LOCAL HPC? YES X NO _____

HAS PROJECT BEEN SUBMITTED IN PREVIOUS YEARS? Yes IF SO WAS IT FUNDED? No

NEED STATEMENT/PROBLEM ANALYSIS:

The Park Day Allotment Management Plan, completed under a NEPA analysis in the mid 1990s, identified the need to reduce the number of piñon-juniper woodland acres and increase the number of grassland acres in the allotment. After archaeological surveys were completed, approximately 3,250 acres of piñon-juniper woodland were sold to commercial fuel wood cutters or pushed in the mid to late 1990s. Slash from the fuel wood harvest was lopped to 3 feet or less and left on-site to promote the growth of cool season grasses and browse species. This slash cover inhibits pronghorn and other big game species access to forage. The proposed treatments will enhance grass and browse species and improve elk, deer, and pronghorn access to forage across approximately 994 acres.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The objectives to improve cool season grasses and browse species have been met and the desire is now to grind the slash and carcasses to improve antelope, mule deer, and elk access to forage. Pronghorn are present in the vicinity but do not use the treated areas due to the slash constraining their movements. This project proposes to grind 994 acres of slash in 2010 – 2012. A contractor would be used to complete the project. This project will connect treated acres with existing grasslands and grasslands that have been recently restored by other Forest Service activities.

PROJECT STRATEGIES:

The project will provide additional pronghorn habitat in GMUs 3A and 3C. The habitat blocks to be treated are very near and in some cases directly adjacent to areas antelope currently utilize year round. The project area is also elk and mule deer winter range and would improve winter range forage for these species. We have a landscape level approach to grassland restoration in this area of GMUs 3C/3A and are utilizing several treatment methods, including complete piñon-juniper removal as biomass, grinding, shearing, and pushing, to accomplish our objectives over several thousand acres.

PROJECT LOCATION:

The project is located in GMUs 3A and 3C in Navajo County. The legal description is T12N, R18E, several sections, and T13N, R18E, several sections.

LAND OWNERSHIP AT PROJECT SITE (Please state specifically if PRIVATE PROPERTY and provide landowner's name): U.S. Forest Service, Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests.

IF PRIVATE PROPERTY, IS THERE A STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE LANDOWNER AND THE DEPARTMENT? NA

HABITAT DESCRIPTION: The habitat blocks to be treated are grassland with a few scattered piñon pine and juniper trees. The green area proposed for treatment is thick piñon-juniper woodland. The adjoining areas are either grassland or piñon-juniper woodland.

ITEMIZED USE OF FUNDS:

This grant request would be:

Grant to thin encroaching piñon-juniper and masticate existing fuel wood slash
675 acres x \$75.00 per acre = \$50,625.00

Forest Service match (acres already completed):

Piñon-juniper mastication: 199 acres at \$15,000.00

Piñon-juniper thinning and removal: 348 acres at \$87,000

LIST COOPERATORS AND DESCRIBE POTENTIAL PARTICIPATION:

AZ Game and Fish Dept., Grazing permittee.

PROJECT MONITORING PLAN: Photo monitoring points

PROJECT MAINTENANCE: None planned

PROJECT COMPLETION REPORT TO BE FILED BY: Rachael Vaughn, USFS

WATER DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (see attached worksheet): N/A

TREE SHEARING (AGRA-AXE, PUSH) PROJECTS (see attached worksheet): N/A