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Outgoing

0070018

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From: Priscilla Burton
To: Miller, Vicky
CC: Helfrich, Joe; OGMCOAL
Date: 8/18/2009 2:02 PM
Subject: 007018 Soldier Cyn topsoil stockpiles
Place: OGMCOAL
Attachments: DSCN1550.JPG; P0002059.JPG

Hello Vicky,

The topsoil and subsoil and boulder stockpiles at the topsoil canyon stockpile site were created during the surface facilities expansion, in 1992 . According to the MRP, p. 3-13, the intermediate seed mix (Appendix 3E) was used to stabilize the stockpiles. The components of the mix were Intermediate wheatgrass, slender wheatgrass, thickspike wheatgrass, western wheatgrass, yellow sweetclover, and alfalfa.

As you recalled today, your past efforts to control cheat grass on the (small) NW topsoil stockpile involved burning (torching) the topsoil stockpile in March 2007, followed by 2-4D application in the late fall 2007. The control also involved manual cheatgrass pulling in May and December 2008. Today we saw only a few cheat grass plants on the topsoil stockpile. We saw plenty of Russian thistle and mustard weeds, a couple of asters, and a few grasses (slender wheatgrass and possibly thickspike wheat grass) on the topsoil pile.

You mentioned that the topsoil pile may be reseeded this fall to encourage more desirable species to out-compete the remaining cheatgrass and other weeds, and that there may be some changes to the intermediate mix. If so, I recommend replacing the yellow sweet clover and alfalfa in the intermediate mix with Palmer penstemon (*Penstemon palmeri*), globemallow (*Sphaeralcea* sp.), and prairie sage (*Artemisia ludoviciana*). I also recommend including the grasses: alkali sakaton (*Sporobolus airoides*), and Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), because of their drought tolerance. There are many species that would be suitable. If you determine that a new mix is required, please amend Appendix 3E with changes to the intermediate seed mix.

I have attached a photograph of the topsoil stockpile that I took today and one that I took on August 20, 2004 from the same vantage point.

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