



Effect of Prescribed Fire on Standing Crop Production in Halophilous Grassland of Durango, Mexico

Jesús J. Quiñones-Vera, Celso M. Valencia-Castro, Edmundo Castellanos-Perez, Olvera Sanchez-Olvera, Juan J. Martinez-Ramos and Gerardo Jimenez-Gonzalez; Universidad Juarez del Estado de Durango; Contact Author Email: jjqv@prodigy.net.mx

The halophilous toboso grass (*Pleuraphis mutica*) dominates on plains of the Bolson of Mapimi. The growth of the toboso grass occurs in a short period of time and it matures quickly having low forage quality most of the year and accumulation of unpalatable plant material. With the purpose of eliminating this material, we used the prescribed burning in different dates to observe their effect on the standing crop production. With firebreaks lines of 3 m wide, we delimited 16 plots of 1140 m², distributed in four blocks where we applied one of four treatments of burning (dates): December of 2006 and February, May and June of 2007, in addition to the control. Previous to the burning, the grass volume and the continuity of fine fuel were estimated with the line intercept method. During the burning, the meteorological conditions were registered: wind's speed, wind's direction, temperature, and relative humidity. The burning was carried out with the heading fire technique, and at the beginning a backing fire technique was used for extending the fire breaking lines. Using quadrats of 0.25 m² to determine the standing crop, the response was also measured in four dates: August, two in September, and October of 2007. The effects of the blocks and measuring dates were confused, which were analyzed statistically with a randomized block design. The comparisons did not show statistical differences among treatments, but a better answer was observed when the burning was carried out close to the rainfall season.

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