



## Reducing Fuel Load of Key Cheatgrass [*Bromus tectorum* L] Dominated Range Sites by the Use of Livestock Grazing

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Reducing cheatgrass fuels using spring cattle grazing techniques is not practical on scales large enough or concentrated enough to be effective. However, cattle can be concentrated on cheatgrass during the fall, using supplementation as a tool. Reducing the amount of cheatgrass fuel carryover may effectively reduce the amount of total fuel available during the next fire season. The overall goal of the project is to investigate the efficacy of fall grazing of cheatgrass by domestic livestock, as a large scale fuel reduction tool, without effecting livestock performance. The project is located on the Gund ranch approximately 40 miles northeast of Austin, Nevada on land administered by the Bureau of Land Management and the Nevada Agriculture Experiment Station. Grazing will be applied to an area of approximately 7.8 km<sup>2</sup> in size, bounded on the west by a fence. The project will be organized into three treatment areas. Blocks 1 and 2 will be fall grazed with cattle. Production and plant density for both cheatgrass and perennial grasses will be determined before and after each fall grazing session over a 3 grazing season period and a seedbank assay has been performed for 2007 and 2008. Preliminary results indicate cattle gained weight; cheatgrass was grazed below 100 lbs per acre without effecting cattle performance; cattle preferred cheatgrass; critical to know the nutritional content of cheatgrass and yearly production data. All analysis and complete data will be available by December 15, 2008.

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