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RANGE LAND SEEDING IN IDAHO

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The purpose of this brief report is to provide a summary of the range land seeded by federal agencies and private land owners in the state of Idaho. The values reported were graciously furnished by the Supervisor's offices of the several National Forests in Idaho, the State Director's office of the Bureau of Land Management, the Superintendent of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and the State Conservationist, Soil Conservation Service.

The reported acreage of land seeded in Idaho, as presented in Table 1, underestimates the actual amount seeded. Records kept by the Soil Conservation Service of seedings on private lands prior to 1940 were incomplete and not all such seedings are reported; the total acreage in this category, however, would be very small. The Clearwater, St. Joe, Kaniksu and Coeur d'Alene National Forests have made some small seedings for stabilization of road cuts and fills, grouse habitat improvement and *Ribes* control on stream bottoms. These acreages are not included in Table 1.

The proportion of the total area on which the seeded species was successfully established is not known. Unsuccessful seedings were more common, however, in the 1930's and 1940's than after that time. Improved equipment, better methods of planting, and the increased knowledge of species adaptability are the principal factors responsible for better success in establishing seeded stands of grass. An appraisal in 1954 of the 80,560 acres of seeding projects made by the Bureau of Land Management under the halogeton control program showed only six percent of this area had failed to establish a stand of grass.

Prior to 1950, only 13 percent of the 1,266,112.5 acres presently seeded had been planted. In the next ten years, 645,500 acres were seeded and seeding in the following five years (1960 through 1964) amounted to 453,979.5 acres. The acreage seeded during the ten-year period, 1950 through 1959, represents 51 percent of the total and the remaining 36 percent of the total was seeded during the last five years. The average annual rate

of seeding from 1950 to 1960 was 64,550 acres and this increased to 90,795 acres annually during 1960 through 1964.

A marked stimulation to the seeding program in Idaho developed after 1945 when halogeton caused the death of a large number of sheep in southern Idaho. Some of the money appropriated by the United States Congress under the Halogeton Glomeratus Control Act of 1952 for eradication and control of halogeton was used to seed depleted range lands. The Bureau of Land Management had seeded 512,327 acres through 1964 in eight of the far western states with funds designated for halogeton control. This agency had planted 231,201 acres in Idaho (45 percent of the total seeded in the eight western states) by the end of 1964. An additional 120,629 acres were seeded in Idaho by the Bureau of Land Management for control of the weed hosts of the beet leaf hopper. This program was started in 1959 and has continued through 1964.

It is difficult to judge the full impact of the range seeding program on increased beef cattle numbers in Idaho but there is no doubt that it has been very important in this respect. Beef cattle numbers have almost doubled in the interval from 1950 to 1964 rising from approximately 650,000 in 1950 to 1,256,000 in 1964. Carrying capacity has been increased many times on much of the seeded land. One area near Almo, Idaho had a grazing capacity of 200 acres/animal unit month (AUM) prior to seeding and 1.8 acres/AUM after seeding. The Point Springs seeding east of Malta, Idaho had a licensed use of 27 acres/AUM before treatment and approximately 3-4 acres following seeding. The licensed use on this seeding was increased to 1.5 acres/AUM in the spring of 1965.

A secondary benefit to the livestock producer, the people of Idaho and to the nation is obtained through the improvement of other land not adapted to seeding with conventional methods and available plant species. The shift of livestock use from these areas to the seedings has permitted the native perennial plant to gain in vigor and increase in amount.

Idaho has made substantial progress in improving its range land by seeding but there still remains an estimated three to five million acres that could be profitably benefitted in this way.

Table 1. Acres of land seeded in Idaho by the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fort Hall Indian Reservation and private land owners in Soil Conservation Districts.

Year	USFS	BLM	Fort Hall Indian Reservation	Total Federal	Private	Total
1938	400			400		400
1939	10,428			10,428		10,428
1940	3,576	2,445		6,021		6,021
1941	2,239	2,848		5,087		5,087
1942	5,591	9,670	2,800	18,261		18,261
1943	3,215	1,024		4,239		4,239
1944	5,195	2,230		7,425		7,425
1945	14,750	1,000		15,750		15,750
1946	6,598	1,000		7,598		7,598
1947	11,200	2,785		13,985		13,985
1948	6,303	5,340		11,643		11,643
1949	7,083	4,440		11,523		11,523
					54,373*	54,373*
1950	5,720	3,770		9,490	21,803	31,293
1951	5,204	29,099	1,500	35,803	3,416	39,219
1952	5,202	27,958	4,650	37,810	5,328	43,138
1953	6,610	65,820	8,125	80,555	15,536	96,091
1954	3,625	42,672	18,425	64,722	18,263	82,985
1955	2,620	38,476	6,065	47,161	24,412	71,573
1956	2,880	23,281	2,650	28,811	18,368	47,179
1957	3,752	28,052	400	32,204	25,403	57,607
1958	3,961	34,781		38,742	22,422	61,164
1959	3,304	64,775		68,079	47,072	115,151
1960	20,411	41,291		61,702	36,428	98,130
1961	9,292	105,615		114,907	55,148	170,055
1962	4,873	21,940	250	27,063	25,160	52,223
1963	3,091	36,634		39,725	36,621	76,346
1964	6,373.5	35,113		41,486.5	15,739	57,225.5
Total	163,496.5	632,259	44,865	841,925.5	425,492	1,266,112.5

*Total land seeded prior to 1950 by private land owners in Soil Conservation Districts.

Table 3. Acres of land seeded in Idaho by Bureau of Land Management Districts over a twenty-five year period.

Year	Boise	Twin Falls Burley	Idaho Falls	Salmon	Shoshone	Coeur d'Alene	Total
1940	2,445						2,445
1941	2,848						2,848
1942	3,515						3,515
1943					6,315	40	6,355
1944			80		1,024		1,104
1945					2,150		2,150
1946					1,000		1,000
1947		1,500		75	1,000		2,575
1948	100	3,990	200		1,210		5,500
1949		2,000			1,050		3,050
1950		1,445			2,440		3,885
1951	5,466	18,129	1,340		2,325		27,260
1952	4,620	20,569	684		4,164		29,037
1953	14,648	29,586	9,075	1,310	1,925	160	55,544
1954	10,250	24,989	2,519		11,201		58,959
1955	2,855	16,230	4,810	1,110	4,914		39,929
1956	4,400	8,874	3,616	700	13,471		29,961
1957	9,427	2,354	2,994		5,691		20,475
1958	10,220	13,657	2,610	1,204	13,277		40,968
1959	23,303	19,737	2,572	3,565	7,090		68,272
1960	16,832	11,555	2,579	2,670	15,515	83	49,134
1961	51,764	8,515	13,130	780	7,545	110	75,764
1962	10,386	854	5,060	1,710	30,300	1,126	52,336
1963	16,878	13,538	833	4,500	3,930	65	37,744
1964	11,591	18,111		1,950	820		32,472
Total	201,548	215,633	52,177	19,499	141,818	1,584	632,255

Table 2. Acres of Range Land in Idaho Seeded on Eight National Forests Over a Twenty-Seven Year Period.

Year	National Forests								Total
	Sawtooth	Boise	Payette	Salmon	Challis	Targhee	Caribou	Nez Perce	
1938		10			40		350		400
1939		3,030			40		7,358		10,428
1940	60	540			40		2,936		3,576
1941		1,957		282					2,239
1942		3,388		6	100		2,097		5,591
1943		2,612					603		3,215
1944		2,680	1	40			2,474		5,195
1945	60	13,120			100	40	1,430		14,750
1946	1,035	1,455	568		240		3,300		6,598
1947	4,320	4,200	700	770	310	600	300		11,200
1948	1,650	1,030	120	326	635	548	1,994		6,303
1949	910	2,930		256	1,561		1,426		7,083
1950	160	480	200	28	1,000		3,852		5,720
1951		1,570		130	1,184		2,320		5,204
1952	315	300	1,729	130	337	200	2,191		5,202
1953	1,875	80	1	40	753	25	3,836		6,610
1954	555		40		663		2,367		3,625
1955	550				1,801	269			2,620
1956	1,470		440		125	150	695		2,880
1957	1,850		40		592	670	600		3,752
1958	2,816	106	159		130		750		3,961
1959	2,004		200			500	600		3,304
1960	6,108		7,600	340		80	475	5,808	20,411
1961		285	78	3,110		513	0	5,306	9,292
1962	899		182	75		105	3,160	452	4,873
1963	1,300				2	526	800	463	3,091
1964	3,055	255	1,266		2½	570	980	245	6,373.5
Total	30,992	40,028	13,324	5,533	9,655½	4,796	46,894	12,274	163,496.5

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