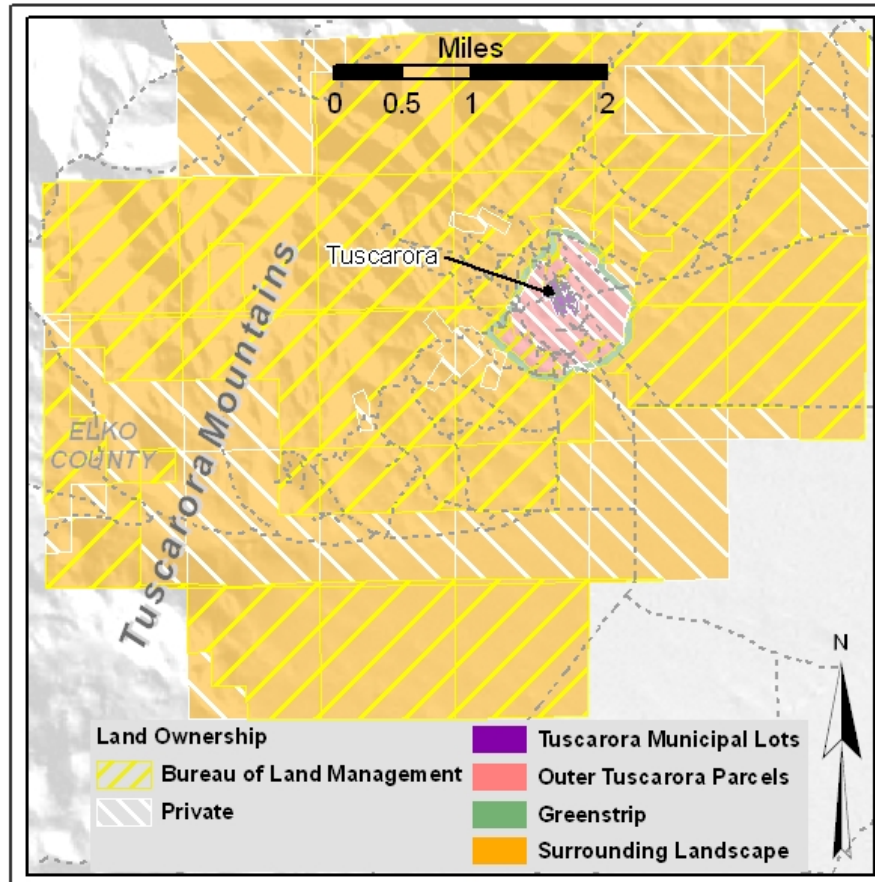


Tuscarora Comprehensive Fuels Management and Weed Containment

Project Update 10/12/2012



Progress Achieved and Desired

2009 - BLM maintained the greenstrip area by mowing woody fuels and spraying weeds with herbicides

2010 - Fuel loading was measured at 2.5 tons per acre of continuous fine fuels by NDF and the Tuscarora NVFSC. UNCE completed a plan to install demonstration plots on the western edge of town using different combinations of targeting grazing, herbicides, and seeding in attempt to understand the most effective weed containment, fuels reduction, and desired vegetation restoration treatment.

2011 - Some county-owned municipal parcels within the town were sprayed using herbicides funded by NDF and USFS, and the parcels will be seeded with a complimentary seed mix provided by the Owyhee Conservation District. The attached brochure was designed and printed. Also, the Indian Creek fire was sparked in the fall and burned around most of western and northern portions of town. BLM seeded most of the burned area surrounding town with a mix of fire resistant species. The demonstration plot areas that were surveyed for archeological

clearances were consumed in the fire. The Nevada Firesafe Council got into trouble with its funding (<http://www.tahoebonanza.com/article/20120502/NEWS/120509988>), so the funding that was going to be used for the demonstration plots was frozen. Between these two events, the effort to implement the demonstration plots was abandoned.

2012 – NDF contracted weed spraying on all but five parcels in the town (Figure 1) in the spring. NDF will have contractors working in the town during the month of October to remove brush from those same parcels that gave permission to do so. NDF will also seed all of these same treatment areas during the fall months. NDF has been negotiating with Ken Milner, majority private landholder in Outer Tuscarora Parcel area, to access and treat his property. BLM used visual surveys on the surrounding landscape to identify vast swaths of hoary cress and sprayed approximately 1,730 acres last spring (Figure 2). BLM has awarded additional contracts to spray 2,214 more acres between this fall and spring of 2013. The Willow fire burned into the fire scar on the west side of Tuscarora, but it is unknown if it overlapped with any hoary cress infestation areas.

2013 – The large infestation of hoary cress will be mapped on the Surrounding landscape by BLM. BLM continues spraying the surrounding landscape and seeding where necessary to establish desirable vegetation where hoary cress dominated. NDF will spray the same municipal lots in the spring and continue negotiations with Mr. Milner to gain access to his property. In the event that NDF does get permission, Milner's land will be incorporated into the treatment plan. NDF will extend its assistance to private landowners in the Surrounding Landscape areas to assess the current state of infestation of their lands and attempt to connect them with opportunities to treat any existing hoard cress as well as establish more desirable vegetation. NDF will also extend offers to treat parcels in town that did not take advantage of the opportunity in 2012.

The working group has made great strides towards getting this weed under control and without their help and assistance our treatments would not be nearly as effective!! Please stay tuned and involved as we deal with the challenges of weeds, fire, and rehabilitation on your lands. If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please reply all to the e-mail or contact Ryan S. Shane at 775-738-3454 or Bryan Mulligan at 775-753-0200.

In 2007, the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group (NNSG) secured a Division of State Lands Question-1 Grant for performing a habitat and watershed assessment in the Tuscarora Population Management Unit (PMU) for the Greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*). The assessment was completed in the fall of 2008. In general terms, there were three issue areas: 1) weed infestation, primarily hoary cress in and around the Tuscarora area; 2) extensive grasslands lacking in woody species; and 3) monocultures of sagebrush minus the forbs and grasses necessary for productive and resilient rangelands. The latter two of three issues are a result of either an increased frequency or decreased frequency of wildfire. Hoary cress (*Cardaria draba*) and cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) are non-native weeds that produce fine fuels known by fire specialists and ecologists alike to create increased fire risk as well as increased fire frequency. In 2009, a group of concerned residents of Tuscarora brought their similar concerns of wildfire risk and the enormous infestation of weeds to the attention of Federal, State, and Local wildfire fuels and natural resource managers. A series of field visits and community meetings ensued that brought together 12 partnering entities that focused their knowledge and abilities on the challenges identified by the group known as the Tuscarora Working Group. In 2010, a plan was produced to assist the Working Group in keeping the federal, county, and private lands in a productive and healthy condition for present and future owners and users and to increase the economic and environmental benefits of these lands. It provides guidance that each cooperator can use to achieve fuels management and weed containment objectives themselves, or with the assistance of partnering entities, professional resource managers, and contractors.

Helpful Links:

Tuscarora Comprehensive Fuels Management and Weed Containment Plan:

<http://docstoc.com/Docs/81384600/>

Tuscarora-Comprehensive-Fuels-and-Weed-Containment-Plan

Tuscarora Wildfire Risk Assessment (Resource Concepts Inc 2005):

<http://www.rci-nv.com/reports/elko/section20.html>

Fighting Invasive Weeds - A Northeastern Nevada Landowners' Guide to Healthy Landscapes:

<http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/ho/2005/eb0502.pdf>

Tuscarora Comprehensive Fuels Management and Weed Containment

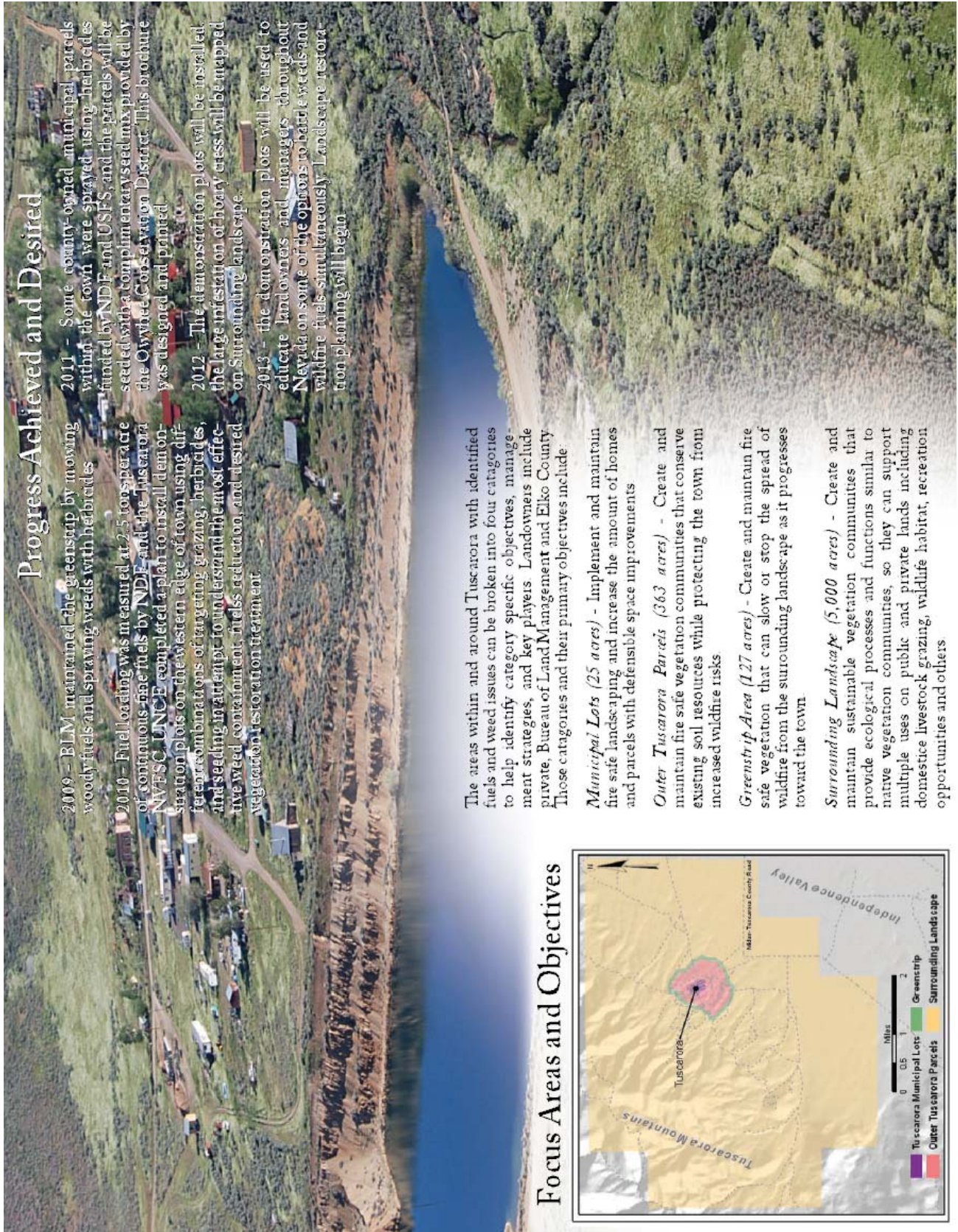


Project Cooperators

Private Landowners
Nevada Division of Forestry
Bureau of Land Management
Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group
Tuscarora Chapter - NV Fire Safe Council
Daka Doyabe Conservation District
Owyhee Conservation District
University of NV - Cooperative Extension
Elko County
US Fish and Wildlife Service
USDA Forest Service

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Progress Achieved and Desired

- 2009 - BLM maintained the greenstrip by mowing woody fuels and spraying weeds with herbicides
- 2010 - Fuel loading was measured at 2.5 tons per acre of continuous fine fuels by NDF and the Tuscarora NVFSC. UNCE completed a plan to install demonstration plots on the western edge of town using different combinations of targeting grazing, herbicides, and seeding in attempt to understand the most effective weed control, fuels reduction, and desired vegetation restoration treatment.
- 2011 - Some county-owned municipal parcels within the town were sprayed using herbicides funded by NDF and USFS, and the parcels will be seeded with a complimentary seed mix provided by the Owyhee Conservation District. This brochure was designed and printed.
- 2012 - The demonstration plots will be installed, the large infestation of hoary cress will be mapped on surrounding landscape.
- 2013 - the demonstration plots will be used to educate landowners and managers throughout Nevada on some of the options to battle weeds and wildfire fuels simultaneously. Landscape restoration planning will begin.

The areas within and around Tuscarora with identified fuels and weed issues can be broken into four categories to help identify category specific objectives, management strategies, and key players. Landowners include private, Bureau of Land Management and Elko County. Those categories and their primary objectives include:

Municipal Lots (25 acres) - Implement and maintain fire safe landscaping and increase the amount of homes and parcels with defensible space improvements

Outer Tuscarora Parcels (363 acres) - Create and maintain fire safe vegetation communities that conserve existing soil resources while protecting the town from increased wildfire risks

Greenstrip Area (127 acres) - Create and maintain fire safe vegetation that can slow or stop the spread of wildfire from the surrounding landscape as it progresses toward the town.

Surrounding Landscape (5,000 acres) - Create and maintain sustainable vegetation communities that provide ecological processes and functions similar to native vegetation communities, so they can support multiple uses on public and private lands including domestic livestock grazing, wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities and others

Focus Areas and Objectives

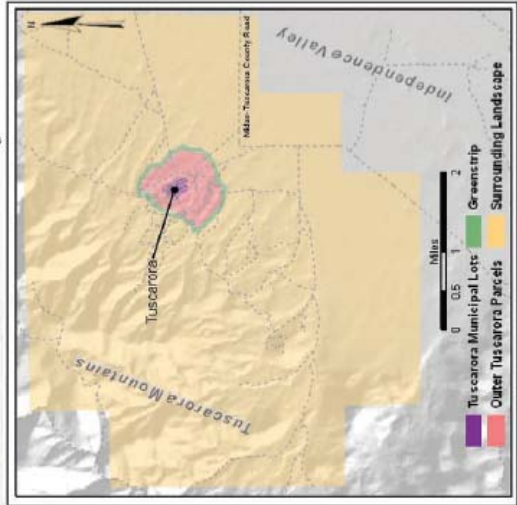


Figure 1. Parcels shaded in green represent landowners that gave permission to treat with herbicide and remove brush through 2015.

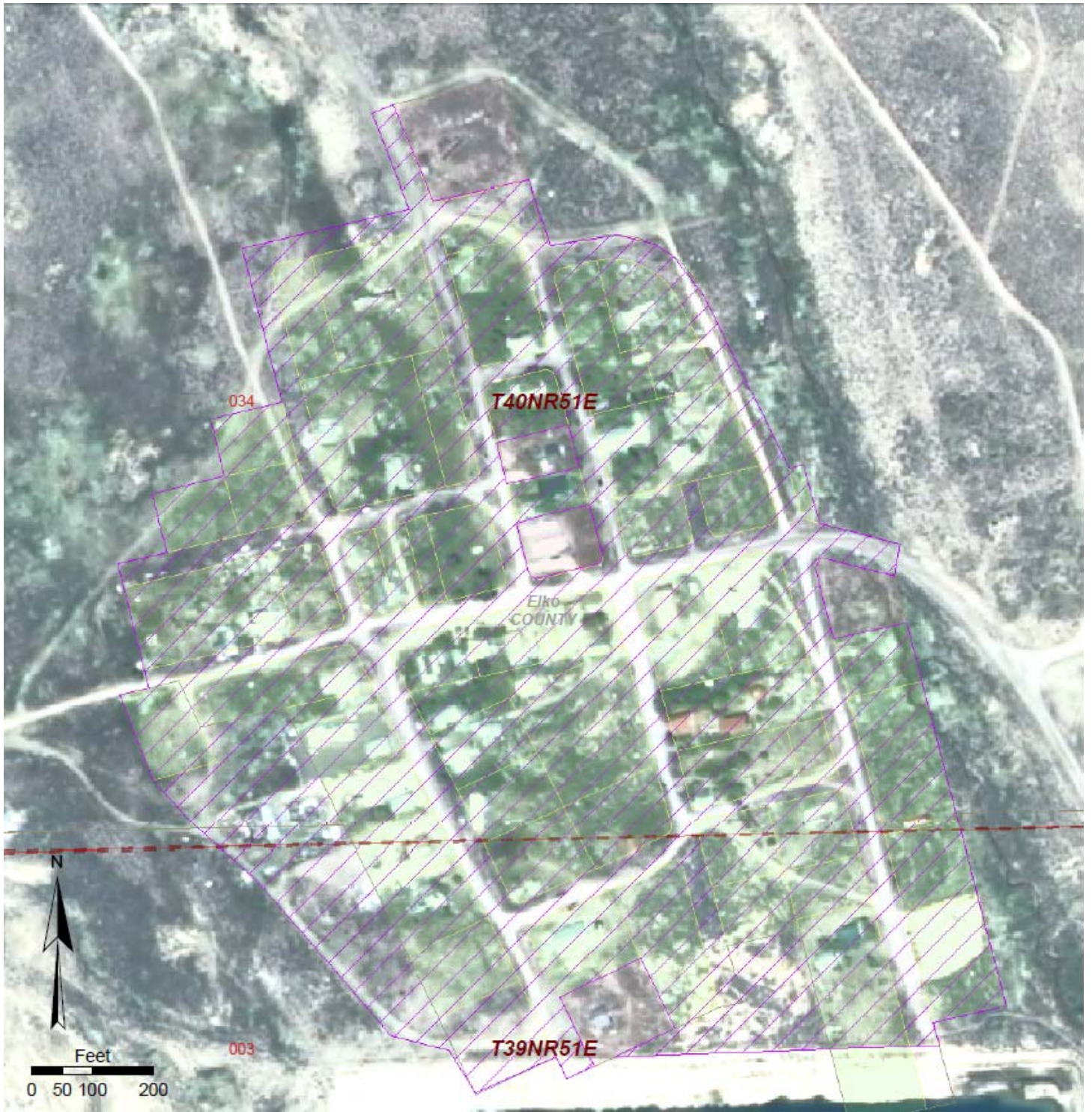


Figure 2. BLM treatment areas for spring and fall 2012.

