

EFFECTS OF FOREST SLASH ON NATIVE GRASSES AND WILDLIFE IN NORTHERN ALABAMA

A McIntire-Stennis supported project



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This study's primary purpose is to understand better factors affecting the establishment and growth of planted native grasses, particularly factors that develop or alter during timber harvesting. We replaced less desirable species at the ground level, such as red maple, with native warm-season grasses, such as planted big bluestem grass (*Andropogon gerardii*).

This study assesses how soil disturbance and removing or retaining logging slash may affect the survival and growth of big bluestem grass. This research will contribute to developing guidelines and management practices for improved removal operations of forest logging residues in the southern United States.

This project's other objectives include assessing the interaction between planted native grass and invasive species, benefits of native grass restoration on wildlife, and willingness of loggers and forest landowners to alter current slash management regimes given measured environment and economic impacts.



About McIntire-Stennis

The McIntire-Stennis program, a unique federal-state partnership, cultivates and delivers forestry and natural resource innovations for a better future. By advancing research and education that increases the understanding of emerging challenges and fosters the development of relevant solutions, the McIntire-Stennis program has ensured healthy resilient forests and communities and an exceptional natural resources workforce since 1962.



COLLABORATION

Bankhead National Forest (BNF)

US Forest Service Southern Research Station



About 20

undergraduate students have measured the number of grass plugs, length of blades, slash cover, and soil disturbance

IMPACT

Trained three graduate students in understory vegetation inventory



BNF is seeding bluestem grass and other native warm-season grasses after logging



Planting grass can be supported through KV plans (money acquired from timber sales sale area)



Best grass survival and growth occurred on sites with high soil disturbance and light amount of slash (tallest grass was 8 feet)