

Work Task C55: Techniques to Increase Leaf Litter Decomposition Rates

FY14 Estimate	FY14 Actual Obligations	Cumulative Expenditures Through FY14	FY15 Approved Estimate	FY16 Proposed Estimate	FY17 Proposed Estimate	FY18 Proposed Estimate
\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

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Start Date: FY13

Expected Duration: FY14

Long-Term Goal: Develop techniques to reduce litter biomass

Conservation Measures: MRM2 and CMM1 (WIFL, YBCU, ELOW, GIFL, GIWO, VEFL, BEVI, YWAR, and SUTA)

Location: PVER

Purpose: The purpose of this work task is to: (1) evaluate whether a reduction in accumulated leaf litter and fuel load is needed, (2) develop tools to reduce the accumulated litter, and (3) determine if a reduction in litter improves irrigation efficiency.

Connections with Other Work Tasks (Past and Future): Post-development habitat monitoring will be conducted at habitat creation sites detailed in Work Tasks F1–F5, a fire management plan under Work Task E18, and creation and management of a mosaic of native land cover types under Work Task E4.

Project Description: In many of the LCR MSCP habitat creation sites, there is a buildup of dead vegetation and leaf litter that contributes to fuel loads, which could eventually become a fire hazard. Additionally, the accumulation of litter may impede the movement of irrigation water across the site.

At habitat creation sites, the cottonwood-willow habitat type is planted in high densities. The canopy closure varies as well as the density and cover of understory shrubs, forbs and grasses. A reduction of fuel loads, including the accumulation of litter, may be a necessary management action. It is also necessary to determine whether excess litter hinders water movement across a field, which is important for managing irrigation at habitat creation sites.

The objectives of this study were to evaluate the effectiveness of adding a biological compost tea to habitat creation areas with an excess accumulation of litter and determine whether a reduction in litter improves irrigation water distribution across the gradient of a field.

Previous Activities: The work plan for FY13 was canceled due to sequestration.

FY14 Accomplishments: The project was evaluated, and it is not known whether leaf litter decomposition rates are a problem. This project was defunded and closed, with no expenditures and no accomplishments.

FY15 Activities: This work task was closed in FY14.

Proposed FY16 Activities: This work task was closed in FY14.

Pertinent Reports: N/A