

ARIZONA ELK SOCIETY BOY SCOUT EAGLE PROJECT PROGRAM

Part of the mission of the Arizona Elk Society is to work to improve and restore wildlife habitat for elk and other wildlife. To accomplish this part of the mission the Arizona Elk Society partners with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Forest Service, and local landowners. Each year the AES organizes, funds, and provides volunteer labor forces to accomplish projects throughout elk range in Arizona.

For two years, the AES has partnered with the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts for volunteers at our various projects. We have identified a need for good projects for potential Eagle and Gold Scout projects that deal with wildlife and their habitat.

In 2012 the Arizona Elk Society met with the Coconino and Kaibab National Forest staff to design activities for Boy Scouts to complete Eagle Scout projects.

The AES is thrilled to work with the Boy Scouts in informing these scouts about the importance of conservation of Arizona's.

Two scouts worked with their team and the AES in July of 2012 on a project removing small trees from riparian draws and basins, allowing more water to reach the riparian areas that supported much of the wildlife in the area. We have put together information sheets on a few additional projects for the scouts to evaluate.

COCONINO NATIONAL FOREST HWY 180 W. OF FLAGSTAFF GRASSLAND RESTORATION PROJECTS

In addition to the Buck Springs projects, there are two areas on the western portion of the Coconino National Forest that would be very good projects. The first is working on grasslands east of Slate Lakes. This is a project that the Arizona Elk Society worked on in 2010 where we cleared about 150 acres adjacent to Highway 180. There are a number of small pines that have grown up since we cleared the area that need to be removed while they are small and easily cut and scattered. This project has been approved by the Forest Service and is ready to go. In addition, the rancher in the area has requested that AES remove these trees.

The second of the western Coconino National Forest is west of Slate Lakes and is grassland that is several hundred acres in size. This area was treated by the AZGFD in 2005 and many small trees have proliferated here. The plan would be to segregate a portion of this grassland for the Eagle Scout to work on, as the overall project is very large.

Tool requirements will include loppers, hand saws, gloves. Safety items include long sleeve shirts, long pants, good boots, hats and sunscreen. Scouts can coordinate with the AES for the hand tools.



The photos above show the type of area the work will be done in. All of these project areas are ecologically important and part of a much bigger effort to restore grassland function for winter range for big game. Grasslands are also a key habitat for grassland obligate species such as golden eagles. It is important that these projects be done in the near future as the larger the trees grow, so does the difficulty in removing them.

The Forest Service and area Ranchers rely on volunteers to help with these types of projects. Using hand tools requires a lot less red tape and we can get work done now.