



# Protecting Your Soils After a Fire: SEEDING FOR EROSION CONTROL

*During the fall and winter after a fire, rain on bare soil can cause the soil to erode and run off. Seeding and mulching can help protect your soil following a fire. Protecting your soil keeps it healthy and also keeps soil from running off into rivers and streams.*

## SELECTING YOUR SEED

**High quality seed mixes or single grass seed species** with a seed analysis tag showing no noxious weeds will help avoid bringing unwanted weeds onto your property. Look for a mix with an annual grass such as annual ryegrass. Perennial grasses such as blue wild rye, creeping red fescue, perennial ryegrass or turf-type fescue also work very well.

Ryegrasses (both annual and perennial) will sprout and start growing quickly to protect your soil this first fall and winter, and the perennial grass will create a longer lasting cover.

Annual ryegrass is likely the economical choice for restoration projects. Smaller quantities can be found at most hardware and garden retailers. Larger bulk quantities can be purchased from many Oregon seed dealers. A seed dealer listing for ryegrasses and fescues can be found at: <https://www.ryegrass.com/dealers.html>

## PREPARING THE AREA FOR SEEDING

**If possible, roughen the soil** by harrowing or raking, then create a firm soil surface by rolling. If this is not possible, you may want to apply your seed at a higher rate. A firm soil surface helps your seed come into contact with the soil and this helps increase the number of seeds that sprout.

## SEEDING

**You may use a hand-held seeder**, scatter your seed by hand or use a mechanical drill for your seed. For very large areas or rough terrain, seed is commonly flown on with aircraft.

Below are some possible seeding mixes and recommended application rates. There are also erosion control seed mixes available – check with your local supplier.

### **Fertilizer**

**If possible, broadcast slow-release fertilizer** at the time of seeding. You should aim to apply about 25 pounds of nitrogen per acre this fall and another 25 to 50 pounds per acre in the late winter or early spring. This is not always possible, but it can increase the success of healthy, productive grass cover.

### **Mulching**

**After you seed and fertilize**, scatter straw over the soil if you are able to find weed-free straw. Pull the straw apart if it is in a bale and scatter it over the soil so that about one-third to one-half of the soil is covered.

## Know Before You Sow

Always use seed that has a seed analysis tag attached to the bag. The tag contains important information, but pay particular attention to the listing for “Noxious Weeds.” Only use seed that states “no” or “none found.”

Crop	<b>Annual Ryegrass</b>
Variety	<b>ABC</b>
Lot#	<b>86-W6-17-2Q-8902</b>
Origin (state)	OR
Pure Seed	99.91%
Other Crop	0.00%
Inert Matter	0.09%
Weed Seed	0.00%
Noxious Weed	<b>None Found</b>
Germination	91%
Hard Seed	5%
Date Tested	
	Purity 3-15-2018
	Germ 3-19-2018
Net wt.	50 lbs.

## For More Information

Contact your local **Soil and Water Conservation District, OSU Extension office or Oregon Department of Forestry office** for more detailed information on sources of seed, site preparation, seeding rates and mixes, and fertilizer and mulching.

- Visit the State of Oregon’s Wildfire page: <https://wildfire.oregon.gov>
- Find your local Soil and Water Conservation District: <https://oda.direct/SWCD>
- Find your local watershed council: <https://oda.fyi/watershedcouncils>
- Visit Oregon State University’s After a Wildfire page, <https://oda.fyi/AfterWildfire>, or find your local OSU Extension office, <https://oda.fyi/FindExtension>
- Visit the Oregon Department of Forestry’s Help After a Wildfire page, <https://oda.fyi/HelpAfterWildfire> or find an Oregon Department of Forestry forester, <https://oda.fyi/FindForester>
- Visit the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Resources for Recovery page: <https://oda.fyi/RecoveryResources>
- For wholesale suppliers of seed, visit the Oregon Ryegrass Commission website: <https://www.ryegrass.com/dealers.html>