

## Field Note

April 10th, 2014



By Jeff Clarke



The field crew started a sagebrush thinning effort this week. We will open dense sagebrush stands to allow more plant diversity. This photograph shows a thinned area.





Forbs and grasses emerge in the open niches around the edge of dense sagebrush stands.





An early yellowbell blooms in the sunlight after a large sagebrush was removed.







The first shooting star blossoms emerged this week. Many more will soon brighten the Ranch's hillsides.





I flipped a flat board near the corral and found a couple sluggish long-toed salamanders. Younger morphs continue to develop in the corral spring pool.





Chris sprayed the edges of all fields that were seeded this spring. We hope this herbicide application keeps the invasive weeds at bay and allows the planted native seeds to fill the open niches. Less than one week later, the cheatgrass turned brown.





This mule deer started to grow its 2014 antlers.



Over the years I've found several coyote skulls on the Ranch. Most of the time they are under dense shrubs, in the base of drainages, or in low dips in the earth. I assume these K9s wanted to die in hidden solitude.





I inspected a bunch of ponderosa pine cones in the Northern Floodplain yesterday. Unfortunately, many of the winged seeds were small or non-existent. I assume drought stress is to blame for the lack of viable seeds. The inset photo is what healthy seeds look like.





The field crew helped implement a diversity island project last week. We planted clusters of bitterbrush and rabbit brush across the large seed-drilled fields. We hope the seeds produce large plants that will break up and diversify the rows of drilled seeds.





Added tractor work brings old bailing twine to the earth's surface.  
The field crew scrambles to find it before the ospreys collect it for their nests.





We continue to burn large piles of weeds that collect in low lying areas and along fence lines.







We continue to transplant basin wild rye into areas that washed out during the spring overland flow. So far, all the basin transplants are growing!



