

**Category C—Low**

**Rescuegrass (*Bromus catharticus*)**

**Identification and Impacts**



Photo credit: P. Alexander



Photo credit: J.M. DiTomaso



Photo Credit: M. Licher

**Key ID Tips**

- Spikelets are flattened and appear braided together.
- Seeds or lemmas are awnless.
- Longer ligules with irregularly toothed at the end.
- Broad hairless leaves.

**Origin**

Native to South America.

**Description**

Rescuegrass is an annual brome species that grows in clusters with erect or leaning stems. The leaf blades are mostly hairless, but the sheaths have small fine hairs that point downward. They have a long ligule that is irregularly toothed at the top. Their inflorescences are distinct from other annual bromes as the spikelets are flattened with the seeds arranged in a braided pattern and are awnless. Seed spikelets appear green, turning red as they mature. The inflorescence is in an open panicle with several branches of spikelets that can be erect or nodding.



Photo credit: P. Alexander

**Biology**

Rescuegrass can be found in rangelands, agricultural fields, riparian areas, and roadsides. It is well adapted to warm climates and resistant to extreme cold. Similarly to other non-native invasive bromes, it can outcompete native vegetation and replace high value perennial forage. It can be used as forage when needed.

**Locations**

Found throughout the Navajo Nation and problematic in rangelands and along trails.

**Ecological Threat and Management Concerns**

Rescuegrass can outcompete native grass species, crowding out perennial grass species especially in rangelands and riparian habitats. It can grow in dense clusters, preventing native plant growth and regeneration. It is also responsive to disturbance, becoming one of the first plants to resprout. It is tolerant of a wide range of environmental conditions, giving it an advantage over slower growing native species. In agricultural settings, rescuegrass can reduce production of cultivated grass species. The seeds can also be carried by animals, humans, and equipment, allowing it to spread to new areas. Rescuegrass is included as one of several non-native annual brome species that have impacted rangelands in the region.

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Additional safety measures and limitations may apply for each method. Refer to the [Navajo Nation Integrated Weed Management Plan](#) for more information.

**Mechanical/Manual Removal**

Small infestations can be hand pulled or hoed in the early spring before seed maturation. Mowing is not recommended as it can initiate flowering if done before seeds mature. If necessary, repeated mowing should be done every 3 weeks to reduce seed production and followed with herbicide. Shallow tilling in the fall or early spring can also suppress bromes and facilitate perennial grass establishment. Equipment should be cleaned after treatment to prevent seed distribution to new areas.

**Biological**

No biological control organisms are available.

**Cultural Control**

Targeted grazing can be used to control rescuegrass when young and before seed development. However, treatments should be followed with herbicide and should only apply moderate pressure. Burning can be used when done in the spring before seed set and as part of a 2 to 3-year program.

**Chemical**

Use of herbicides can be effective. Refer to the product labels for information application rates, timing, and approved application methods.

Recommended herbicides include:

- Glyphosate
- Indaziflam
- Metribuzin
- Prodiamine

**References**

Southwestern Environmental Information Network (SEINET) Arizona-New Mexico Chapter Portal. Available at: <https://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/index.php>.

USDA, NRCS. 2023. PLANTS Database. Available at <https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/>. National Plant Data Team, Greensboro, NC 27401-4901 USA.



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