

## Flaming as a Weed Management Tool on Beetle Banks Summer 2005, 2006

In the summer of 2005 Persephone Farm used a back pack flamer to do one flame application the weeds on their two banks. The flaming was followed up with hand weeding on a portion of the front bank where a strong bank of water foxtail exists. At the end of this bank a good stand of Elymus has come back the second year with no other weeding that that original flaming (see ***Slender Wild Rye Makes Valiant Comeback***). The second bank was lost to weed competition.



At the Hyslop Research Station, Gwendolyn Ellen was able to use a bed flamer with four burners designed by Gregg Prull of Sunburst Inc. to keep the weeds off of unseeded beds that were created in the fall and seeded and transplanted after the flamings in the spring/summer. Two to

three flaming applications were made with good results. No other weed control measures were needed on the plots that were transplanted. A few weeds appeared through out the summer and were manageable with minimal hand weeding.

John Eveland of Gathering Together Farm did a major flaming on a portion of the spring transplanted beetle bank in May 2006 to control an onslaught of broadleaf weeds just three weeks after transplanting. He used a five burner flamer that is pulled behind the tractor. A crew of four came through the next day to weed the 25-35 % of weeds that were not impacted by the flaming.

**Flamed transplants**



John felt another flame application or two would have probably done the job and have been more cost effective, however this theory was not able to be tested. The implications of flaming on grass growth and density is unknown at this time. The transplants were healthy, with multiple tillers about 6-9 inches tall by the middle of the summer. Yet another weed flare up had to be hand-weeded pushing the estimated cost of weeding labor over \$1000 for the season.



**Hand-weeded transplants**