

Slender Wild Rye Makes Valiant Comeback- June 2006

In the fall of 2004, Elanor O' Brian and Jeff Falen of Persephone Farm took the banks by the horns and plowed up two, about 500 feet long, lightly seeded them with Water Foxtail (*Alopecurus geniculatus*) and Slender Wild Rye (*Elymus trachycaulus*). The following spring Jeff dutifully flamed both banks with a back pack flamer. The prospects of these banks looked dim as weed pressure continued to grow. One portion of the Water Foxtail in the front bank was hand-weeded, but the labor proved too costly to do the same in the remaining sections of this bank or the second bank in the back field.

By the middle of the summer 2005, it looked as though the section of Water Foxtail that was hand-weeded was turning into a fabulous bank (see picture on right). The rest of that front bank looked pretty hopeless and would probably be tilled up and redone sometime in the future. The back bank looked to be a total wash, with grass and broadleaf weeds overtaking the native grasses. That spring, in one final attempt to resurrect the banks, Elanor and Jeff over-seeded portions of both banks with more *Elymus* spp.



Zoom to a year later, this spring, while checking the banks we noticed a hearty, thick stand of wild rye where we thought existed. This was in that back the Water Foxtail established. That this grass succeeded in competing the weed pressure second year with just a first flaming is quite a pleasant. This is the only stand of Wild Rye that we know of in beetle bank. The Slender (picture on right) is about five feet tall and the seed heads are filling



slender only weeds section of bank. out- in its year spring surprise. Slender an Oregon Wild Rye

out. The stand of Water Foxtail at the front part of this bank, bloomed well this year and has become a fabulous thick stand. The middle part of this bank is a mix of *Elymus* spp. and weedy patches. As for the second back bank, Jeff and Elanor have mowed it and are plowing it in this fall.