

Bluestem Breezes
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As promised, this week we're following up with additional methods from K-State Range Specialist Walt Fick to help in controlling the onward spread of eastern redcedar:

Mechanical control

Redcedars can be killed outright if they are clipped off near ground level, below the first green branch. Where clipping or mowing hasn't been effective, it's because the plants were not cut low enough. Even clipping three inches off the ground may not be low enough in some cases. Managers should try to get as close to ground level as possible. Clipping may be the only way of controlling eastern redcedar that is more than four feet tall. Clipping is sometimes easier to do if the plants have first been burned – even if the plants survived the fire. If the fire was reasonably hot, it will almost always sear off many of the lower branches, which makes it easier to get to when operating a clipper, mower, or chainsaw. Eastern redcedar that is clipped off at ground level will not regrow or re-sprout. Redcedar can be controlled by clipping or mowing at any time of the year.

Chemical control

If the stand of redcedar is too thick to get a good burn (or the manager simply doesn't want to do a prescribed burn) and the plants aren't too big, then chemical control is another alternative. One chemical for eastern redcedar control is picloram, which is contained in Tordon 22K and Surmount. Tordon 22K can be applied as a liquid directly to the soil right at the base of the plant. The label calls for three to four milliliters (cc's), undiluted, per three feet of plant height. This should be applied in April/May or September/October, just prior to a rain if possible. It can also be applied as a foliar spray, in a one percent solution. Surmount is applied as a foliar spray to trees no more than three feet tall, at the rate of three to six pints per acre, in late spring or early summer. Tordon 22K and Surmount are restricted use pesticides.

Other chemical options for eastern redcedar include hexazinone and metsulfuron methyl. Velpar L is a liquid formulation of hexazinone, meant to be applied to the soil at the base of the tree at the rate of two to four milliliters per inch of stem diameter at breast height. Pronone Power Pellets are a dry formulation, applied on the soil at the base of the tree at the rate of one to two pellets per inch of stem diameter. Metsulfuron methyl, e.g. Escort XP, can be applied at the rate of 1-2 oz product/100 gal water as a high-volume treatment for redcedar control.

Summary

Prescribed burning is the method of choice for most instances where eastern redcedar has invaded. Fire is a very effective tool for controlling smaller trees. Larger trees that may survive

burning can be mechanically removed. Herbicides are available for treating redcedar, but usually require good spray coverage and will be more effective on smaller trees.

Further information on range management is available by visiting the Extension Office (215 Kansas, Courthouse, Alma; kamayer@ksu.edu; 765-3821). For Bluestem Breezes archives, check out wabaunsee.ksu.edu.