



HIGHLIGHT: BARLEY GRASS RESEEDING

The following highlights why barley grass was selected for reseeded in the early restoration stage post-fire.

An annual barley variety (along with crimson clover and other native grasses and forbs) was applied to the burn area after the Alameda Fire to stabilize soils before the winter rains. This variety of barley is a commonly used cover crop species in agriculture and has proven to be useful at stabilizing soils and suppressing weeds in riparian restoration projects in the Bear Creek watershed. Some seeds from this barley cover crop will germinate, however, the number of plants diminishes over the course of several growing seasons. It is unclear if the barley that people are observing in 2022 is the result of seeds that did not germinate in late 2020 and early 2021 or last year's barley-producing viable seed.

Observations along the Bear Creek Greenway in 2022 indicate that barley is present in some locations and not others (despite its presence in all of these areas in 2021). This suggests that the barley observed this year may be from dormant seeds and not from viable seed production from last year's plants. In either case, we expect the barley to become less abundant over time, yielding to more vigorous, regenerating native plants. The barley, while initially taller than other spring grasses, stops growing once it begins to set seed. The seed tends to be heavy and that causes the barley to lay over as it dries. The collapsed grasses make an excellent ground cover that suppresses weeds. The barley seeds feed birds and other wildlife and help offset the loss of food sources diminished by the fire.

The Bear Creek Restoration Initiative (with support from Jackson County Parks and ODOT) conducted a vegetation condition survey in July 2022. This survey will help our understanding of the extent of barley within the fire footprint and will help us develop a strategy to monitor and take action if the barley persists in abundance over the next few years.

For more information on BCRI, find the following info sheets on our website:

Hazard Trees

Instream/Near-stream
Habitat + Floodplain
Connectivity

Invasive Plant Species
Management

Infrastructure Protection

Riparian Vegetation

Water Quality

