
APPENDIX 4. REGIONAL BUFFELGRASS HOT SPOTS

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REGIONAL BUFFELGRASS HOTSPOTS

The Buffelgrass Working Group has identified approximately twelve buffelgrass hotspots that have been geographically delineated for the greater Tucson region (see map below). Numbered in no particular order, the twelve 'hot spots' are described in more detail.



1. **Santa Catalina Mountains and Pusch Ridge.** The south-face of the Santa Catalina Mountains and Pusch Ridge are infested with large, dense stands of buffelgrass. This is an area of many hiking trails, tourist destinations and expensive homes.
2. **Sabino Canyon (urban area).** This is a heavily infested urban area with lots of natural areas that have become infested with buffelgrass. It is probably the worst infestation in the urban area in the foothills north of Tucson.
3. **Rincon Mountains.** Tanque Verde Ridge is the most notable infestation area, but the west slopes are peppered with small and medium infestations that are getting increasingly widespread and difficult to control.
4. **I-10 south of Tucson.** This is easily the worst infestation along our transportation corridors. The size and density of the infestation on both sides of the highway and in the median serves as a continual seed source that carries

further down the highways and along the intersecting roads to additional fertile ground. It is simultaneously the most problematic in terms of source seed and the simplest to treat in terms of cost efficiency because it is so dense and concentrated along the roadways.

5. **I-19.** Buffelgrass lines the roads of I-19 near Green Valley due in part to the buffelgrass soil stabilization project on the mines. I-19, Old Nogales Highway, Sahuarita Road, and many other roads in this area are facilitating seed dispersed into wild areas of the Santa Rita Experimental Range and Arivaca Mountains.
6. **Southern Tucson.** Buffelgrass has infested creosote flats, washes, and roadways surrounding the airport, up and down Valencia, and Old Nogales Highway. These infestations present the greatest current threat to life-threatening fires.
7. **Tumamoc Hill/ Sentinel Peak.** This is a long-time hot spot, seed source for surrounding communities, an eye sore, and an example battleground that needs to be won. Eradicating buffelgrass from Tumamoc Hill would be a huge psychological boost for the buffelgrass control effort.
8. **Tucson Mountains.** The south-facing slopes in the Tucson Mountains are continuously being infested and simultaneously being treated by Sonoran Desert Weedwackers. This is another important battleground where an accumulation of efforts is holding back the infestation. However, this area likely could become infested quite rapidly without constant maintenance.
9. **Panther Peak.** A series of south-facing slopes near Panther Peak are infested with buffelgrass. These are quite large patches and have been the source of a number of studies about treatment cost and efficacy. It is separated from the rest of the Tucson Mountain infestation because it is physically distinct.
10. **Avra Valley.** Abandoned farm fields owned by the City of Tucson in Avra Valley have been intentionally planted with buffelgrass or colonized and infested with buffelgrass. This is a large area with tremendous amounts of buffelgrass producing copious amounts of seed. Many seed scatter to nearby Ironwood National Monument, Saguaro National Park, or Tucson Mountains if they are not carried away on Kinney Road or the Ajo Highway. This area could be an easier area to treat because there are few natives in place.
11. **Ajo Highway.** Buffelgrass lines the road from Tucson to Sells. The densest infestations are near the intersections of Irvington, Ajo, and Kinney Roads. Where it goes through the Tucson Mountains, buffelgrass has firmly colonized the mountain slopes. Near Sells, buffelgrass has invaded nearby mountains as well.
12. **Black Mountain.** This patch and the nearby Hernandez Hill patch are on similar geology and terrain as Tumamoc Hill and A Mountain, but have significantly more area are even more infested. However, these areas are less populated areas so are not often noticed or considered.