

Direct seeding native grasses: *Techniques for success*

Presentation to: *Innovations in Restoration Ecology, September 2009*
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Situation & Opportunity

- Slow to establish natives are threatened by short-lived & quick growing weeds
- Early post-emergence weed control is critical
- Composted mulches will suppress weed growth
- But will they provide a suitable seedbed for native seed germination?

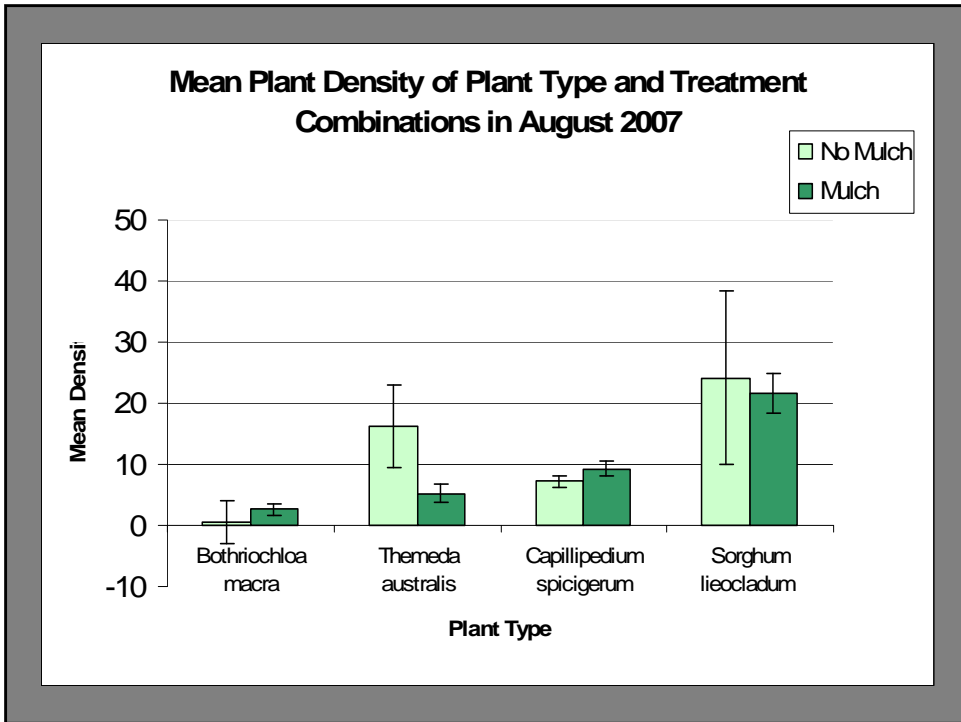
Field Trial - surface mulch

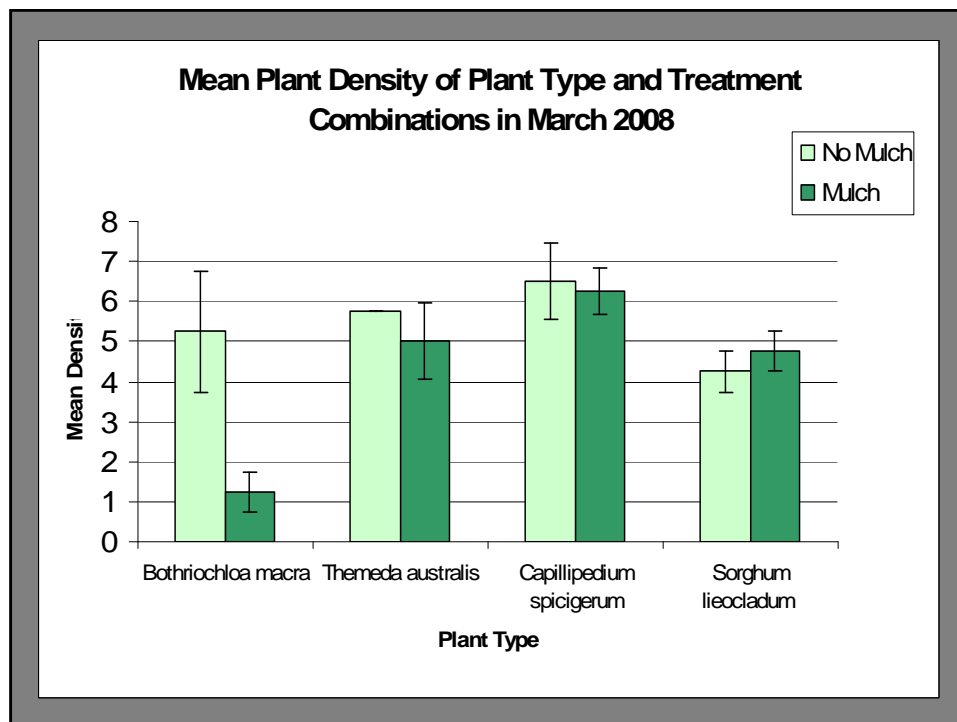
- 5 direct-sown native grass species
- With & without a composted mulch seedbed
- With & without selective herbicide
- 4 replicates
- 8 observations over 2 years
- Native & weed densities
- Native & weed cover abundance











Advantages- mulch

- Weed control
- Less imperative with timing & type of early stage weed control
- Soil improvement
- Soil moisture retention

Limitations- mulch

- Expensive- unnecessary expense
- Herbicide & other alternative approaches also work, & may be cheaper
- Inhibits native seedling density; higher sowing rates may be necessary
- Nitrogen draw-down
- Doesn't work for all species- *Bothriochloa*
- Different mulch grades may behave differently

Acknowledgments

- Client: Sydney Water
- Architect: EDAW- Mark Blanche
- Landscape Contractor: Simpson Landscapes
- Seed & Seeding: Cumberland Plain Seeds
- Advice & Monitoring: Cumberland Plain Seeds
- Statistics: Christine Cooper

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