

Box 1448, 5039 – 45 Street
 Rocky Mountain House AB T4T 1B1
 Ph: (403) 844-2645 email: gwfa1@telus.net

Pasture Species Monitoring

Project #: 1988-B

Co-operators: Wayne Carr, Bluffton
 John Grinde, Bluffton
 Don Halladay, Rocky Mountain House

Sponsor: Grey Wooded Forage Association

Funded: PID

Background:

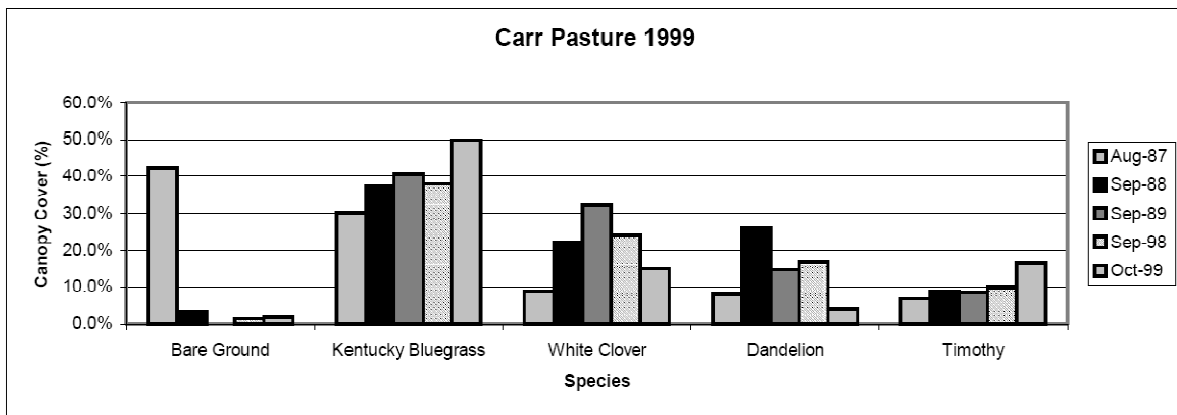
This project was started in 1987 with the three cooperators. At that time Don Halladay and John Grinde were just developing their pastures for controlled grazing. Wayne Carr.s pasture was still going to be continuously grazed.

Objective:

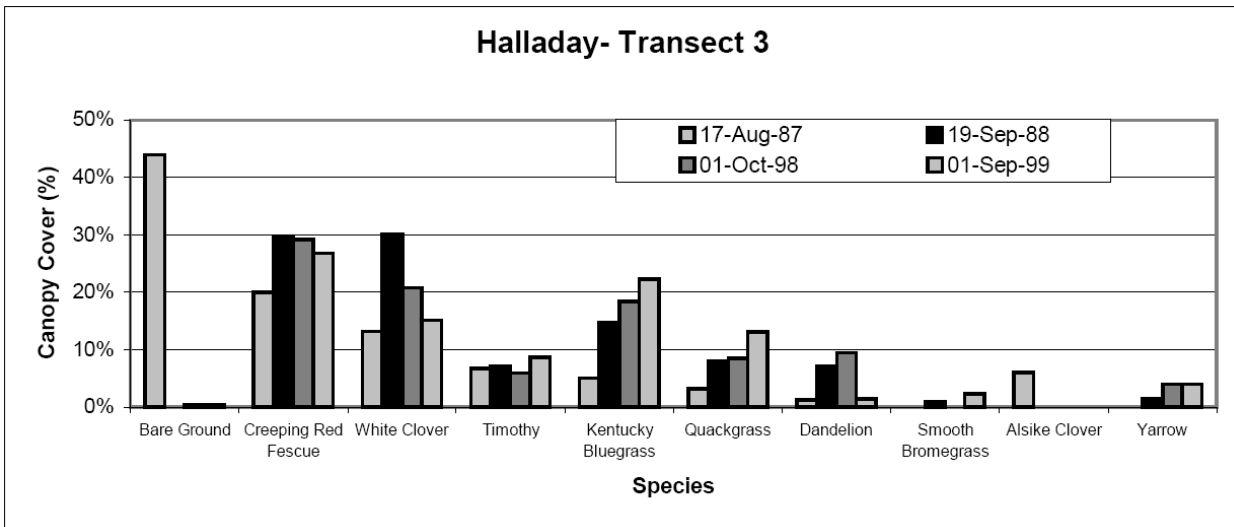
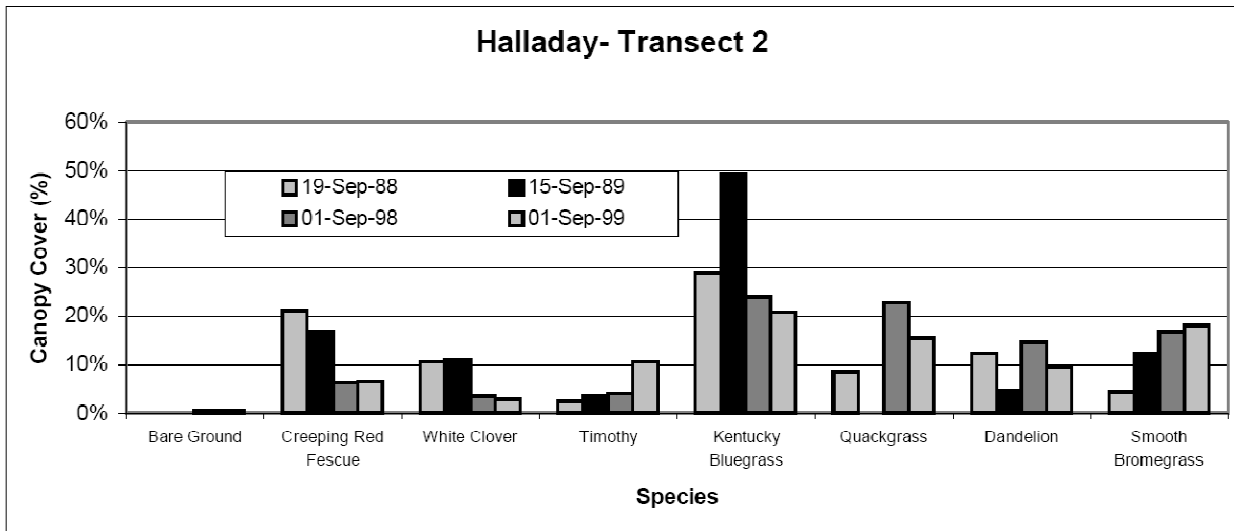
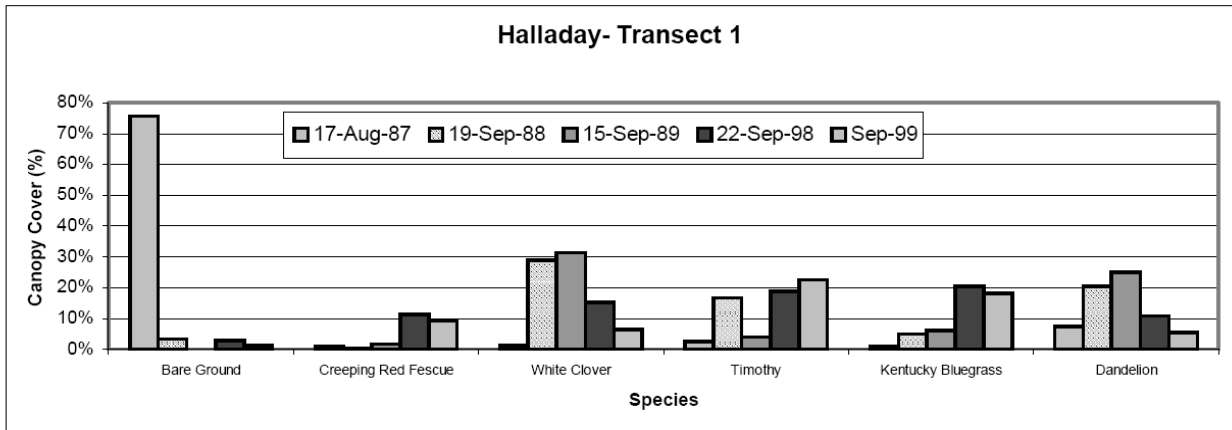
To monitor the species composition of selected pastures to observe if any species shifts occurred as a result in a change in management.

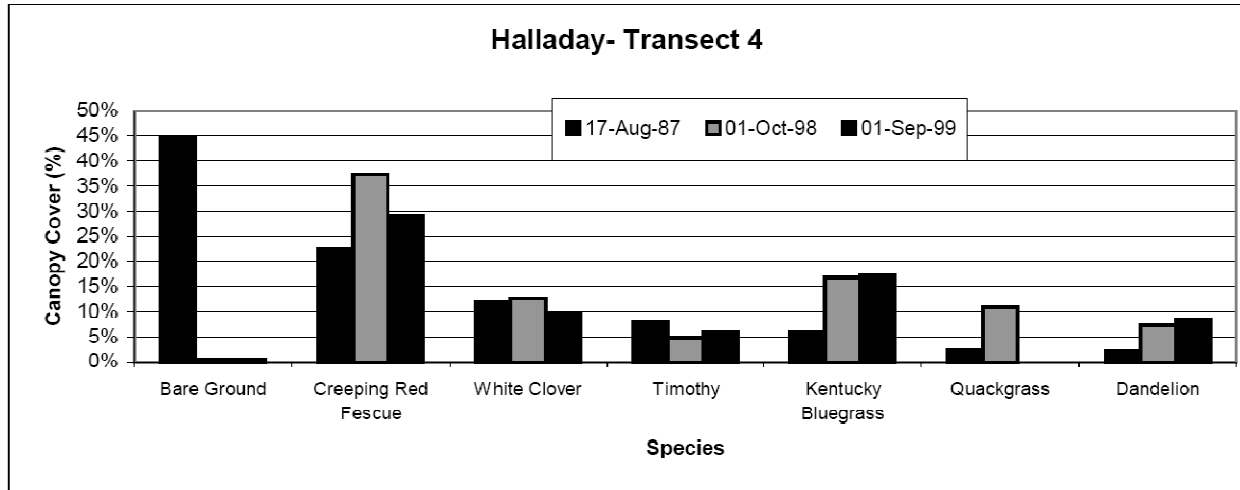
Results:

Wayne Carr:



Don Halladay:





Discussion:

As you can see at both sites that there were no dramatic changes in species composition. The Grinde site was not completed in 1999, so the results are not included in the report. Species that are dominant for all the pastures is a Kentucky Bluegrass/Creeping Red Fescue with taller grasses such as Timothy, Orchardgrass or Quackgrass. The legume component is typically white clover with some establishment of native legumes such as American Vetch or Peavine, but these legumes do not predominate the canopy cover as the white clover does. For the forbs, dandelion is the main component of every sward. There was the odd Daubenmire frame, which did not have any dandelion, but it was rare.

Litter is also a strong component of these long-term pasture stands. The reduction of the percentage of bare ground is significant. The litter component is essential if the pasture sward is not thick enough to provide a medium in which to slow down raindrop impact, and allow moisture to soak into the soil profile. However, can we as pasture managers have too much of a litter layer?

As for any dramatic shifts in sward species could be due to some sample error. Environment (moisture and temperature) probably played a role, along with the time since the last graze, as to what species would be recovering at around the time of inventory readings. These will be the last readings to be done, and maybe we will do them in a few years time, to see if there have been any changes.