



Native Plant Program

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What was our purpose?

Revegetation projects occur for a variety of different purposes and the source of materials can have an impact on success of the project. Some seed can readily be purchased, but some species may be difficult or impossible to source. In addition, some available seed may not be adapted to the local area. We have started programs to grow-out plants for transplant, plant fields of native species for seed production, and develop varieties appropriate for the region.

Transplant Projects

In cooperation with BLM and NRCS we have grown cottonwood, big sagebrush and curl-leaf mountain mahogany for habitat restoration. Seed was locally collected and grown so plants returning to the area were adapted to conditions.

Many species provide important structural support for wildlife species such as sage grouse during the summer. Winter habitat for mule deer, elk, and other species is also improved through transplant efforts.

Seed Production

Seed production of some native species is difficult because of germination/establishment, harvesting, and/or cleaning of the seed. Part of this program was to determine best methods for all. Some fields have been direct seeded while others were started in the greenhouse and transplanted. We have also joined with Bridger Plants Materials Center to maintain developed varieties of native species including western wheatgrass, prairie sandreed, green needlegrass, prairie coneflower, blanketflower, winterfat, and fourwing saltbush.

Wildland Collection

In partnership with the BLM, wildland collections of native seed have been performed to collect local varieties of grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Those seeds will be used in seed increases and to help develop specific local varieties. With a plant breeder, we hope to begin variety trials to determine if there are characteristics pre-existing in individuals from local populations which can be strengthened, developing new varieties of native species which will be adapted to regional growing conditions.

Species collected

- Grasses: big bluestem, bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, prairie junegrass
- Forbs: arrowleaf balsamroot, desert biscuitroot, false hairy goldenaster, harebell, Lambert's crazyweed, pale agoseris, prairie coneflower, purple astragalus, purple milkvetch, scarlet globemallow, silvery lupine, slimflower scurfpea, threadleaf phacelia, threadleaf sedge, tufted fleabane, two-grooved milkvetch, yellow indian paintbrush
- Shrubs: curl-leaf mountain mahogany, rubber rabbitbrush, spineless horsebrush, winterfat

