

# Northeastern Lower Michigan Native Seed Source Development Project – Huron-Manistee National Forests

## 2006 Accomplishments

The Huron National Forest is developing a source of native seed from local genotypes to facilitate the restoration of fire scarred lands. The Huron National Forest's colder climate requires that plants be adapted to a shorter growing season than most other regions in Michigan from which native seed is currently available.

Native Connections of Constantine, Michigan, was awarded the collection, seedbed establishment, seed production and delivery contracts. The contractor's crew visited the Mio Ranger District in late September of 2006, collecting over 100 lb bulk live seed of big and little bluestem from previously identified native populations. Most collection was done with non-mechanized equipment (Figure 1) as many natural sites consist of only discontinuous patches. Large, weed-free patches could be harvested with a specialized weed whip (Figure 2). In the Spring of 2007 the grower will proceed with the cultivation of this seed at their facilities in southern Michigan. Seed production should be sufficient for delivery of 400 lbs of Huron NF native seed in 2008.

Other grasses in the original proposal for collection were not collected as they were not found in sufficient quantity to collect and grow commercially.



Figure 1: Native Connections worker collecting little bluestem fruit with scythe along Mack Lake Trail.



Figure 2: Native Connections bulk seed collector for larger patches of grass.

Year Awarded: 2006

Project completion: 2008

Report number: 1 of 3

Expenditures:

- FY06 funding \$55,490
- Expended \$40,318
- \$15,171 remaining

Contractor:

Native Connections

Contact:

Greg Schmidt (989) 826-3252



**Huron-Manistee National Forests**

Mio Ranger District

401 N. Court St.

Mio, MI 48647