

Collection and Propagation of Native Plant Materials on the Helena and Lewis & Clark National Forests

2008 Accomplishments

This project was initiated jointly on the Helena and Lewis and Clark National Forests in 2008 to develop supplies of bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, and rough fescue seed from local genetic stock. Bluebunch wheatgrass was collected from 3 sites on the Helena and 4 sites on the Lewis and Clark National Forest. Idaho fescue was collected from 3 sites on each Forest. Due to difficulty with seed ripeness and proximity to other collection sites, rough fescue was not collected in FY08. Remaining funds will be used in FY09 to collect rough fescue from at least 3 sites on each Forest. Collected seed was sent to the Coeur d'Alene Nursery for processing, sowing, and two years of seed increase. Increased seed would be available from the nursery in 2010.

Seed produced from this joint effort would be used for revegetation of mid-and high elevation disturbed sites including road and trail construction, rehabilitation, and decommissioning; mining; watershed improvement projects; and timber harvest activities.

In addition, bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue were collected to support the Region One goal of understanding patterns of genetic variation in native bluebunch wheatgrass and Idaho fescue across their range using common garden study methodology.

Results will be used to develop seed transfer guidelines for the states of Idaho, Montana, and adjacent areas as well as to compare native genotypes to 'restoration cultivars'.



Figure 1. De-awned seed ready for cleaning



Figure 2. Fescue field at CDA Nursery

Year awarded: Initial award in 2008

Project completion: 2010

Report number: 1

Expenditures (through Sept. 2008)

- FY08 funding: \$57,000
- FY08 expenditure:
 - Coeur d'Alene Nursery - \$34,000 to sow and increase seed until FY2010.
 - Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Montana Discovery Foundation and Carroll College - \$9060
 - Forest Service project administration - \$3700 – LCNF; \$5178 - HNF
- Remaining funds: \$5,062

Partners/Contractors/Coop: Montana Discovery Foundation and Carroll College

Contact person & phone number:

Lois Olsen, Ecologist: 406/495-3734

Tanya Murphy, Silviculturist: 406/791-7753



Helena National Forest
2880 Skyway Drive
Helena, MT 59602

Lewis and Clark National Forest
1101 15th St. North
Great Falls, MT 59401