

Development of New Native Plant Material Source for Rehab and Restoration of Disturbed Areas

2008 Accomplishments

The Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests have partnered with the Plant Materials Center of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Los Lunas, New Mexico to develop new native plant source materials for use in site restoration following wildfire, prescribed fire, White Mountain Stewardship, and watershed restoration. Grass seed sources are being developed from wildland collections ranging in elevation from 6,100 to 10,500 feet and represent piñon/juniper woodland, ponderosa pine forest, and mixed conifer forest types. The 2008 plantings included:

- Transplanting two rows of deergrass clumps that were present as contaminants in the spike muhly field
- Plug planting two new rows of weeping brome
- Plug planting three and one-half new rows of Arizona fescue
- Plug planting eleven new rows of Thurber fescue

Seed was sown in plug trays and watered daily to encourage germination and initial seed growth. After hardening off in the nursery, the plugs were field planted.

The production of seed should begin for the cool-season grasses (fescues and brome) in 2009. If production is limited, it may indicate that the summer heat and alkaline soils in our cold desert environment cause significant stress. The warm-season grasses all produced seedheads in 2008. Mountain muhly is the only warm-season grass that is struggling to make vigorous growth. The limited acreage and the generally poor yield of galleta ecotypes suggest that little seed of this species will be harvested. We hope that enough galleta seed is available to propagate a sufficient amount of plug seedlings to finish the seed field in 2009. The other species of warm-season grasses should yield large quantities of bulk seed.



Galleta (Town Draw) seed production Seedlings planted on June 14, 2007; photo taken on July 15, 2008

Year Awarded: FY2006
Project completion: Year 3

Report number: 3 of 5

Expenditures to date:

- ◆ FY06 - \$8,000
- ◆ FY07 - \$13,071
- ◆ FY08 - \$29,816

Partners/Contractors/Coop:

National Resources Conservation Service; Plant Materials Center

Contact Person & phone number: Deb Bumpus, Ecosystem Staff Officer. 928-333-6302

Apache-Sitgreaves NFs
30 S. Chiricahua
Springerville, AZ 85938

