

# Uncompahgre Plateau Native Plant Program on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest

## FY 2009 Accomplishments

The objective of the Uncompahgre Plateau (UP) Native Plant Program is the development of site-adapted native plant materials for use in the restoration of native plant communities in the Colorado Plateau regional area. The primary elements of the program are 1) the production of native plant materials; 2) basic and applied research on native species; and 3) training and dissemination of information. In FY2009, substantial advancements have been made in each of our program areas. Specific accomplishments include:

- Advanced a western Colorado source of Sandberg bluegrass (UP Colorado Plateau) to commercial production. Approximately 20,000 pounds of UP CO Plateau are currently ready for purchase by federal and state agencies as well as by private companies.
- Provided seed of thirteen UP species to commercial growers. Information gained from UP studies on cultivation techniques have also been provided to these growers. The UP has selected these species (six grasses and seven forbs) because they are considered key components of native ecosystems in the Colorado Plateau area. Currently CO Plateau sources of these target species are either not offered on the market in quantities sufficient for large-scale projects or their costs are prohibitively high.
- Developed adequate seed stock of five additional forbs to support commercial production. These species have been advanced through our program, performing the necessary studies and seed increase process.
- Delivered 554 pounds of cleaned seed from 30 native species to the Forest Service, BLM and CO Division of Wildlife for use in local on-the-ground projects in western Colorado.
- Provided 200 cliffrose transplants to the Forest Service –Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison NF to rehabilitate a fire on the Uncompahgre Plateau.
- Maintained 37.5 acres of native species in studies and production in UP fields.
- Produced 190 pounds of cleaned seed from 12 native species.
- Completed a 3-year Adaptability Study on 130 accessions of 13 native grasses, comparing western Colorado sources to sources from the intermountain west and known cultivars. The data show that several grass species from western Colorado are of great value for restoration efforts.
- Continued work on 3-year life history studies on 17 grass and forb species at two research facilities.
- Continued work on 3-year cultural studies investigating spacing and irrigation needs on 21 grass and forb species at two research facilities.
- Completed an on-line survey to assess the current and potential demand for native plant materials for the upper Colorado Plateau. Results of the survey indicate a need for local sources of native seed and a lack of adequate storage facilities in western CO.
- Partnered with CO State Univ. and the San Juan NF to initiate a new study to research and develop economically viable techniques to commercially produce seed of key perennial forbs and pioneer species.
- Submitted 387 individual UP seed collections made from 2003 –2008 in western Colorado and eastern Utah to the Seeds of Success Program through the BLM.



Figure 1. Harvesting bottlebrush squirreltail seed at the Snow College facility, UT.



Figure 2. UP CO Plateau Sandberg bluegrass in 50 acres of commercial production



Figure 3. Muttongrass in the Grass Adaptability Study at Utah State University - Nephi site, UT

Year Awarded: initial award in 2005  
Project completion: 2011  
Report number: 4 of 6

Expenditures (through 10/2009):  
▪FY05 Agreement #05-PA-11020400-067 funding \$275,000, expend. \$275,000, \$0 remaining  
▪FY07 Agreement #05-PA-11020400-067 Modification #1 - funding \$145,000, expend. \$45,000, \$0 remaining  
▪**Total funding \$420,000, total expended \$420,000;**  
▪**\$0 total remaining**

Partners/Contractors/Coop: USFS Regions 2 & 4, BLM CO and UT State Offices, CO Div. of Wildlife, and UT Div. of Wildlife Resources, Public Lands Partnership, Colorado State Univ., Brigham Young Univ., Utah State Univ., Snow College, Meeker Plant Materials Center, and commercial / private growers.

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