

Seed and Soil Dynamics in Shrubland Ecosystems: Introduction

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This proceedings is the twelfth in a series on the biology and management of wildland shrub ecosystems, sponsored by the Shrub Research Consortium and published by the Rocky Mountain Research Station. Other cosponsors of the symposium on Seed and Soil Dynamics in Shrubland Ecosystems included the University of Wyoming Department of Renewable Resources and the USDA-ARS High Plains Grassland Research Station.

The twelfth wildland shrub symposium united above- and below-ground research on shrublands to more clearly delineate the dynamic nature of shrubland ecosystems. The keynote address (Allen, this proceedings) characterized differences in exotic brome invasions and impacts depending on geographic locations and poses some interesting questions relative to the common trends of invasion of annual grasses. The meeting also provided the venue for presentation of the first Shrub Research Consortium Distinguished Service Award to Dr. E. Durant McArthur, Project Leader, Shrub Sciences Laboratory, USDA Forest Service, in Provo, UT (Hild and Shaw, this proceedings).

Our symposium intended to unite plant ecology academics, managers, and soil scientists into a dialogue to consider

below-ground dynamics and their ties to shrubland ecosystem restoration and management. The 38 papers in this volume report research on below-ground biology, seedbanks, biological soil crusts, microsite and soil surface ecology, invasive species competition, restoration and revegetation in sagebrush steppe, blackbrush, salt desert shrub, annual grasslands, Chihuahuan and Sonoran Desert shrublands, and mountain shrub communities. Field trips included travel from Laramie west through the Snowy Mountains near Riverside and Encampment to examine vegetative ecology, soils, and geomorphology of the Snowy Range. Travel to the east from Laramie included the USDA-Agricultural Research Service High Plains Grassland Research Station in Cheyenne, WY, where participants examined long-term research on grazing and carbon sequestration. The poster session included 42 academic poster presentations and numerous trade exhibitors.

The thirteenth Wildland Shrub Symposium will be held in Lubbock, TX, in summer 2004, and will consider the theme "Shrublands Under Fire." Previous symposia cover a wide variety of topics relevant to shrubland ecosystems (see front pages of this proceedings for their availability).

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