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Making Change in a Changing World

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Conference Abstracts



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THE GREAT BASIN NATIVE PLANT SELECTION AND INCREASE PROJECT

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The Great Basin Native Plant Selection and Increase Project, organized by the USDI Bureau of Land Management, Native Plant Materials Development Program and the USDA Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Research Station in 2000 as a multi-agency collaborative effort has the objective of improving the availability of native plant materials and the knowledge and technology required for their use in restoring diverse native plant communities in the interior western United States. Lands within this 55 million ha region have been heavily by grazing practices, invasion of exotic annual grasses, primarily *Bromus tectorum*, and changing fire regimes. Guidance for this project is provided by Executive Orders, Congressional direction, and agency initiatives. More than 20 federal, state and private cooperators in 10 states are involved in the program. Specific objectives are to increase availability of native plant materials, particularly forbs, adapted to biogeographic regions, examine intraspecific variation and develop seed zones for widely used species, refine seed technology and cultural practices for agricultural seed production, formulate guidelines for effective multispecies seedings, provide for germplasm conservation and conduct information transfer. Species were selected by surveying resource specialists across the region. Research cooperators are recruited from botany (seed biology, plant geography), forestry (seed zone delineation) plant materials development, agronomy (seed production practices), entomology (pollination biology, seed predators) and wildland seeding methodology (restoration ecologists, weed scientists, and equipment developer). Commercial seed increase requires collaboration with state seed regulatory agencies and private sector growers. Results will improve land manager's ability to restore functional native communities.