

Production of Dwarf Bilberry for Outplanting - Ottawa National Forest

2007 Accomplishments

This project was begun in 2005, with location and collection of dwarf bilberry fruits. In February 2006, the seeds were planted and seedlings were raised at the J.W. Toumey Forest Service Nursery in Watersmeet, Michigan. The objective is to develop seedlings for outplanting on suitable sites to help in recovery of this Regional Forester's Sensitive/State threatened species and its dependent Sensitive/State threatened butterfly, the northern blue.

Toumey Nursery forced some of the bilberry seedlings, to help them grow more quickly. These were ready for outplanting in June 2007. One hundred and eighty bilberry plugs were planted in sandy soils at two different sites, on the Watersmeet and Kenton Ranger Districts. Unfortunately, planting was followed by an extremely dry summer and many of these plugs died. Six larger plants, raised in pots, were planted at the Forest Visitor Center and Kenton Ranger District native plant gardens. However, survival of these plants was also limited due to drought.

The remaining seedlings, which were not forced, were planted in September 2007. Seventy-five were planted at the first Watersmeet site. Seventy-two were planted at a second site on the Watersmeet District. The remaining 82 plugs were planted in clay soils on the Bergland District.

Toumey Nursery sowed additional seed in 2007 and is raising about 750 seedlings for use on the Ottawa and possibly the Hiawatha and Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forests in 2008. More seed may be planted in the coming winter to provide dwarf bilberry shrubs for planting in 2009.



Planted bilberry plugs in June 2007

Year awarded: 2005

Project completion: first phase completed 2007; additional planting expected (beyond that outlined in 2005 proposal)

Report number: 3 of 3

Expenditures 2007:

NFN3: \$0

\$ 500 in-kind, Toumey Nursery

\$1,500 in-kind, Ottawa Botany Program

Partners/Contractors/Cooperators:

J.W. Toumey Nursery

Contact: Sue Trull, Forest Botanist
906-932-1330 ext. 312, strull@fs.fed.us



Plugs ready to plant



Ottawa National Forest
E6248 US Hwy. 2
Ironwood, MI 49938