

Development of Tongass National Forest Native Plant Materials for Rehabilitation and Restoration.

2009 Accomplishments

This summer was a landmark season of accomplishments in the Sitka garden. After a spring meeting with partners from the USGS and Cooperative Extension Service, we started a summer of site expansion and utility upgrades. The Forest Service held a chain saw certification class on the grounds and removed a dozen Sitka spruce trees that were encroaching on the garden site. Master gardeners and a SAGA (Southeast Alaska Guidance Association) crew provided volunteer help to clean up the tree branches and build new potting benches.

As a part of the new garden design, the garden shed was moved in order to increase light and add space to the garden. A new access road and storage pad were constructed; in addition, a waterline was installed and buried, and conduit was laid for hooking up electricity to the site. Until this summer we accessed water and power from buildings near the garden. We purchased a new commercial garden tiller and promptly doubled the garden's production space.

Materials were purchased to expand the deer fence and to add a small greenhouse next year. The greenhouse will be constructed as part of a University of Alaska construction class during the winter. We also bought a new seed harvester, an irrigation system, and enough bulk soil mixing materials to continue expanding next season. The enlarged site holds great promise to continue in the tradition of the original Sitka Agricultural Research station which occupied this site in the early 1900's.

We are growing an expanding selection of native plants. Many of these crops are producing seeds and showing promise as revegetation and restoration plants for a variety of habitat types in southeastern Alaska. We are ready to start providing seed and plant materials to projects for use in rehabilitation or restoration.



Placing the garden shed at its new site.



A much needed waterline was installed, and a power conduit was buried to bring power to the site next year. Note the garden shed in its old location in the middle of the garden.

The Cooperative Extension Service continues to be our key partner in this work at the garden. A Cooperative Extension Service employee serves as the head gardener and helps keep the crops watered and weeded. The Cooperative Extension Service also works with a variety of native and non-native crops for food production. Other native species are being tested as landscape material.

In FY10 we plan to finalize a Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the Cooperative Extension Service and continue producing native plant materials at the site for both Forest Service needs and to promote native plant use and awareness within the public.

Year Awarded: 2009 (Carryover from FY08)

Project completion: ongoing

Report number: 3

Expenditures for FY09:

- **\$50,000 – Total project award** (dollars received back from FY08 fire transfer to the Region)
- \$20,000 – Salary for USFS employee for maintenance and growth of nursery stock and clearing of 1/10 acres land for native plantings.
- \$30,000 Challenge Cost Share Agreement – unspent.

Partners: University of Alaska, Cooperative Extension Service, United States Geological Survey

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