



Native Seed Collecting Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest 2011 Accomplishments

This marks the seventh year that native plant seed was collected on the Chequamegon-Nicolet. This seed will be used for restoration projects and native plant gardens.

The seed came from two distinct ecological zones that occur on the forest: the Northern Highlands and the Bayfield Sand Plain. This ensures we are using a native genotype. Contractors skilled in plant identification targeted a host of native plants for collection throughout the growing season. They try and pick seed at its peak ripeness. This often means several trips to the same location depending on the species.

Seed was collected in forest and sunny areas as well as wetlands and includes: Canada mayflower, wild leek, grasses, blazing star, milkweed, bee balm, asters, sunflower, turtlehead, and joe-pye-weed.

The seed is dried and processed to remove much of the chaff and flower parts. This year we will process it at the Forest Service's JW Toumey Nursery in Watersmeet Michigan since they can do much of the work by machine. It is then sent to the Oconto River Seed Orchard in Wisconsin for cold temperature treatment and storage.



Figure 3. Bagged seed and flower heads from the collectors ready to be cleaned

This year seed was used from 2010 and prior to plant at native plant gardens in Florence, Rhinelander, and Park Falls. We also used it for several restoration projects across the forest. Seed from the Northern Highland Zone was planted at the Alvin Creek Impoundment restoration site and at the Florence Natural Resource Center native plant garden. Seed from the Bayfield Sand Plain seed zone helped restore the Mount Valhalla recreation site and augment wildlife openings across the Forest.



Figures 1 & 2 Picking seed is easy, as for Canada anemone (left); but cleaning small seed like this aster (right) is difficult and often the fluff can not be removed from the seed (photos M Brzeskiewicz)

Year Awarded: 2011

Project completion: on-going

Report number: 2

Expenditures: FY11 total funding \$4,0000 NFN3

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