

Native Prairie Seed Increase Project at Clymer Meadow

2012 Accomplishments

Status of Project Accomplishment: The Blackland Prairie of Texas once spanned more than 12 million acres between the Red River and San Antonio. Today, it is estimated that less than 1% remains. Restoration of native prairie plant communities is an essential strategy for increasing the acres under native vegetation, enhancing degraded remnants and buffering extant remnants. Lack of seed stock of local genetic origin is an impediment to accomplishing true restoration. The Nature Conservancy's Clymer Meadow Preserve has long been used as a seed source for prairie restoration. Recently, old agricultural lands within the preserve have been converted to seed increase plots for selected local native grasses.

The Conservancy has entered into an agreement with USFS to harvest wild seed from extant prairie and increase seed within plots to provide stock for restoration at the Caddo National Grasslands. Notably, seed stock harvested from irrigated plots and wild stands on Conservancy lands in Hunt and Lamar Counties was planted on approximately 45 acres of the Ladonia Unit of the Caddo National Grasslands in March.

Eastern gamagrass plots, planted in 2009, were harvested in June 2012, yielding approximately 15 lbs bulk seed. An additional 10 lbs were harvested from wild stands and previously planted restorations. Small quantities of conservative species, including blue wild indigo, and rattlesnake master were harvested in the fall of 2012.

Due to the drought, no wild harvest was taken on Clymer Meadow in 2011. However, prospects of a fall 2012 harvest are favorable. Upcoming plans include:

- Harvest of +/- 50 ac at Clymer Meadow
- Seed hay harvest at Tridens Prairie
- Harvest of 30 acre restoration at Collin County's Parkhill Prairie.



Echinacea pallida and *Sporobolus silvenanus* on Tridens Prairie harvest site. Photo by Bill Carr

Native Plant Program

- **Total Native Seed Project Cost including equipment: \$40,000**
- **Employed: 2**
- **Type of Project: Increase and harvest native prairie seed for use at the Caddo National Grasslands**
- **For More Information, Contact: Tom Philipps 1-936-639-8514**

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