Great Basin Plant Materials Center

NRCS
USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

2006 Projects

Poplars Tested for Use as Biofuel

On June 28, 2006, the first plant trial at the Great Basin PMC went underway. The study included planting a thousand popular trees to evaluate 58 different varieties. The tree planting was part of national biofuels project being funded through U.S. Department of Energy and conducted by Greenwood Resources, Inc., a poplar tree farm management company out of Portland, Oregon, the University of Nevada, Reno Cooperative Extension, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the 58 popular varieties and select the varieties that are most suitable for biofuel.

Poplar seedling in the early stages of growth.

Conservation Plant Demonstration

A demonstration planting was established at Herbig Park in Gardnerville, Nevada. Cooperators on the project include the Great Basin PMC, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department, and Carson Valley Conservation District. The project will be accessible to the public and will demonstrate the plant species that can be used to address conservation concerns. Additionally, the planting will be evaluated to determine the performance of each species in the soil and climate conditions present at the site.

Field where demonstration planting took place

Soil Stabilization On Abandoned Cropland

Population growth in Nevada has increased water demand for urban development. As a result, water has been diverted from cropland to urban areas as water rights have been sold to cities and developers. Water transfers have resulted in abandoned cropland that is highly susceptible to erosion. The Great Basin PMC, in cooperation with University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the Lahontan Conservation District, implemented a study to investigate grass, forb, and shrub species that can effectively stabilize soils on abandoned cropland.

Tractor pulling seed drill during trial planting

Cheatgrass Displacement Being Studied

Cheatgrass die-off has been observed in many areas where it had previously been the dominant plant species. The Great Basin PMC, in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, began a study to examine plant species that can establish in areas where cheatgrass die-off has occurred and prevent the reestablishment of cheatgrass in the future. Six grasses and one forb were planted in mid-November at an off-site location near Winnemucca.

Cheatgrass increases risk of wildfires

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

MISSION

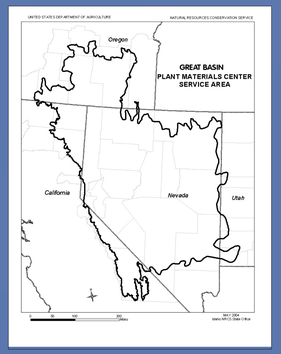
Specialize in the collection, testing, and selection of native and adapted plant materials, cultural practices, and restoration and rehabilitation methods for resource concerns of the Great Basin.

COLLABORATORS

Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station
University of Nevada, Reno College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources
USDI Bureau of Land Management
Nevada Department of Agriculture
USDA Forest Service
Nevada Division of Forestry
Private Landowners
and many others

The Great Basin PMC area covers approximately 139,000 square miles, almost 89 million acres, in four states: Nevada, Oregon, California, and Utah.

The Great Basin PMC is the newest plant materials center, bringing the number of PMC's nationwide to 27.



PURPOSE OF THE GREAT BASIN PMC

Develop plant materials for vegetating non-cropland areas
Develop technology for improved reclamation success
Communicate seed production information needed for seed growers
Develop a foundation seed source to meet restoration needs
Work closely with cooperators to monitor the success and impacts of real-life plantings in the wild
Develop alternative, low-water-using crops

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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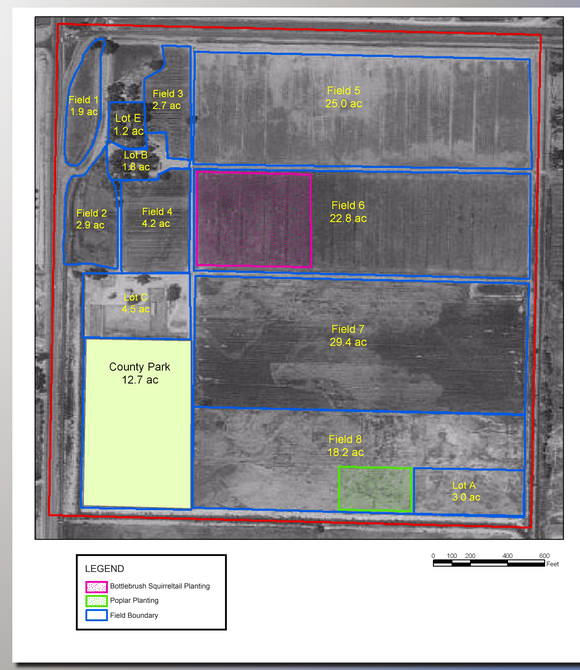

Aerial view of the Great Basin Plant Materials Center