

## **Establishing herbaceous wetland plants on a WRP site**

*Grabowski, J. and Rodrigue, P. Corresponding Author: Janet Grabowski, USDA-NRCS, Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center, 2533 County Rd. 65, Coffeeville, MS 38922-9263. Phone: (601) 675-2588; Fax: (601) 675-2369; Email: jgrabowski@ms.nrcs.usda.gov*

Moist soil management areas on WRP lands are usually planted with either annual wildlife food crops or bottomland hardwood trees. Although these species provide desirable food resources for wildlife, these sites often ultimately contain little plant diversity. The Jamie L. Whitten Plant Materials Center (PMC) conducted a study on a WRP site in Quitman County, Mississippi using herbaceous wetland plants previously tested at the PMC. Examination of the planting site made it apparent that information on the hydrologic characteristics of the site was required to accurately determine planting locations. Therefore, the USDA-NRCS Wetlands Science Institute was enlisted to gather this data. Four accessions were planted, Indian Bayou Source powdery thalia (*Thalia dealbata* Fraser ex Roscoe), Leaf River Source woolgrass [*Scirpus cyperinus* (L.) Kunth], soft-stem bulrush [*Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani* (K.C. Gmel.) Palla], and soft rush (*Juncus effusus* L.). Two water management schemes were tested; normal practice, where boards were placed in the water control structures in the fall and removed in the spring, and summer water collection, where the boards stayed in the structures year round. The planting area was from 0.3 m below to 0.3 m above normal winter water level. Bare-root plants were planted in the spring and fall of 1998 and the planting repeated in 1999. Plant survival will be monitored. The summer of 1998 was unusually dry and evaluations in late July showed limited survival of powdery thalia only. Data on the fall 1998 and spring 1999 plantings will also be presented.

Key words: water management, planting season, hydrology, wildlife.

*The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).*

To file a complaint of discrimination, write the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenues, SW. Washington, D.C., 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.