

Manhattan Plant Materials Center



A newsletter in support of the Plant Materials Program for Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma

Volume 12, No. 3

July 2005

Homestead National Monument of America

The Homestead National Monument in Beatrice, Nebraska celebrates the 1862 signing of the Homestead Act by then President Abraham Lincoln. The Homestead Act allowed any citizen over 21 years old, who was the head of a family, who was a citizen or intended to become one, and who had not borne arms against the country, to acquire 160 acres of surveyed land free of charge. The National Park Service is planning to construct a new Homestead Heritage Visitor Center at the park in the not to distant future. Russ Haas, NRCS/NPS Liaison, was requested to visit the Homestead National Monument on May 11, 2005 to provide guidance on projects the NRCS Plant Materials Program could assist the Park in completing. Rich Wynia, PMC Manager at Manhattan, also met with Russ and park officials Mark Engler, Superintendent, and Jesse Bolli, Resource Management Specialist, to discuss the new visitor center and potential for landscaping with native species. The park just like the Homestead Act that it represents has no undisturbed prairie other than a small area around the site of a one room country school. Thus, the process of providing seed for the landscaping around the Heritage Visitor Center may be accomplished using local commercial seed vendors and specifying local cultivars or source identified releases from neighboring states.

The Manhattan Center has worked on only one other National Park Service Project and that involved producing seed and

transplants for the Agate Fossil Beds National Monument located in Western Nebraska. The Plant Materials Program nationally is assisting many of our National Parks to revegetate and retain the genetic integrity of native plants found within the parks.

Training Program Instituted

The Plant Materials National Program Leader, Robert Escherman, has re-instituted an old program to get new people into the Plant Materials discipline. Trainees will be hired in all three regions of the U.S. The Trainees will be located at different Plant Centers in the three regions. The trainee in the East will be located at the Big Flats New York PMC, the Central Trainee will be located here in Manhattan and the West's Trainee will be assigned to the Pullman, Washington Plant Center. The main idea is to get some new folks into the program, give them an idea about what Plant Materials is all about, and then get them to different Centers for additional hands on experience. The Trainee Program will bring new, well educated folks into the PM Program and help to fill those voids left as the boomer generation begins to retire. Human Capital Management is what it is called in Washington, DC.

Personnel Changes

First, we had Regional Plant Materials Specialists at the NTC. Then they were gone. Now we have the NTSC (National Technology Support Centers) and a new

Regional Plant Materials Specialist for the central part of the country. Joel Douglas, former PMC Manager at Coffeyville, Mississippi, is now the Regional PMS for the Central part of the U.S. So we welcome Joel to the Central Region and look forward to his visit to the Manhattan PMC in July of this year.

Pat Broyles, Soil Conservationist at the PMC, worked on many American Indian outreach projects during his tenure here in Manhattan. He even has helped to formulate a new outreach course for NRCS by working with the National Employee Development Center. Pat has also worked on updating the National Plant Materials Manual by helping formulate a Standard Memorandum of Agreement and Task Agreement that Plant Centers can use as a model when beginning work with American Indian groups. Pat is still tying up loose ends on some of his projects even though he is now officially a Soil Conservationist at the Emporia, Kansas Field Office. The PMC Staff wants to extend a big thank you to Pat for all the help he provided to the PMC while he was here and to wish him the best in his future endeavors.

Robert Alan Shadow will be joining the Manhattan, PMC Staff July 11, 2005. Alan is a recent graduate of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. He has a Masters of Agronomy Degree with an emphasis in Wetland Management and Science which he completed in May of 2005. Alan was employed by the LSU Ag Center while earning his Masters Degree. He has had a variety of experiences and will be an excellent candidate for improving the Plant Materials Program. The Manhattan Staff looks forward to Alan joining us and getting to know him better.

Agronomy Field Day 2005

The Kansas State Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service is having their Agronomy Field Day July 22, 2005 (8:30 AM – 2:00 PM). The Field Day is being held this year at the KSU Ashland Bottoms Research Fields. The focus of the Agronomy Field Day will be weeds and herbicide use. Topics and tours will include: herbicide drift, round up ready alfalfa, herbicide symptoms/injury, diagnosing unique field problems and weed seedling identification. Field Day participants will have an opportunity to visit with Agronomy Faculty and College of Agriculture Administrators. There will also be an opportunity to tour the USDA Plant Materials Center facility and fields. There will be a complimentary lunch served at noon and a spray drift clinic presented by Bob Wolf after lunch. A brochure with details can be downloaded from the internet at the following address: <http://www.oznet.k-state.edu/agronomy/events/fieldday2005.pdf>

The PPFA to Meet in Texas

The Plains and Prairie Forestry Association is having its 2005 Annual Meeting in Amarillo, Texas this year. The theme for the meeting this year is 'Plains Forestry - Resource Development and Protection'. This will mark the 10th annual meeting for the PPFA. Mark the week of September 12-16, 2005 on your calendar and plan to visit Palo Duro Canyon State Park in Amarillo. Your contact for the Meeting is:

Brian Scott
Texas Forest Service
3611 Soney Suite 4-C
Amarillo, TX 79119
806-353-8952
bscott@tfs.tamu.edu

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or 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 the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202)-720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.