



# NewsNote

A Periodic Note for State PLANTS Coordinators

1 December 2004

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### **1. NPDC Visits Arizona State Office**

In early November 2004, National Plant Data Center (NPDC) staff had the opportunity to meet with NRCS Arizona State Office and Tucson Plant Materials Center staff to discuss the role of the PLANTS Database in Arizona. The NPDC received valuable feedback on current usage of the Database and additional ways to improve services in Arizona and the southwest.

Meeting highlights included a discussion about the NPDC's work in ethnoecology and Arizona's hope for expansion in this area. Additionally, participants discussed plant data currently under development on topics like carbon sequestration, phytoremediation, and carbon fixation. The NPDC took note of specific recommendations made by field staff on how the data could be used and applied in the southwest. These recommendations will be extremely helpful in the future development of interactive data tools in the PLANTS Database.



*Jim Briggs, Mike Somerville, Rebecca Noricks, and Bruce Munda (L to R) meet in Arizona*

The National Plant Data Center hopes to meet and connect with other states in the same way. Like Arizona, your feedback is an invaluable tool in future data development. If you are interested in hosting NPDC staff in your state to provide feedback on how you use the PLANTS Database or how the Center could serve you better, please contact Rebecca Noricks at (225) 775-6280 x 10.

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## **2. Legal Status Extended in PLANTS Database**

The National Plant Data Center has achieved a first by capturing the comprehensive legal status (threatened and endangered, noxious, or wetland indicator status) for related plants on its Plant Profile pages. This feature allows users to visit any Plant Profile and immediately grasp the complex legal protections for a plant. It was developed in cooperation with the NRCS Information Technology Center.

A plant's legal status applied at one taxonomic level of classification often automatically applies to another. However, until now, there has never been a listing or location that communicates these legal status relationships between synonyms and related plant species, varieties, or subspecies. For example, *Chorizanthe robusta* is listed as federally endangered—previous listings would have stopped here. But, now PLANTS also displays the endangered status of its two varieties, *robusta* and *hartwegii*.

It is also important when a state classifies the legal status for an entire genus without specifying particular species. For example, California lists the genus *Cynodon* (Bermudagrass) as a noxious weed. This means that all Bermudagrass species in California are considered noxious by the state. The PLANTS Database now communicates this relationship at each species' Plant Profile (i.e. *Cynodon dactylon*) because of the genus' legal status.



## **3. State PLANTS Coordinators Page Added to NPDC Site**

A State PLANTS Coordinator page has been added to the NPDC Web site. This page provides access for maintaining state plant lists by revising and updating state common names. It also enables coordinators to create and update their state Grazing and Spatial Analysis Tool (GSAT) list. Additionally, this is also where we maintain the list of State PLANTS Coordinators and their contact information. To access this page, go to the NPDC Web site at <http://npdc.nrcs.usda.gov> and select the State Coordinators button on the gray navigation bar.



## **4. President Signs Noxious Weed Control and Eradication Act of 2004**

The Noxious Weed Control and Eradication Act of 2004, an amendment to the Plant Protection Act of 2000, was signed by President Bush into law on October 30, 2004. This Act requires the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program assisting weed management entities to control or eradicate noxious weeds on public and private land. Though it has been authorized for the years 2005-2009, no appropriated funds are currently available. For more information on this legislation, go to <http://invasivespecies.gov/laws/congress108.shtml> and click on S.144 - "Noxious Weed Control Act of 2004."



## **5. E-mail Changes at the National Plant Data Center**

Staff e-mails at the NPDC changed in late November 2004. Previously, e-mails had a [po.nrcs.usda.gov](http://po.nrcs.usda.gov) or [usda.gov](http://usda.gov) extension. Now, all NPDC staff e-mails have an [la.usda.gov](http://la.usda.gov) extension and follow the following formula: `firstname.lastname@la.usda.gov`.

For example, Scott Peterson's e-mail which used to be either [scott.peterson@usda.gov](mailto:scott.peterson@usda.gov) or [speterson@po.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:speterson@po.nrcs.usda.gov) is now [scott.peterson@la.usda.gov](mailto:scott.peterson@la.usda.gov).

For a full listing of accurate and updated staff e-mails, please visit the NPDC Web site, <http://npdc.usda.gov>, and click on employee directory.



### **Your Feedback is Requested**

Please send comments regarding PLANTS, NPDC NewsNote, or other plant-related issues to <rebecca.noricks@la.usda.gov>. Visit us on the Web at <http://npdc.usda.gov>.



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