

# Uncompahgre Plateau Native Plant Program on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest

## 2008 Accomplishments

The objective of the Uncompahgre Plateau (UP) Native Plant Program is the development of site-adapted native plant materials for use in the restoration of native plant communities in the Colorado Plateau regional area. The primary elements of the program are 1) the production of native plant materials; 2) basic and applied research on native species; and 3) training and dissemination of information. In 2008, substantial advancements have been made in each of our program areas.

1) Production of Native Plant Materials: Seed increase fields of 25 species at multiple facilities in UT and CO have produced significant amounts of seed this year. The seed will be cleaned in Winter 2008 and made available for use in restoration activities or for commercial production. In Fall 2008, several seed increase fields were expanded with additional plantings.

In September, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association purchased 180 pounds of mountain brome from a local farmer to reseed areas along its power line on the Uncompahgre Plateau undergoing fuels reduction. The seed source was originally collected only one mile from the site in which it will be replanted. With 18 species expected to be available in 2009 for commercial and private growers, the UP hopes that this example establishes a new approach and can be the beginning of a steady supply of local native seed for this region.

2) Basic and Applied Research: In 2008, the program completed many of its long-term studies. Multi-year cultivation and life history studies of 21 perennial native grass and forb species were concluded at the CSU-Rogers Mesa Research Facility and Utah Div. of Wildlife Resources-Fountain Green Facility. These studies investigated important biological characteristics and effective growing practices. In 2009, the results of these studies will be compiled and evaluated. In Fall 2008, new studies were initiated at the CSU-Yellow Jacket Research Facility and Fountain Green Facility on four forbs that are important for wildlife, including Gunnison sage grouse.

A 3-year Grass Adaptability Study also reached completion. The purpose of the study was to compare ecological characteristics (such as drought tolerance, growth rates, and seed production) of individual populations of 13 perennial grasses before releasing collections for commercial propagation. Data was collected on 130 different populations of grasses over the last three years at four study sites in UT and CO. The results of this study will also be compiled and a report prepared in 2009.

3) Training and Dissemination of Information: The UP has initiated a local quarterly lunchtime lecture series. Lecture topics are centered on issues related to public lands and are targeted at federal and state land management agency employees, city and county government representatives, members of local interest groups and community members. The UP also continues to produce newsletters and maintain a website as a means of communicating our accomplishments.



Figure 1. Grass Adaptability Studies at Utah State University-Nephi Farm Facility.



Figure 2. Blue aster in a seed increase field



Figure 3. Planting mountain sagebrush at Billy Creek State Wildlife Management Area, CO.

Year Awarded: initial award in 2005

Project completion: 2011

Report number: 3 of 6

Expenditures (through 10/2007):

▪FY05 Agreement #05-PA-11020400-067 funding \$275,000, expend. \$275,000 \$0 remaining

▪FY07 Agreement #05-PA-11020400-067 Modification #1 - funding \$145,000, expend. \$48,630; \$96,370 remaining

▪**Total funding \$420,000, total expended \$323,630;**

▪**\$96,370 total remaining** (It is anticipated that this balance will be fully expended before June 30, 2009 on current ongoing program activities.)

Partners/Contractors/Coop: USFS Regions 2 & 4, BLM CO and UT State Offices, CO Div. of Wildlife, and UT Div. of Wildlife Resources, Public Lands Partnership, Colorado State Univ., Brigham Young Univ., Utah State Univ., Snow College, Meeker Plant Materials Center, The Nature Conservancy and commercial / private growers.

Contact Person & phone number: John Moore, GMUG NF 970.874.6696



**Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest**

2250 Highway 50  
Delta, CO 81416