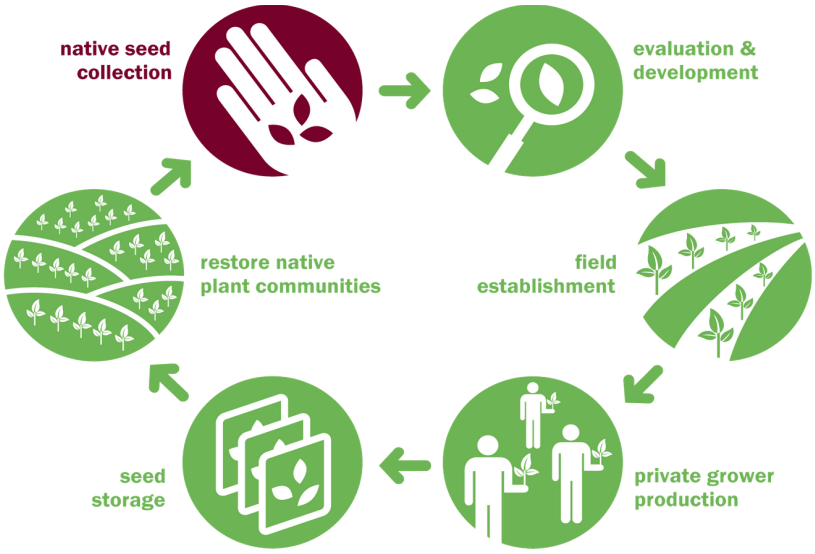
Seeds of Success

Seeds of Success (SOS) is a national native seed collection program in the United States, led by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in partnership with the USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Agricultural Research Service and many non-federal partners. SOS is the first step in the native plant materials development process to increase the quality and quantity of native seed available for restoring and supporting resilient ecosystems. SOS collections of wildland native seed are used for seed research and development such as germination trials, common garden studies, and protocol establishment. Additional uses include germplasm conservation, seed production, and ecosystem restoration. Portions of each collection are also held in long-term storage facilities for conservation.

Program history: SOS was established in 2001 by the BLM and includes many partners, such as botanic gardens, arboreta, zoos, and municipalities. All SOS teams share a common protocol to coordinate seed collecting and species targeting efforts.

To date, SOS has made more than 26,000 native seed collections comprising 5,832 unique taxa from 43 states across the US. In 2015, BLM received a $3.5 million mitigation award because of Hurricane Sandy to collect seed in coastal habitats from Virginia to Maine. Current SOS priorities include ecoregional programs in the Great Basin, Colorado Plateau, and Mojave Desert. Efforts are also underway to expand partnerships in the Southeastern U.S. to preserve the incredible plant biodiversity of the region.

Native Plant Materials Development Cycle



Since 2001

26,000 + TOTAL SEED COLLECTIONS

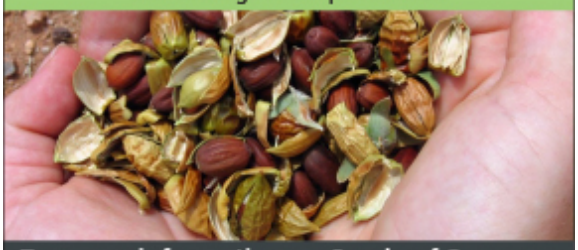
5,800 + Unique Taxa Collected
1,170 + Genera Collected

140 + COLLECTING TEAMS

2,500 + Collectors Trained

43 STATES REPRESENTED

93 Ecoregions Represented



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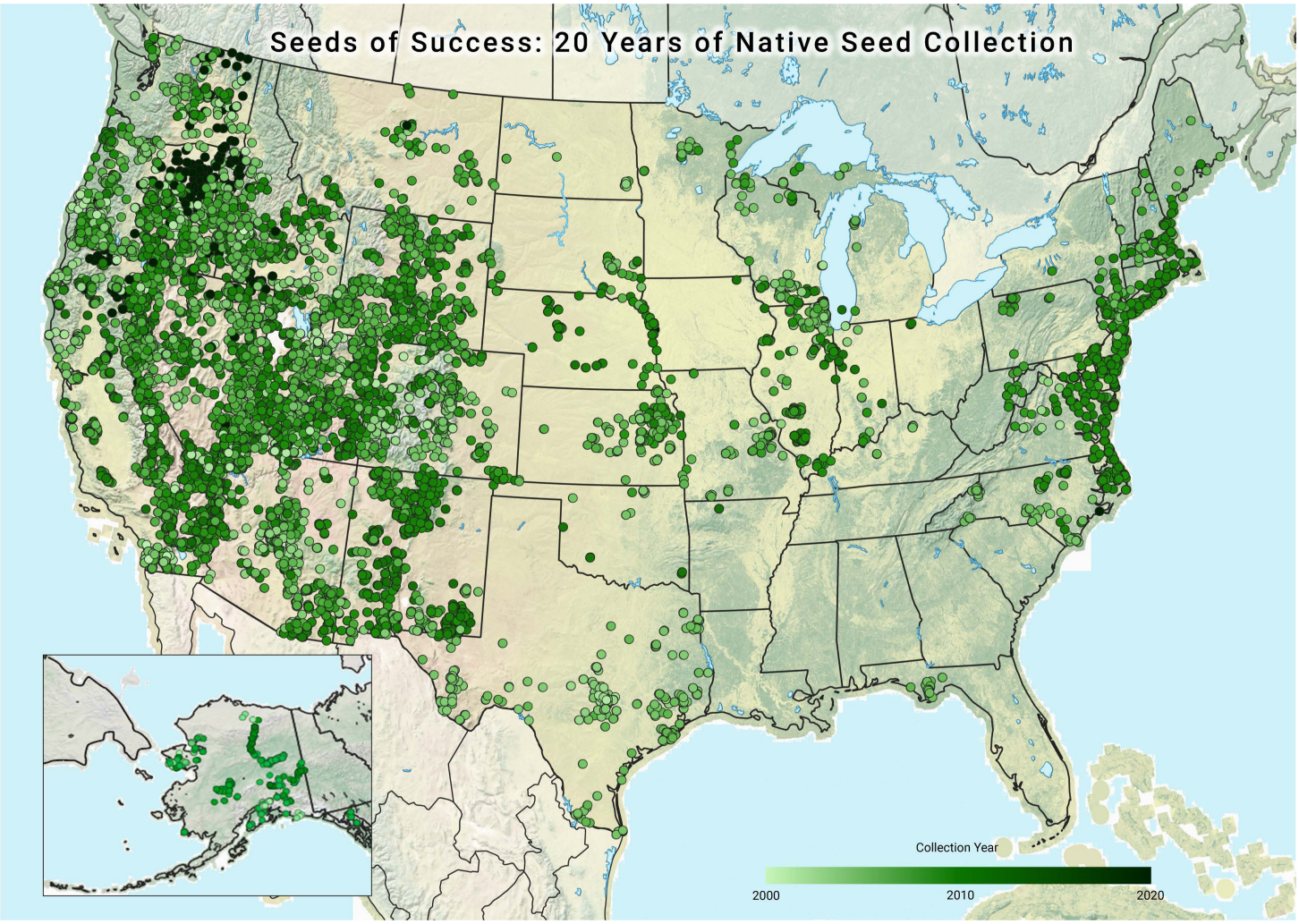

Number of SOS Collections by BLM States

Alaska 1,054	Eastern States 4,553	New Mexico/KS,OK,TX 2,524
Arizona 1,186	Idaho 896	Oregon/Washington 3,362
California 4,013	Montana/Dakotas 360	Utah 2,343
Colorado 1,330	Nevada 2,820	Wyoming/Nebraska 1,587

Seeds of Success priorities include:

Great Basin Region: Seeds of Success is working to capture genetic variation from populations of native plants including sagebrush. SOS has made over 6,000 native seed collections of 1,345 different species within Greater Sage-Grouse habitat areas.

Colorado Plateau Region: SOS Collections made by BLM Colorado and the Colorado Plateau Native Plant Program are being studied by the Upper Colorado Environmental Plant Center so that local farmers can successfully grow them for BLM and others to buy. These species will be crucial in restoration efforts as the region recovers from more than 5.4 million acres destroyed by wildfires between 2010-2020.

Mojave Desert Region: The Mojave Desert encompasses a diverse range of habitats, including isolated mountain ranges, desert basins, sand dunes, and riparian areas around isolated springs and streams. The Mojave Desert Native Plant Program prioritizes SOS seed collections to restore habitat for the threatened Mojave desert tortoise.