



Seeds of Success 2011 Annual Report



Seeds of Success (SOS) is the national native seed collection program, led by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in partnership with a variety of federal agencies and non-federal organizations. As the wildland collection arm of the Native Plant Materials Development Program (NPMDP), SOS's mission is to collect wildland native seed for research, development, germplasm conservation, and ecosystem restoration.

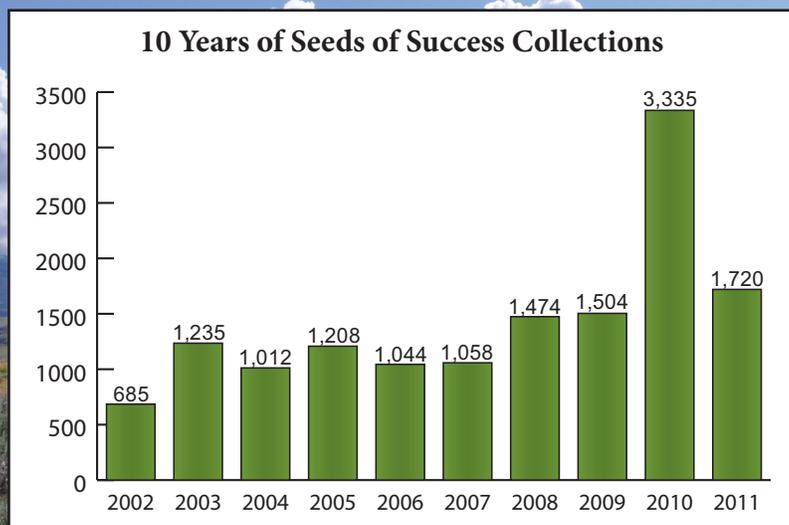
The long-term conservation outcome of the SOS program is to support the NPMDP, whose mission is to increase the quality and quantity of native plant materials available for restoring and supporting resilient ecosystems. Healthy ecosystems provide the essential ecological services upon which all life depends, including our own. Native plant communities provide the foundation for fish and wildlife habitat such as the sage grouse. These communities support the mandates of federal land managing agencies as wilderness areas, habitat for rare, threatened and endangered species, and as sources of recreational- and extraction-based income, thus strengthening local economies. Additionally, native seed collections and the workforce created to make these collections, support the Secretary of the Interior's Initiatives in Climate Change, America's Great Outdoors, and Youth.

Successful Program Development in Wyoming

Thirteen SOS collection teams worked in 2011 to make over 220 seed collections; 46% of which were forbs to support development of materials for use in the restoration and enhancement of sagebrush communities. Winter preparation for the 2011 season included data synthesis, production of a GIS map of 2006 – 2010 SOS collection sites, overhauling the Wyoming Plant Conservation Program (PCP) website, designing two color brochures for the WY BLM SOS and PCP programs, lecturing at the University of Wyoming and state meetings, and giving Field Office (FO) trainings in SOS protocol and Plant ID. The work was possible with the assistance of an experienced Conservation and Land Management Botany Intern at the State Office who traveled statewide, plus participation from all FOs, research partners, and fifteen weeks of Youth Conservation Corps crews from four states. Seeds from 2011 SOS went into research with three University of Wyoming labs, two USDA NRCS Plant Materials Centers, and into two UW demonstration gardens. Many of the 2011 seeds are now going into trial field reclamation plantings.

2011 Seeds of Success Collections in Brief	
Total 2011 Seed Collections	1,720
Unique Taxa Collected	950
Genera Collected	379
Collectors Trained	60
Ecoregions Represented	44
States Represented	21

Photo: A collector with the University of Wyoming's Hufford Lab looks for Hoary Townsend Daisy (Townsendia incana) to collect for the Bureau of Land Management.





Special K Ranch provides opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities to work on native plant materials development.

Montana: Ramping Up Collections and Partnerships

Prior to the 2011 collection season, there had been relatively few SOS seed collections in Montana. The season started out cold and rainy, initially delaying fieldwork but the Miles City SOS team had plenty to do. As with any new time collection team, they did not know enough about population locations to collect early season species. Instead, they first engaged in a number of tasks that helped get a seed collection program off the ground, including:

- Coordinated with biologists at state/local levels to compile a target species list.
- Performed a literature review and investigated appropriate websites for information on species on the tentative collection list. Information such as flowering times, seed collection times, counties where found, propagation protocol, seed readiness indicators, uses in reclamation and other general facts were researched and recorded.
- Identified all plants found in the field during reconnaissance of potential collection sites using the *Vascular Plants of Montana* by Robert Dorn to key out plants, and the USDA PLANTS Database for nomenclature. Double checked against sensitive plant list.
- Started the Miles City Field Office herbarium by collecting specimens and mounting/labeling them.

By the end of the 2011 season, the Miles City Field Office had contributed 13 collections to the SOS National Collection. In addition to collecting on BLM land, they worked with the Montana Fish and Wildlife Eastern Land Office and the USDA ARS Fort Keogh Livestock and Range Research Laboratory to obtain permission and develop protocols for collecting on their lands. They also have partnered with the Special K Ranch, a working ranch that provides residential opportunities for adults with developmental disabilities. Since 2005, the Special K greenhouse has been working on native plant materials development. In 2011, about 10,385 plants were sent out for planting. Another 14,000 plants are expected to be used in the 2012 season.



Seed from Sideoats Grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), a perennial grass, collected in the Northwestern Great Plains ecoregion by the BLM Miles City Field Office in September 2011.

SEEDS



OF SUCCESS

For more information about Seeds of Success

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