



# Seeds of Success 2012 Annual Report

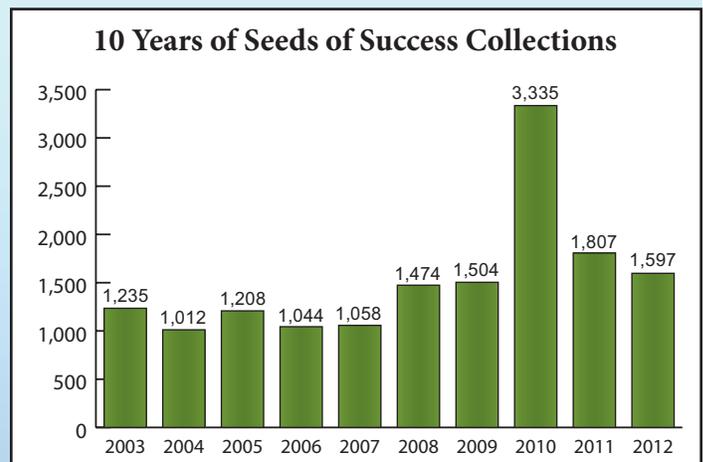


Seeds of Success (SOS) is the national native seed collection program, led by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in partnership with a variety of federal agencies and non-federal organizations. As the first step of the Native Plant Materials Development Program (NPMDP), SOS's mission is to collect wildland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

## Alaska BLM: Partnering for SOS and NPMD

The BLM Alaska state program has focused on obtaining native plant seed for storage and increase, with the objective of providing greater seed availability for restoration efforts. From 2007-2012, BLM Alaska State Office (AK930) has partnered with the Alaska Plant Materials Center (AKPMC), University of Alaska Anchorage/Alaska Natural Heritage Program, and Chicago Botanic Garden's Conservation and Land Management Internship Program. Together they have made collections across the state. Four hundred and fifty collections, totaling over 25 pounds of cleaned seed, were made between 2009 and 2011. An additional 41 collections were made in 2012.



*Photo: The Bureau of Land Management works with the Alaska Plant Materials Center on native plant materials development using Seeds of Success collections.*





Photos from the 2012 collecting season in Alaska where collections are sometimes done in remote areas without roads that are accessible only by helicopter or plane.

SOS has obtained permits from Chugach National Forest, Alaska State Parks, Alaska Department of Natural Resources, and Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, among others. The ability to collect on many different landscapes benefits not only SOS, but also the permitting agency, which can draw on the seed collections for local projects.

AK930 began a more in-depth partnership with the AKPMC in 2009, when they took the lead in cleaning and processing all Alaska seed collections. In addition to processing these collections, AKPMC has performed germination tests on about a dozen species and has planted these for seed increase. Most of the plants are presently being grown in raised beds. These include *Achillea sibirica*, *Artemisia borealis*, *Artemisia tilesii*, *Carex mertensii*, *Chamerion latifolium*, *Hedysarum alpinum*, *Oxytropis campestris*, *Sanguisorba canadensis*, and *Wilhelmsia physodes*.

### Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank: A New Ecoregional Partnership

In early 2012, the Greenbelt Native Plant Center (GNPC), a division of the New York City Department of Parks, officially launched the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank (MARS-B) with funding from the US Botanic Garden and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. One of the first steps for GNPC, a long-time Seeds of Success Partner, was to hold an organizational meeting where 25 scientists and plant conservationists from across the region met for two and a half days of discussions.

The initial work of MARS-B has focused on two pilot efforts in addition to basic SOS collections. The first pilot effort is to make ecoregional collections of *Fraxinus* (ash) throughout the Mid-Atlantic. Ash is a targeted genus due to its imperilment from the invasive Emerald Ash Borer which has killed tens of millions of trees and threatens billions more in North America.

MARS-B's second pilot is focused on collection of early successional species. Using a dataset generated from the USDA PLANTS Database, a list was created for species whose range exists throughout all the MARS-B states. Then the list was narrowed to 276 species, with the help of MARS-B cooperators.

In addition, work is underway to develop a more generalized target list including species representative of the diversity, geography, and plant communities and habitats found throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. A standing committee is being formed to assist with the development of ecoregional seed mixes that will directly impact on-the-ground ecological restoration efforts.

We look forward to hearing more about the accomplishments of MARS-B as they develop as an ecoregional program!

Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank Workshop participants took a collecting field trip and spread out at a power line right of way to collect Velvet Panicum (*Dichanthelium scoparium*) seed in 2012.



**SEEDS**



OF SUCCESS

For more information about Seeds of Success

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