

Abstract from the 2013 National Native Seed Conference

Native Plant Materials Development, Production & Use in Habitat Restoration

Plant Materials Development and Planting Strategies for Disturbed Southwestern Landscapes

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The service areas of the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center are primarily located in the arid and semi-arid eco-regions. These regions receive less than 13 inches of annual precipitation which makes it extremely challenging to establish field plantings using traditional planting methods. Established in 1934, the Plant Materials Center and its partners have been developing native plant materials and effective planting strategies for the arid Southwest. Plant materials are developed by collecting, selecting, and employing plant breeding strategies to primarily enhance establishment attributes, or to maximize plant population diversity. Planting strategies include some type of moisture enhancement treatments which are necessary for successful establishment in arid environments. Treatments include mulches, hydrophilic polymers, deep-rooted systems, the deep-planting methods of longstems and pole cuttings into shallow groundwater, the proper timing of plantings, and the use of local plant populations. Case studies will be presented that include photos of sites with before and after examples of plantings.