

USA: Native Plant Initiatives: Native Plants for Public Lands

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Changes in revegetation policies of land management agencies during recent decades have reflected public concern for the condition and sustainability of public land resources and have directly or indirectly dictated approaches to the selection and use of plant materials. Legislation, Executive Orders, and policies of individual agencies now generally recommend use of native species when feasible. Policies and guidelines are evolving, and although agency objectives differ to some extent, all recognize the need for an inclusive and integrated approach to provide native plant materials and seed supplies required to improve and maintain the health of public rangelands. Commonalities in agency strategies to implement native plant policies include assessing native plant needs in terms of species and quantities required annually, enhancing interagency coordination in plant material development, and increasing cooperation with the private seed production and wildland seed industries to stabilize the industries while improving the availability of adapted plant materials. Institutionalizing native plant programs requires agency commitment in terms of funding and development of infrastructure that includes hiring of trained personnel, development of seed storage and contracting capabilities, and a commitment to research and technology transfer. Research needs center on developing plant materials of numerous species as well as seed and seeding technology and seed transfer guidelines for their use. Agencies need capabilities for adjusting regulations to accommodate proactive revegetation plans, tracking origins and use of individual seed lots, and appropriate protocols for monitoring seedings and plantings.