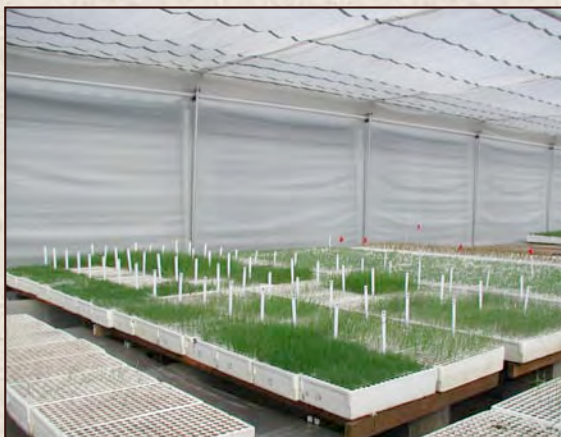




UP Native Plant Program: Species Adaptability Studies

The objective of the Uncompahgre Plateau Native Plant Program is to develop an adequate supply of seed for a variety of species native to the Colorado Plateau for use in restoration activities on public and private lands. A significant amount of high quality seed is needed to facilitate the restoration of native plant communities in wildland burned areas, depleted rangeland, wildlife habitat, energy development project areas, fuels reduction treatment project areas and for noxious weed prevention and control.

Landscape restoration requires the reestablishment of healthy, diverse, native plant communities. To preserve genetic diversity and ensure successful re-seeding efforts, it is important to use species that naturally occur at the site of interest and whose origin is from the region (local ecotypes). Native plants from the Colorado Plateau region have not been previously produced in large quantities, nor have these local ecotypes been compared to ecotypes from other areas of the country to determine genetic variances. A comprehensive assessment of the native plants of this region is, therefore, needed. The Native Plant Program, in its



Transplants of the major native grasses being grown in greenhouses at Lucky Peak Nursery, Boise, ID.



Crews hand-planting grass transplants at the Coal Creek site near Dove Creek, CO.

long-term commitment to ecosystem health, has undertaken not only the task of producing local plant material, but also a comprehensive plan involving native plant research, development, education, and outreach.

In an effort to better understand the local ecotypes of this region, the Program is conducting Species Adaptability Studies, using funding provided by the BLM and USFS. There are over 50 native species currently in the Program. Each species has been wildland collected from several locations throughout the Upper Colorado Plateau region in order to

Members of the UP Technical Committee visit the Transfer Rd. site.

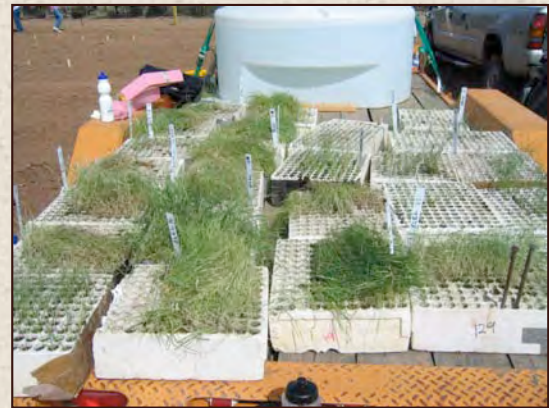




represent the range of environments that the species occur naturally within. Species Adaptability Studies will be used to compare these various populations to one another and to materials from other regions.

Of these multiple collections within the Program, only one population, or accession, of each species will be released for commercial propagation and sales. It is important, therefore, to determine the range of ecological adaptation of each species and promote the most vigorous and well adapted populations.

In Spring 2006, multiple replications of 113 different populations (accessions) for 13 of the major grasses were planted at four representative locations in Colorado and Utah. The sites are: Sims Mesa - located on BLM land on the Uncompahgre Plateau, CO; Transfer Rd. - located on BLM land on the Uncompahgre Plateau, CO;



Grass transplants at the Sims Mesa site.

The results of these studies will not only further the Program's goals of developing adequate native plant materials for use in restoration activities on the Colorado Plateau, but will also advance the much needed research of the native species of this region. Results from all of the Program's studies will be available on our website and also will be presented to agency personnel and interested community members through technology transfer sessions.



Ron Bell plants the first grass transplant at the Sims Mesa site.

Coal Creek - located on Colorado Div. of Wildlife land near Dove Creek, CO; and the Levan Farm - managed by Utah State University and located near Logan, UT. The sites are representative of the pinyon-juniper and sagebrush communities occurring on the Upper Colorado Plateau. The plantings will be used to evaluate plant growth, flower and seed formation, drought tolerance, seed production, seed quality and seed germination. Bob Welch, a retired Wildlife Biologist for the BLM, is conducting the studies for the Program. In Spring 2007, 25 forbs will be planted at each of the four locations to further the Program's studies.

Native Grasses Used in the Species Adaptability Studies

- Nodding brome
- Mountain brome
- Western wheatgrass
- Bottlebrush squirreltail
- Needle-and-threadgrass
- Slender wheatgrass
- Sandberg bluegrass
- Salina wildrye
- Prairie junegrass
- Muttongrass
- Sand dropseed
- Basin wildrye
- Indian ricegrass



Paul Memmott hand-planting at the Transfer Rd. site.