

Appendix 5
UNCOMPAHGRE PLATEAU NATIVE PLANT PROGRAM
Summary of Contracts and Agreements
As of December 31, 2005.

The UP Native Plant Program has several contracts and agreements for funding of the program, to document working relationships through a Memorandum of Understanding and to contract for services. Also, the UP Project has a number of informal working relationships with a number of partners and cooperators. The following is a listing of those items and their status as of December 31, 2005

Bureau of Land Management

The BLM issued an Assistance Agreement (1422 CAA 010004) effective April 23, 2001 for the purpose of providing funding support to the original Uncompahgre Ecosystem Restoration Project (UERP). This has since been changed to the Uncompahgre Plateau Project. The purpose of the Project Agreement is to “improve the ecosystem health and natural functions of the Uncompahgre Plateau”. It directs that Task Orders will be written to request funding to support projects that further the Agreement’s purpose.

Task Order #1

This TO authorized \$47,500 to be used to support the Technical Coordinator and Public Information Coordinator positions. The funds were utilized for this purpose and the Task Order was closed out on September 30, 2001. Although funds were not directed to the Native Plant Program, the work of the Technical Coordinator at that time was instrumental in getting the Native Plant Program going.

Task Order #2

TO#2 was written to provide additional funding to the Tech Coordinator and Public Information Coordinator positions, to do some restoration projects, to increase public awareness of landscape management techniques and to provide support to private landowners for doing habitat conservation projects on private lands. This \$200,000 grant was completed December 31, 2002. Again, some of the funding from this grant assisted the UP Project in the early development of the Native Plant Program. None of the funds from TO#1 and TO#2 were charged to the Native Plant Program.

Task Order #3

This is the first Task Order that provided funding specifically for the Native Plant Program in the amount of \$75,000. The Meeker Plant Center received \$25,000 of this grant and it went directly to the Plant Center from BLM. The balance, \$50,000, was allocated to hire Steve Monsen to produce three specific items. These were:

1. Plant Development – Create an outline and subsequent plans for a three-year period to acquire and produce seed from species native to the Uncompahgre Plateau. Develop working relationships with various partners who have interest in participating in the Native Plant Program. (\$27,900)
2. Planting & Restoration Guidelines - Prepare guidelines and practices to direct restoration measures for representative plant communities existing within the Uncompahgre Plateau. (\$14,200)
3. Research Program/Special Events – Identify needed research, opportunities and funding opportunities to advance the restoration efforts on the Plateau. And, participate in various public and agency education programs as requested by the UP Technical Committee. (\$7,900)

Mr. Monsen completed the activities of #1 through his efforts to get the Native Plant Program started. He was compensated for his time and expenses.

Item #2 was modified as Mr. Monsen accepted an offer from the Colorado Division of Wildlife to develop a similar program for them and was compensated by CDOW for that report. The amount allocated to this deliverable has been paid to Mr. Monsen through his expenses in travel and time that he incurred to work on various UP restoration and Native Plant Program projects in Colorado.

Mr. Monsen provided a report for deliverable #3 and was paid the amount upon its submittal to the UP Tech Committee.

All funds associated with the Task Order have been expended and it was closed effective September 30, 2005.

Task Order #4

The initial Task Order (A) was written for \$272,000 to “Implement the UP Native Plant Development Project”. These funds were fully expended for various expenses from April 27, 2003 through July 31, 2004. This first Task Order #4 was closed.

The BLM determined that it was more feasible to do Modifications to Task order #4 to convey Native Plant funds to Unc/Com, Inc. than to write new agreements. Thus, the following modifications were made to transfer funds.

Modification #1 of Task Order #4 (also known as Task Order #4B) was issued to convey \$463,500 in Native Plant funding to Unc/Com, Inc. This was a combination of \$190,000 in BLM funds and \$273,500 in Forest Service funds that were conveyed through an existing agreement between BLM and the Forest Service. Initially BLM charged an administrative fee for handling the Forest Service Funds. However, it was later reinstated through Modification #2 of TO#4. At the end of 2005, the \$273,500 in Forest Service funds was expended. The BLM portion of this Task Order was still open with \$48,926.04 available to be expended in early 2006.

Modification #3 (C) was issued by the BLM in the amount of \$185,000 to further support the Native Plant Program. As of December 31, 2005, none of these funds were expended. It is anticipated that upon the completion of Task Order #4 (B), these funds will be utilized to cover the various expenses of the Project.

In August 2005, the Utah State BLM Office notified the UP Project that it had \$110,000 in available funds that could be allocated to the Native Plant Program. These funds were transferred to the Colorado State BLM Office and subsequently to Unc/Com, Inc. through Task Order #4 Modification #4 (D). The primary purpose of these funds is to support the Utah State BLM’s interests in the Native Plant Program’s Colorado Plateau Partnership Program. (See Utah Division of Wildlife Resources). None of these funds were expended as of December 31, 2005,

No other BLM funds have been formally allocated to the Project as of December 2005.

Forest Service

Program funding by the Forest Service has been with two different grants. The first was detailed in the BLM narrative for Task Order #4 – Modification #1. As noted all of the allocated \$273,500 has been expended on the Native Plant Program.

In January 2005, the Delta Office of the Forest Service submitted a proposal for funding support as a cooperative effort between Region 2 and Region 4. This was successful and funding in the amount of \$275,000 was made available to the Project through Participating Agreement 05-PA-1102040-067. The UP Project anticipated making requests for advancements on this agreement in approximately \$50,000 segments beginning in early 2006.

The Forest Service has not allocated any other funding to the Project as of December 2005.

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

It became apparent through several meetings with representatives from the UDWR that there was an opportunity for the UP Project to partner with UDWR. This partnership was formalized in a five-year Memorandum of Understanding that was signed in March 2005.

The purpose of the MOU is to recognize the values of a collaborative effort between the two partners to develop native plant materials for the restoration, enhancement and recovery of rangelands, woodlands and forests in the Great Basin and Colorado Plateau. It is expected that the common interests of the parties will offer opportunities to leverage resources and eliminate the duplication of programs of common interest.

During the fall of 2005, it was mutually agreed that the parties would enter into a contract for the purpose of funding a new position at the Great Basin Research Station in Ephraim, UT. This position's responsibilities will be to focus on projects of common interest in the Colorado Plateau area in Southeastern Utah. The UP Project committed up to \$70,210 in funds advanced by the Utah BLM (see BLM Task Order #4 (D) above) to support the position through June 30, 2007. This contract supports the intent and purpose of the MOU.

The contract has been signed by Unc/Com, Inc. on behalf of the UP Project and at the end of 2005 was pending approval by the UDWR. The UDWR and the UP Project have an informal operating agreement on the use of UDWR facilities at Fountain Green, UT, and in Ephraim, including fields owned by Snow College. Discussions are in progress to record this in a letter between the parties.

Colorado State University – Rogers Mesa Experiment Station

The UP Technical Committee recognized the value of having the resources of Colorado State University through its Extension Service as a partner in the Program. The CSU Station at Rogers Mesa has found that its tradition research for various crops and orchard production was on the downturn due to a changing economy in those local agricultural arenas. It was looking for new opportunities to utilize space that had been used as testing plots for those crops.

In 2003, the UP Project signed a one- year contract with CSU (note to exceed \$60,000) to begin work on the Native Plant Program. They did field prep and planted a number of different species for studies, both in transplants and by direct seeding. During that time, UP assisted in writing a WSARE (Western Sustainable Agriculture and Education) grant, which ultimately was awarded to CSU for in the amount of \$171,121 over a three-year period. This grant provides operating funds for CSU for their native seed research and to assist in helping develop a base of local growers who want to diversify their crop base. The WSARE grant provides that \$4,000 be paid annually to the UP Project for program support. Details of the work that CSU has preformed are included in another section of this report.

Brigham Young University

BYU has been conducting various native plant studies for a number of years at its farm in Spanish Fork, UT. In 2004, they decided to terminate all of the agricultural activities at the farm and sell off the property. However, it became evident that this would not occur in the immediate future so the UP Project was able to contract with the University to do some plot studies on a variety of native seed species. A three-year contract, which covers three growing seasons and expires December 31, 2006 was signed for a total of \$41,625. Plantings were made in the spring of 2004. Details of these studies are provided elsewhere in this report.

In the fall of 2005, BYU agreed to allow the UP Project to do some additional plantings on vacant land at the farm. These direct seeding plots are for the purpose of increasing seed volumes in quantities adequate to provide commercial growers to begin larger scale production. There is no formal agreement with BYU on the use of this additional area.

During the summer of 2004, the UP Project hired Dr. Allan Stevens from Snow College to conduct a survey of the incidents of cheat grass on the Uncompahgre Plateau. A variety of seeds were collected to determine if there was a biological difference over the Plateau. BYU was contracted (\$2,870) to conduct DNA studies on these samples. Those studies have been completed, however, the payment for the work has not been made pending the receipt of a report on the results of the testing as of the end of 2005.

Utah State Lone Peak Nursery, Point of the Mountain

The UP Project has utilized this nursery for the past two years as a resource to germinate and grow transplant stock. Although an effort was made to develop a formal service agreement for the first year, it never was finalized.

The nursery is growing seedlings to be ready in the spring of 2006. A formal agreement has been forward to the nursery for signing. However, a change in personnel at the nursery has delayed their signing the contract. The contract is for a maximum of \$19,000 but charges are made for only the plants produced and it is anticipated that one or more species may not be viable or have satisfactory germination rates.

USDA Forest Service Lucky Peak Nursery – Boise, ID

The UP Project engaged the services of the Lucky Peak nursery in the fall of 2004. No formal agreement was signed. They provided a variety of transplant stock in the spring and summer of 2005 and also planted some increase plots of several species. Due to a variety of issues, the quality of the stock from the nursery was marginal. At the end of 2005, negotiations were in progress to determine a fair value for their service for the year.

No formal agreement currently exists with the nursery for their services that are currently underway with seedlings expected in April 2006. The work of the nursery is detailed in other sections of this report.

Upper Colorado Native Plant Center – Meeker, CO

This facility has a long history in native plant/seed experiments. In 2004, the UP Project began a working relationship and provided the Center several seed species for testing and to plant for increase fields. As noted in BLM Task Order #3, \$25,000 was allocated to the Center for their work. The Center received those funds through direct billing to BLM. Those funds should have been expended by the end of 2005.

No additional funding has been allocated to the Center out of 2006/07 UP Native Plant funds and no formal agreement exists between the UP Project and the Center.

NRCS – CIG Grant

The UP Project was successful in receiving a three-year \$150,000 grant from the NRCS for the development of a base of local growers to begin commercial production of several native species. Discussions with several entities who have worked with local growers, including the Utah Crop Improvement Association and the USDA Research Station in Boise, show there are several options that have been used to stimulate grower interest and to provide market incentives. The UP Project is reviewing these options and it anticipates developing a formal program in 2006 that will be mutually beneficial to the Project and the growers. Through 2005, \$50,000 of this grant has been utilized toward the study and development of a supply of seeds that will be made available to local growers.

Local Growers

The CSU Rogers Mesa Station has initiated a program with three local growers to grow several seed species on small foundation plots of less than one acre. Two growers have completed two years in the project and had some seed production during the summer of 2005. The third grower planted several species in the fall of 2005. CSU, through the WSARE grant has assisted growers with some of their start-up costs. No formal agreements currently exist between CSU and the growers or with the UP Project. It is currently assumed that all seed produced is owned by the UP Project.

Commercial Growers

The UP Project has provided seed of several species to two commercial growers, one in Southwest Colorado and one in Wyoming for study and for commercial production. The results of these efforts are reported elsewhere in this report. No formal agreement currently exists with these commercial growers.

USDA Rocky Mountain Research Station – Fort Collins, CO

Provo Shrub Lab – Provo, UT

The UP Project has utilized the resources of the Research Station in several ways, including assisting in the analysis of various species of sagebrush, utilizing the Lab in doing germination studies, and reviewing opportunities to provide personnel to support the Colorado Plateau Program. These have been provided at no charge to the Project. No formal agreements are in place between the UP Project and the USDA RMRS.

Colorado Plateau Native Plant Program

The UP Project has had several meetings with Utah BLM, Region 4 of the Forest Service, UDWR and some entities in Arizona about the values of developing a formal Colorado Plateau Native Plant Program. As of December 2005, no formal agreement excepting the UDWR MOU is in place with any of the potential partners. Hurdles to formalizing this collaborative partnership include limited resources on the part of several of the partners, other agency programs that have equal or higher priorities, and the uncertainty of future funding to support a larger scale and longer term effort.

Conclusion

The UP Project will continue to meet its existing contractual obligations, but due to the uncertainty of funding to support the project beyond 2007, will be very cautious about future commitments to expand the concept across a larger landscape.