

September 5, 1997

INTERAGENCY RIPARIAN/WETLAND PLANT DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

JANUARY, 1997 TO JULY, 1997 SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Project Staff

J. Chris Hoag, Wetland Plant Ecologist
Mike Sellers, Wetland Biological Technician

Introduction

This progress report covers from January, 1997 through July, 1997. Chris was extremely ill from the end of January through the entire month of February. He came back to work half-time on March 10. He didn't come back full-time until April 1. So this progress report is limited.

Sellers Resigns

Mike Sellers has resigned from the Interagency Riparian/Wetland Plant Development Project effective August 15. He decided that he wanted to go into High School Teaching. He will finish up his student teaching this Fall. We sure wish him the best. He provided a very valuable contribution to the Project and we will all miss his research-oriented mind. Good Luck, Mike!!

At the present time, the Project does not plan to replace Mike. The recent budget cuts by almost all federal agencies prevent consideration of a full-time employee. In addition, the limit on PFT positions means that we would not be able to consider anyone but a seasonal worker that would be hired through the Soil and Water Conservation District or the University of Idaho.

What this means is that Chris will be cutting back on the studies the Project will take on. We will continue to provide assistance to all the sponsors and to NRCS Field Offices. We will continue our Technology Transfer program and development of demonstration sites for Bioengineering and Constructed Wetland Systems.

Constructed Wetland System Tour

We held a tour this year of 3 Constructed Wetland Systems (CSI, Cedar Draw, and Nature Conservancy) on July 1, 1997. We had 38 people attend from Idaho, Utah, and Oregon. We rented an air conditioned bus and drove to each of the sites where the principles address the group. We also had a Capital Press reporter attend who wrote an article on the tour that did not once mention the Interagency Riparian/Wetland Plant Development Project. Go Figure!! The comments we received were all positive and the concept of Constructed Wetland Systems was transferred to many new people.

Third Annual Newsletter

The third issue of "View From A Wetland" is expected to go out in September, 1997. Copies are mailed to cooperators, NRCS offices, and those on our mailing list throughout our service area. We would like to hear from anyone who has comments on the articles in the newsletter.

Wetland Plant Release Documentation

Release notices for 22 wetland plant ecotypes were sent to the various states for review and signatures. This process was very interesting and quite involved. Each state has its own review procedures and most had not even developed guidelines for the Alternative Release Procedures. We were certainly on the cutting edge of technology with our releases.

Now that we have obtained signatures on all the release notices, we have official notification that the releases are approved.

Bioengineering Manual Update

We have just finished the rough draft stage and are into the rough draft review stage for the Bioengineering Manual we have been promising for a year. Our present time table is the rough draft out for review in September with a return date of November 1. We are hoping to get the changes in and the final form ready for printing in first quarter of FY98. We hope to have the printed copies available by the first of the year.

Presentations (posters, papers, talks)

Project personnel presented a number of talks, papers, poster sessions, and workshops from January to July, 1997. Below is a list:

Meetings

Idaho Plant Materials Committee meeting, Boise, ID. Jan., 1997. *Interagency Riparian/Wetland Plant Development Project Work and Advances.*

City of Pocatello Stormwater CWS meeting, Pocatello, ID. Potential CWS to treat stormwater in the city of Pocatello, ID. Redesigned their plans. January 8, 1997.

Fairview Wetland Meeting. *Constructed Wetlands for Treatment of Irrigation Wastewater.* March 24, 1997. American Falls, ID.

Rock Creek LQ Drain CWS Site Review. Review potential site for CWS with Chuck Brockway and the Twin Falls Canal Co. March 12, 1997.

Portneuf WAG meeting. Discussed Portneuf River and bioengineering structures, wetland plants, CWS, and tours.

California Crop Improvement Assoc. Site review and release discussion for CANE2 release out of CA. May 24-29, 1997.

Modoc NWR Wetland Improvement Meeting, Alturas, CA. Recommendations for cover crops, seed field development, general Refuge improvements. May 29, 1997.

Tri-State Advisory Committee Meeting, NRCS, Corvallis, OR. Plant Materials Center direction, budget, and reinvention. April 28-30, 1997.

Targhee Creek (near Henry's Lake) Restoration Plan, Aberdeen, ID. Develop a plan on how to restore Targhee Creek. April 11, 1997.

Sandpoint Wetland Classroom Project, Sandpoint, ID. Assist the School district with plans to create a wetland classroom for the various grades. June 9-13, 1997.

Training Sessions and Workshops

Bioengineering Workshop, Society of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting, Bozeman, MT. Training session for Wetland Scientists on Bioengineering techniques, principles, and procedures. June 2-6, 1997.

NRCS New Employees Conservation Training, Weiser, ID. Training new NRCS employees on Riparian Zone Ecology, Restoration and Management. June 9-10, 1997.

Plant Materials Training Session for NRCS Employees, Aberdeen, ID. Training new employees on use of plant materials to solve conservation problems. June 16-20, 1997.

Conservation Reserve Program Refresher Course, Aberdeen, ID. Training for NRCS employees of CRP seeding, seedbed prep, seed mixtures, new varieties of grass, etc. June 20, 1997.

Proper Functioning Condition training, Twin Falls, ID. Received training on PFC. July 9-10, 1997.

Tours

Curlew Off-Center Advanced Test Site Tour with reference to CRP, Curlew National Grasslands, ID. Grass species for use in CRP. June 26, 1997.

Scarrow Dairy Constructed Wetland System Tour, Wendell, ID. June 21, 1997.

Constructed Wetland System Tour; a review of CSI, Cedar Draw, and Nature Conservancy. July 1, 1997.

Technical Papers and Publications

Progress Reports

Hoag, J. C. and Sellers, M. 1996. Interagency Riparian/Wetland Plant Development Project January-July 1997 Progress Report. August, 1997.

Hoag, J. C. and Sellers, M. 1996. Interagency Riparian/Wetland Plant Development Project June-Jan 1997 Progress Report. Mar, 1997.

Published Symposium Proceedings

Hoag, J. Chris. 1997. *Constructed Wetland Systems for water Quality improvement in the arid and semi-arid West*. Society of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting, Bozeman, MT. June 2-6, 1997.

Sellers, Mike. 1997. Germination strategies for *Carex* seed. Society of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting, Bozeman, MT. June 2-6, 1997.

Riparian Zone Ecology, Restoration, and Management Workshops

Riparian workshops will be held in Utah this year. The following is a breakdown of the sessions and dates.

Utah

Ephraim, UT, November 4-5, 1997

Coalville, UT, November 6-7, 1997

The Riparian Zone Ecology workshops are open to NRCS employees, other federal agencies, SCD's, state agencies, private organizations, and anyone interested in Riparian areas and Bioengineering. Call us for more information.

We are considering putting together a 1 or 2 day course on Wetland Ecology, Management, and Restoration. We could also conduct a field day and plant a wetland. We need some input as to whether a course like this is needed or not. Please call and let us know how many in your agency would like to participate in another riparian workshop and / or a wetland workshop.

Scarrow Dairy Animal Waste CWS

This project is still progressing and the landowner is looking for grant money to help defray the construction costs. The final engineering plans were approved and construction is taking place as we speak. Planting will probably take place in May, 1998.

Arimo Ranch (Marsh Creek)

The Arimo Ranch Research and Demonstration Site located on Marsh Creek south of Pocatello is proceeding on schedule. This demo site is designed to test a planned grazing system versus total exclusion, and planting (accelerated revegetation) versus no planting (natural revegetation). Starting in 1995, we have been planting woody riparian species using various bioengineering techniques, and developing new bioengineering methods in grazed and ungrazed (excluded) sections.

We will have reached a point where we will probably not plant any more at the demo site. We will continue to evaluate the bioengineering techniques already installed. We will continue documenting changes in the riparian zone on the Arimo Ranch this coming year.

Camas Creek Stream Stabilization Project, Hamer, ID

Howard Johnson, DC Rigby, and Jerry Deutscher, USFWS Camas NWR asked for help with a stream stabilization project on an artificially intermittent (irrigation diversions) stream north of Idaho Falls near Hamer. Camas Creek runs from the Spencer, ID area down through Camas NWR to Mud Lake, ID and has been straightened in the past. Larson Farms agreed to do some work to decrease the severe bank erosion in the straightened sections. This bank erosion results in heavy deposits of silts and sand on the Camas NWR which in turn causes problems with getting water to the Mud Lake Irrigation District.

Work is currently being done on the riprap while the sloping and vegetative components will be begin after harvest.

This project is an excellent example of producers, agencies, and waterusers working together. It also shows that hard and soft structures can be used together and can improve the function of each.

Ft. Hall Wetland Plant Nursery

We have contracted with the BOR to provide assistance to the Shoshone-Bannock Indian Tribes at Ft. Hall, ID in developing a wetland plant nursery. We are training tribal members in how to collect wetland plant seeds, clean the seeds, and produce wetland plant plugs.

The tribe is now collecting seed to build up their supply. The greenhouse should be constructed this fall near the Ft. Hall High School. High school teachers will run the wetland plant propagation program with the help of high school students.

Publication of Note

We recently came across a great publication that Dan Ogle, Plant Materials Specialist put together this year. The publication is called *Plant Guide Handbook*. Dan put together plant guide sheets on numerous grasses, forbs/legumes, shrubs, trees, riparian/wetland plants, and weeds. This is a great reference that details description, uses, adaptations, establishment, management, and seed production. All NRCS field offices received copies of the Handbook. Visit one of the field offices closest to you to see if the Handbook may be of use to you in your job. Dan has indicated that he has a few extra copies.

The Interagency Riparian/Wetland Plant Development Project is sponsored and funded by: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (Idaho & Utah), USDI Bureau of Land Management, USDI Bureau of Reclamation, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, Idaho Fish and Game, Idaho Transportation Dept., and Idaho Power Co.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenues, SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.