



Solutions for Recreation

Recreation is a growing outdoor activity for the American public. As public pressure increases the demand for more parks, mountain trails, golf courses, and other green areas, the necessity for improved plant materials to sustain these uses also grows. Plant materials adapted to varying soil conditions, high water tables, and climatic variations are required. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Plant Materials Centers (PMCs) select and test species to address the following needs:



Parks, Campgrounds, and Trail Ways

Conservation plant materials can be selected to serve a plethora of growing needs. Native species are being used to provide visually pleasing environments and a more natural setting along trail ways. Typical turf grasses with high water requirements may be replaced by low maintenance species with lower water needs. Using adapted species can also reduce the need for fertilizers and chemical applications.



Stream Environment Zones

Damaged stream zones require careful selection of plant materials that can stabilize and protect stream banks, provide ideal fishery habitat, and contribute to water quality needs. PMCs are active in development of both desired plant materials and the technology necessary to achieve success with stream zone plantings.



Roadways and Road Medians

Plant materials selection for roadside stabilization is critical to maintain soil stability, filter runoff, and repel invasive species. Road medians, while attractive, are costly to maintain. Development of low maintenance plant materials for road median use is a growing need across the country. Several PMCs are selecting local ecotype perennial plant materials. Native grasses and wildflowers serve as low-maintenance buffers along highways and provide the aesthetic qualities desired by the public.



Ball Parks and Golf Courses

These recreation areas typically experience constant use and require high maintenance. Plant materials that tolerate traffic and minimize water use, chemical application, and fertilizers are needed. PMCs are testing plant materials conducive to safe application of treated effluent on areas such as golf courses.

For more information, visit <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov> and <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>