

Potential Native Species for Mitigating Fire and Weed Invasion

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Western water limited sites left barren by large-scale fires or other disturbances are increasingly vulnerable to invasion by invasive plant species. Tackling the re-establishment or restoration of such sites is particularly challenging in areas of low and/or inconsistent precipitation. Do these sites have mixed establishment results due to restoration methods and techniques or do the seed mixes adequately represent the appropriate ecological site description? Within the Natural Resources Conservation Service Plant Materials Program, plant species are not chosen for the particular species but to solve or address specific conservation or ecological restoration problems. Utilizing the commonly understood ecological tenet that plants grow in habitats to which they are adapted, and accepting the corollary, if you change the habitat, so too the inhabitants change, may be the first in a twelve step process to select the appropriate native species and establishment techniques for the restoration of disturbed western landscapes.