



Rose Lake Plant Materials Center

Summer 2012 Newsletter



'Lancer' perennial pea in full bloom

Rose Lake PMC works with Wild Rice

Wild rice is an aquatic grass that grows in the lakes and streams of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota and many other states. It is considered a culturally significant plant for many Native American Tribes and it has good nutritional value. The Gun Lake Band of Potawatomi Indians in western Michigan contacted NRCS with an interest in propagating wild rice for their tribal areas.

Plant Materials Specialist Dave Burgdorf (now retired) worked with the Elsberry PMC in Elsberry, MO to get several plants of wild rice (*Zizania aquatica*) from Ken Dalrymple with the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Missouri.

Ken agreed to provide plants and seeds to allow the PMC to gain experience growing the plant in Michigan in preparation for the project with the Tribe. The PMC will conduct experiments on seed germination techniques later this year.



Wild rice arrived from Missouri in tubs like this.



Wild Rice growing at Rose Lake PMC



Ken Dalrymple from the US Fish & Wildlife Service showing the wild rice growing in Missouri.

Rose Lake PMC propagates plants for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Since 2000 the Rose Lake PMC has been working with the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore on Lake Superior in Wisconsin to propagate plants and provide technical assistance in restoring eroding sites in the Park. In 2012 the PMC propagated and delivered 16,600 plants to the park. Beachgrass, wavy hairgrass, evening primrose, common milkweed, common juniper, and Canada mayflower were the species propagated for delivery this year.

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is part of the National Parks Service. They entered into an interagency agreement with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to propagate plants from materials collected in the Park and have those plants returned to the Park for restoration of eroded areas. Over the past 12 years the PMC has propagated 30 plant species and has provided technical assistance to stabilize eroding shorelines. The Plant Materials Center recently completed a technical document summarizing the propagation protocols for those species and provided it to the Park. That document will be on the Plant Materials Program website in the near future.



Plants being unloaded from the truck and loaded onto the boat for transport to the island.



Volunteers unloading the plants from the boat onto the island.



Volunteers preparing the plants for planting after being unloaded from the boat.



Volunteer carrying racks of plants to the planting site.

Plant Materials Specialist Dave Burgdorf receives Meritorious Service Award from Plant Materials Program.

Dave Burgdorf, NRCS-MI Plant Materials Specialist, retired from NRCS after 38 years of service. Dave served as the Plant Materials Specialist for Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Ohio since 1989. During his tenure as Plant Materials Specialist Dave was instrumental in developing techniques for soil bioengineering, working with Native American Tribes, and providing plant technology assistance to Field Offices and conservation partners.

The Plant Materials Center hosted a retirement luncheon on June 4. NRCS-MI State Conservationist Garry Lee presented Dave with the Meritorious Service Award in recognition of his dedication to the Plant Materials Program over the past 23 years. In addition to that award Dave received a certificate of appreciation from NRCS-MI for his years of dedication to conservation in Michigan. The award was presented by State Resource Conservationist Jim Scott.



Dave Burgdorf receiving a Meritorious Service award from Michigan State Conservationist Garry Lee



Dave Burgdorf receiving a NRCS-Michigan Certificate of Appreciation for all his years of service from State Resource Conservationist Jim Scott

Soil Health at the PMC

Soil health demonstrations are becoming an integral part of tours and field laboratory experiences provided for visitors to the Rose Lake Plant Materials Center (PMC). Recently Sergio Pérez performed a water infiltration test for members of the Michigan NRCS Civil Rights Advisory Committee (MI CRAC).

Mr. Pérez's demonstration showed that water infiltration took 10X longer in a highly trafficked lawn area than in an adjacent area that had not been trafficked. The ensuing discussion of how precipitation that does not readily infiltrate may move laterally, taking with it valuable topsoil, resonated with MI CRAC members who are passionate about their vocation of "Helping People Help the Land."

In addition to demonstrations, soil health is being integrated into plant material studies at the PMC. This soil health emphasis is being lead by PMC Agronomist John Durling.



Biosciences Tech Sergio Perez demonstrating water infiltration as a measure of soil health.

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