

NOTICE OF THE NAMING AND RELEASE OF 'BARRANCO' DESERTWILLOW
FOR **USE** IN RESOURCE CONSERVATION PLANTINGS

The USDA-Soil Conservation Service, the New Mexico State Highway Department, and the New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station announce the naming and release of 'Barranco' desertwillow (Chilopsis linearis (Cav.) Sweet) for commercial production and sale of seed and plants.

Origin: Several desertwillow plants, obtained from the Texas Highway Department, were transplanted to a location near Jal, New Mexico. Seed was collected from these plants in 1966 and taken to the Plant Materials Center, Los Lunas, New Mexico, where it was used to produce plants, designated as NM-778, for testing and for a seed source of 'Barranco' desertwillow.

Description: Desertwillow is not a true willow (Salix). The plants can be shrubs or trees up to **30** feet tall. **Two** types of plants have been evaluated at Los Lunas. One, represented by the accessions NM-778 and NM-819, have straight leaves 1/4 to 1/3 inch wide. The other, represented by A-3620 and NM-912, has leaves which are narrower and curved. The latter type tends to have more stems and is less upright than 'Barranco'.

Flowers of 'Barranco' desertwillow are varying shades of lavender. Since the variety is propagated by seed, a few offspring might produce white or light colored flowers. The plants flower from late June until late summer, if soil moisture is adequate. The thin, two-valved seeds are formed in long, narrow seed pods, many of which remain attached to plants into the winter.

Performance: Excellent stands of 'Barranco' desertwillow seedlings have been consistently produced in irrigated, direct-seedings at the Los Lunas PMC. One year, when the seed was planted in soil with a high salt content many seedlings died. The tops of some seedlings and older plants sometimes winterkill. This is especially true of younger plants. The roots are apparently quite winter-hardy at this location.

The average vigor rating for this variety for three years at the Tucson PMC was higher than that of any of the other six accessions with which it was compared.

'Barranco' was included in at least 36 plantings between 1969 and 1976 for field testing at various locations in New Mexico. Potted plants were used in 29 of these. At least half of the 'Barranco' plants survived in 40 percent of the plantings. Most of the failures occurred due to poor sites or to lack of initial maintenance.

Areas of Adaptation: 'Barranco' desertwillow is adapted from western Texas to southern California and southward into Mexico. Albuquerque is about the northern limit for desertwillow in New Mexico. In its natural environment, this species is most commonly found along dry washes. When desertwillow is moved north of its natural range, it generally survives for several years, but ordinarily does not grow as rapidly nor produce as many flowers as it does farther south. None of the 12 transplants survived the first winter at Aberdeen, Idaho.

Uses: This plant has a relatively low water requirement compared to most commercially available shrubs and trees. It is useful for windbreaks; for screening unsightly areas; and for ornamental plantings on homesites, around buildings, in highway rest areas, along roadsides, and in road medians. The plants can be pruned to various shapes for formal plantings. 'Barranco' can tolerate a considerable amount of reflected heat from paved parking lots or from the south sides of buildings.

Propagation: This variety will be propagated by seed. Good stands can easily be obtained by seeding shallow during May. Seedlings emerge about a week after the seeds are planted, provided the soil remains moist and warm. Stored seed remains viable for several years if held in a dry, cool location.

Seedlings grow rapidly, if the stand is not too thick. Many seedlings are large enough after one growing season to be used either for bare-root plants or for potting. Both types of material have been used successfully in resource conservation plantings. Plants in small tarpaper pots seem to survive better than bare-root plants on sites with limited moisture during the first growing season.

Some plants have produced a few seeds during their second year of growth. However, older plants produce much more seed.

Source of seed and plants: Breeder seed will be maintained by the Los Lunas Plant Materials Center. Limited numbers of live plants will be available for establishing seed source nurseries. Seed and plants for these uses will be available from the Los Lunas PMC through resource conservation districts. Seed will be on hand for the initial commercial production of plants.

