



Webinar Brief for Resource Managers

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Weed-free seed, Unicorns, and Other Myths

Presented on 15 March 2017 by Steve Popovich, Forest Botanist and Rare and Invasive Species Program Manager, Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests and Pawnee National Grassland, Ft. Collins, CO

Project Summary: This webinar presents an overview of how to understand what weeds are and are not included in weed testing for seed that is sold in industry or increased under contract, and presents tools to help determine what weeds are actually present in seed procured by the end-user. A seed ordering guidance paper will also be made available.

Abstract: When we order seed, we often read the seed bag label that says “Noxious: None” and call it good. But did you know that many listed noxious weeds and undesirable weedy species, such as cheatgrass, can still be and often are present? Weed contaminant in seed is becoming increasingly problematic. Industry is challenged to provide tighter levels of weed presence at a time when contamination is becoming more difficult to control. Yet many users are unaware of what weeds may be occurring in the seed they order, and end up unknowingly buying the bonus gift that keeps on giving – weeds! Knowing exactly what you are getting is particularly important with national ramp-up of demand stressing the use of native plant materials in revegetation, such as increasing landscape-level resiliency, sage grouse habitat restoration, and incorporation of pollinator-friendly host plants. This webinar will overview how to interpret seed lab analyses, the single greatest – yet largely unused – tool you have as an end-user in determining what weeds are present in the seed you are ordering, so that you can make more informed decisions when buying or using seed. Find out why Noxious: None on a seed label is not enough information to tell you what you are REALLY buying, and be able to come away armed with simple tools you can use immediately to help keep your projects out of the weeds!

Management Implications

- Increase quality control regarding weed content during seed ordering process
- Minimize weeds hitting the ground during seeding operations and reduce need for follow-up weed treatment
- Increase seeding effectiveness and contribution to site resiliency