

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN THE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

AND THE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

FOR

MUTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF PLANT MATERIALS FOR REVEGETATION

This memorandum of understanding (MOU) is entered into between the U.S. Department of Interior, National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this MOU is to forge a close working relationship between NRCS and NPS that fosters collaboration and cooperation in a joint effort to achieve the activities herein through a commitment of working together for the benefit of both parties and the benefit of each organization's customer base as well as citizens throughout the U.S.

II. BACKGROUND

NPS administers the National Park System and manages the units of the system to conserve their scenic, natural, cultural, and wildlife resources in such a manner as to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations. NPS also provides technical assistance to Federal, State and local resource managers.

As NPS carries out its responsibilities for site improvements while preserving and protecting the natural and cultural resources, additional services may be needed which require revegetation of disturbed areas with indigenous vegetation. Many of the species needed for revegetation exist only in their native stands. Propagation techniques are lacking, and sources of indigenous plant materials may be limited. Because of the limited availability, returning disturbed sites to their pre-disturbance condition is extremely difficult. The production of sufficient native plant materials is essential to restoration.

NRCS provides national leadership in the conservation and wise use of soil, water, and related resources, and improves these resources.

NRCS operates Plant Materials Centers (PMCs) for the purpose of developing needed plant materials and methods for their propagation and use to help meet the mission of the Agency. Propagation of plant materials to meet revegetation needs similar to those of the NPS is part of continuing program activities at several NRCS PMCs.

There are opportunities for NPS and NRCS to cooperate in the development of procedures for using plant materials that will assist in the revegetation of disturbed areas in the NPS park units using indigenous species. Cooperative efforts can:

- (1) Promote better resource management and protection;
- (2) Improve public service;
- (3) Provide better understanding of Agencies' goals, objectives, and programs;
- (4) Accelerate the development of needed plant materials;
- (5) Help provide a cost-effective means for resource management decisions; and
- (6) Advance the state of the reclamation and revegetation art.

III. AUTHORITY

This MOU is made under the authority of the Economy Act of 1932 (31 U.S.C. 1535).

IV. SCOPE

The provisions of this MOU extend to those activities of NPS and NRCS that impact the need for and the development of revegetation technology that might have application to NPS sites. These activities include but are not limited to:

- A. Short-range and long-range development of plant materials and revegetation technology needed for site restoration as mutually agreed upon.
- B. Development of needed methods and practices to enhance maintenance of endangered species and reduce invasive species.

V. IT IS MUTUALLY AGREED TO:

- A. Promote the early identification of opportunities for NPS and NRCS to cooperate in the development of needed plant materials and methods of propagating and reestablishment.

- B. Establish guidelines that will foster this cooperation at every level of both Agencies.
- C. Cooperate in such a manner as to raise the public understanding of the mission of both Agencies.
- D. Establish a coordinating philosophy and policy under which more specific working agreements may be developed to foster plant propagation for use by specific parks.
- E. Promote exchange of information between the Agencies on plants and propagation innovations relative to new technology and plant management.
- F. Study and develop reproductive techniques of endangered species where populations may be indigenous to specific parks.
- G. Designate a senior level point of contact (POC) within both agencies to assist in identifying, coordinating and expediting the exchange of information regarding the need for plant materials technology by both Agencies, and assist in arranging interagency agreements between individual NPS sites and NRCS Plant Materials Centers.
- H. Designate a National Technical Advisor (NTA) within both agencies that will assist the POC in developing and expediting specific interagency agreements between individual NPS sites and NRCS PMCs. The NTA's will develop a guideline document to be used for development of individual park plant materials agreements and will coordinate all activities under the guidance of the POCs.
- I. Provide technical reports from any joint studies as well as proposed press releases or other public affairs information related to joint efforts or projects for review by the other prior to release.
- J. Have the POCs meet on a regular basis to identify problems of common interest, advance and promote joint programs, and provide coordination in planning. The NTAs and additional staff may be invited to these meetings to provide appropriate technical expertise for review and comment. The POCs may convene ad hoc committees, as appropriate, to address specific issues.
- K. Reference this MOU in subsequent Interagency Agreements (IAG) and other supplementary and/or implementing documents so that the details of cooperative efforts carried out between the two agencies are adequately documented.

VI. NPS AGREES TO:

- A. Advise Regional Offices, Denver Service Center and park employees of the existence of this MOU, and of the opportunity for cooperation with NRCS for the development of needed plant materials technology.
- B. Identify from their resource management and long-range development plans, work that may create the need for plant materials.
- C. Cooperate where applicable in coordinating with NRCS to develop park specific plant materials for reclamation revegetation efforts.

VII. NRCS AGREES TO:

- A. Advise all PMCs of the existence of this MOU, and of the opportunity for cooperation with NPS for the development of plant materials technology specifically designed to meet NPS needs.
- B. Support subsequent IAGs by providing resources, carrying out the provisions of IAGs, and providing technical expertise for performance, review or consultation in areas of mutual interest, subject to program priorities and budget constraints.
- C. Provide NPS with financial and program information consistent with NPS management and financial accounting systems;
- D. Maintain consistency with NPS program and administrative management requirements, such as the prohibition of exotic species on NPS land.
- E. Provide quarterly program status reports to the Agency POC.
- F. Provide an annual report of the Interagency Program's status and accomplishments.
- G. Obtain concurrence and required permits from respective park units for seed collection or commercial propagation NPS germplasm.

VIII. ADMINISTRATIVE AND TECHNICAL CONTACTS

A. NRCS:

- 1. **Diane E. Gelburd, Director (Senior POC)**
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2. **Robert Escherman**, Program Manager for Plant Materials (Technical-POC)
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3. **Russ Haas**, Plant Materials Technical Advisor (Technical-NTA)
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B. NPS:

1. **Sue Masica**, Associate Director (Senior POC)
Park Planning, Facilities, and Lands
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2. **Lou DeLorme**, Team Leader (Technical-POC)
Transportation Planning/Alternative, Transportation Program
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3. **Nancy Dunkle**, Revegetation Technical Specialist (Technical-NTA)
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IX. DURATION AND LIMITATIONS

- A. This MOU becomes effective on the date of its signature by both parties and continues for the duration of 5 years unless otherwise terminated or reestablished.
- B. This agreement can be terminated by either Agency upon 90 days written notice. The NPS Director and the NRCS Chief will periodically review the agreement and recommend any modifications or adjustments that will be desirable.

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- C. Nothing in this agreement will be construed as limiting or affecting the legal authorities of the NPS Director or the NRCS Chief, or as binding upon NPS or NRCS to perform beyond their respective authorities, or to require any of the parties to assume or expend funds in excess of available appropriations.
- D. This MOU is neither a fiscal nor a funds obligation document. Any endeavor involving reimbursement or contribution of funds between the parties will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures. Such endeavors will be documented in separate agreements, contracts, or leases made in writing by the representatives of the parties and shall be independently authorized by appropriated statutory authority. Reimbursement or transfer of funds among the signatory parties will be handled at the appropriate level.
- E. This MOU may be renegotiated, amended, extended, or modified by a written amendment to this MOU through an exchange of correspondence between authorized officials of both parties.

Arly. Martin

Director, National Park Service

5/15/05

Date

Dana D. York

Associate Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service

9/30/04

Date