

Contribution Report
STATEWIDE NATIVE PLANT EDUCATION
 Environmental Horticulture Work Team
 Natural Resources and the Environment Core Competency Area
 Program Year 2007

This report details the work individual Agents and Specialists have done to implement the work of a specific work team during the identified calendar year and the results of that work. This information is consolidated into a cumulative work team report by the team leader. Team and individual reports are used to develop stakeholder impact reports, media pieces and reports to our funding partners.

Agent/Specialist submitting report: Barbara Fahey submitting for 2007 Native Plant Education Sub-team including Bruce Bosley, Barbara Fahey, Yvette Henson, Tom Hooten, Linda Langelo, Laurel Potts, Susan Rose, Irene Shonle and Curtis Swift
 Contact Number: 303-271-6620

1. **Program Outputs:** In regards to this work team's efforts, how many of the following outputs did your local effort result in:
- 19 Number of Native Plant Master courses (one course equals three 4-hour sessions).
 - 188 Number of adult participants in Native Plant Master courses (count each registrant in each course as one participant e.g. if Juan Hernandez takes a May course and a September course, he is counted as two participants.)
 - 6 Number of classes such as an introductory botany/taxonomy class or a weeds class that directly supplement and/or support Native Plant Master courses.
 - 212 Number of registrants in these classes.
 - 0 Number of K-12 Junior Native Plant Master courses (one course equals three 4-hour sessions).
 - 0 Number of K-12 participants in Native Plant Master (NPM) courses (count each registrant in each course as one participant e.g. if Manuelita Vallejos takes a June course and a July course, she is counted as two participants.)
 - 242 Number of current NPM volunteers. (Current NPM volunteers include total course graduates from all years and certified Native Plant Masters. (Certified Native Plant Masters are participants who have received a grade of C or better for 3 courses and who reported contacts for current year).
 - 22,414 Total educational contacts made by NPM volunteers. (Total contacts reported on all Educational Contact Record forms for the year)
 - 19 Number of volunteer NPM trainers (volunteer NPM trainers are those volunteers who teach NPM courses).
 - 5 Number of trainings conducted for volunteer NPM trainers.
 - 3 Number of trainings conducted for Extension Staff.
 - 7,934 Total web hits on locally hosted Native Plant Master web sites.
 - \$7,494 Amount of grant dollars generated to support this program.
 - 1 Number of newsletters distributed in support of this plan of work.
 - 1 Number technical (fact sheets) and refereed journal articles published.
 - 4 Number of curriculums developed and /or reviewed that support this plan of work.

If you worked cooperatively with another agent or specialist – please determine who will report what outputs so that efforts are not double counted.

2. **Program Outcomes:** describe the outcomes/impacts that occurred as a result of these programming/educational efforts:

- **Immediate (learning) changes:**

Number of program participants reporting **increased skill** in relation to:

Total # of Survey Respondents	# Reporting Gain	Increased Skill in
242	235	Identification of native and non-native plants found in Colorado.

Attach information that supports individual/team effort as appropriate: evaluation summary, publication produced, photos, etc.
 Submit report to work team leader and to supervisor prior to January 30, 2008

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Number of program participants who **increased awareness** as a result of the program:

Total # of Survey Respondents	# Reporting Change	Awareness Increased
242	213	What weeds are and why it is important to control them.
242	220	The value of native plants for landscaping uses.

- **Short/medium term (action) changes:**

Number of program participants reporting **behavior changes** in relation to:

Total # of Survey Respondents	# Reporting Change	Behavior Changed
242	169	Began or increased weed control efforts.
242	186	Began planting or increased planting of natives.
242	196	Stayed on trails to prevent erosion and damage to native plants.
242	194	Educated others about the value of native plants.
242	172	Left wild plants to produce seed rather than collecting or picking wildflowers.
242	213	Educated others about the impact of weeds on native plants.
242	133	Asked for native plants at a local garden center.

- **Long-term (conditions):** - social, economic, civic, environmental.

Total # of Survey Respondents	Acres	Behavior Changed
242	21,236	Acres impacted by weed control efforts.
242	2,396	Acres impacted by planting of natives.

3. **Additional Inputs:** Describe additional local inputs (your county or assigned area) that were engaged or invested in this program effort:

86 of different agencies you partnered with in this program effort. Include employers/agencies of NPM participants and any other collaborating agencies which cosponsor NPM in your county. Please list these agencies:

\$10,175 User fees generated through this program effort.

Describe other inputs used if any:

Resources generated by the work team itself will be included by the team leader when individual reports are consolidated into a team report.

Attach information that supports individual/team effort as appropriate: evaluation summary, publication produced, photos, etc.

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4. Describe successful efforts to reach new and/or underserved audiences locally in this POW area, if any:

Gilpin County:

Native Plant Master Volunteers held a series of wildflower walks (5) in Gilpin County so that people who were unable to take the full NPM class could learn more about wildflowers.

Jefferson County

For the Statewide Native Plant Master Program, a partnership was forged with the Colorado State University Extension Diversity Catalyst team to generate ideas that might be useful for marketing the NPM Program to diverse audiences. The following strategies to increase diverse audiences were implemented for the NPM Program in 2007:

- NPM was marketed directly to federal agencies for the first time including the Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service and U.S. Geological Survey. The strategy was to target agencies that are more diverse due to federal diversity mandates.
- CSUE Jefferson County joined the James P. Beckwourth Mountain Club which is an outdoor wilderness recreation group for diverse individuals and marketed NPM directly to this important group.
- Continued to emphasize in marketing materials that the NPM program covers human uses & historical significance of native plants. The thought is that perhaps people from cultural backgrounds that value plants for their medicinal, food, dye, and other uses would be drawn to the program if they were more aware that these uses would be a focus of the program in addition to focusing on native plants from an ecological perspective.
- A new course in 2008 will be offered at the Saddle Rock golf course located in Aurora, a highly diverse community. The thought is that in urban areas where field identification of native plants in natural/naturalized areas may not be possible; perhaps courses on native plants and weeds in more urban settings would attract people who don't want to attend NPM courses in non-urban settings.
- Informational brochures about the NPM program were provided at the Wheat Ridge Carnation Festival and the Jeffco Fair. The thought is that providing information on NPM at community events and gathering places (festivals, fairs, farmer's markets, community centers, schools etc.) would raise awareness among people who might not happen upon information about the NPM program or other Extension programs elsewhere.
- A classroom course in introductory taxonomy was offered in spring, 2007. The thought is that offering classroom-based courses in addition to field-based courses may attract people who are limited in the amount of strenuous, outdoor activity they can tolerate.

The impact of the recruitment efforts will be analyzed in 2008 after NPM courses are complete to determine if it resulted in a more diverse population enrolling in the program.

Logan/Morgan/Kit Carson/Yuma/Phillips/Sedgwick/Washington Counties:

Native Plant Master trainees successfully completed course – 8 female adults. Large animal veterinarian – 1 young adult male – 5 individual contacts. 4 youth involved in native range plant surveys

Tri-River Area:

Our program this year was to “Train the Trainers” for the Tri River Area. All of the participants in the course have committed to being NPM educators in future courses.

5. Provide a description of program accomplishments (bullets), a success story, or provide highlights of anecdotal or qualitative data that demonstrates the value or effectiveness of this program effort locally. Include a brief

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statement of the issue addressed locally; how the program addressed the issue; and the names of 1 or two contacts who could be contacted, through you, at a later date, for interview.

Accomplishments:

Jefferson County

- In 2007, the Native Plant Master Program expanded to 7 programs across the state, up from 1 program in 2004.
- A total of 19 Native Plant Master courses were offered across the state in 2007, up from the 3 offered in 2004. A total of 35 courses are scheduled in 2008.
- In 2007, a total of 17,630 citizens were educated by Jefferson County NPM volunteers using information they gained from the Native Plant Master Program.
- A \$15,000 grant was received from the Colorado State University Extension Venture Capital Fund for statewide expansion of the Native Plant Master Program.

Tri-River Area

Our program this year was to “Train the Trainers” for the Tri River Area. All of the participants in the course have committed to being NPM educators in future courses.

Success Story:

Eagle/Garfield Counties:

- Identification of large noxious weed population unknown to Manager of large ranch.
- Russian olive eradication by HOA and inclusion in Master Plan by City Parks and Rec. Dept.
- 2nd grade teacher taught class about the concept of native vs. non-native and went on weed hunt in playground.
- Information from NPM used to recommend native plants for new LEED Green Building project for BLM.
- Encouraged use of native plants to reduce water usage in community garden.
- Identification of natives and noxious weeds for HOA, neighboring land owners, etc.
- More knowledgeable about native and noxious weeds when leading tours at botanic garden, nature center, science school and state park.
- Talks to local groups about native plants and noxious weeds.

Gilpin County

- The Native Plant Masters really help out in teaching Gilpin County locals the difference between weeds and wildflowers. Because they are on the ground in different areas of Gilpin County, they can contact more of their neighbors than I could reach alone.
- One Native Plant Master belongs to a large (600 acre) family-owned Ranch that has both significant weed issues and significant habitat for native plants. In the past, I had been entirely unsuccessful in convincing this group to take care of their weed problems. But this Native Plant Master not only got them to begin on an ambitious weed control program, but is beginning a survey and booklet on the native plants of the Ranch – which is already having the effect of making the family members more interested in protecting their resources.

Jefferson County

Jan Loechell Turner is a current Native Plant Master (NPM) and former volunteer trainer for the Native Plant Master Program. Jan has grown tremendously since her first days in the NPM program. In her own words, she says that “It is not an exaggeration . . . to say it has been a life transforming experience for me.”

When she initially took NPM courses, Jan was a part-time librarian and she described herself as being “terrified of public speaking”. After being certified as a Native Plant Master, she was trained to be a volunteer instructor for the program for several years and became a highly rated NPM course trainer. Subsequently, she was hired as an Assistant Professor at Regis University. Jan commented that “without teaching in the NPM program, I would not have developed the skills I needed. A large part of my job involves teaching.”

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Jan's involvement in the Native Plant Master Program led to her becoming co-author of two highly regarded field guides to native plants found in both a national park and a national monument (*Wildflowers of Mesa Verde*. Golden, CO: Rabbitbrush Publishing, 2007 and *Wildflowers of Canyon de Chelly*. 2nd ed. Golden, CO: Rabbitbrush Publishing, 2006, Jan Loechell Turner and Charles A. Turner (authors and photographers). Both are sold in the visitor centers for the parks and Jan is currently co-authoring a field guide to the flora of Red Rocks Park, a Denver Mountain Park.

In commenting about the curriculum structure of the Native Plant Master Program, she said, "I was so impressed by the way in which the information was presented that, as a writer, I incorporated the NPM approach into my books. As a matter of fact, without the inspiration of the NPM classes, I probably would never have written the wildflower guides."

According Jan, because of her involvement in the Native Plant Master Program, "I have become more involved in the Colorado Native Plant Society." She was elected as the current co-President of this important statewide group. She also was appointed to the Colorado State University Extension Advisory Board in Jefferson County and has served for several years.

Jan also used knowledge she gained from the Native Plant Master Program to increase the sustainability of her personal landscape at home. She said, "In my yard, I've "gone native" to a large extent, eliminating the lawn and replacing it with many native plants and grasses that I learned about in the NPM classes."

Jan also feels that the Native Plant Master courses themselves were outstanding. Jan has a Master's degree in biology, but did not get significant field experience in her prior coursework until taking NPM courses. She commented that "As a student of botany, the class has been extremely useful. It was so helpful to get out into the field, exploring different ecosystems in the area during different months, and learning about the plants in their natural habitats. I don't think I have ever enjoyed any classes more than the Native Plant Master classes. I've learned so much that has been useful to me in my career as well as my personal life."

In conclusion, Jan summarized her involvement in the Native Plant Master Program by saying "The NPM has enriched my life, both personally and professionally. The NPM program is highly effective in increasing citizen awareness of weed management, increasing awareness of sustainable landscaping using natives, and increasing skill in identifying native and non-native plants. It is an excellent way to create an educated public who truly understand the value of native plants in the environment and the threat of weeds to the ecosystem."

Logan/Morgan/Kit Carson/Yuma/Phillips/Sedgwick/Washington Counties:

- 3 Native Plant Master non-certificate trainees (Secretaries) provided plant ID references (9 total)
- One NPM trainee has helped establish a Native Plant Demo Garden
- Same NPM trainee has also helped start a native plant seed germination class for FFA youth

Montezuma/Dolores/LaPlata:

Issue Statement: Southwest Colorado has a wealth of native plants: wildflowers, grasses, shrubs, trees, which are well adapted to the variable climate, soils, temperatures, and elevations. Native plants are valuable in landscaping, because of their adaptability, and are worth promoting and protecting. These plants are threatened by alien weed species that are proliferating in Southwest Colorado. This issue was addressed through two, local Native Plant Master courses. The program had been enormously successful in Southwest Colorado. It has expanded into San Miguel / West Montrose counties with two additional courses. All four courses filled to capacity and had waiting lists. Plans are being made to expand the program into La Plata County.

San Miguel/W. Montrose:

I am thrilled that because of our efforts to hold this course at Priest Lake, the County Weed Manager was able to cooperatively work with the Forest Service to treat invasive species at the site this year and next....It very likely would not have happened otherwise. That is wonderful in light of protecting the ecosystem of this very special site.

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Tri-River Area:

Each year, there is a wildflower talk and walk at our wildflower garden at the Grand Mesa Visitors center. This program is so popular that it lead to dissatisfaction, because as we NPM'ers know, it is impossible to hear and see when there are 70 people gathered around an instructor. This past year, our newly trained NPM participants helped out at this event, leading smaller groups, to great success. Their efforts were much appreciated by the Forest Service.

6. As a result of program evaluation, implementation or community input; are there changes or suggestions you have for this work team, its plan of work or the contribution report?

Eagle/Garfield Counties:

The impact of the weed education component of the NPM program is critical and should continue to be emphasized as important to the overall success of the program.