

# Rose Lake Plant Materials Center



*Spring 2009  
Newsletter*

Snap Shots of Spring

# Collections Still Needed

The Rose Lake Plant Materials Center is collecting populations of American plum, broomsedge bluestem, buttonbush, and coralberry for testing and evaluation as conservation plants. The Center is asking NRCS staff, Conservation District employees, and conservation partners to collect plant material of these species and send them to the Rose Lake PMC.



**Buttonbush**  
*Cephalanthus occidentalis*



**American Wild Plum**  
*Prunus americana*



**Coralberry**  
*Symphoricarpos orbiculatus*  
*orbiculatus*



**Riverbank wildrye**  
*Elymus riparius*

**Broomsedge Bluestem**  
*Andropogon virginicus*



# Ohio NRCS Plant Materials Committee Works with Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Districts

The Ohio NRCS Plant Materials Committee made presentations at the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation District meeting on January 20 – 21. PM Committee members used the National Plant Materials Program display as the backdrop to discuss the Plant Materials Program at the meeting where about 550 District Board Directors and staff were in attendance.

The Committee also had a display at the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation District All Employees meeting held March 10 – 11. (See below and next page.) The display focused on Committee activities in Ohio, such as the residential septic system constructed wetland project, as well as opportunities for the Districts to work with the Plant Materials Program. About 60 SWCS employees visited the display during that meeting.

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources  
Conservation Service
OHIO PLANT MATERIALS PROGRAM

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CURRENT PLANT MATERIALS PROJECTS

<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>PLANT MATERIALS CENTERS (PMC)</b></p> <p>Plant Materials Centers were established to research plants that show promise for meeting conservation needs and to test their performance. After species are proven in performance, they are named and released to commercial growers for production and sale as conservation plants to the public.</p> <p><b>Plant Materials Centers Serving Ohio:</b></p> <p><i>Rose Lake PMC</i> East Lansing, Michigan Serves NRCS Areas 1 and 4</p> <p><i>Alderson PMC</i> Alderson, West Virginia Serves NRCS Areas 3 and 5</p> <p><i>Big Flats PMC</i> Big Flats, New York Serves NRCS Area 2</p> <p>The Ohio Plant Materials Committee works with National Plant Materials Centers by identifying Ohio customers, Ohio resources, and Ohio program needs.</p> </div>	<p><b>Residential Septic System Constructed Wetland:</b></p>  <p>Several species of plants have been planted to determine their effectiveness for use in a constructed wetland on a residential septic system site. The Logan County Health Department requested this study through the Logan County Field Office. This study began in 2008 and will be evaluated over a 5-year period.</p> <p><b>Vegetative Barriers for Soil Conservation:</b></p> <p>Vegetative barriers, which are permanent strips of stiff, dense vegetation, are being evaluated for the reduction of soil erosion and the stabilization of slopes. These barriers may offer an alternative to grass waterways, and in some cases, taking less land out of production. Field planting locations are needed for trials.</p>  <p><b>National Ash Seed Collection Initiative:</b></p>  <p>The Rose Lake Plant Materials Center began an ash seed collection program to preserve the native germplasm of the ash trees being destroyed by the invasive Emerald Ash Borer. Volunteers are needed to collect seeds to send to the PMC. This is an excellent community service project for volunteers. To learn more visit <a href="http://www.ashseed.org">www.ashseed.org</a>.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>PLANT MATERIALS TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT STEPS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resource Concern Identified</li> <li>2. Interested Entity/Individuals Coordinate w/Plant Materials Committee Through NRCS Field Office</li> <li>3. Plant Materials Committee Works with PM Specialist to Create Study</li> <li>4. Plant Materials Center Provides Plant Materials and Instructions to Field Office</li> <li>5. NRCS Field Office Establishes and Maintains Planting</li> <li>6. Conservation Plant or Technology Released</li> </ol> </div>
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Plant Materials Program display at OSWCD All Employees Meeting



United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

## Plant Materials Program Project

### *Miscanthus Vegetative Barriers for Soil Conservation*

Grassed waterways (NRCS 412 Standard) are a recommended conservation practice for healing ephemeral gully erosion. Waterways convey concentrated-flow water, reduce gully erosion, prevent flooding, and limit sediment and/or nutrient loss to surface water. Vegetative barriers, a conservation practice that takes LESS LAND OUT OF PRODUCTION can be a viable alternative to grassed waterways. A designed narrow vegetative barrier (NRCS 601 Standard) of *Miscanthus sinensis* has prevented about 95 tons of soil loss over five years. Technology used for establishing the *Miscanthus* vegetative barrier sod strips under greenhouse conditions and installed in the field was developed by the Rose Lake Plant Materials Program.

#### Vegetative Barriers

Permanent strips of stiff, dense, vegetation along the general contour of slopes or across concentrated flow areas designed to:

- Reduce sheet and rill erosion
- Reduce ephemeral gully erosion
- Manage water flow
- Stabilize slopes
- Trap sediment

#### Advantages

***Miscanthus sinensis* accession was NOT INVASIVE at evaluation sites**

- did not produce viable seed in 15 years of testing
- did not escape from original plantings

***Miscanthus* vegetative barriers performed conservation functions**

- managed water flow, stabilized slopes, and trapped sediment
- removed very little land from production
- eased farming through concentrated flow areas
- emerged through sediment and resumed growth from buried nodes
- remained intact and erect year round
- provided immediate functionality when installed as sod strips

***Miscanthus* is long-lived**

- 15 years in field planting at Rose Lake Plant Materials Center



*Stadia boards showing 1-ft soil deposition upslope from barrier*

### Ohio Field Locations Needed!

The Plant Materials Program is looking for field planting locations to demonstrate and evaluate their soil saving technology that keeps more land in production. The Program needs your help to:

- Identify field planting sites
- Provide assistance in planning and installation
- Provide assistance in monitoring and evaluation

The Plant Materials Program has plant material available for this project. The Plant Materials Specialist can provide guidance and training in planning the installation.

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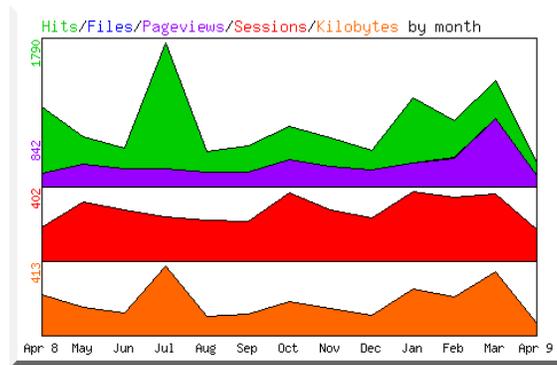
**Plant Materials Program display at OSWCD All Employees Meeting**

# Recent Activity on [www.Ashseed.org](http://www.Ashseed.org)

Ash seed collected during 2008 as part of the National Ash Seed Collection Initiative has been processed and analyzed for seed quality. Of the approximately 250 samples submitted to the Rose Lake PMC in 2008, 154 samples were sent to the U.S. Forest Service Laboratory in Dry Branch, GA for x-ray analysis to determine seed soundness. Based on those results 136 samples will be sent to the NCGRP in Ft. Collins, CO for long term storage.

Spring and summer are the ideal times to identify seed bearing ash trees for seed collection in the fall. Please be looking for ash trees that produce seed throughout the summer and make plans for seed collection in late summer and fall.

As part of the National Ash Seed Collection Initiative the Rose Lake PMC, in partnership with the National Association of Conservations Districts maintains the website, [www.ashseed.org](http://www.ashseed.org). The website has information on ash tree identification, seed collection instructions and links to additional ash tree resources.



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