Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass

Elymus macrourus (Agropyron macrourum)

Selected Class Release "Natural"

Uses: Revegetation Interior Alaska

Match the species and seed source to the intended planting site

Plants native to an area create a more permanent habitat

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass
Plant Identification Number: 9097726

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass comes from Slana, near Glennallen Alaska (August 1995). It was collected at an elevation of approximately 2400 feet by Stoney Wright (2006).

The seed from the parent (Slana) plant is grown and harvested at the Plant Materials Center and by other seed growers.

Some agencies require the original seed to be collected within a certain circumference around where the revegetation will take place.

An example of this is at Denali National Park. They use a locally collected seed mix of a native legume, Indian Potato (*Hedysarum alpinum*), and wheatgrass (*Elymus macrourus*). By planting both species at the same time, Densmore (2000) states that the resulting product can withstand mowing and light scraping—as well as resist invasive weeds.

This same method is practical throughout Alaska where the seed source material is not so strictly regulated.

Roadsides which are well-drained, nutrient-poor, sandy, or gravelly could be successfully established in about 5 years with a mix of *Elymus macrourus* and *Hedysarum alpinum*.

Background and Growth

Elymus macrourus is native to Alaska. It is found on open slopes, gravel or sand bars, and earth embankments in tundra and woodlands (Hultén, 1968).

Map from Hultén, 1968.
Used with the permission of Stanford University

Tufted wheatgrass is usually found on well-drained soils. It is a long-lived perennial.

It reproduces by seed or (rarely) vegetatively via rhizomes. It is self-fertile (Sullivan, 1993).

This grass grows in clumps to about 3 feet tall. Its leaf blades are narrow and mostly green, but occasionally bluegreen. It has a slender 8 inch seed spike that some growers consider to be attractive.

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass seed is maintained by the Alaska Plant Materials Center for commercial production.

Wheatgrass in the Wild—

- is considered a colonizer and an indicator of disturbed sites (Tsvelev, 1983);
- is drought-tolerant, long-lived, and forms sod;
- can be found on riverbanks subject to fluctuating erosion;
- plays an important part in natural revegetation as a nurse plant for other species.

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Alaska Plant Materials Center
Serving Alaska's needs in production of Alaska native plants

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass for Alaska Revegetation Purposes

This wheatgrass can be an important part of seed mixes for revegetation. It is quick to germinate and become established. This enables it to act like a nurse plant for slower growing plant species (Sullivan, 1993).

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass is well suited to revegetate roadsides where the soil is dry. Wildlife and domestic animals eat this grass.

Elymus macrourus **production field at the Plant Materials Center in Palmer, Alaska.**

Elymus macrourus seed
170,174 seeds per pound

To Produce Slana

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass grows better in fine-textured soils. Drill it about 1/2 inch deep.

Light irrigation will help its growth. Keep weeds controlled. Seeding can begin either in early spring or fall.

Tufted Wheatgrass has an approximately 8 inch seed head, making it easy to harvest with normal farm devices. Its seed spike ripens in late summer, thus it is one of the last grasses harvested.

Slana Germplasm tufted wheatgrass plant characteristics

Wetness Tolerance	**moderate**
Acidity Tolerance	**moderate**
Seedling Vigor	**good**
Yield Potential	**high**
Longevity	**long**
Seed Production	**moderate**
Drought Resistance	**good**
Winter Hardiness	**moderate**
Palatability	**fair**

(Sullivan, 1993)

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References

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