

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 26, 2004

### **Native Grasses Galore**

Mid-July is when the native bunch-grasses in the Methow go to seed. Now is the time to collect them!

Twenty-five people gathered at the Methow Natives nursery last week to learn about native grass seed collection, and many were impressed by this simple, inexpensive method to restore bare soil and weedy ground.

The methods are simple. First learn to identify several native grasses by visiting the Methow Natives or Wild Heart's nurseries. Once you recognize the target species, simply pull the seeds from the seedhead and store them in a cool, dry bag. If you have a relatively small restoration area, you can plant the seeds now in a flat with potting soil, and keep them moist for two weeks. This will increase the germination success of the seeds, and increase the chances that your grasses will survive.

In October you can divide the grasses and plant individual clumps. If you're restoring a large area, broadcast seeding may be more practical. In this case save the seeds that you collect this month, and plant them in late October, just before the first snow. Rake them into the ground and cover with a light layer of mulch (seedless straw or other weed-free organic matter). Come spring you'll have native grasses galore.

For more information, go to [www.methowconservancy.org](http://www.methowconservancy.org) and click on "newsletter" or visit the Methow Natives nursery located on the East County road between Winthrop and Twisp.

The grass seed collection and sowing workshop was sponsored by the Methow Conservancy--a locally-based nonprofit organization dedicated to inspiring people to care for the land of the Methow Valley. In addition to working with private landowners to protect open space through conservation easements, the Methow Conservancy hosts a variety of free, public, educational events focused on conservation and natural history. The First Tuesday Lecture series, offering guest speakers on conservation topics each first Tuesday, will begin again in September.

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