

Release of Carrizo Germplasm little bluestem

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South Texas Natives in collaboration with the USDA NRCS E. “Kika” de la Garza Plant

Materials Center completed formal release of an ecotypic seed source of little bluestem for South Texas in the fall of 2014. Little bluestem is a highly desired, late successional warm-season bunchgrass. Research has shown that this species is an important nesting substrate for bobwhite quail, is excellent cover for wildlife, and provides high quality cattle forage on many rangelands. Historically, little bluestem was a dominant plant species on sandy soils across South Texas. A regionally adapted release of little bluestem was needed due to poor survival and establishment by non-ecotypic little bluestem varieties currently available, which performed poorly in South Texas when planted.

- Carrizo Germplasm little bluestem is comprised of 2 collections chosen from evaluation of over 70 regional collections. Collections in the release originated from Zavala and Bexar Counties.
- Carrizo Germplasm little bluestem has shown excellent adaptation to the South Texas climate and has had consistently superior performance to other commercial sources of little bluestem when planted in this region.
- Based on field planting results, this release should provide an excellent species for restoration of native grasslands on sand, loamy sand, and sandy loam soils in South Texas.
- Commercial seed should be available from Douglass King Seed Company in spring 2015.

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