## Part 542.1 Terms Commonly Used in Plant Materials Work (Glossary)

The following list of terms, although not complete, defines some terms commonly used by plant scientists.

**9 million numbers** - NRCS numbers used to identify plant accessions; i.e., 9056783

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**Accession** - Plant material (plant, seed, or vegetative part) collected and assigned a number to maintain its identity during evaluation, increase, and storage.

**Acid Equivalent** - The theoretical yield of parent acid from an active ingredient.

**Active Ingredient** - The chemical compound in a product that is responsible for the herbicidal (or other chemical) affect.

**Advanced Evaluation** - The more intensive testing of plants that have been selected as being superior in one or more attributes to the initial evaluation.

**Aggressiveness** - Seedling vigor related to ease of establishment. Also capacity of well-established plants to compete with or outcompete associated grasses, legumes, or woodies.

**Alien Species** - A species introduced and occurring in locations beyond its known historical range. This includes introductions from other continents, bioregions, and also those not native to the local geographic region. Executive Order (E.O.), Invasive Species, February 3, 1999, more narrowly defines an alien species and ties the definition to an occurrence outside a native.

**Allele** - One member of a pair or series of genes occupying a specific position (locus) in a specific chromosome; one of the alternative forms of a gene. Normally an individual has only two alleles for any trait one gene derived from its male parent, the other from its female parent.

**Allopolyploid** - A polyploid containing genetically different sets of chromosomes; for example, sets from two or more species.

**Amphidiploid** - A polyploid whose chromosome compliment is made up of the entire somatic complements of two species.

**Aneuploid** - An organism whose somatic number is not an even multiple of the haploid number.

**Annual**

ological, or other characteristic; Uniformity - If any variations exist in the variety, they must be describable, predictable, and commercially acceptable; and Stability - When sexually reproduced, the variety must remain unchanged in its essential and distinctive characteristics to a degree expected of similarly developed varieties.

**Polycross** - Open-pollination of a group of genotypes (generally selected) in isolation from other compatible genotypes in such a way that each of the original selections has an equal opportunity at pollinating, or being pollinated by, any of the others.

**Population** - (1) The aggregate of organisms which inhabit a particular area or region; (2) a (specified) portion of such an aggregate, usually a group of organisms of the same kind occupying an area small enough to allow interbreeding.

**Population Genetics** - A branch of genetics dealing with the frequency and distribution of genes, mutants, genotypes, etc. among populations of organisms. Population genetics is now based upon an increasing input of laboratory and field observations under an array of environments; much of this work involves the documentation and interpretation of genetic variability in natural populations.

**Post-Emergence** - After the emergence of a specified weed or crop.

**Potential Natural Community** - The biotic community that would become established on an ecological site if all successional sequences were completed without interferences by man under the present environmental conditions. Natural disturbances are inherent in its development.

**Pre-Emergence** - Before the emergence of a specified weed or crop.

**Pre-Planting** - Any time before the crop is planted.

**Pristine** - A state of ecological stability or condition existing in the absence of direct disturbances by modern man. See also “relict”.

**Project** - A national PM activity that is broad in nature and serves as an umbrella for PMC studies. Refer to Part 540.51 of the NPMM for more information on PM projects.

**Project Statement** - A document that outlines the details of a National PM Project. Refer to Part 540.51 of the NPMM for more information on PM project statements.

**Pure Line** - Succession of generations of organisms homozygous for all genes.

**Pure Live Seed (PLS)** - The product of the percentage of germination plus the hard seed and the percentage of pure seed divided by 100.

**Purity** - (1) The name or names of the kind, type, or varieties and the percentage or percentages thereof. (2) The percentage of other agricultural seed or crop seed; the percentage of inert matters. (3) The percentage of weed seed, including noxious weed seed, and the names of the noxious weed seed and the rate of occurrence of each.

**Race** - A term sometimes used to denote ecotypes.

**Range Condition** - A generic term relating to present status of a unit of range in terms of specific values or potentials. Specific values or potentials must be stated. Some agencies define range condition as follows: the present state of vegetation of a range site in relation to the climax (natural potential) plant community for that site. It is an expression of the relative degree to which the kinds, proportions, and amounts of plants in a plant community resemble that of the climax plant community for the site.

**Range Condition Class** - Confusion has existed regarding both definition and use of this term. The following definition fits the thinking expressed in the definition Range Condition: one of a series of arbitrary categories used to either classify ecological status of a specific range site in relation to its potential (early, mid, late, or potential natural community) or classify management-oriented value categories for specific potentials, e.g., good condition spring cattle range.

**Range Degradation** - The degeneration of a site caused by biotic or abiotic factors which results in a lowered successional status to the point that ecological potential is changed. See also “Range Site Degeneration”.

**Range Retrogression** - The degradation of a site caused by biotic or abiotic factors which results in movement of the site to a lower successional status within the same ecological potential.

**Range Seeding** - The process of establishing vegetation by the artificial dissemination of seed. Establishing adapted plant species on ranges by means other than natural revegetation. See also “Reseeding”.

**Range Site** - An area of rangeland having the potential to produce distinctive kinds and amounts of vegetation, resulting in a characteristic plant community under its particular combination of environmental factors, especially soils and climate. Each range site is typified by an association of species that differ from that of other range sites in the kind or proportions of species, or in total production. Synonymous with ecological site when referring to rangeland. Some agencies use range site based on the climax concept, not potential natural community. Syn.: Ecological Site.

**Range Site Degeneration** - The degradation of a site caused by biotic or abiotic factors which results in an ecological shift to a lower successional status and possibly a lower ecological potential for production. Syn.: retrogression. See also “range degradation”.

**Reciprocal Cross** - A second cross involving the same characters as the first but with the sex of the parents interchanged.

**Reclamation** - Restoration of a site or resource to a desired condition to achieve management objectives or stated goals. The construction of plant, soil, and topographic conditions, after disturbance, which permits the disturbed site to function adequately within its ecosystem. However, the constructed conditions may not be identical to predisturbance conditions. The process of reconverting disturbed lands to their former uses or other productive uses.

**Recovery** - The rate or amount of regrowth following harvesting of a forage species or following a dormant season.

**Recurrent Selection** - A method of breeding designed to concentrate favorable genes scattered among a number of individuals by selecting in each generation among the progeny produced by intermating of the selected individuals of the previous generation.

**Registered Seed** - The progeny of foundation seed that is so handled as to maintain satisfactory genetic identity and purity and that has been approved and certified by the certifying agency. This class of seed should be of a quality suitable for production of certified seed. See also “seed certification classes”.

**Registered Variety** - (1) For grasses and agricultural species: A variety accepted, numbered, and registered as a recognized improved variety by the Committee on Varietal Standardization and Registration of the Crop Science Society of America. (2) For other species: A variety which has been registered with the appropriate International Species Registrar.

**Rehabilitation** - Return of land to a form and productivity that conforms with a prior land use plan, including a stable ecological state that does not contribute substantially to environmental deterioration and is consistent with surrounding aesthetic values. Improving a project site to a more desired condition than previously existed, usually as result of a major disturbance. Synonymous with reclamation.

**Released Variety** - A new variety of proved value that is made available to the public, according to ESCOP standards, for a conservation purpose. See also “variety”.

**Relict** - A remnant or fragment of the climax plant community that remains from a former period when it was more widely distributed. See also “pristine”.

**Reseeding** - A crop variety or inbred line that has been evaluated and made available to the public. To make available to the public. To seed again, usually soon after an initial seeding has failed to achieve satisfactory turf establishment.

**Restoration** - The process of restoring site conditions as they were before land disturbance.

**Revegetation** - Establishing or re-establishing desirable plants in areas where desirable plants are absent or of inadequate density, by management alone (natural revegetation) or by seeding or transplanting (artificial revegetation). A general term for renewing the vegetation on a project site, which include restoration and rehabilitation. Refers to the vegetation construction phase of reclamation.

**Riparian Community Type** - A recurring, classified, defined and recognizable assemblage of riparian plant species. A repeating, classified, defined and recognizable assemblage of riparian plant species.

**Riparian Ecosystems** - (1) Those assemblages of plants, animals, and aquatic communities whose presence can be either directly or indirectly attributed to factors that are waterinfluenced or related. (2) Interacting system between aquatic and terrestrial situations, identified by soil characteristics, and distinctive vegetation that requires or tolerates free or unbound water.

**Riparian Species** - Plant species occurring within the riparian zone. Obligate species require the environmental conditions within the riparian zone; facultative species tolerate the environmental conditions, therefore may also occur away from the riparian zone.

**Seed Certification** - A system whereby seed of plant cultivars (and pre-varietal releases) is produced, harvested and marketed under authorized regulation to insure seed of high quality and genetic purity.

**Seed Certification Classes -** Classes of seed produced by a grower to ensure the purity of the genetic material. Seed which undergoes the certification process is typically inspected during the growing season or at harvest and the seed is tested. Certification classes include: Breeder, Foundation, Registered, Certified, and Common. See also “breeder seed”, foundation seed”, “registered seed”, “certified seed”, and “common seed”.

**Seed Certifying Agency** - General term for the state or other agency responsible for the release and certification of crop varieties and for inspecting and approving seed produced under one of the seed certification classes. Most seed certification agencies are members of the Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA).

**Seed Lot** - A definite quantity of seed identified by a lot number, every portion or bag of which is uniform, within permitted tolerances, for the factors that appear on the labeling.

**Selected Class Release** - (1) Seed that is the progeny of rigidly selected seed or stands of untested parentage that have promise but not proof of genetic superiority, and for whichgeographic source and elevation shall be stated on the certification label. (2) One of the classes of pre-varietal releases recognized by AOSCA.

**Selection** - Selecting an accession or accessions from an assembly, or individuals from within an accession, to obtain the plants having the best characteristics for a particular conservation use.

**Selective Herbicide** - A chemical that is more toxic to some plant species than to others.

**Self Pollination -** The transfer of pollen from the anther of a flower to the stigma of the same flower, or different flowers on the same plant.

**Seral** - Refers to species or communities that are eventually replaced by other species or communities within a sere.

**Seral Community** - One of a series of biotic communities that follow one another in time on any given area. Syn. successional community.

**Seral Stages** - The developmental stages of an ecological succession.

**Sere** - All temporary communities in a successional sequence. The complete series of ecological communities occupying a given area over hundreds or thousands of years from the initial to the final or climax stage.

**Sod Seeding** - Direct drilling of seed into sod of existing vegetation with no mechanical seedbed preparation.

**Soil Application** - Chemical applied mainly to the soil surface rather than to vegetation.

**Soil Incorporation** - Mechanical mixing of a chemical with the soil.

**Soil Injection** - Mechanical placement of a chemical beneath the soil surface with a minimum of mixing or stirring.

**Soil Sterilant** - A biocide that prevents the growth of plants and kills all living organisms when present in the soil. Soil sterilization effects may be temporary or permanent.

**Source-Identified Seed -** (1) Source identified propagating materials are seed, seedlings, or other propagating materials collected from natural stands, seed production areas, seed fields, or orchards where no selection or testing of the parent population has been made. (2) One of the classes of pre-varietal releases recognized by AOSCA.

**Stand** - (1) A population of plants. (2) Density of population or number of individuals per unit area.

**Standard Plant** - (1) A commonly used species or, if available, variety for the use of which an evaluation is being made. (2) A plant which serves as the standard for comparison.

**Strain** - (1) A group of organisms of common origin having one or more definite morphological or physiological characteristics that are heritable. (2) A term to include breed differences within a species, or as a group of plants differing little, if any, in morphology yet physiologically distinct in some additional quality such as yield or vigor: i.e., the northern and southern strains of smooth brome. Strain also means variety, ecotype, biotype, type, or a group of these.

**Study** - An activity at a PMC that develops a product to address a conservation need identified in the PMC LRP. A PMC study must be outlined in a study plan and be identified in the PMC Business Plan and Workload Analysis. Refer to Part 540.52 of the NPMM for more information on PMC studies.

**Study Plan** - A comprehensive document that outlines the details of a PMC study. Refer to Part 540.52 of the NPMM for more information on PMC study plans.

**Subspecies -** A grouping within a species used to describe geographically isolated variants, a category above “variety”, and is indicated by the abbreviation “ssp.” in the scientific name.

**Succession** - (1) The progressive replacement of plant communities on a site which leads to the potential natural plant community, i.e., attaining stability. Primary succession entails simultaneous successions of soil from parent material and vegetation. Secondary succession occurs following disturbances on sites that previously supported vegetation, and entails plant succession on a more mature soil. (2) The progressive development of vegetation toward its highest ecological expression, the climax replacement of one plant community by another.

**Surfactant** - A material that facilitates and accentuates the emulsifying, dispersing, spreading, wetting, and other surface-modifying properties of herbicide formulation.

**Suspension** - A system consisting of very finely divided solid particles dispersed in a solid, liquid, or gas.

**Synergism** - Cooperative action of different chemicals or organisms such that the total effect is greater than the sum of the independent effects.

**Synthetic Variety** - Advanced generation progenies of a number of clones or lines (or of hybrids among them) obtained by open-pollination.

**Testcross** - A cross of a double or multiple heterozygote to the corresponding multiple recessive to test for homozygosity or linkage.

**Tested Seed -** (1) Seeds or plants which have been through additional testing on more than one generation which will include testing on multiple sites with replicated plots to verify performance and heritability of desirable traits. The material has proven genetic superiority or possesses distinctive traits for which heritability is stable as defined by the certifying agency. (2) One of the classes of pre-varietal releases recognized by AOSCA.

**Tetraploid** - An organism having four basic sets of chromosomes.

**Topcross Progeny** - Progeny from outcrossed seed of selections, clones or lines crossed with a single variety or line that serves as a common pollen parent.

**Translocated Herbicide** - An herbicide that is distributed throughout the plant from the point of entry. Syn. Systemic herbicide.

**Trend** - The direction of change in ecological status or resource value rating observed over time. Trend in ecological status should be described as toward, or away from the potential natural community, or as not apparent. Trend in a resource value rating for a specific use should be described as up, down or not apparent. Trends in resource value ratings for several uses on the same site at a given time may be in different directions, and there is no necessary correlation between trends in resource value ratings and trend in ecological status. Some agencies use trend only in the context of ecological status. Syn. range condition trend. See and “apparent trend”.

**Type** - A group of varieties so nearly similar that the individual varieties cannot be clearly differentiated except under special conditions. For further information, refer to the Federal Seed Act Rules and Regulations.

**Use Groups** - The artificial grouping for the comparative testing of plant materials having similar uses.

**Variety** - (1a) The botanical nomenclature division consisting of more or less recognizable entities within species that are not genetically isolated from each other, below the level of subspecies, and is indicated by the abbreviation “var.” in the scientific name (see “botanical variety”); (1b) The rank of taxa below subspecies but above forma; a plant which retains most of the characteristics of the species, but differs in some way such as flower or leaf color, size of mature plant, etc. A variety is added to the specific binomial and preceded by "var.", such as *saxatilis* in the epithet *Juniperus communis* var. *saxatilis*. (2) Term used in some national and international legislation to denominate one clearly distinguishable taxon from another; equivalent to “cultivar”. (Note: the Plant Materials Program does not recognize the terms “variety” and “cultivar” as equivalent.)

**Vegetation Type** - A kind of existing plant community with distinguishable characteristics described in terms of the present vegetation that dominates the aspect or physiognomy of the area. Syn. Type.

**Warm-Season Plant** - A plant that completes most of its growth during the warm part of the year, generally late in spring and in summer. Commonly a C-4 plant photosynthetic pathway.

**Wetland Communities** - Plant communities that occur on sites with soils typically saturated with or covered with water most of the growing season.