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Cut or tear on line

University of Idaho Extension

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Drought Tolerant, Low Input Turfgrass Trials

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SWCD



Funded By: Sustainable Agriculture Research Education Grant through the University of Idaho Cooperative Extension System

Cooperators:

- Living on the Land Program, University of Idaho Extension
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Oregon Department of Transportation
- Payette Soil Conservation District
- Payette Valley Master Gardener Program

Intermountain Water Conservation Facts:

- The average household uses 60% of its potable water outdoors.
- The Average rainfall for southwestern Idaho is 12 inches of rain a year, equal to Tucson, Arizona. The average in the Mojave desert is 6 inches. Seattle, Washington receives 37 inches.
- Kentucky bluegrass is the most used turfgrass in Idaho, Utah, Colorado, Washington, and Oregon. Kentucky bluegrass uses the most water of any turf grown in Idaho at 25 inches.
- Each household uses 50 to 80 inches of water a year for their turfgrass. More than twice as much as is needed. The average household can save over a third of their water through conservation practices.

Project Purpose:

- The objectives of this project are to strengthen regional Living on the Land partnerships, increase networking, and build alumni volunteer corps by:
- Developing optional **water conserving** turf and forage varieties for small acreage landowners, and non-agricultural landscapes be it residential, commercial, or public.
 - Providing **weed control** cover-crops for small acreage with little potential for minimal chemical input and labor.
 - Providing **water quality** improvements through reduced herbicide, fertilizer. and sediment in ground water and surface waters

Project Objectives:

Low input drought tolerant grass species can be used to replace, supplement, or complement more traditional bluegrass lawn mixes for increased water conservation and improved water quality. Replacing large turf areas with these species that are more tolerant of heat and drought stress will enable landowners and public facilities to save water, reduce maintenance, and possibly reduce chemical inputs.



9								
7	1	3	2	5	8	4	6	

Entrance to Rest Area



7	6
1	4
3	8
2	5
9	9
5	2
8	3
4	1
6	7

Parking Lot

Turf Species and Yearly Water Requirements:

- (1) 'Sodar' Streambank Wheatgrass, 9-12"
- (2) 'Ephraim' Crested Wheatgrass, 10-16"
- (3) 'Hycrest' Crested Wheatgrass, 9-12"
- (4) 'Covar' Sheep Fescue, 12-18"
- (5) 'Roadcrest' Crested Wheatgrass, 9-12"
- (6) 'Manchar' Smooth Brome, 16-24"
- (7) 'Vavilov' Siberian Wheatgrass, 9-12"
- (8) 'Rosanna' Western Wheatgrass, 14-20"
- (9) 'Park' Kentucky Bluegrass, 18-20"

Give Your Input!!!

Rating Scale	7	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	6	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	5	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	4	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	3	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	

1. Do you irrigate with public water? _____
2. Do you have an automatic irrigation system? _____
3. Do you reside in a rural, urban, or suburban location and in what State? _____
4. What turf number would you consider planting to replace your existing lawn? _____
5. From this research project do you plan on changing any of your own watering habits? _____
6. What do you plan to do to conserve water? _____
7. On a scale from 1-7, 1 being least acceptable and 7 being the most acceptable, please rate each grass according to its own merit as a turfgrass alternative. _____