

## ASSORTED GRASSES

### **Green Needlegrass** (*Stipa viridula*)

Green needlegrass is a medium tall, cool-season, perennial bunchgrass adapted to drier areas of the prairies and foothills. It possesses good drought tolerance, but is also moderately tolerant of flooding. A beneficial component in reclamation mixes as it establishes early in cooler conditions and stays green throughout the year. Good seedling vigour allows it to tolerate the cold very well and produce a cover quicker than most other native grasses. Green Needlegrass is a good soil stabilizer and has very good forage growth and palatability for reclaiming disturbed native rangelands.

### **Tufted Hairgrass** (*Deschampsia caespitosa*)

A long-lived perennial, Tufted Hairgrass is a medium to tall growing, densely tufted bunchgrass. Its feathery flower spikes can be green, silvery, golden, purple or variegated. It is a valuable soil stabilizer and is well adapted to wet, acidic soils. It has also grown in soils with high levels of hydrocarbons and heavy metals, such as mine tailings. Producing a fair amount of forage, Tufted Hairgrass is a very small seeded species and a great addition, at low percentages, to any lowland native blend.

### **Junegrass** (*Koe/eria hacrantha*)

One of the most common and abundant native species on the prairies, Junegrass completes its life cycle early in the growing season. It is a shallow, but densely-rooted, bunchgrass that is very tolerant of drought and poor fertility soils. It avoids drought by producing seeds only in years where the spring moisture is above average, which often limits availability. When kept in vigorous growing conditions, Junegrass has a stabilizing effect on soils and water movement on watersheds. It has the ability to inhabit rocky soils and to revegetate areas of high soil disturbance and water stress. Adaptable to a wide range of conditions, Junegrass is a valuable addition to revegetation blends in small amounts, due to its very small seed size.

### **Canada Wildrye** (*Elymus canadensis*)

Exceptional seedling vigour and rapid establishment make Canada Wildrye an excellent species for use in erosion control seedings. Stands of Canada Wildrye typically establish well during the first year, reach peak production the second or third year and then rapidly thin out. It is a tall bunchgrass that grows to about 150 cm and has shallow, well branched roots. Adapted to most soils, it occurs most frequently on sandy soils, in wooded areas and on disturbed sites such as riverbanks. Canada Wildrye is also moderately tolerant of drought, flooding, and salinity. This species is useful in mixtures when there is a need for quick development and soil stabilization; however, seeding with slower growing, longer-lived species is best.

## BROMEGRASS

### **Mountain Bromegrass** (*Bromus carinatus*)

Mountain Bromegrass is a hardy, short-lived perennial bunchgrass common to Northern and Central Rocky Mountain areas. It has good seedling vigour and grows early in the spring. It prefers moist soils and is slightly tolerant of saline conditions. It has an extensive, fibrous root system that is effective in controlling soil losses and stabilizing slopes. The rapidly-developing seedlings make it very suitable for reclaiming road cuts and mined lands.

### **Fringed Bromegrass** (*Bromus ciliatus*)

Fringed Bromegrass is a perennial grass which is normally tufted, with a well-developed root system. The course leaves are slightly pubescent and are green-yellow-green in colour. The leaves have a distinct, light coloured mid-rib on the lower surface and a slightly ridged upper surface. Fringed Bromegrass does well in all natural regions, but prefers moist, poorly drained soils, such as wet meadows and clay streams. It is tolerant of moderately acidic soils and does well in areas where other tolerant species do not.

## FESCUE

### **Rocky Mountain Fescue** (*Festuca saximontana*)

Rocky Mountain Fescue is a long lived, densely tufted, bunchgrass with a fibrous root system. As per its name, it excels in rocky areas at higher elevations, although is not choosy about soil conditions. Very tolerant of drought and colder exposed sites, it thrives on fertile, salty or clay soils. Does not like flooded areas or those with high water tables. Rocky Mountain Fescue succeeds better than most grasses on sandy, gravel soils and its rooting system offers excellent erosion control. It establishes early in the spring and stays green throughout the year and well into fall.

### **Sheep Fescue** (*Festuca ovina*)

Sheep Fescue is a densely tufted, low growing bunchgrass with fine, bluish green leaves. This long-lived grass is very winterhardy and has a large root mass allowing it to grow in sandy soils with poor nutrients. Sheep Fescue is very shade tolerant, more so than other fescues. It will also tolerate acidic soils, but not saline or alkaline which limits its use in some areas of the prairies. While being slower to establish and non-aggressive in nature, Sheep Fescue will persist once the root system has developed.

### **Rough Fescue** (*Festuca scabrella*)

Similar to Rocky Mountain Fescue, Rough Fescue is a bunchgrass with a fibrous root system. It excels in gravel soils and is tolerant of drought and colder sites. It establishes early in the spring and stays green throughout the year.

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## WHEATGRASS

### **Western Wheatgrass** (*Agropyron smithii* or *Pascopyrum smithii*)

One of the most valuable species of grass in Western Canada, Western Wheatgrass is a shorter grass with a similar root system to Northern Wheatgrass - long, aggressive rhizomes for vegetative growth; a dense, shallow system of fibrous roots; and deep feeder roots that extend beyond 60 cm. Adapted to most soil conditions, Western Wheatgrass tolerates everything from prolonged drought to spring flooding to moderate levels of alkaline to extreme salinity. Plants have a distinct blue-green colour and the leaves are rigid and grow from the stem at an easily identifiable 45 degree angle. Able to grow almost everywhere, it is ideal for revegetation of industrial sites, roadsides and other low maintenance areas.

### **Northern Wheatgrass** (*Agropyron dasystachyum* or *Elymus /anceo/atus*)

The most widely distributed native grass on the Prairies, Northern Wheatgrass is a hardy, long lived, perennial species noted for its drought tolerance. Because of its three way rooting system - rhizomes for vegetative spreading and reproduction; very dense, shallow, fibrous roots; and deep, feeder roots that penetrate to at least 60 cm - Northern Wheatgrass is adapted to a wide variety of soil and moisture conditions. With its creeping rhizomes to bind soil and provide excellent erosion control and good tolerances to alkaline and saline conditions, Northern Wheatgrass is suited for most reclamation projects, including slope stabilization along canals and storm water ponds. It also produces a smooth sod layer for use in non-irrigated parks and recreation fields.

### **Slender Wheatgrass** (*Agropyron dasystachyum* or *Elymus /anceolatus*)

Slender Wheatgrass is an easy to establish perennial bunchgrass with excellent seedling vigour and dense, fibrous roots extending below 50 cm. Establishment is quicker than most perennial grasses, especially in dry, light soils. It is very tolerant of saline soils; more so than Bromegrass, but surpassed by Tall Wheatgrass. It has a leafy bunch-type growth with leafy stalks that have a characteristic reddish or purple colour at the base. Widely adaptable to a varied range of soil conditions, Slender Wheatgrass is a valuable component of native mixtures with slower developing, longer lived species. It provides an early ground cover and will gradually decline in importance as other more important species develop.

### **Violet Wheatgrass** (*Agropyron vio/aceum*)

An extremely winterhardy wheatgrass that grows in well-drained gravel and sandy soil types. It excels in disturbed soils such as construction sites in the Northern Rockies' Alipne Meadows.

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