



Riverbend Germplasm silky willow

Salix sericea Marshall



Riverbend Germplasm Silky Willow

The USDA-NRCS Rose Lake Plant Materials Center (PMC), the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservations Districts, and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources released Riverbend Germplasm silky willow a tested-class ecotype for the Midwest and Great Lakes region in 2003.

Description

Riverbend Germplasm silky willow is an erect, multi-branched, native shrub that grows to 10-feet tall. It has a thick canopy of lanceolate, fine-toothed leaves that grow to 5-inches long. These are dark green and smooth above, and silky white beneath. The twigs are hairless, light green to brown in color, and brittle at the base. Catkins are precocious.

Source

One-hundred twenty collections of various shrub-type willow species were assembled from Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin in 1992. A collection consisted of approximately fifty 12-inch woody cuttings taken from a single healthy willow shrub or colony of shrubs with like characteristics growing in close proximity. Cuttings were planted in individual pots and placed in the greenhouse for three months. Eight plants were selected from each accession and transplanted into an initial study area on the PMC. Survival, vigor, spread, insect resistance, tillering, height, canopy width, and canopy density data were collected over a three-year period from 1994 to 1996. In

1998, sixteen accessions were selected for inclusion in an advanced PMC trial. Most of these and additional accessions were placed in off-center field trails located in Wisconsin, Indiana, and Michigan.

Center and off-center plantings were established as replicated research trials. ‘Streamco’ purple osier willow and ‘Bankers’ dwarf willow were used as standards of comparison. Survival, height, spread, canopy width, and canopy density data were taken on the accessions in the advanced trials from 1998 through 2000. Riverbend Germplasm silky willow was selected for its excellent canopy, density, growth, and overall appearance. Riverbend Germplasm silky willow is unaltered. It is a selection from naturally occurring germplasm. Riverbend Germplasm was determined “OK to release” when evaluated for environmental impact using the criteria adopted by the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Program.

Conservation Uses

Riverbend Germplasm silky willow is intended for use in streambank/shoreline restoration and riparian corridors. Michigan NRCS technical specialists have determined that Riverbend Germplasm is useful or potentially useful with these Conservation Practice Standards:

- Early Successional Habitat Development/Management (647)
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)
- Stream Habitat Improvement and Management (395)
- Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Wetland Enhancement (659)
- Wetland Restoration (657)
- Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management (644)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
- Windbreak/Shelterbelt Renovation (650)

Area of Adaptation and Use

This species’ range is throughout the eastern United States from Georgia northward. The use area of Riverbend Germplasm is the Great Lakes region and Midwest. This species inhabits moist soils on the borders of lakes, streams, ditches, and other low areas.

Establishment and Management for Conservation Plantings

Riverbend Germplasm silky willow roots well from dormant hardwood cuttings. Dormant cuttings 12- to 18-inches long and 1/2 to 3/4 inch in diameter can be planted at 3- to 5-foot spacing. Planting can be done in the spring when soil conditions allow. Insert dormant cuttings vertically so that 2/3 of the cutting is below ground and 1/3 above ground. Root and shoot formation will start within a few weeks after planting depending on weather conditions.

Ecological Considerations

No economically important insect or disease problems have been observed on Riverbend Germplasm silky willow.



Row of Riverbend Germplasm Silky Willow

Seed and Plant Production

Riverbend Germplasm silky willow is propagated vegetatively. Dormant cuttings can be harvested from plants any time after leaf drop in the fall. Stems can be cut into sections 12- to 18-inches long for dormant cuttings. Keep cuttings moist until they are placed in the field.

Availability

Riverbend Germplasm silky willow, as well as other Rose Lake PMC releases, is available from commercial suppliers. Rose Lake PMC does not sell releases to the general public, although small quantities of nursery stock are available to commercial seed or nursery growers for increase purposes.

For more information, contact:
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Citation

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For additional information about this and other plants, please contact your local USDA Service Center, NRCS field office, or Conservation District <<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>>, and visit the PLANTS Web site <<http://plants.usda.gov/>> or the Plant Materials Program Web site <<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>>

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