

# Plant Materials Lauded for Riparian Restoration

## *Opportunity to Work With Different Materials*

The Los Lunas Plant Materials Center recently received high praise from the city of Pueblo, Colorado for explaining and educating city staff about the Plant Material Center's proven technology for riparian restoration. The Pueblo project used Plant Material Center cottonwood pole cutting technology in restoring an 11-river-mile stretch on the Arkansas River.

“The city of Pueblo employees were pleased with time taken by the Plant Materials Center staff to explain and educate us on the pole planting process and technology,” said Scott Hobson, senior planner for the city of Pueblo. “They were willing to work with the city to participate in the project that resulted in overall cost savings.”

The USDA-NRCS Los Lunas Plant Materials Center had entered into a joint project with the Army Corps of Engineers, the state of Colorado, and the city of Pueblo, Colorado to restore the 11-river-mile stretch on the Arkansas River. Amidst skepticism by the local nursery industry and others, the Plant Materials Center introduced their proven methods of riparian

restoration technology to the Pueblo, Colorado area.

The first phase of the project was done during February 2003 when the Plant Materials Center planted 2,200 rootless cottonwood pole cuttings in a 50-acre horse pasture on the Arkansas River in Pueblo. In July, Champ Green, biologist for the Albuquerque district Army Corps of Engineers, did a walk-through evaluation and reported a survival rate of above 90 percent.

“The initial planting of over 2,200 cottonwood poles was an outstanding success that exceeded our expectations and provided a highly visible impact to Arkansas River landscape,” said Hobson. “The success of this initial planting has generated a number of inquiries from property owners and conservation agencies in southeastern Colorado.”

This project will provide the opportunity for the Plant Materials Center to work with new riparian species and the Pueblo ecotypes. Species the Plant Materials Center were able to work with included golden current, Great Plains false-willow, and black chokecherry.

For further information about this and other Plant Materials Center projects contact Gregory Fenchel, Plant Materials Center manager at 865-4648.