

NEW APPROACHES TO REVEGETATING ERODING MARSH

Tim Croughan
Professor of Plant Biotechnology
Rice Research Station
Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Louisiana State University Agricultural Center
P.O. Box 1429
Crowley, Louisiana 70527-1429 (phone 337-788-7593; fax 337-788-7553;
tcroughan@agcrt.lsu.edu)

A team of collaborating scientists from the Louisiana State University Agricultural Center and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service is working on a project to develop better methods for vegetating eroding wetlands. The team includes plant breeders, biotechnologists, disease and insect experts, soil scientists, and wetlands ecologists. Initially focussing on smooth cordgrass (*Spartina alterniflora*), the team is developing genetically improved plants for erosion control use. Concurrently, improved propagation methods are in development, with the goal of expediting the establishment of vegetation across large acreage both quickly and economically. Towards this end, a seed-based system for planting the marsh is in development. Ultimately, this approach may allow hundreds of acres a day to be planted by air at a fraction of the cost of current planting practices.