

Release Notice of New Cultivar

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

and

CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA

NOTICE OF THE NAMING AND RELEASE OF 'SIERRA' SULPHUR FLOWER BUCKWHEAT
FOR CONSERVATION AND BEAUTIFICATION USE ON CRITICALLY ERODED AREAS

The United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service and the California Agricultural Experiment Station announce the release of 'Sierra' sulphur flower buckwheat, Eriogonum umbellatum Torr. ssp. polyanthum (Benth) S. Stokes. 'Sierra' was developed at the SCS Plant Materials Center, Lockeford, California.

'Sierra' sulphur flower buckwheat was originally collected from a native stand on August 23, 1972 at South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County, California. It was evaluated and increased at the Lockeford Plant Materials Center and tested at over 40 sites throughout California under a variety of soil and climatic conditions. 'Sierra' was compared to mountainpride penstemon, pinemat manzanita and bearberry on dry, critically eroding sites.

'Sierra' is a native, low-growing shrub with gray-green, ovate leaves, smooth above and finely hairy beneath. Plants are 20 to 30 cm. (8 to 12 inches) high, spreading up to 60 cm. (2 feet) in diameter. Yellow flowers are in umbels, erect or ascending from a woody base and turn orange-red at maturity. Flowers can be used in dried arrangements.

'Sierra' was developed for use in critical area stabilization on dry, rocky slopes and droughty sites. It can be used for environmental enhancement and foundation plantings around mountain homes. It is an excellent dry flower for arrangements as it holds its color and structure for many months. 'Sierra' is adapted to medium to coarse-textured, well-drained soils where the MAP is 40 cm. (16 inches) or higher. Adapted to the dry Sierra Nevada foothills and mountains where soils and slopes limit competition.

'Sierra' produces about 169 kg/ha (150 lbs/Ac) of seed at the Lockeford PMC. The seed field was established with transplants and harvested by hand or portable vacuum harvester in June-July. Seed does not shatter easily and holds on the plants. There are approximately 63,225 seeds/kg (140,500 seeds/lb). Germination has averaged about 35 percent with varying amounts of hard seed. Seed processing with a hammermill and a model 47B clipper produce 99%+ purity.

Plants are propagated by seeding directly into containers in the greenhouse. Seedlings in the early stages of growth are somewhat susceptible to "damp-off" and sensitive to extreme cold.

Breeder and foundation seed will be maintained by the Soil Conservation Service Plant Materials Center, Lockeford, California. Foundation seed and a limited number of container plants for seed source nurseries will be available in 1988.

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Director
California Agricultural Experiment Station

10/26/87

Date

Darwyn H. Briggs, acting

California State Conservationist
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10-16-87

Date

James B. Newman

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11. 24-87

Date