



Rogue Native Plant Partnership

RNPP General Meeting
September 16, 2022 9AM - 12PM

ATTENDEES:

Kathryn Prive, ED, The Understory Initiative
Vanessa Robertson-Rojas, Ecologist & Private Lands Program Coordinator, TUI
Tuula Rebhahn, Program Assistant, TUI
Kyle Poling, Botany Tech/Seed Production, TUI
Sara Mosser, ED, Rogue Basin Partnership
Taylor Owen, Stewardship and Monitoring Coordinator, The Freshwater Trust
Kristina LeFever, ED, Pollinator Project Rogue Valley
Ethan Robinson, Americorps member, PPRV
Maia Black, ED, Selberg Institute
James Kramer, Silver Springs Nursery
Caleb Galloway, Applegate Partnership Watershed Council
Henry Whitridge, Ecologist, TUI
Kathy Kellerman, retired, plant nerd
Rebekah Bergkoetter, Land Steward, Southern Oregon Land Conservancy
Rachel Werling, Land Steward Program Coordinator

1. Introductions & Partner Updates 9:00 - 9:30

Vanessa Robertson-Rojas, Ecologist & Private Lands Program Coordinator, TUI

- Seed harvesting/cleaning season
- First year of large-scale harvests from multiple farmers. Exciting and overwhelming!
- Collecting seed for Little Butte Creek/Klamath Siskiyou Oak Network big project upcoming

Sara Mosser - RBP

- Envision Bear Creek survey
- Monarch Release happening tomorrow at Clyde's Corner/Bear Creek Greenway.

Taylor Owen - The Freshwater Trust

- Non-profit org working in water quality trading, mainly Bear Creek right now
- Site tour at Riverwalk Oct 9 (park next to North Mountain Park)
- 43 projects right now



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Kristina Lefever - Pollinator Project Rogue Valley

- Non-profit volunteer organization that reaches out to small landowners to help them understand the importance of pollinators & native plants
- Small propagation nursery
- Pollinator Anthology book for sale on website & around town
- October 9th Plant Sale for the Pollinators
- Ethan is with the United Communities “chapter” of Americorps

Maia Black - Selberg Institute

- Manages Sampson Creek Preserve (4,000+ acres) and Grizzly Peak Preserve (also 4,000 ac)
- Pollinator bed planted from TUI seed mix is doing well
- Large areas of non-native and invaded grasslands on the preserves, it's a challenge

James Kramer - Silver Springs Nursery

- Filling in for Taylor Starr, he has taken over the propagation
- Lots of contracts for TFT and Rogue River Watershed Council

Caleb Galloway, Riparian Restoration Manager for APWC

- Also participates with RBP Riparian Working Groups
- Outdoor Educator for Jackson County Schools

Henry Whitridge, Ecologist, TUI

- Works on the research side, studying restoration with native plants
- Historically it's been hard to find seed to test out in restoration projects

Kathy Kellerman

- Seed collecting maniac, plant propagator

Rebecca Bergkoetter

- Year 1 with Southern Oregon Land Conservancy
 - Member picnic on 10/8, nature hikes by TUI
 - Open Lands Day

Kyle Poling, TUI

- Manages experimental native seed farm plot at Oregon State University Extension
- Also runs a native plant nursery, Dry Earth Nursery, specializing in drought adapted native seedlings
- Will be selling at PPRV sale in late October

Rachel Werling, Botanist and manages the Land Steward Program at OSU Extension

- Funnel volunteers to native plant work through the Land Stewards program
- New Oregon Master Naturalist Program has a volunteer component as well



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CHALLENGES ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

- Finding drought tolerant species
 - James: Huge demand for drought tolerant shrubs among landscapers/urban gardeners
 - Manzanita, kinnikinnick
- Taylor: Water quantity for riparian restoration projects, emergency irrigation systems going in
 - Starting to plan for this at the beginning of projects, not after implementation
- Kathryn: Instead of looking back to pre-1800s for restoration, we need to start looking forward in time
 - Migrating seeds & species northward
 - Caleb: Experimenting with planting species from drier regions, timing irrigation differently
- Climate Change Working Group being formed? Chris Adlam
 - Other groups: SOCAN, Southern Oregon Climate Smart, OSU Forestry group?
 - Vanessa will follow up to connect RBP with Chris and
- Speed of climate change vs plant growth/development makes it difficult to run experiments; need to do the restoration as the experiment
- Is it possible to stress the conditions on-site for farmers producing native seed. What are the migration best practices?
 - Vanessa: Thinking about mixing seed from local watersheds with those from similar habitats that are drier/hotter
- Taylor: Labor Shortage
 - Plant Oregon was a great partner subcontracting for TFT riparian projects but they are stepping down because the work/labor is getting too expensive
 - Caleb: Hiring for projects is done in-house for seasonsals. Grant cycle makes it challenging to maintain crews year round.
 - No-rise flood permitting makes work more expensive now
 - Summer/fall is monitoring and stewardship season, winter is weed and maintenance time, spring is the busiest time
 - Sara is convening a workforce development group with TFT, APWC, Lomakatsi
 - James is getting out of the nursery business because labor got very expensive. Back in 2012 rate was \$10-\$12/hour. He went up to \$16+ but still couldn't get enough people.

Why is labor expensive? - cost of living

Water Summit happening, via Zoom, Pachamama Alliance - Kristina recommends
6 sessions online leading up to an in-person event



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2. Guest Presentation: Native Grasses 9:30 - 10:30
 - a. Vanessa Robertson-Rojas and Kyle Poling, both from The Understory Initiative, presented on native grass identification, applications in habitat restoration on garden and landscape scales, and their interactions with and importance to pollinating insects.

Q&A

Which is better for restoration - grass plugs or direct seeding?

- Seeding is cheaper
- Plugs have the advantage of visibility, can penetrate hydrophobic soil layers where seeding can fail
- Hotter, larger burn piles with a lot of material added onto the original pile are more likely to lead to hydrophobic soil

How to tell young grasses apart (eg. after reseeding in an area with a previous non-native grass soil bank):

- It takes a lot of practice
- Some bunchgrasses will appear “bunchy” right away (eg. Festuca)
- If possible, wait to weed your plot until after culms and inflorescences develop to aid in ID

Collecting grass seed - should chaff also be collected/stored and used in reseeding?

- There are benefits, but weeds can also be a problem
- Weedy chaff is more likely when harvesting native seed in agricultural settings

Grass succession?

- It's a long-term goal to allow plant population succession in reseeding projects
- Plugs may compete better in areas where there are a lot of annual invasives that grow faster than bunchgrasses

3. Introducing Umpqua Native Plant Partnership 10:45-11:00
 - Since Spring of 2021
 - Funding through a USFS Cooperative Agreement, USFWS

4. RNPP Updates 11:00-11:45
 - a. Pics and partnership highlights from 2022 so far
 - i. Seed collection events - share numbers, pictures
 - b. Grants and current funding
 - i. BLM funding applied for in March 2022; decision expected soon
 - ii. Currently funding the RNPP through its discretionary fund (built up through seed sales etc. since 2016)



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1. “Bare bones” activities - meetings, seed collection, cleaning & sales, maintaining BLM seed inventory
- iii. Coordinating with RBP to apply for OWEB funding to build woody plant materials production capacity
 1. Goal will be to pay for woody plant production “up front” so that it is available when restoration practitioners need it
 2. Thinking about climate change angle
 3. Group ordering of plants through RNPP or seed collection only?
 - a. RNPP can collect seed and contract with farmers to grow seed production beds
 - b. Plug production will always be project-driven. Having seed on-hand and banked will make it easier to create plugs 2-3 years before project needs them
 - c. Hoping to eventually shift toward seed-based instead of plug-based restoration
 - d. Growing coppice beds is another option

Nate has coppice beds for willow and cottonwood, open to anyone who wants to come harvest. “Beaver food banks”

- c. Current projects
 - i. ODA reseeding
 - ii. Seed sales - Grass/forbs and Woody Species
 - d. Proposed projects/grants
 - i. America the Beautiful proposal
 - ii. Woody species proposal - RBP
5. Final announcements and wrap-up 11:45 - 12:00