

Umpqua Native Plant Partnership

Agency Partners meeting

Monday, August 9, 2021 · 3:00 – 4:30pm
via Google Meet

NOTES

Attendees:

Allison Manwaring - USFWS Biologist, Roseburg Field Office

Cal Lee Davenport - USFWS Biologist, Portland

Justy Grinter - BLM Botanist/Natural Resource Specialist, invasive plant lead (Roseburg BLM)

Ian Grinter - BLM Botanist (Roseburg BLM)

Kathryn Prive - Executive Director, The Understory Initiative & Rogue Native Plant Partnership Coordinator

Tuula Rebhahn - Program Assistant, The Understory Initiative

Sean Prive - Ecologist, The Understory Initiative

Sam Friedman - USFWS Botanist, Roseburg Field Office

Crystal Shepherd - USFS Botanist, Umpqua National Forest (Tiller)

Clint Emerson - USFS Botanist, Region 6 & Umpqua National Forest (Roseburg/Supervisor's Office)

1. Introductions

2. Intro to Rogue Native Plant Partnership: Kathryn Prive

- Mission is to overcome barriers to native seed and plug production
- RNPP is a collection of stakeholders: Native plant growers, NGOs, restoration practitioners, and federal entities
 - Federal entities bring financial stability and access to federal nurseries and seed extractories
 - J Herbert Stone makes large grass seed lots available
- Reducing financial risk for growers is the other side of the mission
 - Transitioning growers from other crops to native seed, providing technical assistance and long-term planning
- We helped to transition the Medford BLM from conducting sales to the public, to providing inventory management services through RNPP
- We maintain a seed library with partners' seed, selling excess to growers and the public

Questions/comments?

CalLee - clarifying funding/structure

- USFWS service helps to fund the RNPP and now the UNPP (coordination through TUI)

Ian: How does the Medford BLM seed trade work?

- Medford BLM supports RNPP through MOU that outlines the intent to share resources, including seed. Seed is exchanged but not directly "traded"
 - Medford BLM sells RNPP their seed at cost; RNPP sells it through the public sale
 - Medford BLM is able to buy small lots of wildflower seed that are grown out through TUI
- The Native Seed Strategy is a guiding document used by the BLM - taking a habitat-wide, holistic approach:
https://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/Native_Plant_Materials/documents/SeedStrategy081215.pdf

BLM needs to have widgets - projects on the ground

Allison: Can BLM & USFS use seed from private growers?

- BLM worries about contamination, especially for larger lots
 - BLM has reservations about working with nurseries run by local school groups due to concerns about Port Orford cedar root disease.
- USFS does contract with private growers. Contractors need to be pre-approved
- Limits on purchase agreements with non-approved contractors. BLM has an IDIQ list of 200 species that growers can bid on
 - Benson is the only grower currently
- USFS could use more seed, especially after current fires

3. **Next steps/**What are the pieces that need to be put in place for agencies to partner through UNPP?

Justy: Staff time is an issue. BLM can provide funding but staff turnover has been high, people are stretched thin

- Need riparian and pollinator seeds, adding diversity to seed mix.
- Need an NGO to take leadership

Crystal: USFS partnered with Lomakatsi last year for seed collection. Quality wasn't great.

- Need trained volunteers or workers.

Clint: Scale and resources. Agencies in the Umpqua tend not to have excess seed. A challenge is getting consistent funding.

- Another 100,000 acres are burning in the Umpqua this year; 120,000 burned last year

- USFS is going through 50,000 pounds of seeds per year

Scaling up.

Identified need: Large-scale, scouting, growing and cleaning seeds specifically for the Umpqua

- Need a workforce for seed collection - people who know the landscape
- Need a central organization to apply for the IDIQ
- Identify growers
- Identify a local group willing to take this on, people in place to do the work

Funding

CallLee: Potential financial windfalls coming, have shovel-ready projects and requests

Justy

- Planning needs to start at the beginning of the fiscal year; backlog at the state office. Things get stuck in procurement.
- Roadmap is there; TUI can steer the person in the right direction
- BLM could potentially co-fund a Coordinator position in Roseburg

Clint

- Umpqua is hiring a forest botanist - a restoration-oriented position; this individual could play a role in leading the UNPP

4. Action items

a. Create a business plan

- What are the seed needs for the different species?
- What does it take to shepherd each spp from beginning to end - how many acres, what other resources?
- What are the "shovel-ready" pieces/deliverables? (e.g. freezers)

Clint is working on a region-wide terrestrial restoration EA

Kathryn & Tuula will put together the UNPP Business Plan before next UNPP meeting

b. Create a Vision document/job description for Coordinator - Tuula & Kathryn

c. Set a date for more seed collection - Tuula & Sean