



FLORIDA NATIVE SEED PARTNERSHIP

Informational Startup Session

Stacey Matrazzo

Gage LaPierre

Michael Andreu



SCHOOL OF FOREST,
FISHERIES, AND
GEOMATICS SCIENCES

OVERVIEW

1. Need for Seed
2. Supply Issues
3. Solutions
4. Partnership Structure
5. Updates & Involvement

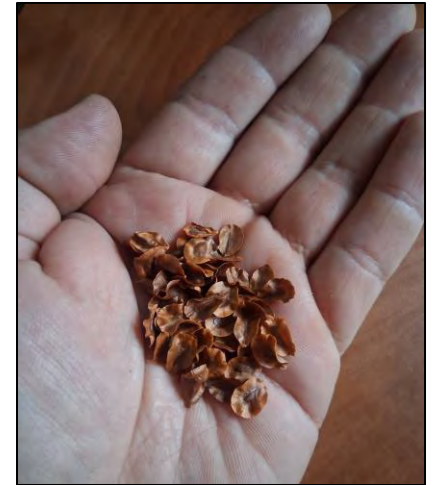


1. THE NEED FOR SEED



THE NEED FOR SEED

- Native seed supply produced in FL is growing but still not sufficient to meet large-scale needs
- Substantial production, investment, and regulatory issues constrain supply
- Prices and demand are at all-time highs
- Collaboration and institutional support is needed at this critical moment



CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

- Public land agencies in FL are actively engaged with restoration projects requiring seed
- Degraded land – including pastures and former agricultural land are an increasing by catch of conservation efforts in FL
- High prices and inconsistent/low seed supply limit the ability to conduct largescale restoration



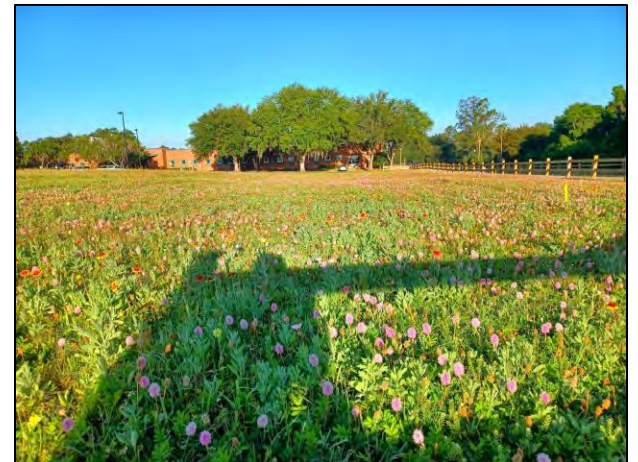
MITIGATION

- 131 Mitigation banks in FL
~300,000 total acres
- Many of these properties are subject to restoration or enhancement efforts.
- Seed for a wide suite of native species is often needed but unavailable at scale and affordability.



GREEN INDUSTRY

- Roadside wildflower stands
- Solar farm groundcover
- Cattle range improvement
- Rural and urban meadows
- Retention basin enhancements
- Timberland producers
- Agricultural support
- Pollinator corridors – transmission lines
- Traditional landscaping – Native nursery industry
- Municipal green infrastructure



2. SUPPLY ISSUES



WILD HARVESTING

- 1/3 of land in Florida is public
- Many native species we do not understand how to grow in farm settings
- Remnant plant communities on public lands currently serve as the primary source for restoration seed material
- Smaller partnerships between agencies have shown success



WILD HARVESTING ISSUES

- Most agencies restrict or prohibit harvesting native seed on public lands for private use
- No certification process exists for managing companies or groups for harvesting seed on public lands in FL
- Trained workforce lacking
- Little research concerning the potential impacts of harvesting on plant communities



FARMING

- Outside of FL many large native seed companies exist that produce seed at large scale
- Most of these companies serve large regional areas
- Many of these companies consist of several farms scattered across the region



Ernst Conservation Seeds, PA



Bamert Native Seeds, TX



Allendan Native Seed, IA



Native Seed Group, West Coast

FLORIDA NATIVE SEED FARMERS



FARMING ISSUES

- Native seed farming for native species in FL is relatively new <20 years
- Farming in general requires a knowledge skill sets that are not easily transferred without support
- Little to no state level support
- Younger generations of farmers have disadvantages



3. SOLUTIONS



OTHER STATES & PROGRAMS

- Texas Native Seeds via Texas A&M
- Iowa's Tallgrass Prairie Center
- Southwest Seed Partnership (Arizona & New Mexico)
- California Native Seed Partnership
- Nevada Native Seed Partnership
- National Native Seed Network
- Institute of Applied Ecology



TEXAS NATIVE SEEDS



- Non-profit R&D program that works to enable native plant restoration
- Primary focus is set on developing commercially available, locally adapted native seed sources
- Originally developed with:
NRCS, Texas DOT, Lady-Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Texas A&M, large-ranch landowners, and oil-gas industry.



IOWA TALLGRASS PRAIRIE CENTER

- The Tallgrass Prairie Center assists county roadside managers, native seed companies, and farmers wishing to plant prairie for conservation purposes
- The center works to produce and study native plant materials for native seed producers
- Educates the public on the importance of native perennial root systems in the region





4. FLORIDA NATIVE SEED PARTNERSHIP

Vision - *Florida's natural and urban landscapes are restored with ecologically appropriate native plants, ensuring the survival of endangered and endemic species, improving biodiversity, and enhancing the resilience of the state's natural habitats against climate change, invasive species and habitat loss.*

Mission - *The mission of the Florida Native Seed Partnership is to grow and sustain a robust supply of affordable Florida native ecotype seeds, produced by a profitable and responsible industry, to facilitate ecological restoration, enhancement, and sustainable landscaping*



MAJOR GOALS

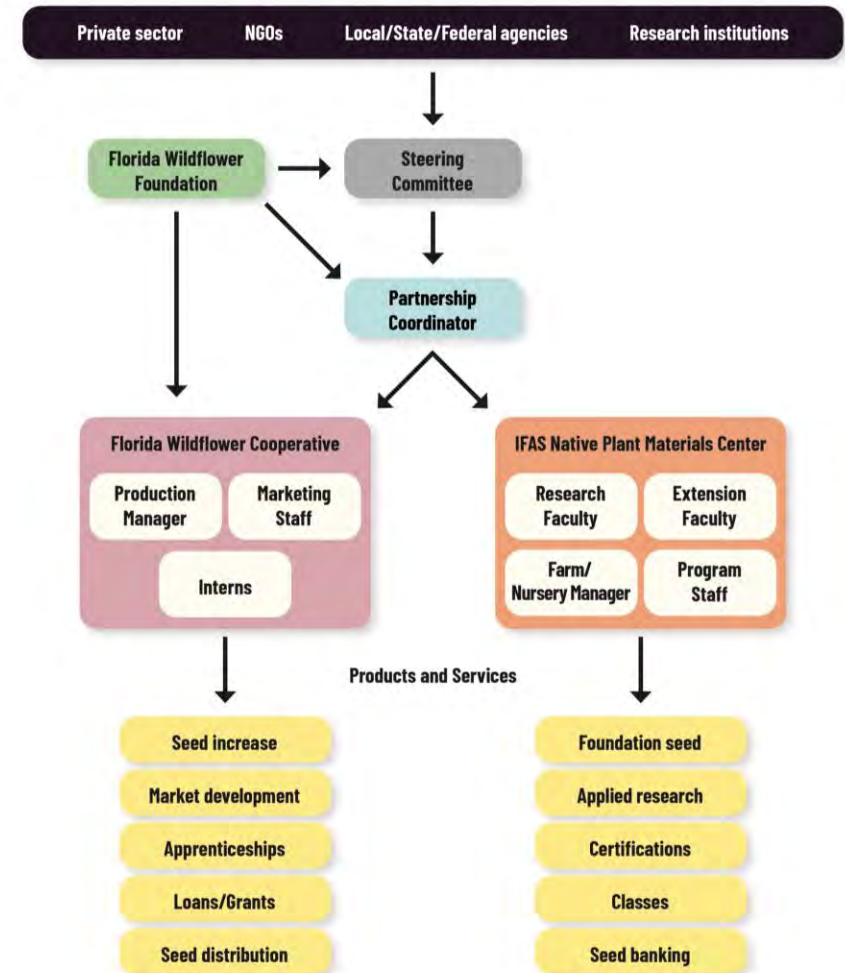
- Goal 1: Form Partnership
- Goal 2: Strengthen Partnership
- Goal 3: Drive Research
- Goal 4: Enhance the Market
- Goal 5: Evolve the Partnership



PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

- Florida Wildflower Foundation plays a leading role in developing and promoting the partnership
- UF/IFAS supports via research, extension, teaching, and production of foundational seed
- Steering Committee provides strategic oversight and guidance, consisting of agencies, NGOs, and the private sector
- Florida Wildflower Cooperative will serve to help share equipment, resources, knowledge, and seed distribution channels to new and existing seed farmers

Florida Native Seed Partnership Organizational Structure



TRAINING & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- Develop website and digital platform
- Establish regular partnership meetings
- IFAS certification for wildland harvesters
- Up to date native seed production manual for Florida
- Training program for future native seed farmers and harvesters



COLLABORATION

- Increase opportunities among partners to work together on seed procurement
- Grow the number of seed producers and productivity
- Grow the market for native seed via strategic production increase
- Facilitate long-term contracts between end-users and producers
- Create equitable guidelines and certification programs



RESEARCH

- Improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of native seed production at scale
- Conduct genetic analyses and common garden studies to develop region-specific seed transfer guidelines
- Establish and manage a conservation seed banking program for priority sensitive species
- Develop and disseminate research-based best management practices for ecological restoration and enhancement.



TIMELINE OVERVIEW

Year 1 - Foundation Building and Assessment

Year 2 - Capacity Building and Research Initiation

Year 3 - Market Development and Advanced Research

Year 4 - Expansion and Refinement

Year 5 - Sustainability and Legacy



5. CURRENT UPDATES



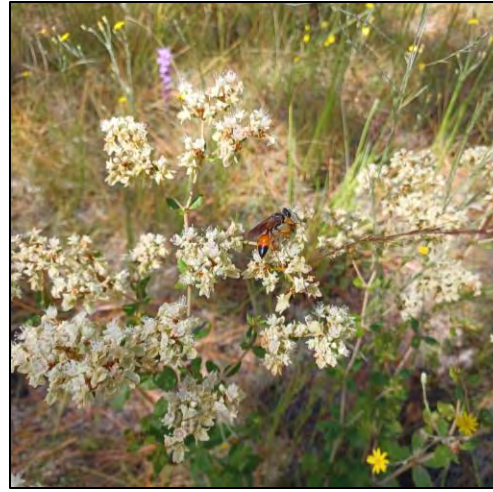


CURRENT UPDATES

- Florida Wildflower Foundation is hiring partnership coordinator
- GREW 2025 – Austin Cary Forest – Nov 13th
- First Steering Committee Meeting – Austin Cary Forest – Nov 14
- Foundation seed plots are being established at PSREU
- Working with public agencies on a private company-based seed harvesting pilot program
- Initial webpage setup with more resources to follow

NEEDS

- Funding
- Seed Source Materials
- Research
- Feedback
- Wisdom & Knowledge



GET INVOLVED

- Participation on steering committee and sub committees
- New seed production fields
- Engagement with foundation seed requests
- Additional public land harvesting programs

GREW Workshop
tinyurl.com/GREW2025

Florida Native Seed Partnership
FlaWildflowers.org/native-seed

Questions & Comments
FNSP@FlaWildflowers.org