

May 15, 2024

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Tracy Stone-Manning  
Director, Bureau of Land Management  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Haaland and Director Stone-Manning:

We write today to thank you for your leadership in promoting native plants in ecological restoration and land rehabilitation activities and addressing the national native seed supply. We especially want to thank you for committing to establish a National Interagency Seed and Restoration Center which will serve as the scientific, technical, and logistical support center for the nation's restoration and native seed needs and a coordination hub for ecoregional native plant programs and native seed warehouses. The establishment of the center implements a primary recommendation of the National Academy of Sciences in its 2023 report on native seed needs and capacities and is a significant step forward for ecological restoration on our federal lands.

Assuring a sustainable supply of genetically-appropriate native seeds is crucial for our federal lands and biodiversity. Adequate quantities of a diverse assortment of native seeds are necessary for the restoration of the natural ecology to the millions of acres of federal lands annually affected by fire, invasive species, intense storms and human activities. The restored native vegetation supports native wildlife including sage-grouse, desert tortoise, and hundreds of other at-risk species. Because of chronic and significant shortages of genetically-appropriate native seeds, federal land managers continue to plant large acreages with non-native species or cultivars that harm native ecosystems and biological diversity. For example, in 2020, about 7/8 of the grasses and 3/4 of the forbs that BLM purchased for its warehouse were not native source-identified seeds.

While this center is crucial for federal land management, its beneficial effects will transcend the federal estate. Department investments in native seed supplies will drive the agricultural native seed market benefitting tribal, private and other public sector landowners and managers. Department investments in conducting and disseminating research will benefit ecological restoration practitioners nationally and worldwide.

Integral to success will be building capacity in the botanical sciences and ecological restoration in the agencies and the new center.<sup>1</sup> We urge you to commit Inflation Reduction Act funds to launch the new center and increase expert capacity. This funding can serve as a bridge for the center until a permanent budget line and governance structure are established. Also essential will be working closely with Tribal,

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<sup>1</sup> BLM has 1.6 botanists for every 10 million acres. This compares to 8.4 botanists per 10 million acres in the US Forest Service. Source: Openpayrolls.com.

public sector, non-profit and private sector partners in developing structure, governance, and early implementation of the center.

As representatives of organizations and businesses involved in ecological restoration, botanical sciences and wildlife conservation, we applaud your leadership to establish adequate native seed supplies and promote excellence in ecological restoration. We look forward to working in partnership on the design and early implementation of the center and offer our continued support in this important endeavor.

With regards,

American Bird Conservancy - Washington D.C.

American Society of Agronomy, the Crop Science Society of America, and the Soil Science Society of America - Madison, Wisconsin

Appalachian Trail Conservancy - Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

Applegate Partnership & Watershed Council - Jacksonville, Oregon

Arizona Wildlife Federation - Mesa, Arizona

Ash Protection Collaboration Across Wabanakik - Orono, Maine

Association of Ramaytush Ohlone - San Francisco, California

Bella Flora Farm - Applegate, Oregon

Berry Seed Bank - Portland, Oregon

Bird Safe Nashville - Nashville, Tennessee

California Native Seed Supply Collaborative - Berkeley, California

Californians for Western Wilderness - San Francisco, California

Center for Biological Diversity - Tucson, Arizona

Center for Large Landscape Conservation - Bozeman, Montana

Central Arizona Conservation Alliance – Phoenix, Arizona

Central Illinois Healthy Community Alliance - Peoria, Illinois

Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage - Chester, Maryland

Chicago Botanic Garden - Glencoe, Illinois

Colorado Native Plant Society - Denver, Colorado

Conservation Coalition of Oklahoma - Tulsa/Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Conservation Lands Foundation - Durango, Colorado

Cottage Codgers - Fresno, California

Creekside Center for Earth Observation - Los Gatos, California

Curry County Soil and Water Conservation District - Gold Beach, Oregon

Defenders of Wildlife - Washington D.C.

Delaware Audubon - Newark, Delaware  
Endangered Species Coalition - Washington D.C.  
Florida Wildlife Federation - Tallahassee , Florida  
Forest Partners International - Flourtown, Pennsylvania  
Forests Forever - Berkeley, California  
FOUR PAWS USA - Boston, Massachusetts  
Friends of Edgewood Natural Preserve - Redwood City, California  
Friends of the Sonoran Desert - Tucson, Arizona  
G2 Marketing - Charlottesville, Virginia  
Georgia Native Plant Society - , Georgia  
Gila Resources Information Project - Silver City, New Mexico  
Grand Canyon Trust - Flagstaff, Arizona  
Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy - Traverse City, Michigan  
Great Old Broads for Wilderness - Durango, Colorado  
Great Valley Seed Company - Los Banos, California  
Healthy Ocean Coalition - Portland, Oregon  
Heritage Growers - Chico, CA, California  
Heritage Seedlings Inc - Salem, Oregon  
Holly Mills Grows - Medford, Oregon  
Homegrown National Park - Sharon, Connecticut  
Humble Roots Farm & Nursery - Mosier, Oregon  
Institute for Applied Ecology - Corvallis, Oregon  
Institute for Natural Resources - Portland State University - Portland, Oregon  
International Crane Foundation - Baraboo, Wisconsin  
Iowa Wildlife Federation - Des Moines, Iowa  
Kettle Range Conservation Group - Republic, Washington  
Klamath Forest Alliance - Arcata, California  
Lane County Audubon Society - Eugene, Oregon  
Los Padres ForestWatch - Santa Barbara, California  
Lower Rogue Watershed Council - Gold Beach, Oregon  
Maricopa Native Seed Library - Phoenix, Arizona  
Maryland Ornithological Society - Baltimore, Maryland

McCarty Woods Restoration - Gainesville, Florida  
Mississippi Native Plant Society - Clinton, Mississippi  
Modoc Nation - Miami, Oklahoma and Tulelake, California  
Nashville Chapter, TN Ornithological Society - Nashville, Tennessee  
National Aquarium - Baltimore, Maryland  
National Parks Conservation Association - Washington D.C.  
National Tropical Botanical Garden - Kalaheo, Hawaii  
National Wildlife Federation - Reston, Virginia  
National Wildlife Refuge Association - Washington D.C.  
Native American Seed - Junction, Texas  
Native Plant Society of New Mexico - Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Native Plant Society of Texas - Fredericksburg, Texas  
Native Songbird Care & Conservation - Sebastopol, California  
NativeSeed Group - Tracy, California  
Natural Areas Association - Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
Natural Communities Coalition - Irvine, California  
Natural Resources Defense Council - Washington D.C.  
Nature's Theater - Davis, California  
New Mexico Audubon Council - Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Nicaragua Center for Community Action - Berkeley, California  
Oregon Department of Agriculture - Salem, Oregon  
Oregon Natural Desert Association - Bend, Oregon  
Partnership for the National Trails System - Washington D.C.  
Patagonia - Ventura, California  
Pollinator Partnership - San Francisco, California  
Pollinator Project Rogue Valley - Phoenix, Oregon  
Prairie Rivers Network - Champaign, Illinois  
Project Eleven Hundred - Castle Valley, Utah  
Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility - Silver Spring, Virginia  
Purely Organic LLC - Williams, Oregon  
Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation - Buffalo, Missouri  
Rainier Audubon Society - Auburn, Washington

Restoration Gardening - Oakland, California  
Rio Grande Return - Santa Fe, New Mexico  
River Partners - Chico, California  
Salem Audubon Society - Salem, Oregon  
Saw Mill River Audubon - Chappaqua, New York  
SC Wildlife Federation - Columbia , South Carolina  
Sequoia ForestKeeper - Weldon, California  
Sierra Club - Oakland, California  
Siskiyou BioSurvey - Eagle Point, Oregon  
Siskiyou Permaculture - Ashland, Oregon  
Siuslaw SWCD - Florence, Oregon  
Society for Ecological Restoration, International Network for Seed-based Restoration (INSR) - Washington D.C.  
Soda Mountain Wilderness Council - Ashland, Oregon  
South Coast Watershed Council - Gold Beach, Oregon  
South San Juan Broadband of Great Old Broads for Wilderness - Durango, Colorado  
Southeastern Grasslands Institute, Austin Peay State University - Clarksville, Tennessee  
Southern Oregon Land Conservancy - Ashland , Oregon  
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance - Salt Lake City, Utah  
Strategic Habitat Enhancements - Tucson, Arizona  
Tennessee Ornithological Society - Tennessee  
Texas Conservation Alliance - Dallas, Texas  
The Freshwater Trust - Portland, Oregon  
The Nature Conservancy - Arlington, Virginia  
The Understory Initiative - Medford, Oregon  
The Wilderness Society - Washington D.C.  
The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation - Portland, Oregon  
Tennessee Wildlife Federation - Nashville, Tennessee  
Tooley's Trees and Keyline Design - Truchas, New Mexico  
Trust for Public Land - San Francisco, California  
Tuleyome - Auburn, California  
Umpqua Chapter Native Plant Society of Oregon – Roseburg, Oregon  
Umpqua Native Plant Partnership - Roseburg, Oregon

Umpqua Watersheds - Roseburg , Oregon  
Upper Gila Watershed Alliance - Silver City, New Mexico  
Valley Eco - Merced, California  
Water League - Cave Junction, Oregon  
Western Watersheds Project – Hailey, Idaho  
White Mountain Conservation League - Nutrioso, Arizona  
Wild Ones Natural Landscapers - Neenah, Wisconsin  
WildEarth Guardians - Santa Fe, New Mexico

Copies to:

Laura Daniel-Davis, Acting Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior  
Sarah Greenberger, Associate Deputy Secretary, Department of the Interior  
Brenda Mallory, Director, White House Council for Environmental Quality  
Shalanda Young, Director, White House Office of Management and Budget  
The Honorable Joe Manchin, III, Chairman, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
The Honorable John Barrasso, Ranking Member, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee  
The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee  
The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Ranking Member, House Natural Resources Committee  
The Honorable Mike Simpson, Chairman, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,  
and Related Agencies  
The Honorable Chellie Pingree, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,  
Environment, and Related Agencies  
The Honorable Jeff Merkley, Chair, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior Environment, and  
Related Agencies  
The Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior  
Environment, and Related Agencies