

Much North Branch policy on collection is in the following seed collecting ethics summary developed by Karen Holland (Rodriguez).

THE SEED COLLECTING ETHIC

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Learn about the sites from which seed is to be gathered and which will receive the seed, the plants seed is to be collected from, and the people who will be collecting.

- ◆ Be sensitive to the dynamics of the collection site, including the reproductive history of species on the site and the current year's growing conditions.
- ◆ Use guidebooks, previous experience and observation to learn about approximate seed ripening times for the individual species to be collected.
- ◆ Determine the best methods to avoid or reduce the impact of people trampling to collect.
- ◆ Obtain appropriate permits to collect on public lands and permission to collect private property.
- ◆ Train seed collectors in techniques that maximize the survival of the donor plant and the retention of the collected seeds, while minimizing the collection of unripened seeds.
- ◆ Utilize pre-settlement and post-settlement historical records to determine the habitat classification of the site which will receive the seed.
- ◆ Collect from and deposit seed on sites which are geologically similar and/or biologically connected.

Tend the collection by gathering ripened seed from known plants, leaving seed for regeneration and for animals, and ensuring donor plants remain intact.

- ◆ Monitor plant populations for seed ripeness often in order to collect at the appropriate time.
- ◆ Pick seed only from plants that have been positively identified.
- ◆ Collect seed from endangered or threatened species only with proper authorization.
- ◆ Delay harvesting of species in which segregating ripened and unripened seed is difficult or impossible until all seeds have ripened.
- ◆ Harvest no more than 50% of seed from perennials and 25% from annuals and biennials.
- ◆ Minimize disturbance to plants while collecting.
- ◆ Remove and transfer plants from a site that is being destroyed to a protected site under the supervision of a qualified plant ecologist.
- ◆ Document what kind of seed is collected, where it is collected from, and how much is collected in order to add to the record of site dynamics.

Share the harvest as soon as possible with those who will sow thoroughly processed seed as mixtures on prepared ground.

- ◆ Participate in a network of restoration groups exchanging information of seed availability and needs.
- ◆ Process seed in a timely manner using current techniques necessary to prepare seed mixtures according to community type.
- ◆ Clear only enough ground at degraded sites to accept the quantity of seed available.
- ◆ Prepare sites with an established plant structure (by burning, scything, etc.) to make them more receptive to rare seed from more conservative species, in order to establish more natural diversity.

Protect the seed that is not sown by storing in a manner that effects continued viability.

- ◆ Find storage space for seed which is not immediately planted.
- ◆ Store seed according to current techniques required by individual species and seed mixes for maximum germination.

Nurture the plantings by managing the site.

- ◆ Manage the seeded area using accepted ecological restoration practices.
- ◆ Monitor the site for the emergence of plants expected from the seed mixture and for threats from undesired, invasive species.