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From Forest Nursery Notes Winter 2013

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Unknown and unprotected

the imperiled genetic resource of native plant populations on roadsides and private lands

Lynda Boyer

ABSTRACT

The Willamette Valley has lost almost 99% of its native prairie habitat. The most vulnerable populations of native plants are on roadsides and unprotected private lands. Collection of seed from these populations is therefore imperative, not only to ensure these genetics are not lost but to develop a supply of genetically diverse native plant material for restoration of prairie ecosystems in the Willamette Valley. Although debate continues among restoration professionals as to the appropriateness of mixing seed sources, acceptance is growing in the Valley that this is desirable within an ecoregion. The hope is that diverse, established populations for restoration will have a better chance of survival over the long term.

Boyer L. 2011. Unknown and unprotected: the imperiled genetic resource of native plant populations on roadsides and private lands. *Native Plants Journal* 12(3):276–284.

KEY WORDS

prairie remnants, roadside vegetation management, diverse seed accessions, habitat restoration, Willamette Valley prairie seed

NOMENCLATURE

USDA NRCS (2011)

Delphinium oregonum OFP (2011)

Photos by Lynda Boyer

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