



# A ROADMAP

## Growing the Supply of Native Seed and Plant Materials

In consultation with researchers, NGOs, practitioners, farmers, and government officials, the California Native Seed Supply Collaborative (CNSSC) offers this roadmap for a two-year effort by the State of California to prevent a bottleneck in the supply of native plants materials. The majority of these actions can be taken using existing authorities and funding vehicles. Where policy modifications or legislation would be helpful, the CNSSC stands ready to work with agency officials and legislators to ensure a timely adoption and implementation of such changes.

**Science** *Establish science-based guidelines that will support sourcing and production of native seed at scale.*

- Establish clear standards and species-specific guidelines for sourcing native materials.
- Map zones that preserve genetic variation and identify sources for wildland seed collection.
- Secure specimens of seeds for long-term banking and DNA sequencing.
- Develop a database of seed sources, DNA barcodes, seed inventories and storage facilities.
- Invest in applied research to address large scale restoration needs in collaboration with restoration practitioners and seed producers.

**Market** *Send clear market signals to kick start the growth of a viable native seed industry.*

- Provide incentives and preferences for restoration projects to incorporate local native plant materials, utilize advance contracts, and guarantee purchase volume and price.
- Include seed development costs as allowable expenses in planning grants for large scale restoration and mitigation projects.
- Increase the availability and specificity of demand forecasts for native materials.
- Use advance purchase contracts to enable producers to develop practices and scale production without assuming all of the economic risk.

**Agronomics** *Support the development of agronomic capabilities and capacities of growers.*

- Provide loan guarantees or low-cost loan programs to support industry development and ameliorate cash flow constraints of small operations.
- Provide support to growers to help cover costs associated with getting seed certified by CCIA.
- Offer incentives for growers willing to invest in scaling up new or hard-to-produce ecotypes.
- Secure seed storage to expand availability and extend viability, including refrigeration.
- Develop cost-share programs for specialized equipment and facilities required for native seed production.

**Coordination** *Connect seed buyers and suppliers to help bridge the disconnect between supply and demand.*

- Reduce barriers to land access for wildland seed collection on public and private land.
- Provide contracts for specialized collection and grow-out to meet site- and species-specific needs that are not adequately met by the current market.
- Coordinate with growers to track production and encourage seed increase for those areas where demand is projected to be greater than supply (e.g. Caltrans highway plans).
- Provide public facing tools (e.g. database) to enable seed consumers to find and obtain seeds needed for their projects.