

## **Martindale Army Airfield Pollinator Planting Demonstration**

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*South Texas Natives* (STN) and the Texas Military Department are working on a 100-acre blackland prairie restoration project on the Martindale Army Airfield near San Antonio. The goal is to establish permanent native vegetation that is low maintenance and provides pollinator habitat. The restoration site was historically used for cropland and is representative of soils and land use common to the Blackland Prairie.

The project began in the spring of 2017 with the application of herbicides to control agricultural weeds, especially Johnsongrass. Throughout 2017 and the spring of 2018, applications of herbicides were made in an attempt to exhaust the weed seed bank that had developed during years of agricultural use. The seedbed was prepared, and the site was seeded with a mix of 37 commercially produced native seeds. This mix included locally adapted grasses and forbs and commercially available native pollinator plants.

The first sampling after sowing seed was completed in the spring of 2019. Data showed excellent establishment of a number of seeded-pollinator plants. Best performing seeded species include plains coreopsis, mealy blue sage, and pink evening primrose. We will continue monitoring the site through 2020 to evaluate plant community establishment and changes over time, quantify the performance of a wide range of native seed sources, and determine the potential for success of restoration efforts. Results obtained will be valuable to aid similar efforts throughout the Blackland Prairie ecoregion of Texas.

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