

## **TxDOT Native Plant Integration Program for Texas**

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The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) is one of Texas' largest landowners and rights-of-way managers. Revegetation to meet federal mandates for cover and erosion control on roadsides is a major activity overseen by the agency. TxDOT needs native plants, but commercial supplies of locally-adapted seed to meet the agency's needs are inadequate in some regions of the state.

In September 2019, we began a project to address these limitations. The project is similar to work done with TxDOT's support in South Texas from 2001–2011 and West and Central Texas in 2012–2018. We are now addressing native seed supply limitations impacting TxDOT in East Texas, the Coastal Prairie, and Permian Basin/Panhandle regions. Goals are to collect, select, increase, and commercialize locally-adapted native seed sources for each region. Upon successful commercialization of new seed selections, we will assist TxDOT in revising their standard seeding specifications for erosion control. This will result in greater native plant use by TxDOT. We are also working to increase commercial supplies of past seed releases, and on improving the availability of native pollinator plant seed for use by TxDOT.

Our efforts should have beneficial impacts on the use of native plants for revegetation throughout Texas. It will be especially beneficial on over 1 million acres of road rights-of-way managed by TxDOT. Supplies of seed commercialized through the project will also benefit large scale restoration efforts by private landowners, the energy industry, and other agencies.

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