

Update on the *South Texas Natives Project*

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South Texas Natives (STN) began in 2001 through a founding grant provided by the Robert J. Kleberg, Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation. Grants from TxDOT, and donations from landowners, foundations, and oil and gas industry also sustain the program. STN's mission is to develop and promote native plants for the restoration and reclamation of public and private lands in South Texas.

Over the past 13 years, STN and collaborators have improved the availability of native seed sources for South Texas, and enhanced restoration knowledge in the region. This work has been accomplished through 24 native seed releases, and the installation and monitoring of over 40 restoration demonstration and research projects.

Future emphasis for seed source development is focused on high value native grass species for restoration of specific, quality habitats for wildlife. Two pressing needs are 1) seeds of species common on sandy soils in the Sand Sheet; and 2) seed of species tolerant of saline and alkaline soils common in grasslands in Western South Texas and the Eagle Ford Shale. Species being developed for commercial seed release include Yellow Indiangrass, big bluestem, sand dropseed, red lovegrass, spike dropseed, switchgrass, silver bluestem, and brownseed paspalum.

Restoration technique research is currently focused on 2 landscape scale needs: 1) restoration of lands impacted by oil and gas or other energy exploration and production; and 2) restoration of crop- and pasture-land that is increasingly subject to land use changes. STN will continue working to positively impact native plant restoration activities in South Texas.

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