

## PROPOSAL: REGIONAL WILDFLOWER REWILDING PROJECT (Draft)

October 31, 2016: initial draft\

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### PROPOSAL

The VBGA to co-sponsor along with other like-minded organizations a program to propagate and replant a select number of native wildflowers in a number of major City of Vancouver parks and Metro Vancouver regional parks (and possibly selected other municipal parks if there is strong interest). The project might entail use of VanDusen volunteers (eg. Master Gardeners, guides) other partners such as the Alpine Garden Club of BC) to raise plants from seed to appropriate size and to work with partner governments and citizen organizations already active in specific parks to:

- select locations and planting sites
- plant out bulbs and plants, seed test plots
- monitor success and disturbance
- maintain sites
- collect seed when available,
- when opportunities emerge, rescue plant populations from properties under development
- mount education and interpretation programs

A program carried out over a five year term could achieve considerable expansion of remnant wildflower populations and, in course, allow evaluation of extensions into new sites and additional wildflower species.

The Wildflower Rewilding project would fit with the VBGA's sustainability and biodiversity objectives, City of Vancouver rewilding and 'greenest city' programs, and with Metro Vancouver's ongoing program of wildlife habitat acquisition, restoration and enhancement. It could be tied into related habitat restoration activities.

### KEY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

**Plant Species:** Initially the program might concentrate on a few species that still exist or are known to have existed in the Lower Mainland. Several bulbous species are quite easy to raise and to handle during their dormant stages, though most take four or more years to reach flowering stage from seed. Prime examples are:

1. *Erythronium oregonum* (white dogtooth violet, easter lily)
2. *Erythronium revolutum* (pink dogtooth violet)

3. *Lilium columbianum* (wild tiger lily)
4. *Trillium ovatum*
5. *Camassia leichtlinii* (blue camas); *C. quamash*
6. *Fritillaria affinis*; *F. camschatsensis*
7. *Dodecatheon jeffreyi*; *D. pulchellum* (shooting star)

Species 1 — 6 are bulbs. Seven are herbaceous species. Other species might be selected, initially or later. However, the writer has experience with most of the above species and is also aware of a number of alpine garden club members and other who could advise on species and cultural requirements.

**Rewilding Sites:** There are many potential locations for rewilding projects. Criteria for selection initially would include:

- suitability of habitat
- existing wildflower populations
- existing partner organizations
- adequate size for secure plantings
- managing agency support

Candidate sites could include:

1. VanDusen Garden\*
2. Stanley Park\*
3. Pacific Spirit Regional Park\*
4. Queen Elizabeth Park
5. Derby Reach Regional Park\* \*\*
6. Campbell Valley Regional Park\* \*\*
7. Kanaka Creek Regional Park\* \*\*
8. Pitt River Regional Greenway\* \*\*
9. Capilano River Regional Park
10. Lynn Headwaters Regional Park
11. Colony Farm Regional Park \*
12. Burnaby Lake Regional Park\*
13. Tynehead Regional Park \*
14. Everett Crowley Park\*
15. Jericho Park\*
16. Musqueam Park
17. Other locations

legend : partner organizations exist \*, possible seed source \*\*

Not all species raised will be suitable in all sites nor would all sites likely be involved in the initial program.

## **Program Initiation**

If this program or some variation on it wins the support of the VBGA and potential partner organizations -- such as Metro Vancouver Regional Parks, Vancouver Parks, Alpine Garden Club, Nature Vancouver, the Pacific Parklands Foundation -- then an initial program might be as follows:

- Confirm nursery space at VanDusen or another location
- Confirm seed and plant availability, by species
- In selected locations choose test plots for suitable species
- Commence seeding of selected species under nursery conditions
- Concurrently identify a few test sites in selected parks where direct sowing can be assessed
- If a small stock of mature bulbs or plants is available a few small plantings could be done
- Effort would build over three years to produce added volumes of seedlings and/or plants

## **NEXT STEPS**

Several key steps are needed to confirm agreement and allow implementation of a Regional Wildflower Rewilding project:

1. Determine interest and willingness of VanDusen volunteers and/or other sources of volunteer support to lead the project;
2. If successful, present to VBGA Board and to other funding organizations for approval in principle including preliminary commitment to modest seed funding;
3. Seek and confirm Garden staff and VPB agreement and involvement of city park sites
4. Introduce proposal to Metro Vancouver regional park staff and seek tentative approval of regional park sites;
5. Convene a meeting or meetings of representatives of potential partner organizations in selected parks;
6. In cooperation with site representatives define a start up program for each selected site with defined responsibilities;
7. Finalize recording and reporting requirements and schedules;
8. Seek formal VBGA approval and funding for the initial five year program
9. Seek formal agreement and funding from other partners and sponsors.