

MA/RI-TACF Spring Quarterly Meeting 2022

Hybrid: In-person at Broad Meadow Brook Audubon, Worcester, MA & Zoom online

Present in-person: Paul Wetzel, Rufin Van Bossuyt, Bill Davis, Gary Jacobs, Brian Clark, Brad Smith, Gray Curtis, Karen Jones, Mark Meehl, Dave Lent, Ross Clay

Present via Zoom: Kathy Desjardin, Yvonne Federowicz, Kendra Collins, Edmund Croteau, Bruce Piper, Rich Hoffman, Michael Grames, Josh Soojian, Seamus, Bill Goodwin
Jim Rassman Service Forester with DCR incl Blue Hills - works with private landowners - land trusts etc. - , has worked with Gray C. re. A great American tree on state land, near Milton

Bruce Piper is in Peabody, MA. Mark is near him. He has found American trees. Does work with a native plants nursery.

Seamus - harvesting American seeds with Mark Meehl

Ross Clay - intern working with Mark Meehl

Welcome!

Meeting began 9:38 - introductions before that

MOTION to approve Winter 2022 Quarterly Meeting Minutes
Passed unanimously

Secretary Report Yvonne Federowicz

MOTION to Accept the Secretary's Report
Passed Unanimously

Membership report: 288 members. Incomplete? Donors missing?

Events, Talks, etc.

YF screenshared the "Chapter Activities Report" and requested that people put in their activities soon after they occur rather than waiting until the due date.

MOTION to Accept the Secretary's Report
Passed Unanimously

Scientific Planning Report - Mike Novack

Make crosses of best x best across our different orchards.

Which strain of blight to use for testing? - important to use one with good discrimination but not too strong

Brian can likely do SSA for about 300 / year. Progeny testing is possibly a good use of this. When those reach a good testing size, test, then create next generation from best. Would add about 1 acre per generation.

Homozygosity is not easily obtained. Chinese may not be homozygous too.

Paul requested Michael's thoughts in written form for Chapter.

Orchard Report Brian Clark

Brian needs orchard managers to do more of the organizing and work this year. He's got another activity that will take a lot of time

He potted up 2000 seed this spring; replacement plantings from last year
New plots/replacements at Norfolk Aggie, Westboro, Granville.

Paul suggested that interns can help with moving supplies around the state.

Mark's trailer is 10 feet long - what can be transported with it? Open air setup.

Kendra - Jared is pulling back on the "plot" orchard design
Moving toward best by best

We had been trying to get as many trees as possible, genetic diversity; Brian now moving toward best by best.

New (national) orchard design, more similar to breeding orchard design

Norfolk - 2 new plots, were going to be best by best crosses

Planting there needs lots of preparation. Very rocky.

Kendra offered to help work with Sandisfield people on the new orchard.

SSA: Normally 2.5 inch pots; Brian found 4.5 inch pots better for longer growth of seedling. Labor-intensive. Inoculation requires detail-oriented people, lots of organization.

Brian cannot do additional SSA work this year.

Kendra: most of the utility of SSA was for progeny testing, and we're not there yet. Not a tool that would reduce workload.

Planting in the ground and screening normally is good.

Paul: SSA testing at URI?

Laura Myerson - starting an orchard there, has greenhouse space

Brian: could we have an intern help her over the summers?

SKLT - needs a lot of inoculation rating, roguing. Bill Goodwin, Tyler McKaith offered help.

GCO Updates - Mark Meehl

Planted 110 seedlings on Flint Field, MA. 100 trees growing still, well-established. About 100 nuts in pots so far. Happy to have intern Ross Clay.

360 trees in block layout so far. Other GCOS in the state.

Mark has given nuts to several other people who plan to start GCOs in MA.

Wild seed harvest last year: over 5000 nuts from blossoming trees.

50% given to national sales. Also at the Chapter annual mtg we gave out American nuts to new members. Other chapters requested numerous seeds.

Vineyard Haven

Mark to email Yvonne details of report as internet connection was unstable during talking

Kendra's design for GCO:

Using 9 ft spacing between nuts, 10 ft between rows, 20 ft between blocks.

Mark can drive his car right up to trees.

Regional Science Coordinator Update

Kendra Collins

Kendra needs updated planting records re. GCOs and seed orchard plantings

She just drafted our Chapter Science Plan, and (science staff) are going to be working on this more.

Re-phenotyping all selections important in New England.

New England didn't have any "good" ones, Jared thinks that ours were done more strictly
Jared, Vasily, & Kendra will be in MA around the week of July 16th. Assessing trees from
Maine to eastern MA to the west.

Kendra to work on itinerary with them
Wayland, Lincoln - figure out identity of "questionable" trees
Kendra has catch-up rating

Kendra has to figure out what was done last year
Brian: doing the re-phenotyping needs to be after pollination this year, so we won't know what
controlled crosses to do

For south: Jared is making suggested pairing of regional selections. He hopes to move into that
in the north.

Predictions didn't put any of our trees in suggested crosses. We can do our best, do some
controlled crosses but not lots.

Making F1s would be helpful.

Brian: We have good male-sterile F1s this year. Previous year was a complete bust.
We have already been doing our best-guesses on best phenotypes.
Kendra can get our "best selections" list from Jared, will get it to Brian.

Why are our phenotypes lower than other areas?
Sporulation is one of the traits that we ruled trees out on; other areas - it was used as a gray
area.
Percent of the crown still alive.

Interns 2022 Bill Davis

Coordinating intern effort. This year they have 4 interns contracted.

Ross Clay - Mark

Nate Lord - Westboro

Eric Harris - Westboro

Isaiah Powers - limited availability - RI

Lisa Collins may also bring on a student

Medical coverage info being obtained

Strategic Planning Update - Karen, Brad

2018 Strategic Plan - Brad has been working on this & will send it out.

Gray Curtis - Eustis Estate / Museum update

Three parts to project: Boy Scouts Camp Sayer, Milton Mother Tree, Museum

Started out as thoughts on plantings

Tree located nearby - American, produces lots of seeds

Permit needed from DCR

Jim Rassman is included

Project includes:

Training Boy Scouts, putting an orchard in at the museum

Survey area for tree that is pollinating this tree

Set up pollination

Get burrs

There are restrictions on drones on DCR property, need approval - can go through process

"Headquarters Tree" in TreeSnap

The Museum is an educational venue; the project would be educational, not just tree growing
Gray showed PowerPoint - slideshow with maps of properties near Museum.

Milton mother tree - 50 ft tall.

Property next to Blue Hills.

There is a stream that runs through the estate, Blue Hills.
Boy Scouts have been authorized by the Museum to maintain an orchard near the museum.
Also at Camp Sayer. Small orchard, perhaps 20 trees. Education/training.

Eustis-Jeffries Land Trust nextdoor also has land.

Gray has a contact who can make the supports for the signage.

Brad: Gray is reaching the right people, more than three organizations.

Miscellaneous

Manton Grant

Kendra: We received the Manton Grant - \$7000.

Burrillville Land Trust

Ed Croteau - BLT planting at Vock Conservation Area occurred 4/21/22. Amica staff came for Earth Day to help plant chestnuts. All got very nice t-shirts!
Also the Callahan Middle School are planting 3 trees on school property, with a presentation for students. Possible chestnut club!!!
Ed is writing an article for E-Sprout.

Presidents Notes Kathy Desjardin

URI Professor Laura Myerson to work on chestnuts. Paul Wetzel in touch. Her office is on the main URI campus and she has access to fields quite near it. Numerous URI professors interested in research?

Chestnut pollinators surveys summer 2022 – stay tuned for needs!

Treasurer's Report Paul Wetzel

Paul showed the 1st Quarter

Financial situation strong, esp. Due to Rufin's gift.

Tax forms filed.

Rufin's gift is technically "unrestricted"

Expenses going up as we start season

Manton Grant can be used for expenses after April 1st, 2022

MOTION to accept Treasurer's Report
Passed unanimously

Presidents Notes Kathy Desjardin

Waters Farm - Historical Farm.

History, education project, hoping to rent a tree spade. YF suggested Largess Tree Service.
Other options.

House has chestnut floors in it too.

Jim DiMaio has seeds, working to plant along with other people.

URI Professor Laura Myerson (Restoration & Ecology) to work on chestnuts. Paul Wetzel in touch. Her office is on the main URI campus and she has access to fields quite near it. Numerous URI professors are interested in research as well.

Chestnut pollinators surveys summer 2022. We want to be involved if possible. – stay tuned for needs!

Civil Engineer from Town of Auburn is working on a project - center of town - he would like to include several chestnuts and signage.

"The Chemical Company" in RI wishes to plant chestnuts as part of a sustainability project - corporation project. Yvonne in touch.

Plantings:

We have more than 300 seedlings BC3F3 from Meadowview - varying from 3 years to new. All in 4-inch-by-4-inch. 1ft to 2plus. Kendra

SKLT Eagle Scout signage - Gillette & Scouts.

Signage still needs to be procured. The kiosk had to be up so Eagle Scouts could fulfill requirements.

TACF Chapter Committee Meetings - Kathy, Yvonne have been attending. Last Friday of every month at 1pm.

You get to see what the other chapters are doing. At some point we will present from our Chapter. The next meeting is April 29th, the topic is social media.

Brad would like to attend! Send Brad an email.

Website redesign. Meeting with national and designers.

SKLT Port-a-jon

YF to get a reimbursement sheet - can send info electronically.

Chapter Insurance Policy - we have a renewal.

TACF Spring Meeting - Kathy attended via Zoom

Branding, national logo change possibility. Wish for consistency in messaging. Developing templates.

We need to be sure our presentations are accurate - no horse chestnut photos! :-)

Summer Meeting - July 17th, 2022

SKLT Barn - or an outdoor venue

Waters Farm - Sutton, MA

Pavillion - Bolton, MA.

Paul mentioned that hybrid meetings are tricky esp in our meeting spaces with unknown wifi quality

MOTION to end meeting

