

**NEW ENGLAND TRANSPORTATION CONSORTIUM
QUARTERLY PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT**

- A. PROJECT NUMBER AND TITLE:** NETC 21-3: Seed Production for NE Roadsides
- B. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(s) & UNIVERSITY(s):** J. Kuzovkina, University of Connecticut
- C. WEB SITE ADDRESS (If one exists):** NA
- D. START DATE (Per NETC Agreement):** May 18, 2022
- E. END DATE (Per NETC Agreement):** June 30, 2024

F. ANTICIPATED COMPLETION DATE: June 30, 2024

*If different from the END DATE in paragraph E., the reason must be given. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to insure that the project, including review of the draft report by the Project Technical Committee and the printing of the Final Report, is completed prior to the Agreement End Date. Costs incurred after the Agreement End Date cannot be reimbursed. **Requests for extensions of the Agreement End Date must contain the reasons for the request and be submitted so as to arrive in the Coordinator's office at least 90 days prior to the Agreement End Date.***

G. PROJECT OBJECTIVES: The objective of this project is to increase native plantings and pollinator habitats with seed from local ecotypes along roadsides throughout New England. The proposed work is designed: 1) to promote ecotypic seed production for effective establishment of native plants on roadsides in New England and 2) to expand management practices that result in the proliferation of existing native plant communities along the roadsides in New England.

H. REPORT PERIOD: April 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023

I. ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS PERIOD:

Task 1: Current knowledge and practices (seed zones, seed mixes, BMP etc.)

- Prepared a revised version of the report for Task 1, Subtasks 1-4 (addressed/incorporated 98 comments from the TC) and submitted it to the TC on May 19, 2023.
- Prepared a draft version of Subtasks 5 and submitted it to the TC on June 3, 2023. Discussed the revision during TC meeting on June 13. The TC provided comments on June 27. The revision should follow in two weeks.

Task 2: Investigate local seed production opportunities

Participated in the two events related to the Northeast Seed Network:

May 18th Northeast Seed Network Steering Committee meeting
· Discussed overall direction and next steps for the network

May 23rd Northeast Seed Network meeting

- Reviewed progress since the group attended Native Seed Conference in Washington D.C. in March.
- Attended by over 60 stakeholders from the Northeast region.
- Surveyed attendees to determine roles within the network and capacities to contribute to production efforts.

Publications about this project in *The Conservation* titled “A shortage of native seeds is slowing land restoration across the US, which is crucial for tackling climate change and extinctions”, which provided clarifications for the lay audience nationwide, provoked numerous responses and resulted in our correspondence with 5 diverse stakeholders.

Also, another article in *UConn Today*, mentioned in the previous quarterly report resulted in correspondence with 12 stakeholders during this reporting period.

Task 3: Establish and monitor roadside demonstration plots for training and research purposes.

CT: Southbound Exit 38

Applied Round Up on May 17

Seeded native grasses using Truax seed drill on June 2 (contractor Matt Landscaping). Planting of forbs is scheduled for October 2023.

MA: Southbound Exit 27 in Northampton, at Allen Road and adjacent to Route 5. Identified difficulties with approval from the Town. Contacted the Town

Consulted with the 7 landscape companies from Mass DOT list trying to find a licensed specialist with the ROWa (Category 40) license – they do not have this license.

Permit: Contacted the Town of Northampton 3 times – no response, apparently will not approve permit.

Collected and analyzed soil samples from two additional sites.

VT: Wheelock, median on I-91. Analyzed soil; discussed concerns with high pH (7.7) with the TC.

Discussed and confirmed the plans with TC during a meeting on June 13, 2023.

J. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED (If any):

We found a company with a valid Category 40 ROW pesticide license to assist with the herbicide treatment of the MA site, however there is no permit.

As per Tara Mitchell’s recommendation we are exploring if sites located in other towns would be easier to attain permits from.

K. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES: *List any reports, papers, presentations published/presented during the report period or anticipated for the next quarter. NA*

Fact Sheets based on the information presented in Subtask 5.

L. STATUS BY TASK: *Show Work Task Number, description and % complete for each task including those completed, those underway, and those not started.*

Task1: Current knowledge and practices 80% complete

Task 2: Investigate local seed production opportunities 70% complete

Task 3: Establish and monitor roadside demonstration plots for training and research purposes 30% complete

Task 4: Draft Final Report and Technology Transfer Strategy and Toolbox 35% complete

Task 5: Deliverables: Final Report 0% complete

M. PERCENT COMPLETION OF TOTAL PROJECT: ____50____%

N. ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR NEXT QUARTER:

- Continue the establishment of the demonstration sites in NE:
 - Document germination records for CT site
 - Continue permit application for establishment of a demonstration site in MA in two other towns.
 - site selection confirmation for VT; conduct the second set of soil analyses from the adjacent land.
- Revised Task1, Subtasks 5 based on the TC' comments.

O. FINANCIAL STATUS:

As of: July 1, 2023

Total Project Budget: \$ 200,000

Total Expenditures: \$ 90,000

Note: This report should not require more than 2-3 pages & should be e-mailed to the NETC Coordinator so as to arrive no later than ten (10) working days after the end of each calendar quarter.