

[www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events](http://www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events)

MARCH 10, 2026  
**11:30 AM - 3:30 PM EST**

## FIRST ANNUAL CANADIAN NATIVE SEED SUMMIT

---

**RENNY GRILZ**  
**WELCOME AND KEYNOTE INTRODUCTION** **11:30**

---

**KEYNOTE: PHILIPP DEHN (VWW) - BUILDING A  
 NATIVE SEED SECTOR: LESSONS FROM GERMANY** **11:40**

Philipp Dehn of the Association of German Wild Seed and Wild Plant Producers (VWW) will give an overview of Germany's organized native seed sector, highlighting how production, coordination, and collaboration support large-scale restoration and biodiversity goals. Drawing on his experience in public relations and networking, he will explain how scientific knowledge is translated into practical standards and coordinated nationally. He will also cover the VWW's structure, member collaboration, and links to broader European initiatives.

---

**JENNY FORTIER - INTRODUCTION TO THE  
 NATIVE SEED PRODUCERS OF CANADA** **12:15**

NSPC unites Canadian native seed producers, promoting the availability and use of high-quality Canadian-grown native forb and grass seeds. By fostering collaboration with stakeholders, we aim to strengthen the native seed supply chain, leading to better restoration outcomes.

---

**RENNY GRILZ - SCALING THE NATIVE SEED SECTOR:  
 LESSONS FROM A GLOBAL NUFFIELD JOURNEY** **12:25**

Western Canada has strong potential for native seed restoration, but structural and market barriers limit growth. This presentation shares lessons from international seed systems and restoration programs, highlighting strategies like producer networks, seedbanking, and policy alignment to strengthen the sector and improve restoration outcomes.

---

**SARAH KOTSOPOULOS - THE MEADOWAY: LESSONS  
 LEARNED FROM SEEDING A HYDRO CORRIDOR** **12:45**

Lessons from restoring meadow habitat in Toronto's 150 ha Meadoway project. It highlights techniques for site preparation, seeding, and invasive species management, exploring what worked, what didn't, and key takeaways for successful urban meadow restoration.

[www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events](http://www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events)

## FIRST ANNUAL CANADIAN NATIVE SEED SUMMIT

MARCH 10, 2026  
11:30 AM - 3:30 PM EST

### **DR. STEVEN TANNAS - APPLIED SEEDING: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVED ESTABLISHMENT OUTCOMES**

How site preparation, seed application method and environmental conditions impact the success of seed establishment. This talk will discuss some of the challenges that need mitigation when using native seed and how to get the most out of limited quantities of native seed.

**01:05**

### **JENNY FORTIER - GIVING NATIVE SEEDS A FIGHTING CHANCE: WHAT SEED ENHANCEMENTS CAN (AND CAN'T) DO**

Native seed often faces tough odds on degraded landscapes. Seed enhancements — from coatings to biological amendments — can help, but they are not a silver bullet. This session shares candid lessons from Northern Wildflowers' work developing environmentally friendly seed-enhancement technologies for Canadian and American restoration projects. It covers successes, limitations, and practical decision-making tools for practitioners seeking better establishment outcomes.

**01:25**

### **MICHAEL FARRELL - THE USE OF NATIVE SEED FOR HABITAT RESTORATION ON ELECTRICAL RIGHTS OF WAY: AN INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE.**

This session provides an industry perspective on using native seed for habitat restoration on electrical rights-of-way. It highlights Hydro One's pollinator program, site preparation and seeding strategies, working with partners, and aligning ecological goals with operational needs for long-term program success.

**01:40**

### **GRAEME ARMSTRONG - GROWING FROM THE SKY: DRONE TECHNOLOGY IN NATIVE SEED RESTORATION**

Industry's growing responsibility for land reclamation is driving innovation in restoration practices. Emerging drone technologies enable faster, safer native seeding across remote or rugged terrain, including winter operations. The session covers specialized seed packaging, such as encapsulation for delicate seeds, techniques for accurate distribution and establishment, and practical considerations for adopting new tools.

**02:00**

[www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events](http://www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events)

MARCH 10, 2026  
**11:30 AM - 3:30 PM EST**

## FIRST ANNUAL CANADIAN NATIVE SEED SUMMIT

---

### **KRISTEN MISKELLY - THE HIYÁM PROJECT: A COMMUNITY-BASED NATIVE SEED PROJECT**

This talk profiles the Hiýám Project, an annual collaboration between Satinflower Nurseries and Styawat Leigh Joseph of Sḱwálwen Botanicals in British Columbia. The project is a partnership-based seed initiative in which seeds are donated, packaged collaboratively, and returned to community. The Hiýám Project explores how partnership, consent, and benefit-sharing can be integrated into native seed work within a nursery context. Kristen will outline the structure of the project, key considerations that have shaped its development, and practical lessons learned.

**02:20**

---

### **MICHAEL SKINNER - INTRODUCING THE NSPC'S NEW SEED SOURCE IDENTIFICATION LABELLING SYSTEM**

Sourcing native seed close to a restoration site improves establishment, survival, and habitat function. In response, NSPC developed a voluntary seed source labelling system and grower guidelines to support informed purchasing, and maintain genetic diversity.

**02:35**

---

### **RENNY GRILZ AND MICHAEL SKINNER - GOOD FIRE: USING PRESCRIBED FIRE FOR NATIVE SEED PRODUCTION**

Prescribed fire is a science-based management tool essential to prairie ecosystem function. Renny Grilz draws on his work with the Canadian Prairies Prescribed Fire Exchange to explain fire behaviour, objectives, and its role in maintaining healthy grasslands. Michael Skinner of Skinner Native Seeds then examines how strategic burning supports native seed production by managing competition, maintaining species composition, and sustaining long-term field productivity.

**02:55**

---

### **JOHN SKINNER - CONCLUDING REMARKS**

A recording of this session will be shared with all registered participants. Thank you for supporting NSPC's work in strengthening the native seed sector in Canada, and contributing to seed-based restoration on the ground.

**03:15**

[www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events](http://www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events)

MARCH 10, 2026  
11:30 AM - 3:30 PM EST

# FIRST ANNUAL CANADIAN NATIVE SEED SUMMIT

---

## PHILIPP DEHN, KEYNOTE SPEAKER, VWW

Representative from Verband deutscher Wildsamens, a key figure in the German wild seed industry. "Since 2024, I have been working at the Association of German Wild Seed and Wild Plant Producers (Verband Deutscher Wildsamens- und Wildpflanzenproduzenten) in public relations and networking, where I make scientific topics on native seeds and plants accessible to members".



---

## SARAH KOTSPOULOS, TRCA

Meadoway Project Manger, Ecosystem Management with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. Sarah Kotsopoulos (she/her) has worked in the field of restoration ecology for the past 8 years. Her focus has primarily been on meadow and prairie restoration, and she has been involved with The Meadoway in various roles since 2019..



---

## RENNY W. GRILZ, BLAZING STAR WILDFLOWER SEED COMPANY

Renny W. Grilz, PAg, is Director of Conservation at the Meewasin Valley Authority in Saskatoon and a 2024 Nuffield Canada Scholar. He is co-owner of Blazing Star Wildflower Seed Company, a Saskatchewan-based native seed business supplying regionally adapted native plant species. With over 30 years of experience in prairie conservation and ecological restoration, his work focuses on prescribed fire, grazing management, and native seed systems.



---

## JENNY FORTIER, NORTHERN WILDFLOWERS

Jenny Fortier is the Founder and CEO of Northern Wildflowers Inc., a native seed and seed technology company based in Sudbury, Ontario, with over 15 years of experience in habitat restoration. She holds a B.Sc. from Laurentian University and an M.Sc. from Trent University, is a Master Gardener with training in Sustainable Landscape Design, and previously led green-tech and agriculture economic development portfolios for the federal government. Jenny sits on several environmental and restoration boards (CLRA-ON, SER-INSR), and chairs and co-founded the Native Seed Producers of Canada. In 2024, she completed Arlene Dickinson's Venture Park Labs Accelerator and was nominated for the RBC Women of Influence Awards.



[www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events](http://www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events)

MARCH 10, 2026  
11:30 AM - 3:30 PM EST

# FIRST ANNUAL CANADIAN NATIVE SEED SUMMIT

---

## DR. STEVEN TANNAS, TANNAS CONSERVATION SERVICES

Owner of Tannas Conservation Services Ltd. And a senior restoration ecologist and vegetation ecologist. Steven was born and raised in the world of plants growing up on a native seed production farm and participating in seed production and environmental consulting for his entire life. He has a particular passion for native species, their importance and their potential for restoration, and understanding their roll in ecosystem function. He's been identifying, assessing and propagating native plants for nearly three decades.



---

## KRISTEN MISKELLY, SATINFLOWER NURSERIES

Kristen Miskelly (MSc, RPBio) is a biologist and native plant specialist whose work bridges applied restoration, seed research, and community collaboration. She co-owns Satinflower Nurseries, a native plant and seed nursery on southern Vancouver Island that supports propagation, education, and regional restoration efforts in Prairie-Oak ecosystems. Kristen is also a PhD student in the Restoration Futures Lab at the University of Victoria, where her research on seed biology informs seed-based restoration practice and the co-development of a practical regional field guide. She also serves on the steering committee of the Cascadia Prairie-Oak Partnership (CPOP).



---

## MICHAEL FARRELL, HYDRO ONE

Michael Farrell works in the Environmental Services department at Hydro One, a large electrical utility in Ontario. In his role leading the Biodiversity Program, he has over ten years of experience creating pollinator friendly habitat on electrical Rights of Ways. Hydro One has restored approximately 275 hectares of habitat at 50 project locations across the province since 2015.



[www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events](http://www.nativeseedcanada.ca/events)

MARCH 10, 2026  
11:30 AM - 3:30 PM EST

# FIRST ANNUAL CANADIAN NATIVE SEED SUMMIT

---

## GRAEME ARMSTRONG, PLANTAIR DRONE SERVICES

Graeme Armstrong is the President of PlantAir Drone Services Ltd., where he leads the use of advanced UAV technology to restore industry-disturbed landscapes across Northern British Columbia. His work focuses on innovative aerial seeding methodologies that improve efficiency, access challenging terrain, and support large-scale ecological restoration initiatives.



---

## MICHAEL SKINNER, SKINNER NATIVE SEEDS

Restoration Project Manager, Skinner Native Seeds. Michael Skinner grew up on a native grass seed farm in Western Manitoba where his dad, John, started growing big bluestem in 1998. Michael left home to pursue a career in conservation biology through the University of Saskatchewan and landed in Grasslands National Park where, with the help of an incredible team of biologist colleagues, he refined his interest in the prairie, native plants and all aspects of native prairie restoration from collecting seed to designing a seed mix in a very ecologically sensitive context. Michael returned home to try his hand at farming with in 2022 and to run the farm's custom restoration operation focusing on high species diversity and genetic source suitability.



---

## JOHN SKINNER, SKINNER NATIVE SEEDS

Skinner family involvement in Manitoba prairie horticulture stretches back more than a century. John's interest in plants started early and naturally, growing up in a nursery with a father who was a renowned plant breeder and horticulturist. He came home to farm and to teach in 1993 - his first native crop was locally collected big bluestem. Since then, he has acquired experience growing many different warm season grasses, cool season grasses, and more recently wildflowers. This interest in wildflowers has led to local collection of over 70 species and development of seed orchards to facilitate production and collection of seed of those species.

