



I. Become a cosponsor of H.R. 1572!

Please contact Rep Quigley or Rep Rooney to become a cosponsor of H.R. 1572!

II. Background: Plant Diversity & Locally-Adapted Native Species

Plants are often overlooked in decisions about ecological issues but they shouldn't be!

- Native plants are the foundation of ecosystems & provide critical ecosystem services, including provisioning of food & water, regulation of atmosphere, floods, drought, support for soil formation, pollution filtering & carbon sequestration.
- Native plants are the foundation of biodiversity. They are equipped to survive local climate, soil types, & animals.
- Plants & animals that have evolved together depend upon each other for their continued survival. They form a complex network of relationships with each species' life cycle highly dependent on the others.
- Locally-adapted native plants do a better providing food & shelter for native wild animals than do introduced or invasive plant species.

Native plants are critical to the long-term success of conservation & restoration projects.

- Native plant communities & the ecosystem services they provide are stressed at a landscape level due to invasive species, altered wildfire regimes, habitat modification & overuse, among others. The effects of these threats & stresses occur on over 30% of U.S. lands under Federal control.

Restoring native plant communities at the landscape scale is challenging.

- Land managers must replant large areas quickly to avoid erosion & colonization by invasive species.
- Seeds of locally-adapted native plants may not be available in quantities needed.
- The lack of botanical expertise in the government can contribute to the problem.
- The federal government has been making progress on these issues through a number of initiatives within the Departments of Interior & Agriculture.
- The Botany Bill provides additional progress & a commitment to these pressing needs.

III. Federal Government Involvement

Federal agencies collaborate on land management & native plant initiatives through the **MOU: Plant Conservation Alliance**.

Federal agencies involved in public land management & plant conservation include:

Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Geological Survey
National Park Service
Fish & Wildlife Service

Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Agricultural Research Service
National Resources Conservation Service
National Institute of Food & Agriculture

IV. What does H.R. 1572 do?

Broadly speaking, the Botanical Sciences & Native Plant Materials Research, Restoration & Promotion Act would advance several goals:

1. Promote critical plant materials & restoration-related research

Problem: We need more botanical sciences research

Solution: H.R. 1572 authorizes \$10 million/year in funding for BLM, USGS, FWS & NPS to support intramural & extramural research to:

- Effective approaches to habitat restoration
- Enhance demand for botanical scientists
- Drive demand for native plant materials
- Support rare, endangered & native plants through federal programs

2. Enhance demand for botanical scientists

Problem: We need more botanical scientists

Solution: H.R. 1572 creates opportunities & incentives for botanical sciences experts

- Authorize the BLM to hire 20 additional Botanical Science personnel
 - Cost ~\$3 million
- Create a program of educational loan forgiveness for botanical science personnel
 - Must commit to work for the Department for at least 2 years
 - Up to \$50,000 in loan forgiveness
 - Modelled after similar, successful programs that place health care providers in under-served areas
 - Cost ~\$1 million

3. Drive demand for native plant materials

Problem: The available native plant materials (seeds) are insufficient to meet the needs of managing federal lands.

Solution: H.R. 1572 creates policy preferences for key agencies

- Applies to the Departments of Interior & Agriculture in undertaking land management activities, including maintenance & restoration, preference shall be made for the use of locally-adapted native plant materials
- The use of non-native species may be warranted in
 - Emergency restoration
 - Interim persistent measures
 - When native materials are unavailable
 - Would result in the permanent alteration of the plant community

4. Support rare, endangered & native plants through federal programs

Problem: The native plant component of federal programs can get 'lost in the shuffle'

Solution: H.R. 1572 emphasizes the importance of plants & their contributions to biodiversity & ecosystem functioning through various programs

- Create an explicit authorization for the Plant Conservation Alliance Interagency Plant Materials Efforts & implementation of the Seed Strategy
- Authorize BLM's Native Plant Materials Development Program
- Amend the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation to implement native plant- specific funding
- Amend the Fish & Wildlife Act of 1956 to authorize grants to the states to protect rare & endangered plants

Track the Bill's progress at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/1572>

Learn more at www.botanybill.weebly.com



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