



North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

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**Policy/Procedure**                      **NATIVE PLANTS POLICY**

**Section**                                      **ADM 6**

**Effective Date**                          **7/1/2023**

**Related Policies and Procedures (if applicable):**                      **N/A**

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**APPROVED BY:**

*D. Reid Wilson*

**D. Reid Wilson, Secretary**

*6/28/23*

**Date**

**1. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF POLICY**

1.1 Native plants are an important part of North Carolina’s natural and cultural heritage. They are adapted to the state’s environment and more likely to thrive, especially during drought. Unlike invasive non-native species, they do not overwhelm natural ecosystems. They support pollinators essential to food production and ecosystem health, and otherwise declining bird populations that depend on insects associated with native gardens. Native plants, especially grasses, are better able to store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. To meet its mission of preserving the natural heritage of our state, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (“DNCR”) enacts this policy regarding the use of native plants at all DNCR sites and all project sites funded by the Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (“PARTF”), unless otherwise excepted.

1.2 This policy shall be effective upon signature and continue until revoked by the Secretary.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

2.1 Southeastern United States: the states of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and the following counties in Florida: Bay Calhoun, Escambia, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Walton, and Washington.

**3. POLICY**

3.1 Landscaping for all property allocated to DNCR shall only use seeds and plants that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has classified as native to a state or county in the Southeastern United

States, including cultivars and varieties thereof that were not bred to have reduced reproductive structures, with a strong preference for plants the U.S. Department of Agriculture has classified as native to North Carolina.

3.2 As a term of PARTF grant contracts with DNCR, landscaping for all PARTF-funded projects shall only use seeds and plants that the U.S. Department of Agriculture has classified as native to a state or county in the Southeastern United States, including cultivars and varieties thereof that were not bred to have reduced reproductive structures, with a strong preference for plants the U.S. Department of Agriculture has classified as native to North Carolina.

3.3 The following non-native plants shall be exempted from this policy:

- a) Non-native plants on property allocated to DNCR or incorporated as part of a PARTF-funded project that are already existing at the time of the effective date of this policy;
- b) Non-native turf grass; and
- c) Non-native seeds and plants where the primary purpose is:
  - i. crop cultivation,
  - ii. scientific research,
  - iii. botanical or historical gardens,
  - iv. plantings for wildlife, or
  - v. plantings for exhibits or for animal consumption at museums, zoos, and aquariums.

3.4 When an exemption to this policy as established in section 3.3 applies, all employees and grantees are strongly encouraged to use appropriate native plant alternatives, if such alternatives exist.

## **History**

**Effective Date: 7/1/2023**