**Herbaceous Ornamentals Crop Germplasm Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, August 10, 2020

**Meeting called to order at 10:00 AM EST**

Attendees: Shaun Broderick, Pablo Jourdan, Ed Schneider, Jeff Carstens, Andrew Sherwood, Peter Bretting, Scott Aker, Susan Stieve, Gary Kinard, Neil Anderson, Marvin Miller, Pam Allenstein, Barbara Hellier, and Ryan Warner

**Welcome and Introductions**

**Office of National Programs Reports:**

*National Plant Germplasm System* – Peter Bretting reported on the germplasm request. A good portion of germplasm requests are for ornamentals, funding/budgets have been stable, effects of Covid-19 has cause ceases in germplasm shipments, but GRIN global is functioning normally. Uncertainty in the FY 21 budgets due to Covid-19. The budget increased by $4.3 M, but when adjusted by inflation the spending power is still down even though distributions of plant material has doubled. This causes challenges. Also, 1/3 of the staff will be retiring within the next 5 years—so this is a challenge to train the new personnel. Developed workshop to train participants. There are interesting new challenges with the deposits of GM germplasm that is no longer under patent. Hemp genetic resources are a challenge due to regulations. Created videos about the NPGS operations at <https://youtu.be/uHOclGNELuw>

*National Germplasm Resources Laboratory* – Gary Kinard. There is a positioning opening up is in the plant exchange office. You may be able to submit something for a Plant Exploration Exchange Proposal. There is some flexibility still. Still making progress on the new updates to the GRIN-Global database. It is a major update and will be going through cybersecurity checking. It is going to be more intuitive. Shaun will be sending meeting minutes and roster to be updates on the website.

*Crop Vulnerability Statement updates* – Pablo Jourdan. He discussed changes to the vulnerability statement. He received feedback of some genera of interest. Neil Anderson commented that maybe some way to identify the priority genera is to look at what is being requested the most. Barbara Hellier suggested providing a month to members to review and then submit. Scott felt that it was fine to focus on natives and conservation. Generally, the committee seems OK with the genera on the list.

Transitions in the OPCG – Pablo is retiring Oct 1st. The is a current hiring pause due to Covid-19. But hopefully it will be filled soon when the budget situation is better understood.

*North Central Regional Plant Introduction Station* – Jeffrey Carstens. They are looking for a new Research Leader. They have 3,871 accessions. Highest requests *Agastache*, *Monarda*, *Origanum*. *Monarda* observation plot was grown. *Monarda serratena* – has deeper veins than fistulosa, *Monarda spp.* and *Monarda austroappalachiana* were among those that were evaluated. He plans to do some collections of *Agastache*, *Monarda didyma*, *Monarda austroappalachiana*, and *Monarda x media*, *Stachys pilosa* and some miscellaneous taxa.

*Western Regional Plant Introduction Station* – Barbara Hellier. A few accessions were added to the SOS program. They continue to increase accessions to *Salvia*. They focused on *Achillea*, *Artemisia*, *Allium*, *Cammassia*, *Exchscholtzia*, *Erigeron*, *Eriogonum*, *Geum*, *Lomelosia*, *Papever*, *Thymus*, and *Xeranthermum*. They have several retirees from their location. Here are the links for the NPGS <https://youtu.be/0U7M1sPYpyo> and <https://youtu.be/2Lg6sizSLMg>

*Ornamental Plant Germplasm Center* – Susan Stieve and Pablo Jourdan. They had to shut down due to Covid-19. But they have had several accession requests—notably for *Begonia*. They have had a lot of new seeds for the SOS program. It contained over 500 accessions of US native accessions. Now they have 7,324 accessions at the OPCG. Pablo’s retirement will be a challenge for the OPCG with everything else going on with Covid-19.

*US National Arboretum* – Scott Aker. They have about 16,000 accession. They have planted about 27,000 plants in a Springhouse Run Restoration project. They replanted the Friendship Garden, which is based on the book Gardening in a Post-Modern World by Claudia West. It took about 7,000 plugs to complete. This type of planting may require production changes to how plants are produced and sold with plugs being more readily available. They recently constructed 5 raingarden retrofits. They are also trailing a hardy *Rosmarinus* that is now taxonomically placed in *Salvia*. They are now open in the afternoons and Saturday. Their staff is split into two teams for physical distancing.

**Member Updates:**

Marvin Miller commented on the use of native plants. It requires the right mix of plant material to get it just right. He also spoke about their new R&D facility. They should have it completed next spring. They have filled vacancies with high-tech backgrounds to assist breeders.

Pam Allenstein commented on the impact of Covid-19. Many of the collection trips have been cancelled or postponed. Some of the research work has also been restricted by an economical hit. They were able to conduct a virtual conference. The APGA’s conference dates in Ft Worth, TX are June 7-11 2021.

**Orders of Business:**

Shaun Broderick will continue to serve as Chair.

Next meeting will likely be by videoconference, potentially on July 9th, 2021.