Woody Landscape Plant Crop Germplasm Committee

Annual Meeting Teleconference

Minutes

2021.07.08

*Attendance*Alan Whittemore, Jeff Carstens, Andrew Sherwood, Kevin Conrad, Russell Galanti, Fred Gouker, Gary Kinard, Madhugiri Nageswara-Rao, Stan Hokanson, Kim Hummer, Margaret Pooler,Pam Allenstein, Peter Bretting, Ryan Contreras, Tim Rinehart, Todd Rounsaville, Keith Woeste, Michael Dosmann, Kim Shearer (Chair)

Virtual Zoom meeting hosted by The Morton Arboretum

Annual WLPCGC meeting was called to order. First order of business was to welcome new members Andrew Sherwood, Russell Galanti, and Madhugiri Nageswara-Rao. Following introductions, 2020 minutes were reviewed/approved unanimously with a motion from Dosmann and a second from Contreras.

# Update Crop Vulnerability Statement

The updated CVS that the WLPCGC worked on revising was posted to the USDA CGC website. At the time of posting, the CVS was almost complete with additional references needed for citations. Discussion regarding the possibility of modifying the CVS to be a publishable manuscript was initiated by Dosmann. CGC members supported this action. Pooler volunteered to finalize and draft in manuscript format for HortScience including all reviewers/contributors to the CVS as authors. Additional revisions and potential content addition was discussed by the CGC.

# Exploration and Evaluation Proposals

FY2022 Funding

An evaluation proposal was received and reviewed by the CGC, but was not approved for support. This was largely due to the status of the plant material. Much of the material was not available for incorporation into NPGS and some plant material was not yet propagated for distribution to the NPGS.

Exploration proposals were not received.

FY2021 Funding (late submissions in August 2020 approved due to deficit of proposals submitted to PEO)

An Aronia exploration proposal was supported by the CGC and funded by the PEO. Carstens authored the proposal and updated the CGC. A scouting trip was completed in May. It was slightly early on flowering (balloon stage). Four out of six sites had the Aronia targets. GPS coordinates and tissue samples were collected with staff from Morton Arboretum (Kim Shearer and Andrew Muñoz). And a tour of the Morton was provided. A Fraxinus expedition was also supported by the CGC and funded. This proposal was authored by Sherwood. Sherwood updated the CGC on trip plans that were held up due to pandemic travel restrictions. There was not yet approval to fly to Arizona and New Mexico, and it was possible the trip would get postponed unless the pandemic conditions/policies improved over the summer.

# Roster Update

The CGC roster was update with new members listed above. Representation includes academia in tropical woodies and USDA in the Midwest and tropical Florida. It was noted that commercial propagators were needed on the committee in addition to other scientific researchers. A question was raised regarding the status of Joseph Postman at the Corvallis repository and John Preece’s retirement from the College Station repository was noted as a position needing to be filled. Recommendations for commercial propagators and scientific researchers were provided by CGC members including academia and the USDA. A question regarding CGC membership numbers was raised. Kinard noted that there is no cap on membership numbers.

# NGRL Report

A report was provided by Gary Kinard. Two new permanent employees and one temporary employee were recruited during the 2020 pandemic. Three positions were reported vacant including a botanist position. Explorations scheduled for FY2020 were all postponed due to the pandemic, and planned for rescheduling once conditions were considered safe for travel. Two submitted/supported proposals for domestic plant exploration targeted Helianthus of California and Lupinus polyphyllus in Washington state. The Borderland Restoration Network, USFS, and NGRL continued collaboration of documentation and collection of crop wild relatives in Wild Chile Botanical Area of the Coronado National Forest in Arizona and surrounding areas. Nine taxa of crop wild relatives were collected in 2020 with additional collecting plans for 2021. The GRIN Taxonomy of plant project started in 2008 was reported to be ongoing and progress metrics were reported including a completion of 241 major/minor crops from 120 genera and CWR from 4013 taxa mapped to crops and others was under progress. Germplasm exchange continued through plant distribution both domestically and internationally. The Alfalfa and clover/Specialty legume CGCs merged to form the Forage CGC; CGCs continued to meet virtually through the pandemic and urged to update CVSs. A Crop Wild Relative page was released/published on GRIN-Global. Kinard noted that Dr. Anne Francis would be joining ARS/NPGS in August and likely would transition into the position held by Karen Williams.

# CGC Leadership

Shearer raised the point that her tenure as Chair of the CGC had lasted 3 years and asked the committee for a new nomination. Contreras motioned to have Shearer continue as Chair for an additional 2 years. Woeste seconded the motion. The CGC voted unanimously in favor of keeping Shearer in position of Chair.

# Future Meeting

It was proposed to have an in-person meeting at the Morton Arboretum in 2022 to coincide with the ASHS Conference in Chicago (July 30-August 3). The CGC agreed to meet at Morton on Friday, July 29. For 2023, the CGC discussed meeting either virtually or at Arnold Arboretum. The CGC decided to revisit this discussion in 2022. Pooler noted that historically meetings were held in the DC area every other year.

# Discussion

US National Arboretum Woody Landscape Plant Germplasm Repository was in preparation for a 5 year project cycle. Discussion points included potential germplasm targets and research priorities. Hokanson suggested that smaller statured shade tolerant trees were needed for the landscape and germplasm was needed to develop selections, including Southeastern natives. Contreras noted that a lot of species on the west coast are drought tolerant and wild crop relatives of other woody landscape plants in the industry including Styrax redivivus and Cercis occidentalis, and that these traits could be introgressed into commercial plants currently in the nursery industry as established crops. Rounsaville noted that an update of seed storage inventory was in progress and that they would keep western species in mind.

Allenstein raised a point relative to conservation status (as defined by NatureServe) and recommended that work be done relative to G3 species, a concern that was raised to her by Anne Francis. It was noted that much conservation work was focused on targeting G4/G5 species, but G3 species were particularly vulnerable due to a lack of attention relative to status and the lag time of updated assessments. One recommended strategy Allenstein proposed was to cross reference G3 species with emerging threats. Dosmann, Contreras and Hokanson noted that the newly revised CVS recognized the challenge of developing this type of target list and that the 3 themes in the CVS should be considered in developing strategy for identifying target taxa. Shearer noted that another priority should be targeting the provenance gaps of broadly distributed North American taxa after cross-referencing with NPGS holdings.

# Any Other Business

Developing WLPCGC Bylaws: Shearer noted that one motivation was to help determine how active members need to be in order to remain on the CGC , and the question of term limits. This was identified as a low priority for the CGC, and it was suggested that the WLPCGC could adopt/revise existing bylaws from another CGC.

Contreras announced that he would be presenting “For the Public Good” at Cultivate in Ohio–a presentation on the value of university programs.

# Conclusion

Action items included Pooler taking the lead on manuscript initiation and CGC members reaching out to potential candidates for CGC recruitment representing academia, USDA, and commercial industry from the Southeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Midwest.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion from Contreras and a second from Allenstein and Whittemore.