

# BC SEED BANK ONLINE GATHERING REPORT



2026



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# Context Setting

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In February 2024, 62 participants attended the first BC Seed Bank Gathering to create the BC Seed Bank Network. This online gathering focused on identifying needs, resources, opportunities, and barriers to the establishment of a BC Seed Bank. Following this gathering, 4 core collaborators stepped forward to continue to grow the network and apply for funding: Coastal Douglas-fir Conservation Partnership (CDFCP), the Ministry of Water, Land, and Resource Stewardship (WLRS), Nupqu Native Plant Nursery, and UBC Botanical Garden (hereafter referred to as the Core Collaborators).

In March 2026, the Core Collaborators hosted a second virtual BC Seed Bank Gathering. The purpose of the 2026 gathering was to provide project and funding updates, and connect through breakout sessions on priority species lists, data sovereignty, and create a road map for the future. A total of 72 participants attended, representing a wide range of organizations, including Indigenous Nations/Governments; seed collectors, gardens, farms and nurseries (Indigenous and non-indigenous); conservation organizations and non-profits; regional, provincial, and federal governments; and universities.

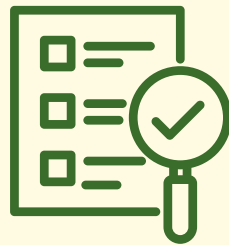
During the 2026 Gathering, a wide range of participant input was collected and synthesized into the key takeaways outlined below. A more comprehensive summary of feedback from the Gathering can be found on our [website](#).



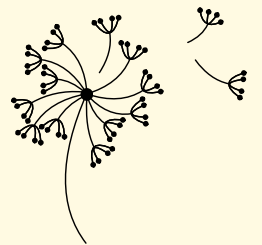
# Current Priorities (2026-2027)



Secure  
long-term  
funding



Create a  
priority  
species list for  
seed collection



Collect seed  
from rare,  
culturally  
significant, and  
restoration  
species



Develop data  
sovereignty  
guidelines



Create a data  
management  
system



Establish &  
operate seed  
bank hubs

# Gathering Agenda

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## I. Welcome & Introductions

- Land Acknowledgement
- Introduction & Project Updates

## II. Identifying Priority Species at Risk and of Cultural Value

- Breakout Session

Q1: What criteria should we use for prioritizing species for the seed bank?

Q2: Who do we need to talk to?

## III. Data Sovereignty

- Breakout Session

Q1: What data sovereignty opportunities and concerns should the BC Seed Bank be mindful of?

Q2: What data may be sensitive?

Q3: What sensitivities are there related to storage location and use?

ex: where the seed is stored/how it is used/who gets access to the seed and or information

## IV. Nupqu Nursery Tour

## V. Growing Forward

- Breakout Session

Q1: What do you see as the long-term vision for the BC Seed Bank? (In 2030, picture the Seed Bank being wildly successful... )

Q2: How might we secure long-term funding for the BC Seed Bank?

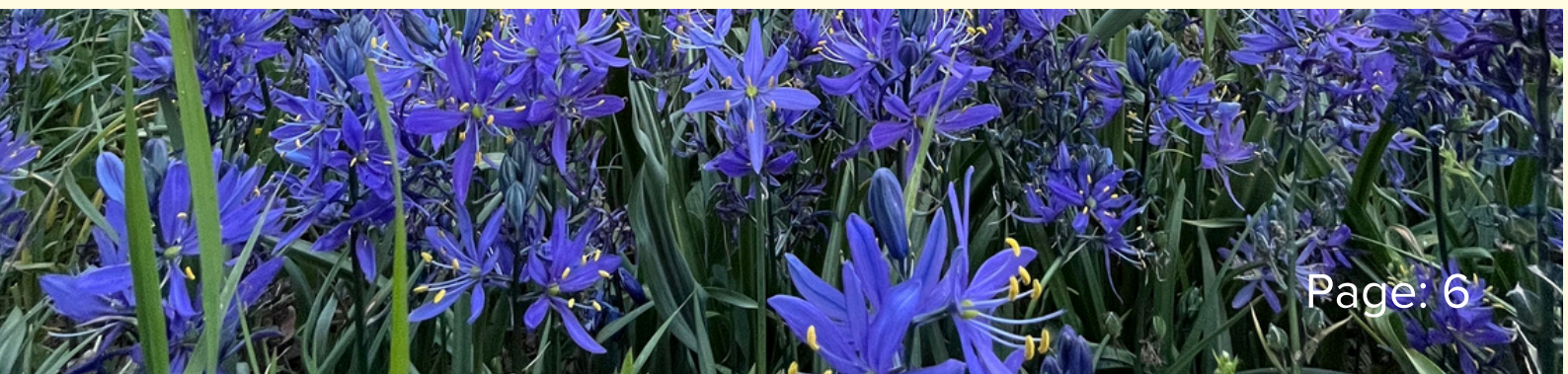
## VI. Conclusion & Questions

# Main Takeaways: Priority Species

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## *Criteria for Priority Species Lists:*

- Prioritize threatened ecosystems, plant communities, and key biodiversity areas (e.g. Garry Oak)
- Prioritize restoration species that support wildlife, pollinators, and people
- Choose species that overlap between rare/culturally significant/restoration
- Species lists need to be regionally specific as each region will have different needs (i.e. some regions have a higher priority for rare species, other regions may have a higher priority for reclamation species)
- Prioritize vulnerable species (i.e species at the northernmost edge of its range, impacted by catastrophic events, impacted by people).



# Main Takeaways: Data Sovereignty

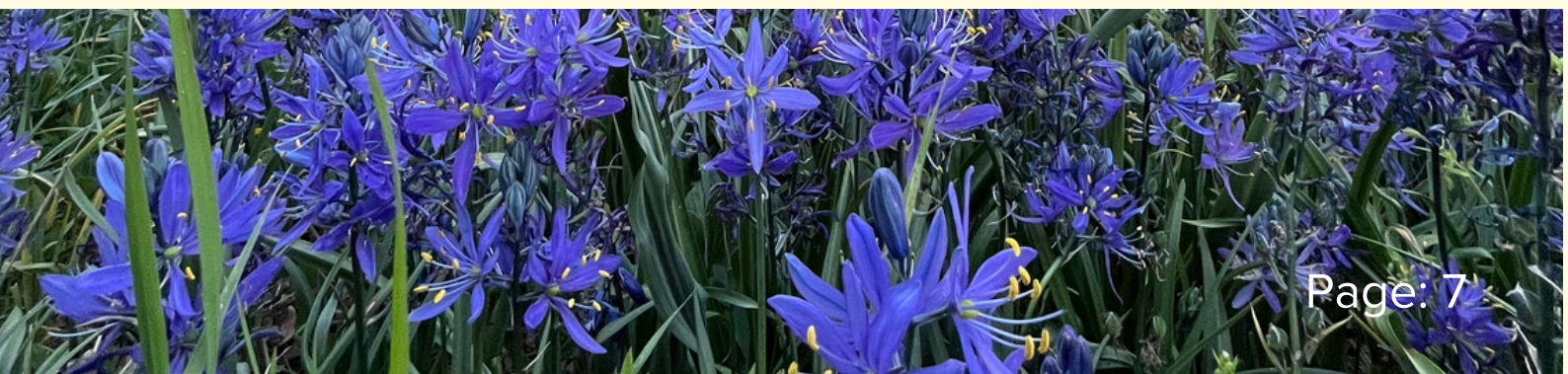
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## *Concerns*

- Sharing location of culturally-important species, species at risk and medicinal plants
  - Potential solution: Remove the last 3 digits of latitude and longitude to preserve provenance data but also to not give away exact location
- Sharing use of medicinal plants outside of communities

## *Seed Collection Agreements*

- Custom agreements with seed collectors and seed donors should be entered into at the beginning
- Need to build relationships and trust with First Nations and be okay with being told “no” when asking to access land to collect seed

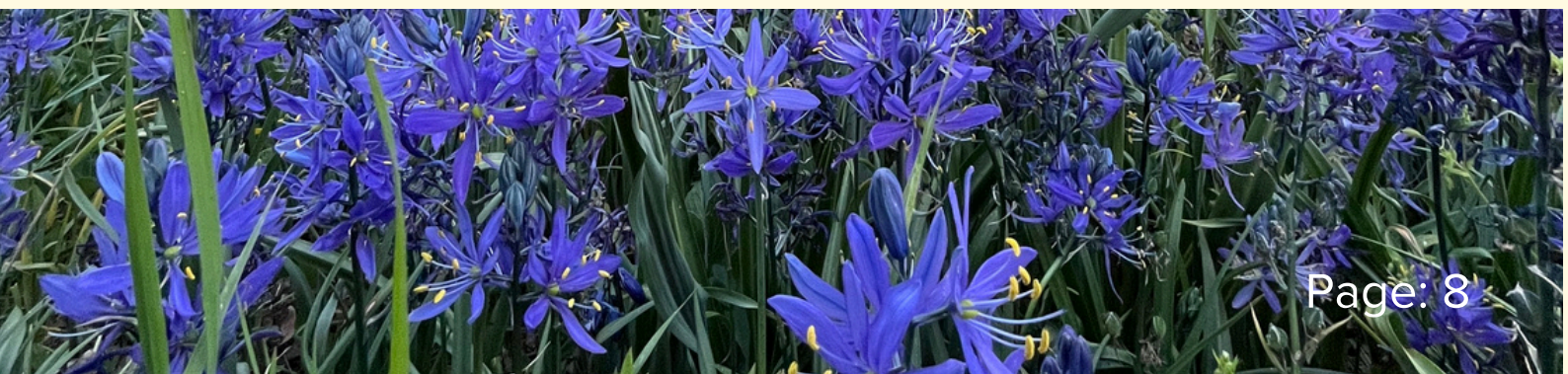


# Main Takeaways: Growing Forward

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## *Opportunities*

- The BC Seed Bank could be an important resource for education and outreach
  - to promote responsible planting and harvesting, promote the use of native plants, provide resources and education for community members and similar organizations to get involved
- Create a seed co-operative to support First Nations and Guardians to share knowledge and materials, provide materials, etc.
- Preference to establish multiple seed bank hubs in different regions
  - Could support development of seed banks with First Nations because they are easier to access for small interior communities and seed can be delivered in person
- Several questions/considerations came up in the breakout sessions:
  - The seed should not be used for commercial or financial gain
  - How are the seeds going to be shared? How long will they be stored?
  - If you are collecting native seed, how do you determine how far from its provenance do you plant it?
  - Wary of too much government funding and control
  - Follow protocols of First Nations while on their land; each nation may have their own protocol for plant collecting
  - Concerns about overharvesting
  - Reciprocity: Risk of researchers coming into communities and taking without bringing information back to the communities

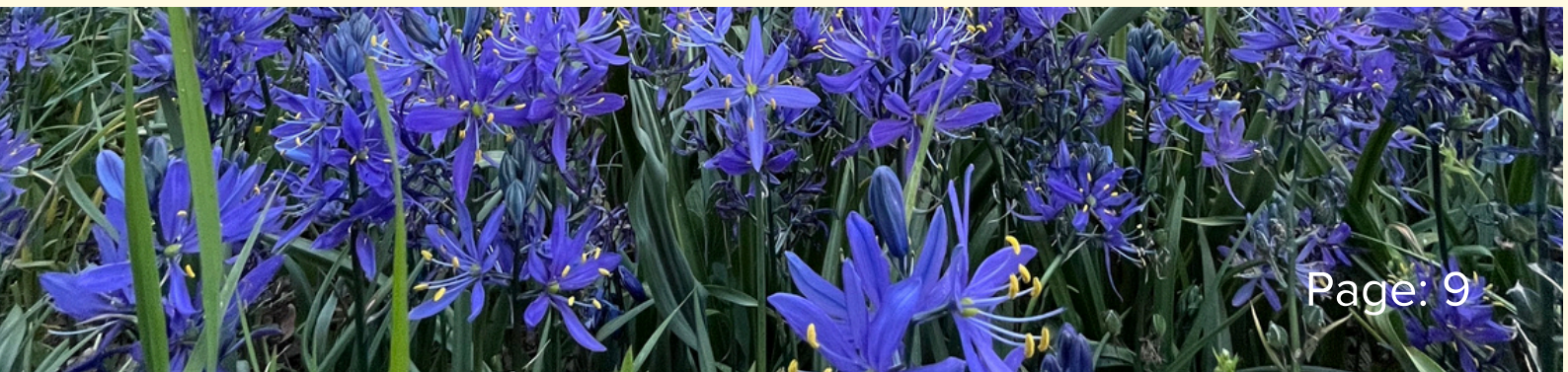


# Main Takeaways: Growing Forward

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## *Financing the Future*

- Leveraging gas/oil industry and the government to pay for restoration initiatives
- Long-term success depends on stable funding, strong public engagement, and utilizing networks to unlock both large-scale and local funding opportunities.



# Conclusion & Next Steps

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Following the Gathering, the Core Collaborators will continue working together to review and reflect on the major takeaways, helping to shape next steps. Where possible, participant feedback will be integrated into current deliverables, including the priority species list, data sovereignty guidelines, and the development of a data management system. The insights and priorities shared will also inform future funding applications.

We extend our sincere thanks to everyone who attended, we deeply value the time, knowledge, and expertise you contributed. We are committed to maintaining and strengthening these connections moving forward. For those who expressed interest in being more involved in specific areas, we will be reaching out, and we warmly welcome ongoing engagement from all participants. We will continue to share updates as this work evolves and hope to convene another Gathering in the future. In the meantime, please feel free to connect at any time ([info@cdfcp.ca](mailto:info@cdfcp.ca)).

