

2021 Ontario Biodiversity Summit

Restoring biodiversity and ecological connections

Thursday June 24, 2021

10:00am **Welcome** *Stefan Weber, Ontario Plant Restoration Alliance*
Opening message *Steve Hounsell, Ontario Biodiversity Council & Dorothy Taylor, Curve Lake First Nation*

10:15am **Panel 1 – Introduction and video** *Stefan Weber, Joanna Equeyem Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation*

10:30am **Panel 1 – Opportunities for restoration**
Moderator *Stefan Weber*
Panelists:
Adam Brylowski, Bruce Trail Conservancy
Liz Bennian, Ontario Green
Brittney McLeod, Canadian Wildlife Service
Kim Gavine, Conservation Ontario

11:45pm **Break**

12:00pm **Panel 2 – Introduction and video** *Stefan Weber*

12:15pm **Panel 2 – Regenerative seed strategies**
Moderators *Denise Miller, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory & Erin Hayward, Revitalizing our Sustenance Project*
Panelists:
Stephanie Morningstar, Sky World Apothecary
Melissa Spearing, National Tree Seed Centre
Kerry McLaven, Forest Gene Conservation Association
Dan Werner, Ontario Native Plant Growers Association

1:45pm **Break**

2:00pm **Panel 3 – Introduction** *Alan Unwin, Niagara College*

2:15pm **Panel 3 – Restoration in action**
Moderator *Alan Unwin*
Panelists:
Radek Odolczyk, Alderville Black Oak Savannah
Terrylynn Brant, Haudenosaunee Food Forest
Val Deziel, Nature Conservancy Canada
Tracey Etwell, Canadian Wildlife Federation

3:30pm –
4:00pm **Break out discussion**

Speaker biographies

Stefan Weber is a botanist and ecologist with the Carolinian Canada Coalition. He is also the director of the Ontario Plant Restoration Alliance, a grassroots initiative that helps restore wild plants through community engagement. Stefan has worked with wild plants for over fifteen years, in both research and industry roles, including species-at-risk recovery work. He spent seven years as a native seed specialist with the St Williams Nursery & Ecology Centre and is now wrapping up a PhD at McMaster University, studying seed-based restoration.



Joanna Equyem is Director of Climate Programs for the Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation (University of Waterloo). Natural infrastructure is at the heart of her career, having worked as a Professional Geoscientist over the last 20 years, in Canada and the UK, specialising in climate adaptation, river restoration and flood and erosion management. Before joining the Centre, Joanna was the National Lead for Climate Change at AECOM Canada. Her focus areas at the Intact Centre include preservation, restoration, and effective management of natural infrastructure to reduce climate risk.



Adam Bylowski has been with the BTC for 11 years helping to manage the Land Stewardship program, and more recently the Trail Development program. He has a background in urban forestry and ecological restoration, a Bachelor of Environmental Studies from York University and a post grad certificate in Ecosystem Restoration from Niagara College. Prior to the BTC Adam worked for the Forestry Department at the City of Toronto as a Natural Resource Management Technician as well as at an organization called Urban Forest Associates that worked to restore degraded natural spaces in Toronto.



Liz Bennian is a former journalist and newspaper editor who has been leading environmental advocacy and educational organizations since 2004. Currently, Liz is Executive Director and Manager of Environmental Education for OntarioGreen, a charity that provides free, curriculum-based environmental science presentations in schools. She is also the Founder of Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara a collective of Niagara's environmental groups and citizens that advocates for proven municipal best practices and policies that protect and enhance local biodiversity and combat climate change. In recognition of her dedication to preserving and enhancing the environment, Liz has received local, Provincial and National awards.



Brittney McLeod is an Ecologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service; she has spent the past 10 years working in the field of wildlife and habitat conservation in Ontario and British Columbia. In her current role she is responsible for Landscape Conservation Planning and coordinates the Priority Place Initiative in Ontario. She received her Bachelor of Environmental Studies from the University of Waterloo and her Master of Science from Trent University.



Kim Gavine is the General Manager with Conservation Ontario. Kim graduated from Brock University with a degree in Human Geography. For over 30 years, Kim has been working in the natural heritage field with positions in both government and non-government including, the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ontario Heritage Trust, Ontario Nature, Severn Sound Remedial Action Plan, and the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation. Kim has also been involved with many Boards and Committees including the Latonnell Conservation Symposium Steering Committee, Couchiching Conservancy Carolinian Canada Coalition, Natural Spaces Alliance and the Ontario Land Trust Alliance.



Denise Miller is from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory and part of the Cayuga Nation and Wolf Clan. Denise is currently attending Trent University as a returning student to complete a joint-major in Indigenous Studies and Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems. She has completed the Foundations of Indigenous Learning Diploma at Trent and Organic Certification from IAP Career College. During the COVID-19 pandemic the urgency of food security and mental health support for Indigenous communities are seen globally. Denise has created a youth-oriented agriculture project called Revitalizing Our Sustenance to create healthier outlets for youth while also learning self-sustaining practices in agriculture.



Erin Hayward works alongside Denise Miller on their Indigenous youth led *Revitalizing our Sustenance Project* <https://www.revitalizingoursustenance.com/>). Erin has been a participant and advisor to other food systems projects including the Peterborough Community Flint Corn Project and the Food Matters Action Toolkit created by the Commission for Environmental Cooperation. Erin is passionate about Indigenous sciences, Kanyen'keha (The Mohawk Language), hunting, fishing, and tending to Haudenosaunee seed and community relationships.



Stephanie Morningstar's people are Kanién'kehá:ka, Wakeniáhten (Mohawk nation, Turtle clan), Oneida Nation, and Western and Eastern European and come from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, Tyendinaga, Cape Croaker/Moraviantown, and Europe. Stephanie is a self-proclaimed plant nerd, medicine tender, bridge builder, soil and seed steward, scholar, student, and Earth Worker dedicated to decolonizing and liberating minds, hearts, and land- one plant, person, ecosystem, and non-human being at a time. She grows, stewards, and protects medicines; builds soil and reintegrates mycelium; teaches about the plant-human-non-human-ancestral connection through a decolonial lens at Seed, Soil, + Spirit School; and liberates land with and for Indigenous, Black, and people of color as the Executive Director and Relationships and Reciprocity Co-Director at the Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust.



Melissa Spearing is certain she was a squirrel in a former life. She is currently working with the National Tree Seed Centre (NTSC) after 15-plus years living the seasonal rush and reality to meet seed demand for production of native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants. She has experience large-scale commercial nursery propagation and management, Species At Risk recovery programs, seed testing, certification and international networking with Millennium Seed Bank, US Forest Service and US National Seed Strategy cooperators. Her experiences have implored her to research and re-promote genetically-diverse seed production as a nature-based solution for our future. New National Seed Supply Assessment Surveys will be available this summer – email melissa.spearing@canada.ca for more information.



Kerry McLaven's career in forestry began with tree planting and evolved into a Masters in Forest Conservation. Kerry has spent time supporting wildfire behaviour research in Jasper, AB with FPIInnovations and has developed a passion for forest restoration and tree seed when she worked at Forests Ontario under her mentor Brian Swaile, former supervisor of the Ontario Tree Seed Plant supervisor. Now as CEO of the FGCA, Kerry is able to apply her passion for tree seed and climate change adaptation with the incredible team there. Kerry is an RFP in Training.



Dan Werner is a representative of the Ontario Native Plant Grower’s Association. After obtaining a bachelor’s degree in Biology from Wilfrid Laurier University he gained valuable experience in biological field assessments, taking particular interest in plants and birds. Now with over 10 years of professional experience in ecology and ecological restoration Dan provides his valuable expertise as an Ecologist for Kayanase. Dan takes pride in coordinating and implementing ecological restoration projects and invasive species management plans that benefit local biodiversity and species-at-risk.



Alan Unwin worked as an environmental consultant for numerous years both in the fields of Waste Management and Ecological Restoration before joining Niagara College in 1995 as a full-time faculty member. In September of 2011, Alan became the Associate Dean for the School of Environmental and Horticultural Studies and was most recently appointed as Dean of the Business, Tourism and Environment Division at Niagara College. From 2015-2018, Alan served as the Chair of the Society of Ecological Restoration (SER), the third Canadian to have ever held this post. Alan also serves on the editorial board of the Ecological Restoration Journal published out of Rutgers University. Alan holds a Bachelor of Environmental Studies degree from the University of Waterloo and a Master of Education from the University of Toronto.



Radek Odolczyk is Alderville Black Oak Savannah’s Ecological Restoration and Stewardship Coordinator. In this role he is responsible for overseeing the restoration work at the Alderville BOS site, and the Stream to Shore project. Radek also plays a lead role in the conservation of Species-at-Risk and other conservation-related projects. He has worked at the Alderville BOS for seven years, with a over a decade of conservation work ranging from mangrove wetland restoration in Central America, to sustainable forest practices in the ancient Appalachian Mountains of New Brunswick. He has a Technologist Diploma in Ecosystem Management from Fleming College, and a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science from Trent University.



Terrylynn Brant “Será:sera”, is a Mohawk Seedkeeper who operates a heritage seed bank and Haudenosaunee Agricultural Resource Centre on Six Nations. She built an eco-friendly Earthship with model gardens to share the ways of the Haudenosaunee. After 35 yrs in indigenous education, she is now a mentor/consultant of indigenous gardening and food security. Terrylynn’s passionate relationship with wild gardening and networking has led to her grass-roots activism in land relations. She authors a newspaper column called “In My Longhouse Basket” and is soon to publish her second book.



Val Deziel started working with The Nature Conservancy of Canada in 2012 with a special focus of Tallgrass Prairie Restoration in the Rice Lake Plains. She completed her Hon. B.Sc. Restoration Ecology in 2013 with Trent University/ Fleming College. Her restoration projects include prescribed burning and thinning of forests for oak woodland, planting prairie and invasive species management. The main focus of restoration in the Rice Lake Plains has been the Hazel Bird Nature Reserve- a Nature Destination property. Val welcomes everyone to visit! <https://naturedestinations.ca/story/hazel-bird-nature-reserve/>



Tracey Etwell is a Restoration Ecologist on the Rights-of-Way and Grasslands Project Teams at Canadian Wildlife Federation. She has a Masters of Science in fire ecology and a post graduate certificate in ecological restoration. She has extensive experience with inventorying, planning and restoring terrestrial, riparian and wetland habitats in Canada.



Program at a glance

THURSDAY JUNE 24

10:00am – 5:00pm	Restoring biodiversity and ecological connections	Register now!
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FRIDAY JUNE 25

10:00am – 5:00pm	Enhancing protection and resilience: Indigenous ways of knowing	Register now!
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JULY

<i>video series</i>	Community science: A tool for biodiversity education and engagement	Register now!
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THURSDAY JULY 15

9:00am – 4:00pm	Restoring aquatic biodiversity	Register now!
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AUGUST

<i>video series</i>	Prioritizing biodiversity education in a changing world	Register now!
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THURSDAY AUGUST 12

10:00 – 2:00pm	Reducing threats to Ontario's biodiversity	Register now!
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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 16

9:00am – 12:00pm	Mainstreaming biodiversity within agriculture	Register now!
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1:00pm – 4:00pm	Mainstreaming biodiversity within forestry	Register now!
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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 23

9:00am – 12:00pm	Mainstreaming biodiversity within business	Register now!
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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 30

10:00am–12:00pm	Funding biodiversity and nature-based climate actions	Register now!
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1:00pm – 3:00pm	Investing in natural infrastructure for biodiversity and climate resilient communities	Register now!
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To learn more about the **Ontario Biodiversity Council** please visit: www.ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca

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www.ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca/summit