



## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** September 4, 2013

**To:** Dave Helzer and Dominic Maze, City of Portland Bureau of Environmental Services

**From:** Maureen Minister and Carrie Butler

**RE:** Government Island Grassland Mitigation – Phase 1

The purpose of this memo is to memorialize changes to the proposed habitat targets for the Government Island Grassland Mitigation Project. These changes were discussed by Port of Portland (Port) and the City of Portland (City) staff at an August 12, 2013 meeting.

As described in the Government Island Grassland Mitigation Project Phase 1 Grassland Mitigation Plan (June 2012), specific measures of success were not predetermined for this project. Instead, general habitat conditions are being targeted which will provide the habitat needed for an assemblage of grassland associated species, including grassland birds. The Port recognizes that vegetation height is of specific importance to grassland birds and is therefore agreeing to add the following vegetation height target to the project. This target was developed by grassland bird experts Bob Altman and Matt Blakeley-Smith and was approved by City staff.

*Mean vegetation height of 12 to 24 inches (measured in mid to late May) including:*

- *Less than 25% of the vegetation will be between 6 and 12 inches*
- *Greater than 50% of the vegetation will be between 12 and 24 inches*
- *Less than 25% of the vegetation will be greater than 24 inches*

It should be noted that the plant species list selected for this project was finalized and the seed was already being sourced before this vegetation height target was added. Many of the plant species that will be seeded in the project area have a wide variation in mature plant height and almost all exceed a maximum height of 24 inches. Therefore, depending on how vigorous plants grow on this site, it is acknowledged that this target may not be achieved at the Phase 1 Mitigation Site.

In addition to adding the vegetation height target, the Port would like to clarify the non-native plant target which was included in the Phase 1 Mitigation Plan. Originally the target stated that invasive non-native species would be targeted for appropriate level of control. We propose to define “appropriate level of control” as no more than 25 percent cover. The revised target would read:

*No single non-native plant will have more than 50% cover on site*

- *Invasive non-native species (as identified in table D-2 of the recovery plan) will be managed aggressively to maintain less than 25 percent cover overall.*

The following is the complete list of the targets for this project that will be used from this point forward:

- Relative cover of native plant species 50% or more
- Little to no woody vegetation (less than 15%)
- Approximately 10-30% cover by forbs
- Greater than 5% bare ground, but no more than 20%
- No single non-native plant will have more than 50% cover on site
  - Invasive non-native species (as identified in table D-2 of the recovery plan) will be managed aggressively to maintain less than 25 percent cover overall.
- Plant species richness greater than 10 native species
  - Preferably 3 species of native grasses and 10 species of native forbs but at a minimum 1 species of native bunch grass and no less than 7 species of native forbs.
- Mean vegetation height of 12 to 24 inches (measured in mid to late May) including:
  - Less than 25% of the vegetation will be between 6 and 12 inches
  - Greater than 50% of the vegetation will be between 12 and 24 inches
  - Less than 25% of the vegetation will be greater than 24 inches

As the Phase 1 mitigation plan was structured as a field trial, the results from this phase will help to determine the management strategies for future phases of mitigation and will help to determine achievable and sustainable measures of success for future phases. It is unknown whether or not these targets can even be achieved; however, adaptive management principles will be used to determine the best course of action for creating successful grassland habitat. Table 1 (attached) will be used in future annual reports to demonstrate whether these targets are being achieved within the project area.

Please let us know in writing if you agree with the changes being proposed.

**Table 1**

<b>Success Measure</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Monitoring Date</b>	
		<b>Overall</b>	<b>Native Species</b>
Relative % cover of native species	50% or more	NA	
Relative % cover of woody vegetation	Less than 15%		
Relative % cover by forbs	Approximately 10-30%		
Relative % cover of bare ground	Greater than 5%, but no more than 20%		NA
Number of single non-native plants with more than 50% cover	No single non-native plant will have more than 50% cover on site		NA
Relative % cover of invasive non-native species	Less than 25% overall cover		NA
Plant species richness	At least 10 native species		
Number of grass species	3 species of native grasses		
Number of bunch-type grass species	At least 1 native species of bunch grass		
Number of forb species	Preferably 10 native species of forbs but no less than 7 native forb species		
Mean height (inches) of vegetation	12 – 24 inches		NA
Vegetation between 6-12"	Less than 25%		NA
Vegetation between 12-24"	Greater than 50%		NA
Vegetation greater than 24"	Less than 25%		NA