



Media Release

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For Immediate Release:

11th Eastern Native Grass Symposium to be Held in Erie, PA September 17-19

Erie, PA – July 2, 2018 — The 11th Eastern Native Grass Symposium will take place September 17-19 at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie, PA. The biennial symposium brings together stakeholders and academics from around the United States and Canada to share best practices, as well as emerging markets and trends in the use of native grasses and forbs (flowering plants) in a diverse host of applications.

The theme for this year's symposium is "*Form & Function: Grasslands and Meadows in the Converging Landscape.*"

The theme recognizes that interest in native plants is expanding to include more private and commercial installations by landowners who want to establish diverse meadows and prairies with grasses and forbs to help restore ecological function and provide forage and habitat for pollinators and other wildlife.

Attendees may choose two field tours from a list of four options to attend on Monday, September 17. Field tours include: *Getting Seeds from Field to Freight: A Tour of Ernst Conservation Seeds* with company staff facilitating; *Wine Country Connection: Streambank Vegetation Projects and Vineyards Using Natives as Cover Crops, Erosion & Sedimentation Solutions* with facilitators Tom McClure, district manager at Erie County Conservation District and Dan Dahlkemper, principal at Dahlkemper Landscape Architects & Contractors; *Native Grasses, Wetland Plants and the Sand Barrens of Presque Isle* with facilitator Dr. James Bissell, curator of botany and director of natural areas at the Cleveland Museum of Natural History; and *Establishment of Native Grasses & Forbs on State Game Lands* with facilitators Ronda Bimber, acting land manager and John Keller, game lands maintenance supervisor at the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

On Monday evening, Dave Boughton, maritime education specialist with Pennsylvania Sea Grant, will present "Shipwrecks of Lake Erie," an informative and entertaining discussion of the many shipwrecks that have occurred on Lake Erie, with stories of the vessels and crews that have been lost to the great lake.

A total of 30 sessions will be offered by 29 presenters on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 18 and 19. Session topics include native grasses and forbs in commercial and residential landscapes; site preparation, seed selection, establishment, maintenance and expectation management; erosion & sedimentation plans, steep slopes/disturbed sites; public health and safety applications; native grasslands for livestock forage, biofuels and sustainable fiber production; restoration of native grassland communities; natives for wildlife and pollinator habitat; the role of natives in conservation agriculture (riparian and pollinator buffers, etc.).

The event will offer continuing education credits (CECs) for landscape architects under the American Society of Landscape Architects' (ASLA) LA/CES certification program. Credits will also be available for Certified Crop Advisers (CCA). The Pennsylvania office of the USDA-NRCS has approved six Wildlife Biology and two Pasture Conservation Planner CECs as well. New credits are being approved weekly. CEC-approved sessions will be noted on the website as approved.

Conference registration is open at the early bird rate of \$185 until July 15. After that date, the rate increases to \$250. An additional \$30 fee is charged for those wishing to attend field tours on September 17.

Accommodations are available at the Courtyard by Marriott Erie Bayfront at the group rate of \$97/night. Reservations can be made directly on the Symposium website, www.EasternNativeGrassSymposium.com.

Sponsorship, advertising and exhibiting options are also available for allied businesses and organizations who wish to promote their products, services or mission to an engaged audience of native plant thought leaders and influencers.

For more information, visit www.EasternNativeGrassSymposium.com, email info@EasternNativeGrassSymposium.com or call 800-873-3321 and ask for Randy Ferguson.

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