Episode 9 transcript

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SPEAKERS

Liz Woodhull, Alison Adams, Jessica Raspitha, McKay Burley

A Alison Adams 00:08

Welcome to restoration roundup, a monthly podcast that explores recent research on, new and emerging best practices for, and stories about riparian restoration. I'm Alison Adams. I'm the watershed forestry coordinator with University of Vermont Extension and Lake Champlain Sea Grant and I run the watershed forestry partnership.

L Liz Woodhull 00:25

And I'm Liz Woodhull, a junior at UVM's Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources studying environmental studies and minoring in geography and English.

A Alison Adams 00:34

In our episode last October, we spoke with Annalise Carrington and Lynda Prim about the shortage of native trees available for restoration projects in Vermont. As many of our listeners know, Vermont currently outsources about half of the trees we plant in riparian restoration projects to other states, and our demand for trees is growing rapidly. Furthermore, as we discussed in that October episode, this problem is not isolated to Vermont. Restoration practitioners all over the Lake Champlain Basin and across the country are facing similar issues. But there are lots of people who are doing work that will help address this problem in the Lake Champlain Basin. And many of them are doing so by starting new nurseries. So today we're speaking with Jessica Raspitha theta and McKay Burley. They run the new Akwesasne native plant nursery, which we're really excited to learn more about today. Jessica is the land resources program manager of the St. Regis Mohawk tribes environment division. She graduated from Dartmouth College with a bachelor's degree in environmental studies and a Master of Business Administration from Louisiana State University. She is a member of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe and over the past 11 years has held various positions within the environment division related to ecological restoration, integrated pest management, invasive plant management and forestry. So actually lots of topics that we've covered across the course of this podcast, so that's really cool, and McKay is the newest addition to the St. Regis Mohawk

tribes land resources program as the plant nursery technician. McKay was born and raised in Messina, New York, a small town just west of Akwesasne. They are a graduate of Clarkson University with a BS in engineering and management. And their goal is to become a thought leader in their community, assisting our society in becoming a more sustainable and enjoyable place. So welcome to the podcast, Jessica and McKay.

J Jessica Raspitha 02:26

Hi, it's nice to meet you. Thank you for having us.

M McKay Burley 02:29

Yeah. Thanks for having us. Appreciate it.

A Alison Adams 02:31

Absolutely, really excited to have you guys with us. So I was hoping that we could start just learning a little bit more about each of you. Can each of you tell us how you became interested in nurseries or what brought you to this work?

M McKay Burley 02:42

So I mostly became interested in nurseries after taking my first permaculture design course at St. Lawrence University, which is a bit controversial because I went to Clarkson University, and they're big rivals, I've grown up spending a lot of my time in the summers gardening, especially with my mom, my grandmother, but mostly in conventional ways. So when I joined the class, it really opened my mind up to the possibilities of regenerative agriculture, and the importance of native species in particular, and attempting to replicate those beneficial relationships that happen in nature and incorporate people in that as well. I happen to actually be reading a native plant propagation guide and nursery model written by indigenous landscapes when I was kind of wanting to get out of technical support, which is what I was doing previously. And then I discovered that there's an opening for the plant nursery technician. So here I am.

J Jessica Raspitha 03:39

Yeah, and I first became interested in nurseries when I was a freshman in college. So one of the cool things that we did as freshmen were that all of the incoming freshmen would spend a couple days on a freshman trip with the Dartmouth Outing Club, as some of them were related to like canoeing or hiking or horseback riding. But I chose organic farming, since I grew up in Akwesasne right along the St. Lawrence River really near the Adirondacks. So I was already pretty familiar with canoeing and hiking, and I just really wanted to try something new. So one of the things I enjoyed about the time that I spent at the farm was learning about the greenhouse because of how integrated it was with its surroundings and how well everything worked together. The greenhouse itself was used to cultivate not only trust your species, but

they were also involved in aquaculture and hydroponics and the way that all these things grew together; and this created environment was really what first interested me in nurseries. And this is the first time that I've actually had the opportunity to work with them.

L Liz Woodhull 04:32

Why did you decide to start the Akwesasne native plant nursery

J Jessica Raspitha 04:37

So, the inception of the plant nursery was something that Les Benedict, the Assistant Director of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe environment division, it's something that he had envisioned and laid the foundation for in 2016/2017. Because at the time we were working on a number of ecological restoration projects, most notably invasive Phragmites control and emerald ash borer mitigation. So to provide some background the emerald ash or EAB is perhaps one of the most detrimental invasive species in our area since its host species, which would eventually kills our ash trees. And this is both dangerous and devastating because we have a lot of ash trees located along roadways, powerlines and houses that pose a threat to safety. And it's also harmful because ash trees, and specifically the black ash, are culturally significant because of their use in traditional basketry. So to prevent future problems, we've been making an effort to take down trees that would be dangerous if they were to fall, and replacing them with trees that are not susceptible to EAB damage. And another project that we're working on focused on invasive Phragmites is growing in or near tribal wetlands because wetland environments are locally known for medicinal plants. And if you're familiar with Phragmites grows in dense mono cultures that not only displaces native vegetation, but it grows in a way that alters wetland hydrology to the point where habitat function is impacted. So the project that we undertook saw to eradicate invasive Phragmites, using carefully timed herbicide application, manual removal and prescriptive burning. And ultimately, what we saw was that after two years of active management, we were able to keep the Phragmites populations at bay. But there were some areas that saw a resurgence of native plant growth. But other areas, especially those that had been inundated with Phragmites. For years, were left there. And so between these two projects, there was a clear need for native trees and plants. And rather than purchasing them, the goal was to cultivate our own trees that are native to the area, adapted to our climate, as well as specifically selected for their medicinal or traditional uses.

A Alison Adams 06:31

That's all really cool. And a lot of it connects to episodes that we've done in the past, we did an episode on Emerald Ash Borer. And I've definitely heard a lot from folks we were talking to through that episode and other folks that I work with about the cultural impact concerns because of the black ash sort of lack of any natural resistance to Emerald Ash Borer. I know some other species of ash have a little bit more natural resistance. And so that that's a really deep concern. And then we also just did an episode on invasive species control, like invasive plants in particular. So both of those things really connected. And it's really cool to be talking to you guys. You got to this a little bit in the answer to that last question. But what makes the Akwesasne native plant nursery different or stand out from other nurseries?

M McKay Burley 07:11

So the difference is that our nursery is aimed at restoring the damaged environment, while also providing those traditionally significant species and our nurseries organizing a working group where we'll have community members who are interested in this field who will be able to guide our decisions of the nursery while also maintaining our grant goals.

A Alison Adams 07:34

It's really cool that you guys are starting a community advisory committee sort of or working group, as you call it, do you have examples of the kinds of decisions that they might weigh on or like what kind of perspective or expertise you're hoping that group will bring?

J Jessica Raspitha 07:46

Like McKay mentioned, but the primary distinction to our nursery is the native plants working group. So while it's been difficult to me over the last few years, we have been assembling this group of people that have a vested interest in native plants. They include local farmers, medicine people, other environmental programs that also do ecological restoration, beekeepers who are interested in pollinator protection, seed savers, and also people who grow traditional foods. So there are a lot of people in our community that have a genuine interest in restoration and the availability of native plant varieties, all for various reasons, and all with various backgrounds. And so our goal is to listen to the needs of the community so that we can meet those needs. Having the ability to meet with this group is invaluable to our operation because of the of context it provides. So for example, we've learned through this group that there's a particular plant that grows along our shorelines that our local medicine people have been having a hard time, an increasingly hard time finding. And that has prompted us to focus more on the propagation and replanting of that specific species.

A Alison Adams 08:46

Oh, cool. That's, that's a great example. That's really concrete. Thanks. I like the way that your guys are responding specifically to what's needed by the community and are serving that purpose. That's really, really neat.

L Liz Woodhull 08:57

So what was starting the nursery like? Can you guys go into some challenges or things you didn't really expect?

M McKay Burley 09:03

For sure. So we're definitely still in the infantile stages of our nursery and working to build its current capacity. Even just today, I was touring a nursery to kind of figure out how their operations go. But, you know, we've run into all sorts of challenges from COVID affecting staff

and supply chain, to large boulders in our intended building areas. Every day, I am learning something new like about how to operate a high tunnel, you know, the many ways to propagate plants, pros and cons of different irrigation systems, how to manage pests and disease, on and on and on. And one thing that I find to be true is, I've actually never alone in my effort, which is awesome. When I'm ever unsure of something I have other people and their expertise to lean on. And I'm very thankful for that and especially for my co workers who are passionate about doing the work alongside me.

J Jessica Raspitha 10:00

Yeah, so the timing of our nursery launch has not been ideal. So the program launched in 2019. And COVID-19 caused a number of delays throughout the project that were universal to many industries like shipping and production delays and social distancing challenges. But despite a lot of those setbacks, we were able to construct our high tunnel in 2020. And in 2021, we focused on the development of our priority planting list and a propagation guide for those plants as well as seed collection. But one of the challenges that I did not expect just completely out of my own ignorance was the difficulty of scheduling seed collections, and also the competition we have with the local squirrel population. So since our program staff work on a number of different projects at any given time, the challenge was with planning and scheduling or collection days, since it's also weather and condition dependent, and different seeds are collected at different times. And we learned very quickly that we need to be able to respond and shift our focus to any particular species when it goes to seed so that we don't miss our window of opportunity.

A Alison Adams 11:04

Is it just the two of you who are doing all of this, including running the nursery and maintaining all of the plants that you're growing and also going out and collecting seed?

J Jessica Raspitha 11:12

So McKay as our plant nursery technician, he oversees the day to day operations at the nursery. But we also, as part of our program, within the environment division, we have a staff that includes our forester, our pesticide technician, and as well as our field crew, and our field crew helps us a lot with our seed collection and any other like just general maintenance. We need help with that at the nursery

A Alison Adams 11:34

Got it. Yeah, I know that I've been in some conversations with folks here about seed collection and have heard similar things. It's hard to get the timing exactly right. There's a lot of competition from other other critters that are out there. And that can be a challenge. And so yeah, hearing that you have some folks who are helping you with that I was I was wondering if you're managing that all on your own. Are you guys able to share what are them main things that you grow? And what are the primary uses and purposes for those plants.

M McKay Burley 12:00

So of course, our main focus is on native species. Currently in the nursery, we have a few what I like to call pilot propagation programs. And I'm attempting to propagate some cuttings from Red osier dogwood, which is referred to locally as red Willow, but not to be confused with it's not part of the willow family. And a few varieties of willow trees, there's a lot of willow trees, and they like to hybridize up here. But they're really good for maintaining bank stabilization. They grow really fast. They also have a natural rooting hormone in them, which is really cool. And additionally, we're growing patches of sweet grass, as well as attempting more aquatic plants like cattails. And the main purpose for these plants is to help secure our eroding banks and provide diverse route profiles that will help retain water table levels and reduce chemical runoff. And we chose these plants because they're easy to propagate. But they also have those medicinal values and are using traditional practices.

A Alison Adams 13:06

So you usually try to to grow plants that fit both of those purposes?

M McKay Burley 13:12

Ideally, yes.

A Alison Adams 13:14

Are some of those more popular? What are your most popular and requested plants? And do you know why?

M McKay Burley 13:20

Yeah, sure. So for me, I hear a lot about sweet grass and elderberry. Those are two pretty popular ones from community members. Sweet Grass, it's really nice because it smells good. Smells like vanilla kinda. And it's used as a medicine. It's also used in traditional basket weaving in other crafts. And then elderberry is sought out for its flavorful berries that are really good for the immune system. And thing is something tricky about these species is that they're not the easiest to propagate by seed and have to separate like roots when they start shooting out. And it's okay, and especially with sweet grass because sweet grass likes to be tended to.

A Alison Adams 14:03

It likes to be tended to What do you mean by that?

M McKay Burley 14:06

Well, I read there's this study that was done by some indigenous scholars. And so the argument

Well, I read there's this study that was done by some indigenous scholars. And so the argument before the experiment, how do you harvest sweet grass? Do you harvest sweet grass by pulling it up by the root by cutting it, etc. So they started to conduct the experiment that three different groups one group was the control group, so they didn't do anything to that sweet grass. The second patch was they just cut the sweet grass and they didn't pull it up by the roots. And then the third was they pulled out around 30% of the plants from the root. And you know over time the experiment concluded that when sweet grass is pulled up by the roots, it becomes more vigorous of a patch versus if you cut it, it does grow back a bit better, but not as vigorous says if you were to remove the roots. It found that actually overtime with the control group, that if they didn't tend to it at all that the production would go down.

J Jessica Raspitha 15:10

So to further elaborate on that by what it means to they like to be tended to it has to do with the rhizome root system that it has. And the way that rhizomes grow. So rhizomes are the kind of species that when they break, both of those pieces will grow into their own individual plant. And so that's what's happening with sweet grasses. As you're pulling it up, those root systems are getting disturbed, and they are multiplying, which it's really great when that happens with sweet grass. But this is also the same root system that a lot of our invasive plants tend to share. And that's what makes sense hard to eradicate. And to further answer the question about plants that are requested: since 2019, we've done a number of community surveys and outreach events to try to gauge community interest. And one of the things we notice that there's a strong desire for increasing food sovereignty. And so a lot of the species that are requested are often fruit bearing trees and shrubs. And so this will obviously impact the direction that we take in the future.

L Liz Woodhull 16:07

And just going back a little bit, McKay saying how sweet grass is used medicinally, like what are some of the medicinal values of it?

J Jessica Raspitha 16:14

Not sure of medicinal sweet grass properties I know it's normally used for basket weaving, but we do it within our working group, we have what we call our traditional ecological knowledge holders, and they join that group to provide that sort of context.

A Alison Adams 16:28

As you were talking, I was wondering, who are the main customers of your nursery? Who usually using the plants that you guys are growing?

J Jessica Raspitha 16:36

Yeah, so everything that we're currently growing in the nursery is ultimately used for our ecological restoration projects like through our own department.

A Alison Adams 16:42

Okay, gotcha. So through doing research for this episode, I learned that apparently, many tribes and tribal colleges have nurseries, which was not something that I knew before. But I'm wondering how you see your nursery fitting into the larger network of tribal native plant nurseries, and also restoration efforts both within and outside of the tribal context.

M McKay Burley 17:03

So we're just getting into that scene. Our goal is to be able to network the best way to see what others are doing and how they're approaching similar issues that we might run into. We have been working to expand our network through the United southern and eastern tribes and also attending workshops working with our grant partners, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank, as well as the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Saratoga Tree Nursery, other local universities who have sustainability programs, something we have to consider, especially with shoreline restoration, is that to ensure our success, it can't just be an effort isolated to Akwesasne, because things flow downstream. So creating that buy in can be difficult, and especially for the community that is up river to Akwesasne, which is Messina. They've relied heavily on manufacturing an international trade to the Seaway locks, which you know, that's a way that invasive species can be reduced and things like that.

J Jessica Raspitha 18:05

So one of the goals for the nursery that's been developed through the connections we've made with other tribes is that we would like to be able to cultivate plants that they need as well, so that way we can serve communities longer than our own. But more importantly, in addition to learning from other nurseries, we also want to help other tribal nurses get started and hope to be able to share some of our experiences with others who want to implement similar programs, because I'm sure other tribal nations are experiencing similar stressors on their culturally significant plant and tree species. And in order to preserve our culture and traditional practices, the native species, those practices rely need to be available. So I view a lot of the things that we do as integral to cultural preservation. And I hope to be able to help others do the same.

L Liz Woodhull 18:44

Thank you. And that kind of leads into our next question. Another one of your goals that we learned about was to increase community awareness and education. And so we were wondering, what strategies do you guys use to maximize your community participation?

M McKay Burley 18:58

I would say we're pretty lucky that we have so many folks interested in the work that we are doing. And of course, as we mentioned, there's the working group. But recently, we put on a seed exchange where we're working to create a system of seed savers who would be interested

in live seed banking, and the opportunity to seed rematriation, or like the return of traditional seeds. And additionally, we put on educational workshops through our partners like Cornell Cooperative Extension, and that mid atlantic regional seed bank. And so right now what we're planning to do is some seed collecting events, and workshops on how to save and store seeds from your own garden, as well as collecting them from out in the woods. And maybe if we're going to get into it, mushroom production.

J Jessica Raspitha 19:48

I also don't think we can understate the importance of the native plants Working Group and the the connection that it has with the nursery. So each event that we hold usually gives us the opportunity to meet with more people who are interested in native plants for a specific reason. And the more participation we're able to get in the working group, the more holistic our approach can be.

A Alison Adams 20:06

Absolutely. McKay, you mentioned both what I think the term you use was live seed banking. And you also said, seed rematriation, I'm somewhat familiar with that latter term. But could you describe just a little bit more about what each of those things means for you, and how that's intersecting with the work of the nursery?

M McKay Burley 20:26

Sure. So we can start with live seed banking. So live seed banking is essentially this concept where, because plants take in information year after year about their climate, to then produce the best seed, it's best for seeds to be planted out, especially as we're seeing climate change affecting our area. So the idea of being able to do live seed banking is essentially creating this network of people who are willing to grow those seeds out year over year, instead of say, putting them in a cold room storage for 30 years, and then planting them, you know, years down the line, it's to really help with increasing the resiliency of those seeds, as we are impacted by climate change. And then the second one is seed rematriation, or just the return of traditional seeds, which obviously, is important for people to be able to practice their cultural practices, through seeds, and especially because I think a lot of people feel a connection to, you know, their previous generations, or even just their elders through planting. And so, you know, seed rematriation is really important for that. And, you know, the movement away from like the traditional diet has affected the health of really everyone. So being able to return to those sources of nutrition could lead to healthier and happier lives.

A Alison Adams 22:02

That makes sense. Thank you for explaining a little bit more about each of those things.

M McKay Burley 22:05

Sure.

Sure.

L Liz Woodhull 22:06

How does climate change pose any challenges for your nursery?

M McKay Burley 22:10

Jess can elaborate a little bit more on this one, but just being with the nursery for a couple of months that I have, the sun is really intense. Additionally, working with plants that experience dormancy presents challenges with climate change, because non native invasive species might be given more of a chance to grow, because they don't go through those similar stages of dormancy. And therefore, that's going to start affecting the competition between native growers that go dormant versus non native species that don't go through that same type of scenario.

J Jessica Raspitha 22:49

Yeah, so climate change is definitely something that we're wary of, because as our conditions change, it alters the habitat range of native plants and animal species. And this is especially concerning because ecosystems are so intertwined that we may not know the full extent, a small change can make until it's too late. And we're already seeing some changes, and that we often experience drought like conditions over the summer. And this has put additional pressure on us to keep our plants and trees adequately watered. So while we still do get a good amount of rainfall throughout the summer, in the past few years, we've had really heavy rain events rather than smaller showers throughout the summer. And this isn't really ideal for plants and trees, because the heavy rainfall needs to run off before the roots have a chance to absorb the water. But other than changing our maintenance plans to meet the water needs, one of the things that we are doing, especially when considering some of the longer lived tree species is that we try to think beyond our current conditions and take into consideration the climate that these trees may be living in over the next 50 to 100 years. So adaptive planning is something that we're actively considering, which is looking at species that generally fare better in warmer weather and will give preference to those species. But like McKay mentioned, another climate focus effort that we're planning to undertake, beginning this year is the creation of a living seed bank. And again, the idea is to purposefully grow out some of those traditional plant species year after year with the purpose of generating seeds that we can share with the community, while also helping these plants slowly adapt to the changing environment. So yeah, we expect that climate change will continue to be a threat, but we plan to help our nursery adapt to the best of our ability.

A Alison Adams 24:23

So given that you started to kind of answer that question, and maybe maybe what you just said, is the answer to this question. But given that preserving culturally important species is such an important part of what your nursery is trying to do. And that as you mentioned, the

range of species is changing over time. It sounds like the live seed banking is part of how you're hoping to adapt to that. Are you concerned that some of those species might no longer be in a range that includes your area anymore? How's your nursery thinking about that?

J Jessica Raspitha 24:51

Yeah, that's definitely something that we are concerned about. And I know there's been some discussion with other tribal nations about maybe adopting what we grow to match other places needs that we can sort of exchange. I don't know that that's really the greatest solution. But again, the the cultural preservation is a, it's a big concern, because a lot of our practices are tied so much to the plants that were here historically. And the concern is that if those plants aren't here, the practices cannot continue.

A Alison Adams 25:21

Right. Yeah, that is a big concern. And I'll be really interested to sort of follow what you guys are doing and how you're facing that. And any creative solutions you come up with, because I know that's a concern for a lot of people for a lot of different reasons. And so yeah, interesting to hear what sort of your thinking about that is. Relatedly, I suppose speaking of threats, how have you guys been thinking about the impact? You mentioned a little bit about emerald ash borer? How are you thinking about the impact of invasive pests and pathogens in your work, including emerald ash borer, but maybe others as well?

J Jessica Raspitha 25:51

Broadly, we do pay attention to our current invasive pest, we do do active monitoring for a number of known invasive species, as well, as we're watching for new threats that are slowly spreading in our area, as well as anything we detect that is new, we have it set up for testing. We actually just found a a new Beetle that was new to our area last summer. So to be proactive for that we have a monitoring plan in place. And also, we know we've learned what the host species is. So we also have a plan in place to monitor the health of the host tree. So those are the kinds of things we do, we just try to look ahead to be wary of which of our species are at risk. And then when we're selecting species for replanting, we want to pick the ones that are a little more resilient to the, to the current past, as well as the ones that are maybe slowly moving into our area.

M McKay Burley 26:41

As for the nursery, but I think that's definitely something I'm still trying to figure out, especially based on, you know, the level of how organic we want to go. I was talking to someone from Cornell Cooperative Extension, and they were a small fruit specialist. But they also were very knowledgeable about pesticides and fungicides. So kind of doing some research into that. And there are some organic options. And yeah, when you're working with like controlled environments, you just want to make sure that you're not creating controlled environment as able to easily host pathogens and diseases of that nature, I think a lot of it comes down to

being really observant, and also understanding what is already in your area, and particular ways to prevent it or stop the spread. Even if you're just taking a cutting of like a woody plant, making sure you're cleaning your blade, different things like that.

A Alison Adams 27:47

That makes a lot of sense, cool to learn about the sort of early detection monitoring that you're doing. That wasn't something I was aware of you guys doing. And that's a huge contribution, I'm sure to your community and and to the broader region. So thank you for doing that.

M McKay Burley 28:00

Yeah, you bet. One other thing I wanted to mention was something that I kind of talked about with someone today, when I was touring their nursery is that they don't like to use really pesticides at all. They're more under the impression that and they've also built out their nursery to be able to support this theory, that if they kind of are able to work with the balances of nature to help with those types of pests, whether it be by removing particular species, recently were introduced that caused an attraction or something of that nature. So kind of figuring out how to keep that ecosystem balance and not have an influx of a particular pest, something that you're kind of always going to struggle with is definitely going to be like foals. They're pretty pesky.

L Liz Woodhull 28:54

What is something the nurseries working on right now that y'all are excited about? Next big projects or anything like that?

M McKay Burley 29:01

Yeah, so actually, recently I just picked up an order of those edible trees and bushes that are on our list of target species. And once this is established, we'll have plants for propagating as stock. So we'll either be collecting their seeds, or collecting cuttings and cloning those plants, as well as being able to kind of do some multi functional layering. So we're going to put in like a hedgerow, which is going to help reduce the wind that our high tunnel experiences. So trying to put in like a wind barrier. And then also just generally kind of helping with the aesthetics and creating a productive area for our nursery. Yeah, we're in the bare bones of our nursery. So we're just introducing new plants that are on our target list and really just getting things started and I want to be able to make sure it's a nice green space that is also welcoming for when community members do come to to check it out or volunteer, or come to Lynn.

J Jessica Raspitha 30:03

So for me the most exciting part is seeing how the nursery ties so many of our department's efforts together. The St. Regis Mohawk Tribe environment division has a number of ongoing efforts related to forestry, invasive plant management, banks stabilization, pollinator

production, runoff reduction, post remediation, and post construction replanting, as well as just working to meet the community needs. And the nursery will continue to play an increasingly important role in a lot of this work by providing plants that are healthy, ready to be planted ecologically valuable and culturally significant.

A Alison Adams 30:36

Yeah, McKay, I was thinking while you were talking, you're saying, you know, you're just at the bare bones of your nursery and of course, yes, it's very new. And I also know from the work I've been doing to understand the issues that a lot of nurseries in the broader region and across the country are facing is that starting a new nursery is really, really hard. And it's like, financially, it's really difficult. And so just huge kudos to both of you for undertaking that. And the amount of success you've had thus far. And all of the different angles, you're already taking on that work, I think it's just really inspiring in such a short amount of time and during a global pandemic. So, you know, just wanted to say, I think you're doing an incredible job, from what I hear and really appreciate the ways you guys are contributing to increasing just the supply of plants that are available for restoration work, because that supply is stressed in every direction. And then also, you know, ensuring that these culturally important species continue on in the face of so many challenges. So really appreciate that. And for other folks who appreciate that, I'm wondering how people can support your nursery in your work?

M McKay Burley 31:35

We're trying to put a bunch of treas in, so volunteer with us right now. I mean, yeah, of course, volunteering would be really awesome. But if you're not from this area, and don't have that opportunity, I think something you can do is learn about the native species that are in your area. And then if you have the opportunity to plant perennial species, or trees, that's how you can support our work.

A Alison Adams 32:03

I love that. And if people do want to get in touch with you about volunteering, if our podcasts happens to reach listeners that are closer to where you guys are located, which would be incredible. How can they do you guys have a website? Or is there a way that folks can get in touch with you?

M McKay Burley 32:18

What's the best way to contact us Jess?

J Jessica Raspitha 32:20

That would be to contact you.

M McKay Burley 32:23

Contact me, my email is my first name. And my last name McKay.Burley@srmt-nsn.gov

A Alison Adams 32:35

Great, we have a small little write up we do for every episode on our website. So we'll put that in there as well so folks can find that and send you a message if they want to help volunteer. Those are all the questions that we had, is there anything else that you guys want to share that we didn't give you an opportunity to share so far?

J Jessica Raspitha 32:51

I think we're good.

A Alison Adams 32:53

Awesome. Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us. It was really cool to learn about your nursery and everything that you guys are doing. And again, I think you're just doing really important work. And so really appreciate it. And I wish you the best of luck in everything that you guys are setting out to do at this nursery.

L Liz Woodhull 33:07

Thanks so much for coming on.

J Jessica Raspitha 33:09

Thank you so much for having us and for hosting this podcast so we can share experiences and learn from everyone else. I appreciate that.

M McKay Burley 33:16

Yeah, so thanks, Alison and Liz. Appreciate it.

A Alison Adams 33:19

Awesome. Thank you.

L Liz Woodhull 33:33

The bird featured in Today's episode was the call of the Baltimore Oriole. It was recorded by

Paul Marvin on May 30, 2012 In Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area in Addison, Vermont.

A Alison Adams 33:44

For more information on the topics covered in this episode, including links, images and more. Visit the restoration roundup podcast tab of Lake Champlain see grants watershed forestry Partnership website. This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under an assistance agreement to end ei WPC C in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin program