

WHAT IS WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY SEED MIX?

A wildlife-friendly seed mix is specifically planned to provide forage and cover for wildlife. Considering wildlife on managed forests is an important goal for many landowners. One of the ways a landowner can accomplish this goal is to provide cover and forage opportunities by sowing seeds after a disturbance event on the landscape, such as a wildfire or logging. Wildlife-friendly seed mixes are available that can target restoration objectives to benefit a wide variety of species, including pollinators, upland game birds, deer and elk. Mixes can comprise all native species, or can be made up of annuals that, although not native, are not invasive and will not persist in the long term.

WHERE AND WHEN SHOULD A SEED MIX BE APPLIED?

There are many situations where a wildlife-friendly seed mix may be appropriate:

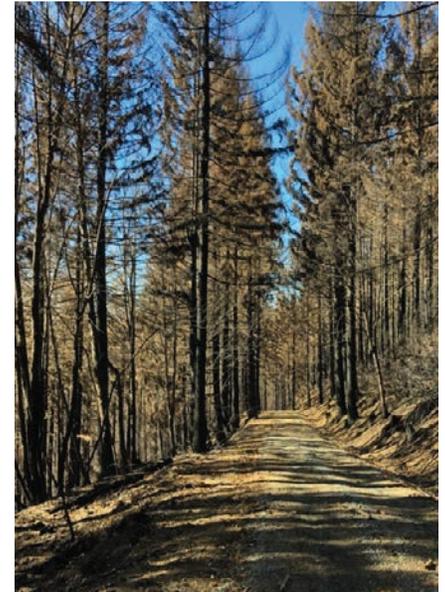
- along roadsides, to control erosion and protect water quality (replace standard erosion-control mix with a wildlife-friendly mix)
- in clearcuts or wildlife food plots, to enhance forage opportunities
- within stands of trees, to control erosion and enhance forage opportunities after a wildfire or other disturbance
- at landings or skid roads, after a logging operation
- at culvert and bridge replacements
- under powerlines or other open areas, to discourage invasive plant growth

In general, pollinator mixes are recommended to be applied at 5 to 7 pounds per acre, but this varies by seed mix and planting site. Other forage mixes are recommended at 14 to 16 pounds per acre. More than one kind of wildlife-friendly forage mix can be applied to a single area.

WHERE DO YOU GET SEED MIXES?

Finding the right seed mix is important. Seed mixes sourced locally will have a better chance of survival. Some sources to consider for obtaining wildlife-friendly seed mix include:

- Sunmark Seeds (sunmarkseeds.com)
- Pro Time Lawn Seed (PTLawnseed.com)
- Silver Falls Seed Company (silverfallsseed.com)
- Heritage Seedlings (heritageseedlings.com)
- River Refuge Seed Company (riverrefugeseed.com)
- Northwest Meadows (scapes) ([northwestmeadows\(scapes\).com](http://northwestmeadows(scapes).com))
- Ioka Farms (iokamarketing.com)



Burned forest lands. Seed mix could be applied along this roadside and on adjacent lands.



Fire lines built by a bulldozer are a great place to consider a wildlife-friendly seed mix.



October view of an area burned by the Riverside Fire. A seed mix could be applied here.

WILDFIRES AND WILDLIFE

In late summer 2020, Oregon experienced widespread wildfires. Approximately 1 million acres burned, in multiple fires. Some species of wildlife suffered because of these fires, and many were impacted - both negatively and positively. Applying wildlife-friendly seed mixes to the landscape after a fire may help control erosion and combat the influx of invasive species, and may also provide much-needed cover and forage for wildlife while forests recover and regrow.

Methods for applying seed mixes after a fire include aerial application (by helicopter or drone), hydroseeding from roadsides and seeding by hand. Seed mix can be applied to fire lines and fire trail, riparian areas, along roadsides, under powerlines, and anywhere where erosion-control seed mix is currently applied.

SEED MIX GUIDANCE

Talking with experts from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) or seed growers will help inform your decision about what wildlife-friendly seed mix is right for your property. Recommendations for seed mixes will vary based on the ecoregion, disturbance type, objectives of treatment and a number of other site-specific factors. We recommend contacting your local seed company for advice on what might work best in your area. Using native seed allows landowners to provide benefits to a wide variety of native wildlife. ODFW believes native seed sources should be used whenever possible, though there are instances where it may be appropriate to use seed mixes that include non-native annual seeds to achieve restoration goals. See ODFW's "[Guidelines for Rehabilitating Landscapes After Fire](#)" for more detailed information.

SOURCES & MORE INFORMATION

Oregon Department of Forestry Food Plots:
<https://www.oregon.gov/odf/working/pages/fpa.aspx>

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife guidelines for rehabilitation after a fire:
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/lands/docs/ODFW%20Guide%20Rehab%20Landscapes%20After%20Fires.pdf>

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation:
<https://www.rmef.org/>

Oregon Hunters Association:
<https://oregonhunters.org/>

"[After the Fire](#)" Publication: Woodland Fish and Wildlife

"[Pollinator Fact Sheet](#)": KnowYourForest.org



Under powerlines is another great place to plant a wildlife-friendly seed mix. This landowner used a mix similar to the one recommended by ODFW to convert seven acres of Scotch broom to a wildlife-friendly field of grasses, forbs and shrubs.



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The Oregon Forest Resources Institute is dedicated to advancing public understanding of forests, forest management and forest products, and encouraging sustainable forestry through landowner education.

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