

WILD ONES®
PLANT RESCUE GUIDELINES



Plant Rescue Procedures

Native plant rescues are a privilege of Wild Ones membership. It is a means of saving native plants which are doomed for destruction due to development and other construction activities. We as Wild Ones members have the privilege of taking these wonderful plants home to add to the beauty of our own landscaping, to appreciate their earthly purpose and to shelter them for future generations, while at the same time providing a multitude of educational opportunities for participants, landowners/developers and ultimate recipients.

Plant Rescue Goals

- When feasible, plant rescue participants should dig extra plants to donate to not-for-profit organizations who plant and maintain natural landscapes (receiving sites).
- From the continued growth of these rescued plants, plant rescue participants should be able to provide additional plants and seeds for not-for-profit organizations who plant and maintain natural landscapes (receiving sites).
- When a rescue results in excess plant material, the chapter may be able to sell these rescued plants as outlined elsewhere in this procedure to raise funds for the chapter and to provide an educational opportunity for the community.

Our 501(c)(3) Tax Status and Rescues

When members ask if there is something Wild Ones can do to stop the destruction of the property, the short answer is, "no." Although the explanation is not entirely to Wild Ones liking, there is nothing Wild Ones can do to prevent landowners from doing whatever they want with their land.

Most Wild Ones members struggle with the issues of digging plants from sites slated for destruction because they would rather that they be protected and not destroyed. But the reality of it is, landowners generally have the right to develop the land as they want. We can make the best attempt possible to educate landowners to understand the benefits of maintaining and saving native plants species. But when there is no alternative but to salvage the plants, Wild Ones does the next best thing and rescues as many plants as possible.

Things Wild Ones members can do

- Plant rescue Chairs should first contact the owners to find out if they are inclined at all to preserve rather than destroy the site. The landowners can be encouraged to write some environmental protection clauses into their construction contracts.
- Plant rescue Chairs should make it a standard practice to contact land preservation organizations such as local forest preserves, park districts, and The Nature Conservancy to make them aware of the pending destruction of this site and to ask if they have an interest in protecting the site on which Wild Ones anticipates rescuing plants.
- No plant rescues should be scheduled at sites where conservation groups are actively working to halt development plans in order to preserve the site. Such plant rescues will only make the site less valuable for preservation and more likely to be developed.
- Members can participate in public planning meetings and share their knowledge and offer alternatives to the footprints or routes or recommend environmental protection clauses be included in the construction contracts.
- Members can help to educate their family members, their neighbors, the community and their state about the benefits of saving what native plant remnants are still left in their area.

TO OBTAIN SITES

Write letters on Wild Ones letterhead to land owners and developers explaining Wild Ones mission of encouraging natural landscaping and ask for help in allowing us to rescue plants when destruction of a native habitat is imminent. If available, enclose a third party endorsement letter or newspaper article on Wild Ones. This is consciousness-raising time.

Remind members to network with friends who are landowners, real estate agents, builders, developers and excavators. Ask them to inquire about land to be developed and pass their names on to the Plant Rescue Committee members. Members or the chapter can educate landowners about the importance of minimizing land damage and using natural landscaping when they finish developing their project.

Develop a relationship with the local and state road planners for rescues at future construction sites.

Any discussions of potential plant rescue must be made with the legal owner of the property and/or their legal agent. Be sure you are both talking about the same site. Before beginning any plant rescue, get permission from the landowner or his legal agent. Get permission in writing if at all possible. You can expedite this by preparing a short letter that is addressed to the chapter and ask them to sign it. Ask the landowner if they would allow the media to do a feature on the Wild Ones rescue efforts of the site.

RESCUE OPPORTUNITIES

Sometimes rescues occur at the last minute and time is of the essence. In addition, a site might be small and only allow a few people to collect. Try to match the rescue site to the nearby members. In all cases, the plant rescue shall follow the *Wild Ones Plant Collection Code of Ethics* which is included elsewhere in this guidebook.

1. **Urgent Opportunities**: Plant rescue Chairs will be called upon to begin the rescue process just days or even hours before the excavator begins moving dirt. When this occurs many of the steps outlined below will need to be homogenized and dealt with in a very short period of time so it will be necessary for the Plant rescue Chairs to plan ahead and be prepared for such opportunities.
2. **Scheduled Opportunities**: Much preferred, planned rescues allow for more planning and better participation of rescue participants.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Receiving Sites:**

A plant rescue provides an opportunity to not only rescue plants from the path of destruction, but also to share these plants with not-for-profit organizations **who plant and maintain natural landscapes ("receiving sites")**. This sharing of plants will **provide an educational opportunity for future generations and the community**. Plant rescue participants should be encouraged to donate extra plants from the rescue site to the receiving area.

As plants mature and provide excess seedlings and seeds, participants will again have the opportunity to share with not-for-profit organizations who plant and maintain natural landscapes.

To make the most of this educational opportunity, the receiving site will need to be aware that the plants are coming. They will need to have their own people on hand to promptly plant the transplants. And, they will need to have informed people ready to continue to maintain the transplants until they are established. It will be up to the chapter to educate the receiving site to make sure it is able to accomplish this. If these minimal conditions cannot be met, the plants will be wasted. Native plants are a long-range responsibility, and transplants should be handled correctly, whether by Wild Ones or others.

2. Sale of Rescued Plants:

Wild Ones does not encourage the sale of salvaged plants. The sale of rescued plants, as a fund raiser for chapters, will only be conducted in conjunction with an opportunity to educate the community. The chapter shall plan an educational program to coincide with the sale to reflect this goal and the Wild Ones philosophy. This program could be as simple as spontaneous one-on-one discussions with purchasers or as planned as a half day/all-day seminar.

Chapters planning to conduct rescued plant sales, should invest resources in caring for the plants until the time of the plant sale(s).

If the chapter chooses to sell salvaged plants, they must comply with any relative state laws to include such concerns as nursery dealers license, nursery inspection by state entomologists, sales tax collection and reporting, sales across state lines requiring phytosanitary certification, handling of endangered species, etc.

Sale of rescued plants by private for-profit nurseries owned by Wild Ones members is prohibited. Sale of rescued plants by private individuals for personal profit is prohibited. All Wild Ones members are able to participate in chapter sponsored plant rescues as a benefit of their membership as long as the plants are being used for purposes as outlined in this guideline.

Proceeds and any expenses are to be reported in the chapter's Year-end Financial Report to the National Treasurer.

SITE SURVEY

After receiving permission for a potential plant rescue from the Owner or his agent, conduct a site survey with the owner/agent, if possible, and the Plant rescue Committee. The following should be noted:

- species of plants and plant communities – trees, shrubs, forbs, grasses, prairie, wetland, woodland
- how many people the site will accommodate. This will determine how extensive the phone tree or e-mail list will be.
- soil conditions – dry, wet, rocky, sandy
- exposure – sun, shade, wind-protected
- obvious safety issues – ditches, holes, steep grades, barbed wire, construction equipment, poison ivy, roadways
- if roadways are near the plant rescue area, ease of access and shoulders which would affect visibility from road and traffic and speed of vehicles
- boundaries within which plants can be rescued. If they are not clearly defined, ask permission to leave some markers until after the plant rescue.
- parking area for plant rescuers vehicles

After the survey, prepare a simple map showing boundaries and hazards. Make copies for distribution on day of plant rescue.

As appropriate, contact one or more not-for-profit organizations to be recipients of any donated plants from the plant rescue. Have them prepare their site, provide a trailer and a vehicle with which to haul the donated plants, and arrange for transplanters once the plants arrive at their site.

TELEPHONE TREE/E-MAIL LIST

At your meetings or in a newsletter, ask members to sign up if they are interested in plant rescues and are willing to participate in a telephone tree or e-mail list. In a metropolitan area, you may want to organize the phone tree or e-mail list according to exchanges or geographical sections, i.e., north, south, etc. Some members may want to be notified only for specific habitats, such as, wetland, woodland or prairie.

Ask specific people to head branches or maintain e-mail lists. Let them organize the branch or e-mail list, and in the case of the telephone tree, possibly having three to four people phoning only three to four people.

When ready to use, notify the branch heads of:

- plant rescue date and time, stressing promptness
- meeting place
- types of plants and habitats available

Members on phone tree or e-mail list should have previously received the EQUIPMENT/PROCEDURES list from the Plant Rescue Guidelines. If not, ask the caller to go over list with the digger.

Plant rescues are available to qualified members and invited guests only. Invited guests might be member assistants, owners or owner employees, or volunteers from designated recipients of any donated plants. The Plant rescue Chair will determine if site conditions allow for well-supervised children of Wild Ones members to participate, but only when accompanied by a parent or responsible adult. Check current membership status. Inactive members should be contacted and encouraged to renew so they can continue to participate in plant rescue efforts.

PLANT RESCUE DAY

Meet members at the agreed upon meeting site. A team leader must supervise all plant rescues. Make sure people do not dig the wrong plants such as invasives or non-natives. Also ensure they do not dig outside the boundaries. (If rescue area is extensive, have experienced volunteers/supervisors/team leaders located at several designated areas to meet and supervise diggers. Plant Rescue Chairs at the meeting site will direct members to specific areas.)

On a highway, supervisors should set a safety cone behind their vehicle to warn approaching traffic. If a roof safety light is used, make sure you have jumper cables in case of battery drain. Members should park ahead of the safety cone.

Have each plant rescue participant sign the waiver of liability form which is entitled "Release Waiver and Assumption of Risk" which can be found in Section 5 of the Chapter Guidebook. Invited guests and children, in addition to member

participants, should sign the waiver, and include their phone number and e-mail address.

Review safety rules and boundaries. Distribute safety vests, if appropriate. Distribute maps showing boundaries and hazards, or explain fully. Review plant rescue methods to ensure everyone knows how to:

- identify the native plants
- dig a sufficiently large and deep root ball for satisfactory transplanting
- not be greedy with the less plentiful plants so everyone who wants some can have some
- not trample native plants so as many plants as possible can be identified and rescued
- mark their equipment so it doesn't get lost
- follow the *Wild Ones Plant Collection Code of Ethics* included as an exhibit at the end of this procedure



If necessary, go over the list of Plant Rescue Do's and Don'ts listed in Section 4 of the Chapter Guidebook.

Make everyone aware of the receiving area(s) for the plant rescue and designate a drop-off area at the plant rescue site for the donated plants. Encourage participants to dig extra plants to donate to the designated receiving area(s).

Remind everyone that they should think of this not only as an opportunity to rescue plants from the path of destruction, but also as an educational opportunity to be shared with others at their homes and in their community. And, that Wild Ones is able to rescue these native plants because we have gotten the permission from the Owner and made certain commitments to the owner regarding time and date(s), supervision, respect for the site and their ownership, and liability. And, that for this reason, this is not an opportunity to give free plants to family, neighbors and friends who are not Wild Ones members.

Stress to participants that they should not share the location of plant rescue sites with family, friends or relatives, and that they cannot return on their own to the property after the rescue. Without a Wild Ones plant rescue supervisor

present, the digger may be considered to be trespassing or stealing plants from the site. This will not only jeopardize Wild Ones creditability, but also their reputation.

Ask the more experienced members to assist beginners with plant identification. Encourage everyone to share information and plants.

Supervisors and team leaders should be given the authority to ask a participant to leave the site if they are not adhering to Wild Ones plant rescue guidelines and procedures. Wild Ones Bylaws state clearly that anyone not complying with Wild Ones policies and procedures may be suspended from membership.

Have someone at a specified place to collect rented, borrowed or Wild Ones members' equipment (vests, cones lights, etc) and inform members to return equipment by a specified time.

EQUIPMENT/PROCEDURES

(Publish or distribute to each member on phone tree or e-mail list.)

- Prepare site at home prior to plant rescue, if possible. This will mean less work on plant rescue day and allow prompt replanting at the new site. For a fall plant rescue, use your vegetable garden space to heel in for spring planting.
- Allow enough time and energy. All plants dug must be replanted promptly for success. Sprinkle dug plants with water if replanting cannot be done same day.
- Note soil type, exposure, companion plants at plant rescue site and mark plants accordingly. Do not try to force transplants too far from their original site situations.
- Take enough soil to disturb roots as little as possible. Put plant into snug carton or bag so soil is not disturbed during transport.
- Water transplants regularly until established.



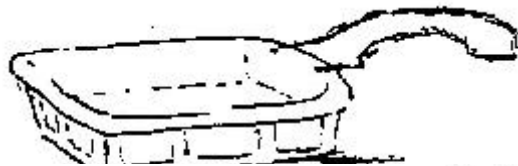
- After ground freezes, mulch to prevent winter heaving.

WHAT TO WEAR?

- long sleeves and long pants
- sturdy work boots; gloves
- visible colors, if site is next to busy road
- cap with visor; rain gear, if necessary

EQUIPMENT:

- sunscreen, insect repellent, drinking water, poison ivy antidote, snack
- **sharp** shovel, pruning shears, collapsible saw. Mark all tools with visible paint or ribbon. An unmarked tool left in leaf debris is easy to overlook.



UTILITY TUB
(SOLD FOR
CONCRETE - MIXING
& DOG - BATHING -)



SAUCER SLED



LOW SLED

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often clumsy and difficult to maneuver over rough terrain.

- marking pen, plastic bags or boxes for **temporary** holding
- old shower curtain to protect trunk or to prevent wind damage in truck bed

JUST IN CASE! Know what poison ivy and nettle looks like in its various forms and seasons. If you think you may have contacted it, wash exposed areas with Fels Naptha soap ASAP. **Jewelweed juice**

(often an on-site plant) is an effective antidote even at blister stage.

Be sure your tetanus booster is up-to-date – every 8 years.

POST PLANT RESCUE

Return any borrowed or rented equipment to proper person.

Write a thank you to the owner for the opportunity to rescue plants. Mention how many people participated and that plants will receive good care. Express interest in any future rescues landowner might have. Reiterate our mission statement.

Note any problems encountered during plant rescue. Discuss possible solutions with Plant Rescue Committee.

The above Plant Rescue Guideline has been updated by Mandy Ploch, Milwaukee-North Chapter, Donna VanBuecken, Fox Valley Area Chapter and Tim Lewis of Rock River Valley Chapter.

March 13, 2005

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Comments in blue are the original changes from last spring.
Comments in orange are changes made since that revision.



PLANT COLLECTION CODE OF ETHICS

I will respect both private and public property and will do no collection on privately owned land without the owner's permission.

I will keep informed on all laws, regulations or rules governing collecting on public lands and will observe them.

I will, to the best of my ability, ascertain boundary lines of property on which I plan to collect.

I will cause no willful damage to property of any kind – fences, signs, buildings, etc.

I will leave all gates as found.

I will discard no burning material – matches, cigarettes, etc.

I will fill all excavation holes which may be dangerous to livestock or people.

I will cause no willful damage to collecting material and will take home only what I can reasonably use.

I will leave all collecting areas devoid of litter, regardless of how found.

I will cooperate with plant rescue leaders and those in designated authority in all collecting areas.

I will report to Wild Ones® officers any plants on public lands which should be protected for the enjoyment of future generations for public educational and scientific purposes.

I will observe the Golden Rule, will use good outdoor manners, and will at all times conduct myself in a manner which will add to the stature and public image of Wild Ones® members everywhere.

SAMPLE OF LETTER TO OWNER

DATE

ADDRESS OF OWNER OF PROPERTY

Dear _____:

Thank you for the opportunity to survey your property located at _____ in _____ for the purpose of identifying any native plants growing there. Since you will be developing this site, we would like to rescue the native plants which we have identified. A list of our findings is attached to this letter.

To rescue native plants in danger of being destroyed, our volunteers will need to go on to the site to remove the plants for transplanting to other areas where they can be preserved. Many of the plants will be donated to public schools, nature areas or other public lands. **SAMPLE OF SENTENCE WHICH COULD BE ADDED TO THIS PARAGRAPH:** Recently our group rescued thousands of plants and worked with, among many other groups, over 1500 local school kids to plant some 8-1/2 acres of school property with seeds and transplants.

Each of our volunteer rescuers are trained and supervised and each rescuer signs a "Waiver of Liability" form in which you, the owner, is named.

We would appreciate your signature of approval at the bottom of this letter so we may begin this plant rescue as soon as possible. I have enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope for your use. I will keep you up-to-date as to date and time. The waivers of liability will be maintained at my office.

Again, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to conduct this plant rescue and good luck with your project.

Yours most sincerely,

_____, Plant Rescue Coordinator

Tel: _____ or e-mail: _____

With my signature below, I hereby grant permission to rescue native plants from my property as described above.

Jeanie Doe

Date