



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

William Brumback, Conservation Director, Retires After Four Decades at Native Plant Trust; First Staff in History of Organization to be Awarded Emeritus Status in Honor of Achievements

August 8, 2019

Media Contact: Debbi Edelstein, Executive Director, dedelstein@NativePlantTrust.org, 508.877.7630 x3101

(Framingham, MA) Native Plant Trust, the nation's first plant conservation organization and the only one solely focused on New England's native plants, announces the retirement of William (Bill) Brumback after four decades leading Native Plant Trust's conservation department. In recognition of his outstanding professional achievements, the Board of Trustees voted Brumback Director of Conservation Emeritus, the first time a staff member has been honored with an Emeritus title since the founding of the organization in 1900.

A recognized leader in plant conservation, Brumback initiated programs that became national models and achieved notable success in the conservation of rare and endangered species. He created the New England Plant Conservation Program, a regional collaboration of more than 60 organizations sharing data and setting priorities for research and conservation action on rare species. He developed the nation's first Plant Conservation Volunteer Corps, which for 25 years has trained volunteers to monitor rare and endangered plants in every county in New England. The data collected are instrumental in deciding how to protect the plants and also were the underpinnings of the groundbreaking report "State of New England's Native Plants." Under Brumback's leadership, the organization also published the first comprehensive manual of the region's plants in sixty years, *Flora Novae Angliae*, and created the Go Botany website which enables people to learn about and identify all the plants on the New England landscape. He co-authored *A Guide to Invasive Plants in Massachusetts* (2006) and *Flora Conservanda: New England* (2012), which details the status of more than 500 plants that are of conservation concern in New England.

Brumback established one of the earliest seed banks in the U.S. for endangered plants and launched a program to collect seeds of all the regionally and globally rare plants in New England. He has also worked on recovery projects for endangered species and was instrumental in getting the first plant removed from the federal Endangered Species List. *Potentilla robbinsiana* (Robbins' cinquefoil), a globally rare plant known to exist in only two locations in the alpine zone of the White Mountains of New Hampshire, was threatened by trampling from hikers on a historic trail that ran through the population. While Brumback grew plants from seed, partners relocated the trail. The new plants were installed in the existing sites, and as the population grew over time, the plant was officially delisted. His work on three other endangered plant species continues, with hopes for similar success.

“It has been my privilege to work for a distinguished organization in the field of plant conservation and to collaborate with so many dedicated colleagues throughout New England,” Brumback notes.

“Bill has worked over decades to understand, document, and conserve the native plants of New England” says Debbi Edelstein, Executive Director of Native Plant Trust, “and he has pioneered programs and techniques that have earned accolades from colleagues across the region and the country. In honor of his many achievements, the Board of Trustees of Native Plant Trust voted to award him the first Emeritus status in the history of the organization. We applaud Bill for his significant contributions to our success and to the entire field of plant conservation.”

Brumback will continue to work with Native Plant Trust as a consultant for several ongoing restoration projects.

ABOUT NATIVE PLANT TRUST

Native Plant Trust is the nation’s first plant conservation organization and the only one solely focused on New England’s native plants. We save native plants in the wild, grow them for gardens and restorations, and educate others on their value and use. We are based at Garden in the Woods, a renowned native plant botanic garden that attracts visitors from all over the world. From this flagship property in Framingham, Massachusetts, 25 staff and many of our 1,500 trained volunteers work throughout New England each year to monitor and protect rare and endangered plants, collect and preserve seeds to ensure biological diversity, detect and control invasive species, conduct research, and offer a range of educational programs. Native Plant Trust also operates a nursery at Nasami Farm in western Massachusetts and manages six sanctuaries in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont that are open to the public. Native Plant Trust is among the first organizations worldwide to receive Advanced Conservation Practitioner accreditation by London-based Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), which included an endorsement by an International Advisory Council representing six continents. Please visit www.NativePlantTrust.org.

###