Highlands Biological Station
Botanical Gardens & Grounds Planning and Advisory Committee
Update for HBS Board of Directors
June 6, 2025

Ken Conover, Chair

The Botanical Gardens & Grounds Planning and Advisory Committee continues to meet monthly and assist the HBS with implementing Gardens and Grounds Roadmap priorities.

Current Committee members are Bryding Adams, Lynda Anderson, Ken Conover, Jim Costa, Jamie Creola, Tara Henderson, Jason Love, Paul Manos, Kathy Mathews, Liz Sargent, Jeremy Schewe, Dollie Swanson, and Glenda Zahner.

Roadmap Implementation
During the past seven months, the HBS and Committee continues to work on several key priorities.

1. Public Engagement

Garden Tours:

Botanical Garden tours began in May on Wednesdays at noon and most are being led by Tara, Paul, and Jim. Sarah Vickery has promoted the tours on all the HBS communication platforms and the Highlands Botanical Foundation has also promoted them. The bog walk led by Paul on June 4 attracted a record 20 participants!

2025 Special Event benefiting the Gardens:

A special fundraising event in support of the Highlands Botanical Gardens, "Roots and Resonance, A Celebration of Place", is scheduled for September 12-13. The celebration begins Friday evening at the Performing Arts Center with a concert by singer-songwriter and former HBS Associate Director, Anya Hinkle and her band Tanasi. Saturday events at the HBS include tours of the Highlands Botanical Gardens, a native plant sale, a presentation by Paul Bonesteel and Janet McCue of their book, George Masa, A Life Reimagined, a reception and book signing.

2. Wayfinding and Interpretative Signage

Installation of the wayfinding signs is completed. Interpretive content is now being developed for the new kiosks and for updating the existing interpretive signs. Historical content is also being developed for plaques for the HBS buildings.

3. South Gateway Entrance Garden

The HBS is dedicating proceeds from the summer workshops and the special September event for the South Gateway project. The goal is to raise $30,000 and begin the schematic design phase next year in coordination with WCU.

4. Living Collections

Work continues to implement the Living Collections Policy established in 2020. Tara consulted with the Committee and developed a living collections spreadsheet and digital map with gardens and sub-areas identified. Tara has begun a garden area by garden area botanical survey to identify existing plants in collaboration with Paul. Kathy is working with Tara to collect herbarium vouchers.