FRIEND OR FOE?
Training Crews to Identify Compatible Vegetation

Lindsey Wall & Mike Stein

GROW WITH TREES
BOOTS TO THE BOARDROOM

TREES & UTILITIES CONFERENCE 2024

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Objectives

## In this session, participants will...

- Identify the value of training crews to identify compatible species

- Practice a method to identify plants

- Discuss strategies and tools used to facilitate training with real utility use cases

- Be able to identify over 2000 different plants

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to **conservation**.

Is investing in training worth it?
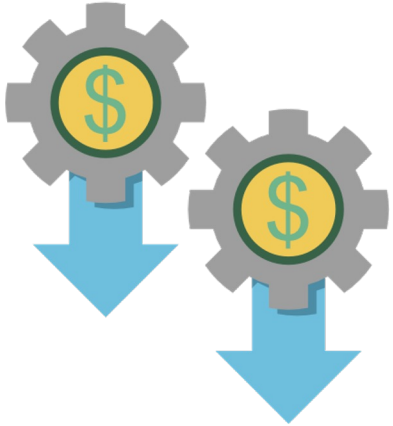
Reduced Maintenance Cost

Safety and Compliance

Environmental Stewardship
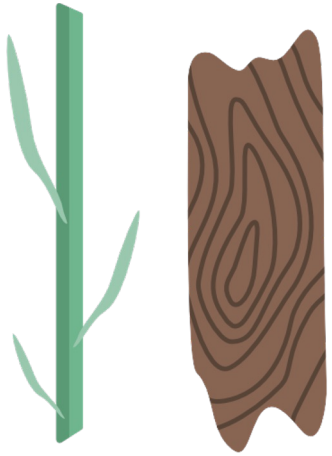

Aesthetic and Community Benefits

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How do you identify a plant?

1. Study the Stem and Bark

2. Examine the Leaves

3. Observe the Flowers

4. Check the Fruits and Seeds
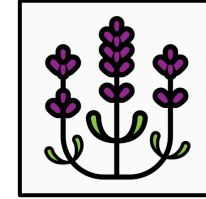
5. Consider the Habitat

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Plant Families
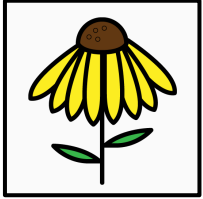
ASTER

✓ Alternate or Whorled Leaf Arrangement

✓ Simple or Compound Leaves

✓ Composite Flower Heads

MINT

✓ Opposite Leaf Arrangement

✓ Toothed or Lobed Margins

✓ Aromatic Foliage

✓ Square Stems

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Aster or Mint?

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How would you rate your training?

1. How would you rate your training program for VM crews?
2. What are your top priorities?
3. What are your biggest obstacles?

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Obstacles of Training

Turnover

Time

Lack of Experience Leading Training

Lack of Boardroom Buy-in

Motivation

Language Barriers

Limited Resources

Current Training is Ineffective

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Compatible Plant ID Training

Hidden in plain sight, a vibrant wildflower awaits discovery. Can you identify it from its secret details?

Strategies

How to Gain Boardroom Buy-in
- Long-Term Cost Saving
- ESG and DJSI Reporting
- Shareholder + Customer Satisfaction
- Improved Safety + Reliability
- ROWSCA

How to Gain Boots Buy-in
- Add Training as Part of Promotions
- Make People – Plant Connection
- Increase Job Satisfaction
- Empower Crews to be Experts
- Update Contractor Specifications

Tools

On-site Training
- Hands-on Learning
- Real-world Application
- Real-time Feedback
- Team Building

"I was apprehensive when the training was scheduled, but it was great and it showed me another way to look at the vegetation out in the ROW."

Field Guides
- Hands-on Learning
- Consistent Reference Material
- Empowers Crews to Make Decisions
- Paper is Available "Offline"

Online Modules
- Self-Paced & Available 24/7
- Scalable & Cost Effective
- Visual & Interactive
- Customization & Consistency
- Analytics & Reporting

Mobile Apps
- Convenient and Familiar
- Micro-learning
- Real-time Updates
- Gamification & Contests

iNaturalist

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How to Gain Boardroom Buy-in
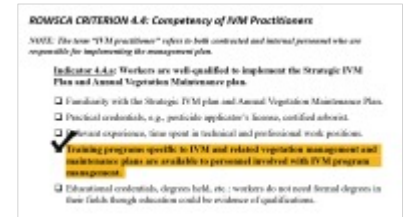
Long-Term Cost Saving

ESG and DJSI Reporting

Shareholder + Customer Satisfaction

Improved Safety + Reliability

ROWSCA

ROWSCA CRITERION 4.4: Competency of IVM Practitioners

NOTE: The term "IVM practitioner" refers to both contracted and internal personnel who are responsible for implementing the management plan.

Indicator 4.4.a: Workers are well-qualified to implement the Strategic IVM Plan and Annual Vegetation Maintenance plan.

❑ Familiarity with the Strategic IVM plan and Annual Vegetation Maintenance Plan.

❑ Practical credentials, e.g., pesticide applicator's license, certified arborist.

❑ Relevant experience, time spent in technical and professional work positions.

✓ **Training programs specific to IVM and related vegetation management and maintenance plans are available to personnel involved with IVM program management.**

❑ Educational credentials, degrees held, etc.: workers do not need formal degrees in their fields though education could be evidence of qualifications.

How to Gain Boots Buy-in

Add Training as Part of Promotions

Make People – Plant Connection

Increase Job Satisfaction

Empower Crews to be Experts

Update Contractor Specifications

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On-site Training

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- **Hands-on Learning**
- **Real-world Application**
- **Real-time Feedback**
- **Team Building**

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Field Guides

Hands-on Learning

Consistent Reference Material

Empowers Crews to Make Decisions

Paper is Available "Offline"

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Online Modules

Self-Paced & Available 24/7

Scalable & Cost Effective

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Liberty Utilities

IVM at Liberty Central

Learn how integrated vegetation management (IVM) can increase biodiversity and wildlife and pollinator habitat.

01   Liberty Utilities

Pre-course Survey   7 questions

Welcome to Liberty

02   VM Department Tour

Welcome to the VM Department

Liberty Service Territory   01:56

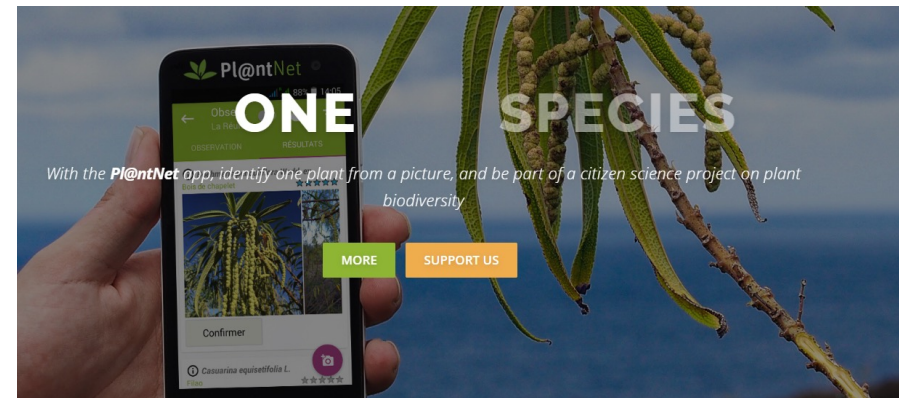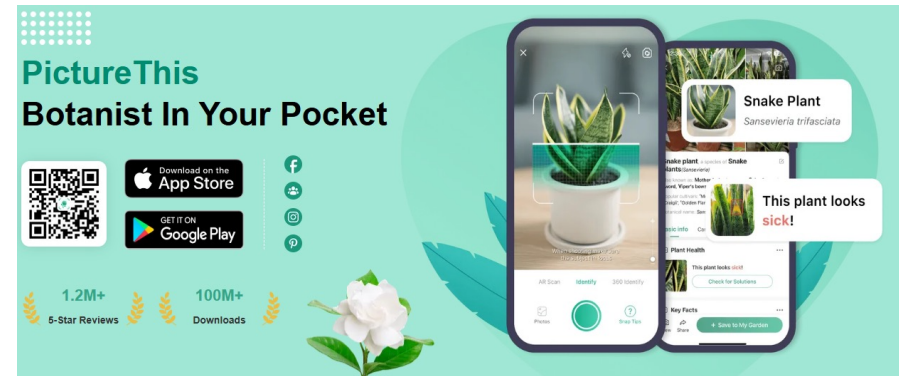Liberty Central Ecosystem

Integrated Vegetation Management   02:26

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Mobile Apps

Convenient and Familiar

Micro-learning

Real-time Updates

Gamification & Contests

iNaturalist — Explore Learn Record

PictureThis — Botanist In Your Pocket

Download on the App Store
GET IT ON Google Play

1.2M+ 5-Star Reviews
100M+ Downloads

Snake Plant
Sansevieria trifasciata

This plant looks sick!

Pl@ntNet

ONE SPECIES

With the **Pl@ntNet** app, identify one plant from a picture, and be part of a citizen science project on plant biodiversity

MORE   SUPPORT US

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Evaluation

Return on Investment

Surveys
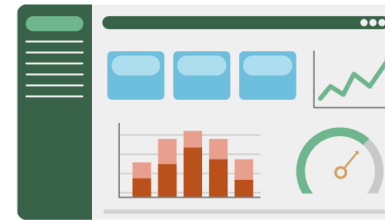
LMS Data

KPIs

Pop Quiz! Aster or Mint?

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Summary

What did we learn?

- Helping crews identify compatibles is the most cost-effective way of controlling incompatibles and enhancing the environment on your ROWs

- You can identify plants by looking for specific charactertics (stem, leaves, flowers, fruit, habitat) and plant families

- Gain buy-in for training from the boardroom by tying it into ESG reporting and cost savings and from the boots by emphasizing the people-plant connection and making competency a part of promotion

- Use tools like on-site training, field guides, online modules, and mobile apps to help facilitate training

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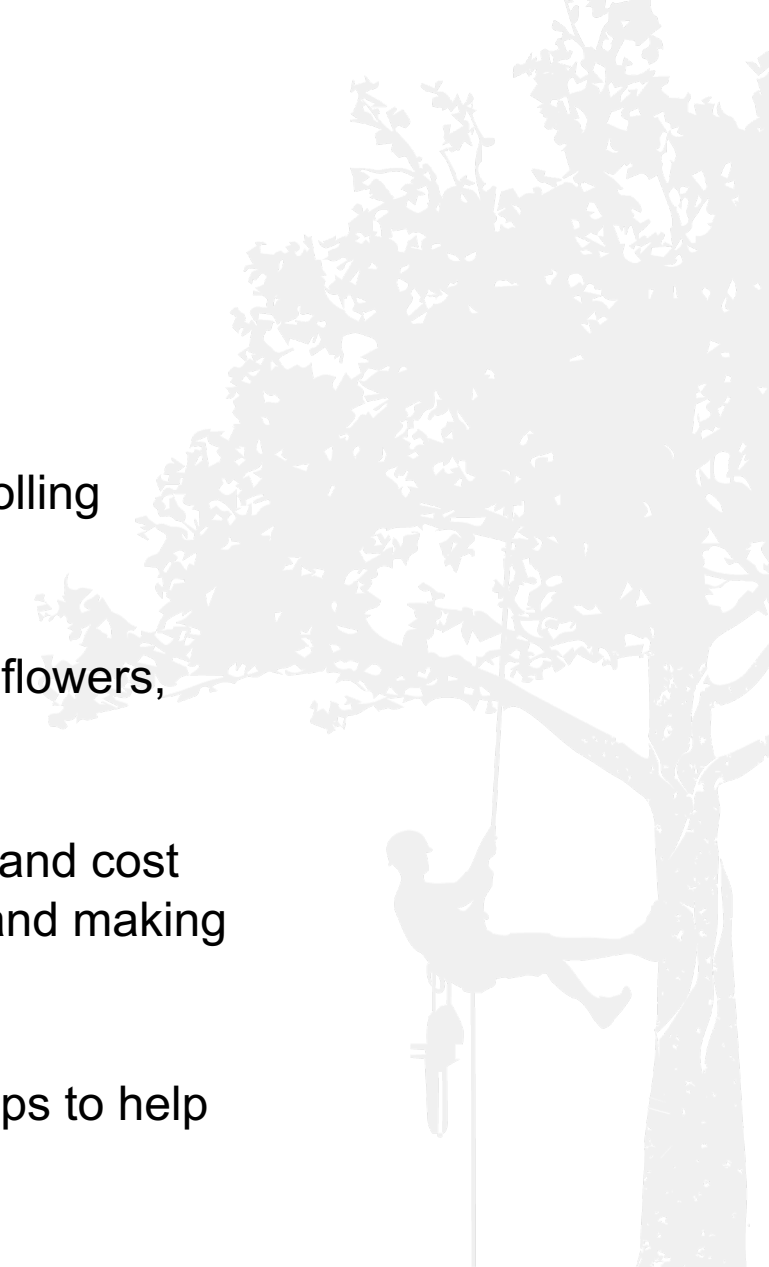
THANKS!

Questions?

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www.GrowWithTrees.com

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