Rivercane Restoration Projects in Western North Carolina

Adam D. Griffith - Revitalization of Traditional Cherokee Artisan Resources (RTCAR)

19 NOV 2019 - Fire Learning Network
Restoration: from what?

Before European contact?

After Native American removal?
Restoration: from what?
Before European contact?
After Native American removal?
To what?
Monoculture?
Multispecies riparian buffer?
Restoration: from what to what?
Restoration: from what to what?
YES!
Restoration: from what to what?

YES!

Plant ubiquitous in southeast
Why is restoration necessary?

- Cultural significance
- 2% of original habitat remains (Noss, 1995) - probably less
- Population growth
- Development pressure
- Demand for plant: DOT, NFPs, EBCI, private land owners
Restoration methods:

- Plant from seed
- Nursery material
- Transplant
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Cherokee Restoration Efforts

- Cherokee Central Schools
- Photo below from 2007
- Fall 2008 and Spring 2009
Cherokee Restoration Efforts

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Cherokee Central Schools

- Multiple donor sites (5+)

- Both hand dug clumps and bare root plants

- Did not trim tops of plants
  - short travel distance
Cherokee Central Schools
Cherokee Central Schools

- Clump survival close to 100%
- Bare root survival low
Warren Wilson College

- Removing ½ acre of river cane for restoration
- Conscientious project manager emailed us
- Cane being moved via seven different project partners: City of Asheville, City of Hendersonville, Nature Conservancy, Conserving Carolina, Veterans Healing Farms, EBCI Schools
Warren Wilson College

- Remnant patch
- Confined for decades by mowing, agriculture
- Culm diameters under 1/2 “
Genetics

- Concern over introduction of different population
- Artificial transportation
Timing

- Originally planned for September
- Then October
- Then this month
- Now January 2020
Methods

- Trim plants to ~4 ft.
- Remove top ~12 inches of soil using a 3 ft. bucket on a track-hoe
- Cover with tarps for transport on flatbed trailers
- Unloaded the same day (ideally)
Opportunities

- Will learn about nurture vs nature regarding culm diameters
- Will learn about transplanting methods
- Will learn about logistics
Is river cane the perfect riparian buffer species?

In this area, yes!
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Questions?

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