Effects of starch-based superabsorbent polymer on survival and physiology of *Pinus ponderosa* seedlings exposed to severe drought stress

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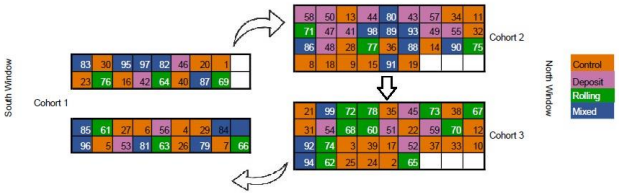
Supplemental Methods 2: Randomization and Rotation Description

We used an online random number generator to select a number between 1 and 4 for each plastic bag of 10 seedlings, which dictated the group for those seedlings. We repeated this process for each bag until each treatment contained 10 bags, or 100 seedlings. The remaining seedlings at the end of this process were immediately placed in the Control group, for a total of 200 seedlings.

Given that two tables are aligned along the south side of the greenhouse and would naturally receive more sunlight, we rotated the boxes within their cohort around the four tables every three weeks throughout both the watering and drought stages.

We randomized the placement of the 99 boxes into three cohorts of 33 boxes: one cohort occupying the two small tables on the south side of the greenhouse, and the other two cohorts occupying one large table each on the north side (Supplemental Fig. 1). The number on the box specifies the prescribed treatment, as described by Table 1. These boxes were rotated every three weeks to reduce bias from varying greenhouse light conditions.

Commented [SKFC1]: Keep basic description in, but put the specific details and the figure in Appendix 1 (supplementary details on Methods)



Supplemental Fig. 1: Randomization schedule for the bin numbers in the greenhouse. Each bin number corresponds to a particular treatment group, and these were fully randomized into three cohorts, which were rotated around the greenhouse every three weeks.