

## **The Policy: CNPS POLICY ON NATIVE-PLANT ADVOCACY**

Adopted September 2011

### **Statement:**

Advocacy by those on record as representing the California Native Plant Society must identify consequential connection to, and impacts on, the conservation of California native plants, their habitats, and those plants as parts of larger ecosystems. Where that connection is indirect or not immediately obvious, the connection to better plant conservation must be clearly stated and, if possible, illustrated by example; inadvertent harm to native plants must be identified and avoided.

### **Intent:**

To ensure that our native-plant advocacy is appropriate, credible, and clearly relevant, to best advance the Mission, Vision and Goals of the California Native Plant Society.

### **Supporting Materials:**

#### **Rationale:**

The California Native Plant Society is essentially the only organization in California dedicated to the conservation of California native flora. The California Native Plant Society is recognized for its expertise in native plants, and is generally seen as credible in the positions and actions that are clearly related to native plants. We lose credibility when we are perceived as taking a position on an issue that is not related to native plants. To preserve our credibility and effectiveness we must stick to issues that are connected to our Mission regarding the conservation of native plants and their habitats. If that connection is not apparent in a given case we must make it very clear in our positions, statements, and actions, and support that with scientific information.

Advocacy for native plants, native plant habitats, and native plants as parts of larger ecosystems is absolutely necessary in the face of increasing threats. Threats may be direct and obvious, such as removal of plant populations for development, or may be indirect through issues such as fuel management, weed invasions, decreased water availability, degraded air, water, or soil quality, and climate change. In cases where threats are indirect, CNPS advocates must clearly establish a connection with native plant conservation. Such indirect or theoretical connections may not be used to justify activities harmful or destructive to native plants and vegetation.

Through the state staff, the state programs, and the state-wide network of Chapters, California Native Plant Society provides and supports the best and most up-to-date information and research on California's native plants, native plant habitats and native plants as parts of larger ecosystems. Making clear the effects of our actions on the conservation of native plants and their habitats is essential to maximizing the value of that science-based advocacy.

#### **References:**

As the policy is implemented, the most important references are:

California Native Plant Society Bylaws (most up-to-date version).

California Native Plant Society statement of dedication, goals, mission and vision (most up-to-date version).

Current research on native plants, native vegetation/habitats, the parts native plants play in larger ecosystems.

Current research on threats to native plants, native vegetation/habitats, and large ecosystems.

Current research on best management methods to minimize, control or eliminate threats to native plants, native vegetation/habitats, and large ecosystems.

Current research on best restoration techniques for ameliorating losses of native vegetation.