

# California Native Plant Society

## STATEMENT OF POLICY - DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION

Adopted December 1992

### **Concerns Relating to Charging Fees for Data Gathered by CNPS Members:**

The exchange of information for scientific and conservation purposes is a primary function of the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). CNPS obtains data on the native flora of California through volunteers and staff and makes these data available to its members and the general public through publications (i.e., the Inventory, contributions to the California Natural Diversity Data Base, and rare plant status reports).

In the past, some individual CNPS members have required donations in exchange for data on rare plants. Requiring payment for data gathered on rare plants is counterproductive to the goals of CNPS and brings with it the risk of being sued over "contracted services rendered." Requiring payment for services raises questions concerning CNPS professional liability.

Professional consultants have a legal responsibility for accuracy and completeness and typically obtain professional liability insurance. CNPS does not have, and does not plan to obtain, comparable insurance coverage for members acting as professional consultants.

### **CNPS Statement of Policy on the Distribution of Information:**

With the concerns relating to charging fees for data gathered by CNPS members in mind, the Board of Directors of CNPS adopts the following policy:

No individual member, officer, or chapter of CNPS, as a representative of CNPS, shall sell or require donations for data, advice, opinion, or any other dissemination of information on California's native plants other than through the official publications of CNPS. Reasonable reproduction and mailing costs may be charged to the recipient.

Data sold by individuals may not be done in the name of CNPS. The Board of Directors recommends that CNPS members who act as professional consultants and are perceived as representatives of CNPS should include a disclaimer statement in any transmittal to paying customers that CNPS is in no way involved and does not attest to the validity or accuracy of the data presented.

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