

California Native Plant Society

Quarterly Executive Director Report

December 11-12, 2010



Author: Executive Director and Program Staff

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

Communications Plan

As announced in the September meeting, the Marketing Committee published and invited comment and feedback on the first beta version of an organizational communications plan for CNPS on September 30th. To date, we have received written comments from three chapters (Marin, East Bay, and San Diego), and general individual feedback from a few others including our Legislative Advisor, Vern Goehring. The Marketing Committee reviewed all of the feedback and comments and was able to incorporate many of them in changes to the draft version. Consequently, Beta Version .2 is has now been made available on the website showing track changes, and will provide the basis for presentation of the plan at the December Chapter Council meeting.

The Marketing Committee expresses sincere appreciation for those chapters and others who took the time to review the first beta draft and provide meaningful and thoughtful comments.

Web Template Development

In mid November, Brian LeNeve, chair of the Brand Development Committee, released a memorandum and survey to help guide development of the branded web template we discussed with Chapter Council in the December 2009 meeting. Although a decision on the updating of the CNPS logo is still pending, a branded template can be developed using branding from the existing State CNPS website.

The advantages of developing a web template and making it available to chapters to use for their own individual websites are numerous and include the following:

1. More consistent branding of CNPS and local chapters - clearly linking local chapters to the combined weight and influence of a much larger organization.
2. Provides chapters with access to the latest and most up to date web technology.
3. Eliminates the cost of individual website hosting.
4. Reduces cost and redundancy when standard information is updated (such as membership levels) that can be incorporated into the template and centrally updated instead of by each chapter web master.
5. Using the same web technology platform for multiple chapters allows for the sharing of expertise and ideas. We expect to set up quarterly calls for chapter webmasters to discuss web ideas.
6. Use of a standard technology platform helps with chapter webmaster transition if others are using the same technology.

In all, fourteen CNPS chapters responded to the survey and the majority of them participated in two scoping calls, which took place during the first week of December. During these calls, Mark Naftzger, webmaster for the State site, gave an overview of the template project, discussed the development and transition process, and answered questions about how chapters might opt in and migrate their existing sites to the new template. At the conclusion of the scoping calls, we had a few chapters indicate that they would definitely opt in, and a few others who are considering it or may opt in later. We expect to have the first chapter site domain set up and ready for development within the next few weeks. As of the writing of this report, Gina Radieve of the San Joaquin Chapter and Alan Washburn of the Monterey Bay Chapter have agreed to build the first new and parallel sites.

Native Plant Week

As previously communicated, CNPS sponsored a resolution (ACR 173) carried by Assemblywoman Noreen Evans, that passed through the legislative process. The resolution ([Click Here](#)) **declares the third week of April, each year, as California Native Plant Week.** This resolution presents a tremendous opportunity for CNPS to take the lead in coordinating events to celebrate the unique beauty of California's native flora, build conservation partnerships, and promote the awareness and importance of our work. We will surely want to take advantage of this opportunity, and must pull all of our heads and resources together to make this a major California event.

At the September Chapter Council meeting, the council approved a motion to form a special ad hoc committee to take on the responsibility for coordinating events and media surrounding **Native Plant Week 2011**.

Since the September meeting, Lauren Brown, Brian LeNeve and I have been working with chapter leadership to recruit members for this new committee, which will be responsible for coordinating statewide events, assisting chapters with event ideas, and developing event materials and public communications. Thanks to the generous commitment of time from a dozen or so chapter members around the state, a new committee was successfully formed, and began meeting weekly by conference call on October 26th. Early planning is already moving forward and you will here more about the committee's progress on planning for Native Plant Week (NPW) during the December Chapter Council meeting.

During the committee's first meeting, **Mike Ross, a Santa Clara Valley Chapter** member with extensive experience in public communications, was elected Chair of the new committee. Mike also serves on the Marketing Committee. Below is a list of NPW committee members and contact information. Look for messages from Mike Ross about NPW updates and activities going forward.

Quarterly Leadership Calls

Recognizing the importance of developing strong leadership capabilities within the society for both Statewide and Chapter roles, I have been thinking about starting up a monthly leadership roundtable open to Chapter Presidents and Council Leadership. These calls would might include some sort of advance agenda/information topic, and then move to an open roundtable discussion where chapter leaders could freely exchange ideas, share problems, and best practices. I will be sending out an e-mail with more information about this topic with some possible dates after the start of the New Year to assess the level of interest in participating in these calls.

CNPS Directory

The State office staff is working on migrating the existing CNPS Directory into the new member database. Currently, all of the information for the directory is housed in a separate Access database that requires dual input and maintenance. In evaluating the raw data that would be imported into the Raiser's Edge member database, it became apparent that we had some consolidating to do. The existing system uses text descriptions for chapter positions, as opposed to tables used in the Raiser's Edge set up, and there are dozens of different descriptions for positions that are relatively similar. We are in the process of assigning a group value to each position that will allow us to easily categorize and update the information for each chapter, while retaining the descriptive nature of the titles in a comment field that will produce a sub-title in the subsequent editions of the Directory. In the next few weeks, we'll be sending the directory information for your chapter out to you, asking you to verify that the information is correct and that the new group level was appropriately assigned before moving forward with the printing of the next directory.

COMMUNICATIONS & SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook and Social Networking

In March, Stacey Flowerdew assumed the role of key administrator on the CNPS Facebook page and continues to update the new fan page weekly with announcements of chapter events around the state. The fan page site has grown to include 1,887 fans and 749 monthly active users. The group site has increased to 2,239 members.

CNPS E-Newsletter

Subscribership of the e-Newsletter continues to increase with each monthly edition. In the last report, we reported a total of 1,859 subscribers in August. This number increased to 1,881 in September, 1,891 in October, and a new high of 1,915 in November, with an average "open rate" of one third of all subscribers for each edition.

FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION – authored by Cari Porter

Chapter Financial Reporting/Communications

The state office staff relies on chapter records to help maintain the financial records of the organization. CNPS is one organization and files one set of tax returns every year and one consolidated sales tax report every quarter. In that regard, chapters have certain financial reporting obligations, including:

1. Providing the State Office with an annual financial report (including year-end inventory). Financial reports are for the fiscal year (April 1 – March 31) and are due in April. The information gathered in these reports is compiled for inclusion into the organization's tax returns.
2. Providing the State Office with quarterly reports on taxable sales. Sales tax reports are always due 21 days after each quarter end (April 21, July 21, October 21 and January 21).

The financial reporting forms and sales tax forms can be found on the Admin page of the CNPS website at all times. Since most of the forms and notices are sent via email, it is important that we have a current email address at all times. Please notify the state office of any change to your contact information and note any chapter positions held so that group email lists can be updated.

I wanted to note again that the volunteer treasurers are not expected to be financial experts and can contact the State Board Treasurer or the Finance & Administration Manager for assistance completing forms or if there are any questions or concerns. We appreciate the Chapter Treasurer's efforts and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the reporting process.

Reimbursement Requests

Several reimbursement requests are being submitted months after meeting dates and even months after the close of the fiscal year. To properly report and budget for expenses throughout the year it is essential for staff, contract staff, Chapter Council delegates and Board members to submit reimbursement requests in a timely manner. A new PDF Reimbursement Request Form is now posted on the Admin page of the CNPS website.

To facilitate more timely reimbursement to individuals and to report expenses in the proper accounting period, completed expense reimbursement forms are requested to be completed within 14 days of the end of the related meeting or activity. Expenses reported more than 30 days after the ending date of the activity will no longer be reimbursed absent extenuating circumstances. Exceptions will be rare, and will not be considered 30 days beyond the close of the fiscal year.

DEVELOPMENT – Tara Hansen

Fund Development Committee

The Fund Development Committee met again on November 17th to review this year's results to date and the fundraising objectives for the remainder of the year. Committee members have remained active, with Mary Frances Kelly-Poe, Brian LeNeve, and Sandy McCoy again taking the lead in providing assistance with thank you letters for major donations and other support related planning and tasks.

New Server at 2707 K Street

Early this summer we started having some challenges with the central server at the State office. We were operating on a 5 year old piece of hardware that has been tweaked and fixed a number of times to accommodate the large volume of file storage and back up performed daily here at 2707 K. Street.

We had contacted Willis Jepson Chapter President and member, Gene Doherty, for some technical advice on equipment and setup. Gene spent a day out here at the office looking at what we had and revisiting our configuration

and gave us some preliminary direction on what to do, with the promise of sending some details later. Well, later on, he didn't just send the details, he ordered and paid for the new equipment. On top of that, he spent two days here at the office completing the initial migration and configuration for the new server. We can't begin to adequately express our thanks to Gene for his gift of time and funding for this upgrade necessary for facilitating our central operations.

Grants and Bequests

As some of you may or may not have heard, Sandy McCoy has been doing some contract Development work for the State office. Sandy has been primarily involved in researching potential foundation matches, developing grant proposals, contacting members who have indicated an interest in our planned giving program, and targeted appeal support. This fall, Sandy assisted with follow up and contacting agencies and organizational supporters to raise funds needed to upgrade our Manual of California Vegetation online database, and bring it up to the standard of the MCV2. So far, mostly due to Sandy's persistence and follow through, we have raised an additional \$12,500 for the project.

We have also submitted a few other funding proposals this year for programs that have not been traditionally grant funded. This summer, we submitted a letter of inquiry (Heller) and a full foundation proposal (Compton) on a joint project involving a state Conservation program collaboration with Heath Bartosh and Lech Naumovich of the East Bay Chapter. While the Heller letter was declined, the Compton proposal is still outstanding. We submitted a proposal to the Stanley Smith foundation for the Horticulture Database, which was also, sadly, declined. Pending is a full proposal to help fund Greg, Aaron and Julie's time addressing rare plant and vegetation community impacts for large scale utility solar energy project applications.

While first attempts may yield a number of declines, we understand that it takes time to cultivate foundations and submitting well written proposals is one of the best ways to familiarize them with what we do. We expect to work through a number of additional resubmissions for all projects still seeking funding.

It is important to note that nearly all grants or state and federal contracts require a certain amount of organizational matching from other sources. This is why all of our programs – even those primarily supported through other sources – must receive some substantial level of general funding to remain viable, and why increasing funding from general memberships and appeals is vital to the overall funding structure of the state office as we continue to grow these programs.

Marketing and Communications Sub-Committee

The Marketing and Communications Committee has been meeting regularly to review comments on the Communications Plan and discuss support and strategy for Native Plant Week. In addition, Sandy McCoy, William Wayland, and Mike Ross identified the theme and penned the initial draft of the Fall Appeal letter. The support and expertise of this group has been invaluable to CNPS and we greatly appreciate their dedication and commitment to helping us identify and refine the CNPS message in our public communications. We invite any member with a marketing or public relations background that would like to serve on this dynamic committee to contact myself or another committee member to inquire about serving. The Marketing Committee currently includes the following key members, all of whom also serve on the Fund Development Committee:

Sandy McCoy, East Bay
William Wayland, Marin
Mike Ross, Santa Clara Valley

Brian LeNeve, Monterey Bay
Carol Witham, Sacramento Valley
Arvind Kumar, Santa Clara Valley

Bob Hass, Bulletin/Fremontia
Tara Hansen, staff

CONSERVATION PROGRAM – authored by Greg Suba

Desert Renewable Energy Projects

Desert Projects

Eight of nine "fast-tracked" desert solar energy facilities were approved by the California Energy Commission in October/November 2010. Two of these, Ivanpah and Imperial Valley Solar, have obtained their federal approvals

(Records of Decision (ROD) issued by the BLM). Federal approvals are still pending for six other projects. Brightsource Energy has begun collecting and moving desert tortoise and has broken ground for Phase I of the Ivanpah project. The Imperial Valley Solar project is under litigation by Native American tribes at the federal level.

The impacts of these projects, individually and cumulatively, to intact desert vegetation communities, rare plant habitats, and desert ecosystems will be irreparable. Project related conditions of certification and mitigation requirements detail progressive botanical measures to be implemented, and raise the standard of botanical requirements for future CEQA reviewed projects.

Walker Ridge

Greg continues to represent CNPS at meetings between conservation groups, the BLM, and the wind energy development company Altagas. Sanhedrin Chapter and State CNPS both sent project DEIS scoping comment letters to BLM for this project, and State CNPS will be working with Sanhedrin and Sacramento Valley Chapter members to revise and resubmit an ACEC (Area of Critical Environmental Concern) petition to BLM for the Walker Ridge Area.

Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

The goal of the DRECP is to design a nature reserve that will conserve desert plants, animals and ecosystem functions in the face of streamlined permitting of desert renewable energy projects. A key data gap in establishing a biological baseline for a comprehensive desert conservation plan is an accurate vegetation map. Currently there is no detailed vegetation map for the western Mojave Desert where many renewable energy projects are planned. The DRECP Independent Science Advisors report recommends that both an alliance level vegetation map and a special botanical or vegetation features map be assembled for this area, much like the one that was developed for the central Mojave in 2004. But neither state nor federal agencies can find the money (estimates range from \$3-4 million) to fund the effort, and both are looking to the energy industry for help. Over 150 vegetation alliances occur in the planning area and will need attention, especially those that are composed of native species, are endemic to the state, have limited distributions, and are essential to the well-being of other plant and animal species. How the DRECP resolves the need to fill data gaps with an expedited timeline to complete a permissible plan will be the work of the DRECP Stakeholder group, Consultant team, and ultimately come down to decisions by state and federal lead agencies.

To assist the DRECP process, Greg Suba and Aaron Sims are in the process of updating and assessing where rare plant taxa occur in relation to potential impacts from development activities and to lands identified as conservation priority areas. They will compile what relevant ecological information is available for the highest priority taxa and provide results to the DRECP Stakeholder group. Julie Evens and Todd Keeler-Wolf have also participated in the DRECP Resource Mapping work group meetings recently. Their input has provided important words of caution against relying on coarse resolution, spatially inaccurate vegetation maps currently available for the Western Mojave. More information is available on the DRECP webpage at www.DRECP.org.

Army Corps of Engineers Levee Vegetation Policy

The US Army Corps of Engineers has delayed publication of a final levee vegetation policy in order to incorporate additional information and issue its release together with the policy's final NEPA review document (estimated Dec 2010). General consensus among state agency staff and environmental groups equally opposed to the Corps policy is that the final policy will not differ substantially from the draft version which threatens most of California's remaining riparian woodland habitat. California State Department of Water Resources and Department of Fish and Game are conducting a multi-disciplinary scientific study of levee safety, and their report will be completed sometime in 2011.

Chapter Conservation Calls

Statewide conservation conference calls were held on September 21 and October 26, and both were well attended by conservation chairs and/or chapter representatives. Of the 16 Chapters that responded to an online survey nearly one third picked the 3rd Monday morning of each month as the preferred conference call-in time. Some concern has been expressed about the expense of the 2-hour toll for these calls. The State office will be looking at other low cost conference line options for the next budget cycle, which begins on April 1, 2011.

Timber Harvest Plan Reviews

The Governor recently eliminated 75% of the funding needed by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) to perform its statutory duty to ensure that timber harvests on private forested lands do not harm or threaten the State's fish and wildlife. This important funding stream was part of 2 billion in late budget cuts made by the Governor in October appropriations that had already survived the legislative budget process.

The Legislature had previously approved sufficient funding for 23 THP review positions, continuing approximately the same level of harvest review as in previous years. Even at this level of funding the Department was able to fully review and monitor only a portion of all THPs submitted. The Governor's cuts eliminate 17 of the 23 positions. DFG is currently developing a plan to transfer timber harvest review staff to other duties so they can return to their former positions should funding be replaced. Until such time, THP-associated impacts to botanical resources will be reviewed and assessed on behalf of the State by CALFIRE staff.

CNPS has initiated efforts, along with other conservation organizations, to identify the impact of the cuts on DFG's ability to protect fish, wildlife, and native plant resources. Vern Goehring and Greg Suba have written to Director McCamman asking him to explore alternative plans and alternative funding sources, and will explore whether the vetoed funds affect the legal status of THPs approved absent a DFG review.

Conservation & Communications Coordinator

The job description for this new part time position was posted online in mid-November and we have received 7 applications so far. Closing date for applications is December 15th, and the position will begin in early January 2011.

EDUCATION PROGRAM –authored by Josie Crawford

The Stewardship and Education Committee

In early November we sent copies of the revised curriculum, *Opening the World through Journaling: Integrating art, science, and language arts* by John Muir Laws and Emily Breunig, to around 30 reviewers comprised of teachers, group leaders, scout masters, and naturalists for review. We are currently working on creating an evaluation system for this group of reviewers as well as subsequent users. Reviewers' comments will be due in May 2011, and John and Emily will make necessary revisions next summer following completion of the evaluations.

This curriculum is specifically tailored for CNPS, and is geared primarily towards children age 8 and up (grades 3 through 7). By completing games and exercises throughout the curriculum, children learn to become keen observers of the natural world through drawing and writing. Later, they employ these skills to assemble a field guide, make treasure maps, and write short stories and poems. These journal activities tie directly into the State of California's science framework content standards as well as the visual and performing arts framework content standards.

CNPS is looking forward to making this wonderful work available for wide distribution. Once released, the curriculum will be available for free and easily downloading at <http://cnps.org/cnps/education/>. If you or someone you know would be interested in using the curriculum, please contact Josie at jcrawford@cnps.org.

We are currently applying for grants for phase two of the child oriented facet of the Education Program. Phase two entails two projects that build on the curriculum and the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt. The first project is the Field Guide project. Classrooms and nature center groups using the curriculum could take it to the next level by working with students to create outdoor field guides for an area and subject(s) of their choice. The project will encourage creativity as well as observational and recording accuracy.

As part of the project, we will contract with an outside entity to create a web-based map (hosted by CNPS) where the locations of the field guides created by the students will become points on the map. CNPS will review the field guides for accuracy, scan and upload them to the website to correspond with a point on the map. Visitors to the site will be able to download and print the student field guides for different areas around the state. What's more, children will be

able to see their field guide locations on the map and compare them to field guides created by others. This project educates the students directly involved in the curriculum and journaling program, but also engages the greater public as family, friends and neighbors start downloading their field guides.

The second project is the “Merit Badge” program where children can achieve different naturalist levels by completing certain tasks. Teaching others is something children love to do and is central to the theme of this project. Tasks could include:

- Completing the exercises in the *Opening the World through Journaling* curriculum
- Participating in creating a Field Guide to a local area
- Leading others on a nature hike using their field guide and new knowledge about the area
- Going on a Rare Plant Treasure Hunt and documenting a rare plant population
- Organizing a Rare Plant Treasure Hunt event with other kids (and adults and a botanist)
- Participating in Project Budburst and contributing data
- Working in a native habitat garden
- Teaching others about the garden
- Becoming an expert in a natural history subject and teaching others what they have learned.

In the first year of the project, we are asking for funding to develop the first phase and merit types using our existing CNPS activities and to develop the infrastructure to reward accomplishment. In subsequent years we will add activities and partners to support the project’s growth.

The Field Guide Project and the “Merit Badge” Project will form the basis of a kid’s webpage (another goal of the Education Program). These two projects also provide additional incentive to use the activities provided by CNPS.

Rare Plant Treasure Hunt

We have just announced and awarded prizes for the first season of the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt. And the winners are:

Individual Winners

Grand Prize – Duncan Bell, Treasure Hunter Extraordinaire
Most occurrences updated by an individual!
Second Place- Clyde Golden, Intrepid Treasure Hunter
2nd most occurrences updated by an individual!
Third Place – Natalia and Bill Blackburn, Terrific Treasure Hunters
3rd most occurrences updated by an individual(s)!

Chapter Winners

Grand Chapter Prize- San Gabriel Mountains Chapter
Chapter with the most hours and occurrences updated!
Second Place Chapter Prize-San Diego Chapter
Chapter with the 2nd most occurrences updated and volunteer hours!

Partner Organizations With The Most Occurrences

George Butterworth, Department of Fish and Game-most occurrences updated!
Karen Cotter and volunteers, Santa Clara County Parks-2nd most occurrences updated!
Tanya Chapple and interns from the Mid Klamath Watershed Council
Tarja Sagar and interns, Santa Monica Mountain National Recreation Area, National Park Service
Michael Chasse and volunteers at the Golden Gate National Recreational Area, National Park Service

Honorable Mentions

Clyde Golden, Most prompt form submitter-Thank you for getting your forms in so quickly!
Millie Nielson, 4 years old, of Nevada - Youngest Treasure Hunter

As many of you know, the CNPS Rare Plant Treasure Hunt teams botanists with amateurs to search for new and historic populations of rare plants across the state. Through this program, participants can survey for rare plants in areas with little history of botanical exploration, relocate historic (not documented in over 20 years) rare plant occurrences, and/or update known occurrences of high-priority rare plants. Up-to-date information on rare plants and their habitats are needed to inform conservation actions and to aid planning efforts. The current status of many rare plant occurrences is unknown, and thousands have not been documented for decades.

The first season results for the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt are still trickling in. Getting the forms submitted on already collected data is proving to be difficult in some instances. This is one of CNPS and the California Natural Diversity Database's (CNDDDB's) biggest obstacles to getting accurate information. There are thousands of unsubmitted rare plant occurrences out there. If you know of any secret stashes, let us know. Here are the numbers to date:

- Volunteers and partner organizations updated over 620 rare plant occurrences across the state.
- Of these, approximately 70% were new occurrences (previously unreported populations)
- Approximately 70% were California Ranked (CNPS List) 1B (Rare, threatened and endangered in California and elsewhere).
- An estimated 245 volunteers and partners contributed
- These volunteers gave over 3000 hours of time to the project!
- Over 20 chapters had participating volunteers.

This fall, Amber Swanson led two treasure hunt field trips/team leader trainings in the desert. These trainings for team leaders give people the tools and confidence to lead trips. She is busy planning trips and trainings for this spring in the Mojave and Sonoran/Colorado Deserts. If you are interested in attending a training or treasure hunt, see the workshops listed below or please let us know at treasurehunt@cnps.org. Go to <http://cnps.org/cnps/rareplants/treasurehunt/> to find more information.

We are still unsure about much of the funding for the Treasure Hunt for 2011. We are waiting to hear from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation regarding a grant proposal for the desert portion of the project. We have applied for Billisoly funds and will apply for further funding before the first of the year for the statewide project.

We will happily accept donations from individuals, chapters, and organizations for the project. Simply send a check earmarked Rare Plant Treasure Hunt to our main office. We believe that citizen science projects like the Rare Plant Treasure Hunt serve dual purposes: (a) data collection: we are able to collect critical data on plants that would not otherwise be surveyed, and (b) education: by teaming up amateurs with botanists, we are able to get people outdoors and learning about rare plant ecology that might not otherwise be out there.

Plant Science Training Workshops

We had to cancel two out of three workshops scheduled for this fall. One was cancelled for lack of rain and fall bloom in the Mojave and the second did not have enough registrants. The workshop program has not been immune to the problems in the economy this year. We did, however, fill a new workshop, *Plant Taxonomy Teacher Training*, to overflow capacity, in late November. This training was lower in price (due to much reduced instructor fee) and apparently filled a need. We desperately need people to teach plant taxonomy and native plant ID classes around the state. Most of the 24 people who attended the class want to teach a class like this. We intend to offer this course again and to post many of the course materials on the web.

The schedule for 2011 workshops is complete. It is a somewhat reduced schedule due to the upcoming Conservation Conference. Go to <http://cnps.org/cnps/education/workshops/index.php> for the full line-up.

CNPS 2012 Conservation Conference: Conserving and Restoring the Roots of California's Richness

Conference: January 12-14

Workshops: Jan 10-11

Public Day: January 14

Location: Town and Country Hotel, San Diego

We finalized all conference sessions at a Steering committee meeting held in San Diego on Nov 2. Session descriptions will be posted on the conference webpage by Dec 31. If you are interested in submitting an abstract please read through the session descriptions. The Steering Committee has agreed to help with the major fund raising for the event.

The preliminary planning schedule for the conference is:

- Call for abstracts and workshop proposals opens: March 2011
- Call for abstracts and workshop proposals closes: July 2011
- Registration and Preliminary Program sent out: June 2011
- Early Registration opens: July 2011
- Call for artwork and photographs opens: Early Autumn 2011
- Call for artwork and photographs closes: Mid- Autumn 2011

We now have a chair for the Public Day and Field Trip committees and are currently looking for someone to chair the Outreach and Student committees. We are looking for volunteers willing commit to help with the conference, if you or someone you know is interested, please contact me at jcrawford@cnps.org for further information.

Up to date developments and opportunities to contribute will be posted on the conference webpage at <http://cnps.org/cnps/education/meetings.php>.

HORTICULTURE PROGRAM – Tara Hansen

Horticulture Web Development & the Growing Natives Blog

Web development changes that have taken place recently include the addition of an events calendar at http://www.cnps.org/cnps/grownative/plant_sale_calendar.php. A special thank you to dedicated Horticulture Committee member Arvind Kumar for getting this event calendar built and providing the link to our website!

We are always looking for new authors and contributors to post content on the CNPS horticulture blog at (<http://grownatives.cnps.org>). We would like to build traffic to the blog because additional traffic will help the site return more prominently in random web searches. Be sure to check it out on the state website when you can, and let us know if you are interested in becoming a guest author or contributing author. The article submission and posting requirements are listed on the right hand side of the blog in the links section (see right handle bar links: [Write for this CNPS blog](#)). Anyone can make comments to current postings.

Native Gardens – Quarterly e-newsletter

We are always looking for good material for the next Horticulture focused quarterly e-newsletter! Horticulture focused editions are published toward the end of March, June, September, and December. If you would like to submit an article for consideration, please forward it to the following e-mail address: cnps-horticulture-review-sub-committee@googlegroups.com.

Horticulture Database Project

This project is currently on hold until additional funding and resources have been found to complete the project.

RARE PLANT – authored by Aaron Sims

2009 Conservation Conference Proceedings (Update provided by Holly Forbes, CNPS Press)

We continue to make progress toward the publication of the Proceedings of the 2009 Conservation Conference. We received 55 manuscripts for inclusion in the Proceedings Publication. As of mid-May the initial technical editing was complete and copy editing is in progress at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden. The final manuscripts went to an indexing service (Columbia Indexing) in late-June, and will go to press (the printer will be Commerce Printing) sometime next year. Gordon Leppig and Amanda Jorgenson completed a foreword for the publication. Bart O'Brien is working on the cover design with Beth Hansen-Winter. Special thanks are in order to all of the individuals who continue to participate in this effort. Following Nick Jensen's leave in late-June, Holly Forbes has taken over the Proceeding process. For more information on the Proceedings please contact Holly (hforbes@berkeley.edu).

Rare Plant Inventory

The review of CNDDDB data has resulted in dozens of changes to CNPS Rare Plant Inventory data over the past three months. Most of the changes were updates to the threats, phenology, elevation ranges, and habitat of dozens of taxa.

During the August to November time period, the following rare plant status reviews were completed:

- Additions: 5 plants
- List Changes: 2 plants
- Deletions: 1 plant
- Name Changes: 81 plants

For additional information on changes please contact Aaron (asims@cnps.org)

The Rare Plant Program maintains a status review backlog with taxa that have been considered for addition, deletion, or list change within the Inventory. The status review backlog will never go away, but will fluctuate up and down in size as more taxa are added to it, while others are marked as complete after full review. Furthermore, some taxa within the status review backlog are postponed until further research is conducted, and thus may remain indefinitely.

In addition to the status review backlog, a second backlog has been created specifically for taxonomic name changes, most of which have been brought about by *The Jepson Manual, 2nd Edition* (TJM2) treatments. The name change backlog is expected to increase as more and more treatments are produced from TJM2 until its projected completion at the end of 2011. It is important to note that most of the taxa in the name change backlog are undergoing non-substantive name changes, meaning they will not require the full status review process and can be dealt with in a much more timely fashion.

Online Inventory Revision Project

The revision of the Online Inventory is near finalization. An independent consultant has done the bulk of programming and technical revision required for completion, while many other individuals have contributed in a number of ways. A finalized draft of the new Online Inventory application was sent to a panel of testers in mid-September for comments and error checking. Feedback from testers was received in early October and necessary revisions and fixes are being made before public release. The new web application will be online and available for use on December 6th.

Funding for this project has been made available by a CNPS member, the Billisoly Bequest, and several botanical consulting firms. I sincerely thank all of our donors for making this revision a reality as well as those diligently reconstructing, reviewing, and implementing the project.

VEGETATION PROGRAM – authored by Julie Evens & Vegetation Program Staff

Chapter and Public Vegetation Workshops & Talks

CNPS along with Aerial Information Systems and the Dept. of Fish and Game (DFG) will co-teach a workshop on vegetation mapping in early 2011 in southern California. We are beginning to prepare for this workshop, as well as plan for others in 2011. A new volunteer, Brian Peterson, assisted us by entering vegetation data from field surveys collected by chapters and during trainings in 2010.

Manual of California Vegetation, Second Edition (MCV2)

Julie Evens continued to work collaboratively with Todd Keeler-Wolf and John Sawyer to develop a new book that will contain photographs and brief written summaries about vegetation, as a coffee-table book companion to the MCV2. We contacted over 10 people to help contribute as co-authors, and Michael Barbour has agreed to be a technical editor for the book. We also corresponded with confirmed co-authors who have begun writing chapters for this new book, and Julie established and posted a set of resource material on a Google Docs website for them.

Tara Hansen and Sandy McCoy continued to help identify funding sources for this project, including new donors for the online/database version of the MCV2. Abigail Genelsa has continued volunteering for a day a week on the project, helping to rename and database a variety of digital images from the co-authors, which depict alliances described in the MCV2.

Grasslands Research Projects (Donation/Grant-funded)

Jennifer Buck-Diaz attended the Central Coast Rangelands Coalition conference held near Hollister in October. She was invited to speak on a panel with other researchers, ranchers and conservation land managers at the conference, in which she gave a brief statement of CNPS's grasslands work towards improving their management, and participated in a discussion of research needs by the ranching community. Also, recent staff articles in the Bulletin and the October CNPS E-news have generated new interest and communication about the grassland initiative.

As part of our Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant, Jennifer performed quality control of vegetation data collected during 2008 and 2010 in preparation for a grassland vegetation classification. Jennifer and Josie Crawford are preparing the agenda and materials for a new grassland workshop in March 2011, which will include results from the first year of our NRCS project as well as grassland plant identification and vegetation assessment methods.

Carrizo Plain National Monument Project (Grant-funded)

Jennifer conducted extensive quality control of over 1000 surveys conducted from 2008-10 in the Carrizo Plain region. These data were collected in a combined resource inventory/mapping effort by the Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management, and CNPS. Jennifer, Julie, and Deborah Stout are currently analyzing these data to develop a floristic classification and key. Some alliances that were previously defined as "Provisional" in the MCV2 (including ones containing *Ericameria linearifolia* and *Gutierrezia californica*) will now have enough surveys for full alliance definition, and new herbaceous associations will be defined such as *Atriplex vallicola* – *Lasthenia ferrisae* – *Lepidium jaredii* association. In January 2011, we will begin detailed (alliance-level) vegetation mapping within the footprint of the Carrizo Plain National Monument.

Northern Sierra Nevada Foothills (NSNF) Project (Contract-funded)

CNPS and sub-contractor Aerial Information Systems (AIS) continued work on mapping in the NSNF with funding from the Department of Fish and Game (DFG). CNPS staff, Danielle Roach and Suzanne Harmon, completed accuracy assessment surveys in the third quarter of the region (from El Dorado to Tuolumne County) with a total of 384 surveys. One hundred were completed recently, and all of these surveys have been entered and analyzed in our databases.

We hired two additional staff, Melinda Elster and Rebecca Crowe, to assist us in completing the final stages of the project. Danielle, Melinda, and Rebecca completed 167 additional surveys so far in the last quarter of the region.

Kendra planned field missions and arranged access to private and public lands, and we plan to complete the mapping and field verification around the beginning of next year.

Members of *Ceanothus* plant identification group met on October 5 to assist us in identifying some of our backlog of specimens collected in the 2008 field inventory performed under this contract.

Southern Sierra Nevada Foothills (SSNF) Project (Donation-funded)

CNPS staff submitted a grant to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to request funding to continue vegetation mapping and inventory in the SSNF region. We also have completed a pilot mapping project for around 11,000 acres in SSNF with funding from a private donor. This is a detailed vegetation map of McKenzie Preserve at Big Table Mountain and surrounding lands near Millerton Lake, including over 20 different vegetation and habitat types, and we have written a summary report for this pilot project in the SSNF.

Bilisoly – Rare Plant Communities Project (Grant-funded)

Deborah and Julie began reviewing chapter vegetation data as a pilot project to create maps of rare plant communities using GIS. We have identified the Coyote Ridge area of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter as our first area for mapping rare vegetation, in which we will begin mapping in December.

Fen Research Project of National Forest Lands (Contract/Grant-funded)

Kendra and Deborah continued to work on final phases of a fen conservation assessment report that summarizes our state of knowledge about fen vegetation on FS lands, including many rare plants and plant communities. Staff has sent out appendices of regional descriptions and maps of fen/meadow areas for US Forest Service (USFS) botanists to review, and we have obtained/incorporated edits on these regional descriptions based on their input.

With funding from the Region 5 USFS and the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act, we also conducted surveys in new areas needing samples to identify fen meadows/vegetation. CNPS staff (Kendra, Danielle, Deborah, and Betsy Harbert) completed seven weeks of fieldwork sampling in the Sequoia National Forest and Lake Tahoe Basin, and USFS and CA State Parks staff provided us with logistical support for fieldwork. Analysis of new data over the winter months will allow us to further differentiate fen vegetation diversity, rarity, and quality on our public lands.

Mojave Network of National Park Service Vegetation Mapping Project (Contract-funded)

Julie continued to quality control a set of legacy datasets, including vegetation data from the central Mojave Desert and Joshua Tree National Park. We have over 3,000 desert classification/mapping surveys that are being amassed into a single format. In October, Julie and Kendra provided a second training with NPS and other staff for a week in Lake Mead and Mojave National Preserve (MOJA), so that they can begin collecting new data through the winter/spring to inventory and assess vegetation on MOJA park lands.

Other Vegetation Program Details

Julie and Greg Suba began attending desert renewable energy mapping meetings twice monthly, and we have recommended that more detailed and accurate vegetation maps are needed in the Mojave/Sonoran desert regions for planning purposes. Jennifer and Julie have continued to answer phone calls and emails regarding vegetation mapping and classification, and Deborah has helped in organizing sets of files, datasheets, and other materials in the office.

SALES REPORT – authored by Tara Hansen and Stacey Flowerdew

At the last Chapter Council meeting, delegates asked if the central office could provide a list of current inventory on CNPS titles. Below is the inventory through October on CNPS press titles:

Item Description	On Hand
CNPS Press	
CNPS Embroidered Logo Hat	76
A Manual of California Vegetation, 2nd Edition - Retail \$82.00	2193
CNPS Leisure Cap	16
27 oz. Klean Kanteen w/Poly Loop Cap	26
Care & Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens	144
Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants	2124
Rare Lilies of California	87
Plants of the Tahoe Basin (Softcover)	843
Plants of the Tahoe Basin (Hardcover)	66
Plant Life in the World's Mediterranean Climates (Softcover)	271
Origin and Relationships of the California Flora	418
Flowering Plants and Ferns of Mount Diablo, California (Softcover)	517
Flowering Plants and Ferns of Mount Diablo, California (Hardcover)	110
A Flora of Sonoma County (Hardcover)	73
A Flora of Sonoma County (Softcover)	4
A Flora of Lassen Volcanic National Park, California	35
Ecology, Conservation, and Management of Vernal Pool Ecosystems	75
Ecology and Restoration of Northern California Coastal Dunes	558
Ecology and Management of Rare Plants of Northwestern California	100
Conservation and Management of Rare and Endangered Plants	11
California's Wild Gardens	553
California's Changing Landscapes	620
The Best Spring Ever	1961
Posters for Resale	
set of 4 Grass posters (Laminated)	493
set of 4 Grass posters (Unlaminated)	344
Coast Wildflowers - Laminated	1263
Coast Wildflowers - Unlaminated	5925
Wildflowers of the Desert - Laminated	713
Wildflowers of the Desert - Unlaminated	5650
Wildflowers of the Redwood Forest - Laminated	1588
Wildflowers of the Redwood Forest - Unlaminated	11207
Shrubs of the Coast - Laminated	190
Shrubs of the Coast - Unlaminated	2260
Wildflowers of the Sierra Nevada - Laminated	587
Wildflowers of the Sierra Nevada - Unlaminated	2197
Spring Wildflowers - Laminated	571
Spring Wildflowers - Unlaminated	1035

MEMBERSHIP REPORT – by Stacey Flowerdew and Tara Hansen

Changes in Member Benefits (reprinted from September's Report)

As many of you may have heard, at the June meeting the CNPS state board voted to reduce the number of *Fremontia* issues published annually to three per year beginning in October of 2011. The decision was made to help reduce fixed expenses relative to current revenues, as *Fremontia* costs about \$20,000 per issue to produce and distribute.

The website has been updated to reflect the changes, and the renewal letters now include a notification of the change in benefits so members are informed at the time they choose to renew their memberships. We are also working on an insert for the membership brochure that should be given to all potential new members starting this fall. While this insert is being developed, please be sure to mark out “quarterly” and write in “3 per year” on any brochures you use for sign ups this fall.

Membership Trends

As reported in the previous quarterly report, Stacey Flowerdew has been personally contacting members who are more than 90 days lapsed in renewing their membership and has had very strong results in the first six months. Between June 2010 and December 1, 2010, Stacey has phoned or emailed 926 lapsed members. 166 of these lapsed members subsequently rejoined-an average rate of one out of every 5.58 contacted! On a related note, the Lapsed Member Comeback Appeal was mailed to 14,600 former members in July and to date has yielded memberships from 410 significantly lapsed members.

Annual Membership Trends					
Year	Total Count	New Members	Join Rate	Non-Renewals	Attrition Rate
2010-Oct YTD	8420	964	11.65%	485	6%
2010- January (new method)	8275				
2010- January (old method)	9294	1087	11.29%	1319	14%
2009 - January	9631	982	10.9%	345	3.8%
2008 - January	8994	938	10.2%	1178	12.8%
2007 - January	9234	816	8.8%	835	9.0%
2006 - January	9253				

	Total Memberships	New Members	% New Member Growth	Est Not Renewed	% Non Renewal (est)	Net Growth
2010						
January	8275	75	0.9%	(99)	-1.2%	174
February	8449	82	1.0%	(78)	-0.9%	160
March	8609	111	1.3%	174	2.0%	-63
April	8546	162	1.9%	98	1.1%	64
May	8610	123	1.4%	187	2.2%	-64
June	8546	93	1.1%	157	1.8%	-64
July	8482	46	0.5%	71	0.8%	-25
August	8457	38	0.4%	(35)	-0.4%	73
September	8530	90	1.1%	200	2.3%	-110
October	8420	144	1.7%			
Cummulative Totals		964	0.6%	439	1.9%	145
Net Growth						1.8%

Member Change of Address: One way to streamline the exchange of data updates from the chapters to the state office on member records is to direct members to use our web tool for address updates. This form is located at <http://www.cnps.org/cnps/join>. When address information is entered into this online form, we are able to retrieve and upload it into the system, negating the need for manual transfer of the information we receive in other ways.

Membership Committee News (Reprint from previous report):

The Membership Committee continues to meet monthly to discuss important issues and initiatives related to membership growth and retention and member benefits, and we are still looking for a few more committee members. If you are working with outreach at your chapter and are able to commit to a minimum of a one hour call each month, please contact Stacey Flowerdew to get on this energetic committee. Current committee members include:

Arvind Kumar, Co-Chair, Santa Clara Valley
 Mary Frances Kelly-Poh, Co-Chair, Willis Jepson
 Betsey Landis, LA/Santa Monica Mountains
 Joan Jernegan, Redbud
 Carol Castro, East Bay
 Sarah Jayne, Orange County
 Dorie Diragosian, Kern
 Cindy Kondon, South Coast
 Tara Hansen & Stacey Flowerdew, Staff

Member Join Dates

In September, we sent a file to each chapter containing members who do not have membership "Join Dates" in our system. Chapter volunteers were asked to fill out the indicated column with the join date of long term members in order to send the entire file back to the state office for inclusion in the database. Some members do not remember when they joined, but we have had a few successes in members recalling their first issue of *Fremontia* as an approximate join date. This will be an ongoing project.

Chapter Membership Development Grants:

If your chapter applied for a membership development grant this spring, remember that you will need to submit a brief report describing the results of the activity with your funding request once the activity is completed.

Two chapters have successfully reported and received their grant reimbursements: Sierra Foothills and Redbud. The Sierra Foothills chapter requested a grant to put toward the cost of speaker fees, venue rental, and publicity for a native gardening symposium held in September. The event attracted 110 attendees! President Bob Brown who appraised symposium surveys at the conclusion of the event, estimates that the chapter introduced the name of CNPS to at least 60 people who had no previous contact with the organization. Three new members were also signed up at the symposium, with more who pledged to join at a later date.

The Redbud chapter requested the grant in order to run a large, full color print ad in the Nevada County newspaper, *The Union* over three weeks in the weekly Home and Garden section of the newspaper. For the first time, Redbud advertised a members-only, early bird admittance to the plant sale. With the additional publicity from the print ads, Redbud signed up 19 new members at the door the morning of the sale, and confirmed that 10 additional members had signed up recently because they had responded to the advertisement- an incredible 29 memberships generated. [On a side note- Redbud reports that at least one new member deliberately chose the \$45 membership level over the low income level just to receive the free tote bag.]

Chapter Membership Gift Incentives:

Chapters were given the opportunity this fall to request tote bags and student backpacks as incentives to attract new members at their plant sales and events this autumn. Though not all chapters have yet reported how many bags and backpacks have been given out to new members this season, there are a few standouts from reporting chapters: The Los Angeles/Santa Monica chapter reports 14 bags given away, Riverside/San Bernardino reports 13 bags, the Bristlecone chapter gave out 11 bags, and the Santa Clara Valley chapter may have already given away an impressive 34 bags to new members!

Most of the ten chapters who requested backpacks for new student members indicated that they will target campuses in conjunction with events scheduled this spring, however, so far both the Milo Baker chapter and Sierra Foothills chapter report that they have handed out six backpacks each to new student members. Good job!

Chapter Membership Trends

Retaining old members while attracting new members is simultaneously a great challenge and a key to our success as a membership organization. The following chapters have all grown by double digits this year to date! Keep up the stupendous work!

Bristlecone
Channel Islands
El Dorado

Napa Valley
North San Joaquin
Redbud

Sierra Foothills

Though the Los Angeles/Santa Monica, Milo Baker, and Santa Clara Valley chapters cannot boast double digit percentage growth given their large membership to begin with, they are still commendable for a net growth of 26, 27, and 38 new members through October 31, 2010. Bravo!