A new initiative to describe and protect California grasslands

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OBJECTIVES

- Goals and steps of CNPS Grassland Initiative
- Progress to date
- Next steps and future collaboration with you!
The California Native Plant Society (CNPS) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the understanding and appreciation of California's native plants and how to conserve them and their natural habitats through education, science, advocacy, horticulture and land stewardship.
Initial Focus Area of CNPS Grassland Initiative:

Central Valley and Southern Coastal CA
Why focus on grasslands?

1. Not previously described
2. Rate of disappearance
3. Implications of climate change
4. New tools, new opportunities
A four-step, integrated approach

Step 1: Current state of knowledge
Step 2: Inventory, map and rank
Step 3: Identify extent of change in past and potential for future
Step 4: Publicize and communicate
Step 1: Current state of knowledge

- Target regions within focus area
- Identify key partners and stakeholders
- Review existing data, interpretations and descriptions of grasslands
- Publish overview paper defining “native grassland”
Step 2: Inventory, map and rank grassland types

- Collect grassland data over many seasons
- Analyze data to define baseline classification
- Translate to units that can be mapped
- Tie in wildlife and rare species and rank rare types
Step 3: Identify extent of change in past and potential for future

- Analyze data for management purposes including non-native species
- Identify restoration potential, including seasonal and regional variation
- Identify key areas for both plants and wildlife and model change
Step 4: Publicize and communicate for conservation and restoration

- Discuss findings with other groups
- Hold conferences
- Publish booklets and reports of findings
- Publish an illustrated guide to major grassland types
Progress so far!

- Established a working group
- Literature search – assembled an extensive bibliography
- Gathered existing and contributed data
- Collated all data into one master database
- Grassland data collection through CNPS contracts
California annual grassland series

- Slender oat-soft brome association
- Soft brome-rattail fescue association
- European hairgrass association
- Soft brome-storkbill association
Vulpia microstachys – Lasthenia californica - Plantago erecta
Herbaceous Alliance
Six-weeks fescue - California goldfields - Dwarf plantain flower fields
Next Steps

1. Inventory under-sampled areas

2. Analysis of types for a preliminary classification

3. White paper of existing knowledge
Future Collaboration with you!
• Data sharing or additional contacts
• Participate in our working group
• Land access/contacts
• Explore funding opportunities
Thank you to CNPS members and the Grassland Initiative Working Group.

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