

The California Native Plant Society
CHAPTER COUNCIL MEETING—~~June 3~~ March 8, 2008
Hosted by Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Riverside/San Bernadino, San Gabriel Mountains,
and LA/Santa Monica chapters.
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden, Claremont, California

Called to order at 8:35 AM.

PRESENT: Alta Peak (Joan Stewart), Bristlecone (Steve McLaughlin), Channel Islands (Dave Magney), East Bay (Delia Taylor), El Dorado County (Sue Britting), LA/Santa Monica Mountains (Betsey Landis, Halli Mason), Marin County (Carol Longstreth), Milo Baker (Liz Parsons), Mojave Desert (Tim Thomas), Monterey Bay (Rosemary Foster), Mount Lassen (Catie Bishop), North Coast (Larry Levine), Orange County (Laura Camp), Riverside/San Bernadino (Katie Barrows), Sacramento (Kristie Scarrazo), San Diego (Marty Foltyn), San Gabriel Mountains (Gabi McLean), San Luis Obispo (Lauren Brown), Sanhedrin (Chuck Williams), Santa Clara Valley (Kevin Bryant), Santa Cruz County (Brett Hall), Shasta (Pat Gilbert), South Coast (David Sundstrom), and Yerba Buena (Linda Shaffer).

ABSENT: Dorothy King Young, Kern County (sent proxy vote), North Coast, North San Joaquin Valley, Redbud, Sequoia, Sierra Foothills, Tahoe, and Willis L. Jepson.

1. Introductions

2. Approval Of Minutes from the December 2007 Chapter Council Meeting:

Levine requested one change in wording under Open Forum: the Herbicide Policy, 11th paragraph: Levine: change "...Are we opposed to herbicide use or in favor?..." to "What is our position on herbicide?"

→ **Action Item—Minutes for December 2007:** A motion was made and seconded LeNeve/McLean to accept the minutes. Approved unanimously.

3. Elections follow-up—Sue Britting

- We had a good slate, but the president and two board member at-large positions are still vacant.
- Decision was made to have the Vice President, Sue Britting, serve as Acting President until the end of 2008. Will spend the time recruiting for someone to fill the role in 2009.
- Meanwhile, the Board of Directors will be clarifying the job descriptions of each position.
- Recruiting will pick up in May – July. The Board really needs help with this job, need a broader recruitment. It's really about people to people! If you can help, please talk to Sue, Brian LeNeve, or Carol Witham.

4. Executive Director Report—Amanda Jorgenson

Report is circulating. [Director's Report]

Updates:

- The Conservation Director position was re-opened. We are still looking for applicants.
- Also looking for a development coordinator
- Thanks to Larry Levine for helping to update the directory. Each chapter should take some. There is a sign up sheet. State will send additional copies. This was put together very quickly. Late changes didn't make it. The goal is to make the information up to date and accessible. Let us know about necessary corrections.

- Due to a generous donation, were able to print 45,000 copies of “Gardening with Natives”. Take them!

Dates:

- Would like to have the state financial report in on time this year. Chapter end-of-year treasurer’s reports are due April 14. Quarterly tax is due by April 21. The state office will be penalized 10% if late. Could lose license for selling books.

Other:

- If contacting legislators, need to be in touch with Vern. Vern wants to do monthly phone calls with the legislative chairs for more coordination.
- Conference: January 17 – 19 in Sacramento. Josie and Cristy, co-chairs of Arrangements Committee, will begin to market the conference soon. We need your support.

Special request: please stay for a group picture before the lunch break.

5. Board Of Directors Report—Brett Hall and Brian LeNeve

- We are looking at a better way to communicate within chapters. A Google account for discussion of OHV issues (an issue dear to Brian’s heart!) has been set up. You have to be invited to join. If this works out, other groups will be set up on other topics. Get in touch with Brian if you know anyone who would like to be on this group. We hope this will work better than the current Forum system.
- President of the Board of Directors: We can only elect a president by a general election. We need guidance from by-laws to cover this situation. What do we do when there is not President of the BOD? The By-laws Committee should look into this.
- Last night the board approved a Policy on Gifts and Endowments. They had worked on it for a year. It was finalized last night, will be posted on the website. There are about eight endowment funds and they are separate from the operating funds. Endowment funds are mostly named and directed toward specific uses. Restricted gifts, unrestricted gifts, and more, all will be covered by the new policy, which will be on the Admin page. It will spell out the purpose of each fund. People will be encouraged to donate to existing funds. [There was detailed discussion of these funds, but since the information is readily available on the Admin page, details are not included here.]

McLean: What about the financial information on the funds?

Hall: There is no financial information on the website. For year-before-last, it will be in the June Bulletin.

McLean: Is the information available to the public? San Gabriel chapter seeks to have finances transparent to the public.

Britting: We can supply this information.

Q: What if one does not have the minimum amount for an endowment but you want to specify a purpose not yet appearing on a named fund?

A: You can make a restricted gift.

Q: How is the Admin page accessible?

A: The Admin page is completely accessible. The protected area is under the Panamint Daisy logo and that is the login. It contains mailing lists.

6. Policies: Herbicide, Invasives—Larry Levine and Jim Bishop

Past actions were summarized by Jim. The policies are still open to amendment and suggestions have been made. The Amendment Packet was sent out in January and contains those suggestions highlighted. On display is the text we approved in December that was in the Amendment Packet, plus three more

changes recently added. We're starting to flatten out on the policy development curve. If there needs to be some amendment, we will talk about it. We can move to end the debate. We hope to adopt these policies at this meeting.

Wildland Invasive Plants, Integrated Weed Management Policy:

Levine: Cal-IPC has updated their definition of weed management.

Bishop: Further amendments do not trigger further chapter approval.

Foltyn: is concerned about substantive changes.

Levine: Everyone should have their eye out for substantive changes. We have tried to stay away from that kind of change.

[Cal-IPC's new definition, read out for those who didn't have their glasses on to read the screen.]

"IWM is a strategic approach for reducing the ecological damage caused by invasive weeds.

Programatically, IWM requires the coordination of multiple efforts including prevention, early detection/rapid response, mapping, control efforts, revegetation, and monitoring. For on-the-ground control projects specifically, IWM requires site-specific selection of control methods from the range of methods available including mechanical, chemical, biological, and cultural based on effectiveness, efficiency, practicality, technological impact, and safety."

I guess we like that. We are inserting this definition, taking out the previous definition.

Changes:

List of areas of concern. Laundry list of "corridors".

- 1-A. "Fuel breaks" taken out from a discussion last night. We should not be trying to cover fuel breaks in this particular policy.
 - "Fuel breaks" put back in
 - Add "levees"
- 1-C. "weed pulling" changed to "weed removal"
- 1-I. Add "field sanitation" (tools). Guidelines for chapters are separate from this. Specifics should not be in this document.
- 2-A, d. simplified.
- 2-B, a,b,c

Bishop: Supporting materials—the Policy Committee has seen this.

Levine: These materials are for the benefit of the Chapter Council to help judge the merits of the policy. They will not go on the website. Pay attention to the Summary of Financial and Legal Implications.

Bishop: The purpose of these materials is two fold: that we understand what we have agreed upon and what the purpose is, and that future generations will understand what we were trying to get at with this policy. It is not part of the text that states what our position is.

This whole process of working on these two policies has put to work, harder than ever before, the entire policy development and adoption process and we've learned as we've gone along that there are some things that need clarification, expansion, and elaboration to make it easier. We'll be having a Policy Committee meeting this afternoon to embark on that. Based on this experience, we're going to refine and clarify this process.

→ **Action Item**—A motion is made to adopt **Wildland Invasive Plants, Integrated Weed Management** policy—**Landis/Foster M/S**. The motion carries unanimously. [Full text available on at cnps.org]

[Cheers]

Bishop: Hopefully we can benefit from this two-year process.

Levine: It worked well to go directly to chapter members to hash out disagreements, not just an email. Things don't happen in the large groups. We have to have the side discussions for topics to really get dealt with.

The Use of Herbicide in Situations Where Native Vegetation May Be Affected proposed policy: Changes:

[Text was projected, edited, rearranged on screen during this discussion. The following lengthy discussion could be omitted in the minutes and replaced by a statement such as "Lengthy discussion resulted in postponement of a further consideration of this policy until the brief afternoon meeting."]

Policy Statement

#1 Changes in wording—no more "weed species"

#2 Two major changes here: We have changed "managing weeds" to "controlling vegetation."

The major reason we had difficulty coming up with an herbicide policy is that herbicides are used in strikingly different ways for strikingly different objectives. That's why we have three elements in our policy.

Element 1 deals with using herbicides on invasive plants. That's one area where we had little controversy.

Element 2 originally dealt with just roadside spraying. Other similar issues were then lumped in. In roadside spraying, you're not just going after weeds, you're clearing vegetation, cutting potentially everything including what we don't want cut.

The third element deals with forestry practices where native plants are sprayed to increase timber production.

Foltyn: The word "vegetation" seems to apply to both native and non-native vegetation. Are you controlling all vegetation?

Levine: Will use "native and non-native vegetation" to be more clear.

Landis: The word "corridors" implies narrow space. "Fuel breaks" should be out.

Montalvo: "Road sides" are no longer narrow.

Levine: "corridor" doesn't work for all the situations.

Kutcher: It will be more consistent if each of the statements starts with "CNPS ..." For #1 & 2, "CNPS feels that..." and #3 "CNPS opposes..."

Suggestions from the floor: "CNPS recognizes that...", "CNPS acknowledges that..."

Witham: For more emphasis, can we say "for control of non-native and native..."

Levine: There are two items in #2 that need special scrutiny.

Foltyn: Can we take out Fuel Breaks?

Britting: The issue with fuel management has to do with the biomass that's out there. Herbicides don't remove the shrub biomass.

Foltyn: It's a matter of scale. Roadside clearing now can be quite broad.

Landis: The word "corridors" is supposed to imply a narrow place. That's why the word is in there and why we tried to make it consistent between the two policies.

Levine: We started out with "roadsides" and decided that there were other similar situations. Someone came up with "corridor" as a descriptive term that would cover them all.

Landis: The word is subject to broad interpretation. Preference would be to take out "fuel breaks" and leave the rest alone.

McLean: We have to be careful of our wording. People will see "...support it..." first even though it's conditional. These "corridors" are getting bigger and bigger. Would like to see "fuel breaks" and "utility rights of way" out. Did a particular chapter have an issue with this?

Taylor: Yes. East Bay didn't like the whole sentence.

Foltyn: The conditions of "conditional" are not clearly spelled out.

_____: All of #2 makes him nervous. Do we even have to make this statement? Can see this going sideways. Corridor projects he is involved with in Southern California are 500 feet wide. The word “corridors” has too many interpretations. Why are we promoting the use of herbicide to control natives?

Levine: This was originally not intended to cover corridors. It was intended to cover roadsides. Would like to revert to use of “roadsides”;

-should not say “conditionally supports” without giving the conditions; those conditions are two-fold—

-don’t support it in counties that don’t permit herbicide;

-vegetation control plans should take into account native plants and habitat in the road strip.

Britting: Remove the paragraph entirely. What chapter supports the use of herbicide on roadsides on native vegetation? Limited trails use? Native vegetation? We should not have this paragraph at all.

Bishop: The best we can hope for is to make agencies that actually do the spraying aware of conservation of native plants. *We* are not going to implement the policy.

Kutcher: Need to add another paragraph stating that we do not approve large-scale usage. Utility corridors and fuel breaks should be dealt with in separate paragraphs.

Witham: Remove “fuel breaks”; we never intended that native vegetation be included. We could drop the paragraph or just remove “native vegetation”.

Brown: Add “...provided that it is conducted under a plan...” Move that up from #3.

Barrows: Use the same language as #1—“CNPS recognizes...provided that...”

Montalvo: Add “...small scale corridors...” before “...use along roadsides, etc.”

Levine: What was the original purpose of #2? Is there any utility for this section? Do we need an element that addresses roadside spraying? Will our concerns about roadside spraying be adequately addressed by #1?

Williams: Mendocino County made a law. There is no herbicide spraying on public property. Weeds are increasing. CNPS should support some spraying of non-native plants. Should be in there for protection.

Levine: Here is wording that will allow for the elimination of #2—add it to #1.

Bishop: “We recommend that any use of herbicide be conducted under a plan...” We can only hope to *influence* the agencies.

_____: Can fold #2 into #1.

Levine:

_____: Scale—we don’t have jurisdiction over that. It is a moot point.

Witham: We need a break.

Levine: The essence of #2 is now incorporated in the body text. The Policy Statement now boils down to two statements, one dealing with controlling invasive plants and the other dealing our feeling about using herbicides against native plants.

McLean: Take the last two line of #2 and add to #1—“...and is conducted according to a plan...”

Discussion

Bishop: If Larry takes two lines that he currently has highlighted and appends them after the word “...standpoint...” in the first paragraph, that’s what Gabi would like to see and I think is an elaboration that can’t hurt.

Discussion

Bishop: The hard cold fact is, we’re going to either satisfy ourselves that we can move pretty quickly on adopting this or we’re going to have to simply defer it. I’m hopeful that we really have a policy the essence of which is going to guide us properly, is not going to restrict us from something we need to do, and not going to commit us to doing we don’t want to do. If the group feels that, then it’s time to be decisive. If we’re not going to be decisive, it’s time to give Brad back his agenda and decide we’re not going to decide.

Britting: Under #1, does “appropriate use” mean “management”? We’ve added a Section G that is titled “Appropriate Use” Our intention is not clear.

More discussion

Hartman: The policy statements are the ones that are going to be primarily quoted and referred to. The policy doesn’t address trails anymore. This has not been considered adequately so just remove it.

Bishop: Send this back to the sponsoring committee, revisit in June.

Britting: We could go back to the original wording—weed management—and specific wording about trails, etc.

Bishop: Is that acceptable?

Landis: The policy must not exclude CNPS chapter weeding groups who are doing a lot of this work. Make comments in writing; attend the committee meeting this afternoon.

Bishop: The Policy Committee will meet this afternoon. We could rework the document, put it to the group when we reconvene at 5:20.

Levine: We will put it back together again.

Jenkins: We’re not ready to vote. Give your comments to the Policy Committee. We’ll try for an up-and-down vote at 5:20.

Bishop: Good try! We got half way there.

8. Financial Report—Steve Hartman (hand lenses required to read the fine print on handout!)

We are one organization. Each chapter has to do a report for the fiscal year, which goes from April 1 to March 31. These reports (an inventory and a statement of annual revenue and expenses) are due April 14 and 21. If the chapter treasurer has changed recently, check to see if the forms go to the former treasurer. The first page of the handout is the Summary page of the budget. The second page shows the budget broken down by categories.

The CNPS budget is complicated. This is our first year with a \$2,000,000 budget.

- The Vegetation Program was awarded an almost \$900,000 one-year contract to survey the vegetation in the San Joaquin Valley. CNPS will assess the accuracy of the aerial maps and will be starting a large surveying effort.
- The budget also includes income and expenses projected for the symposium—about \$100,000
- Otherwise, this year’s budget is similar to last year’s, approximately 1.2 million dollars.
- We *try* to have a Retained Surplus. This year, we are using most of it to cover the symposium. We will be left with only about \$10,000 in surplus. We do have additional funds in restricted accounts. We never anticipate unsolicited donations, but rely on steady income from memberships (about 10,000 members generate \$350,000 to 400,000 a year) and member donations (\$120,000 to 150,000/year).
- We are in good shape, but could always use more money. Annual expenses exceed annual income by about \$100,000. Windfalls help. We have to make cuts when windfalls don’t happen

Witham: We budget very conservatively.

Hartman: Example: we are only budgeting \$6000 income from the symposium.

A lot of work goes into the budget. Each column is supported by another spreadsheet. Complicated, but we manage to come in within 5% every year.

We make mid-year revisions if necessary.

Detail on all of it is available.

Stewart: Thank you, Steve! [applause]

McLean: Can this be put on the website? We want transparency.

Hartman: Personnel information makes this impossible.

Britting: All our tax forms are accessible. Ready access was taken advantage of by a lawsuit in the Sacramento Valley chapter. We should spend some time discussing what should be made public.

Hartman: There is another level of complication. This budget is for state CNPS operations. When the chapter reports come in, it is all combined and submitted to IRS on Form 990. That form is the official public presentation of the society's finances.

McLean: We should be letting the membership know where the money is spent.

Hartman: The Annual Report does that and it is on the website. We have a Finance Committee. It would be good to have more than just board members on that committee. We could discuss this in the small group of Finance Committee.

9. Insurance—Patt McDaniel—Patt was unable to attend at the last minute. Brad Jenkins substituted. Information on Premises Liability Exposure needs to get back to the state office by April 14. Send it to Carrie Porter.

Events of 300 or more people need special coverage.

Questions? Contact Carrie or Patt.

[10. Break, occurred earlier. 11. Conservation Director—cancelled]

12. 2009 Conservation Conference, Status and Promotion—Josie Crawford

CNPS 2009 Conservation Conference—Strategies and Solutions will take place January 17 – 19 at the Sacramento Convention Center and Sheraton Hotel. The Western Chapter of the Wildlife Society is having their conference back-to-back with ours. Josie Crawford is co-chair with Christy Scarrazo.

Areas for chapter involvement are:

- Workshops will be held on the two days following the conference.
- Student activities—Matt Ritter. They are looking for interested graduate students, want to bring in lots of students, have big participation from students.
- Social and Family activities—would be good to have a local person on that committee
- Silent auction
- Marketing—especially to the academic world. The Call for Papers just opened (March 1), will close June 1.

In addition, help is needed the following areas:

- Meals. This will be the “greenest” conference ever. Public transportation will be easy.
- Plenty of opportunities to volunteer for the days of the conference. On the CNPS website, click on the conference icon to go to the symposium site.
- Registration will start in July

At CNPS.org, click on conference logo to go to the conference site. All the information is there and is being added on to daily.

Registration is \$250 to 300.

Landis: Keep the poster session open to non-students as well.

Jorgensen: People submitting abstracts are not asked whether they are students or not.

Landis: The Selection Committee should include representatives from all sectors.

Jorgensen: The committee has representatives from several sectors: academic, environmental, consulting.

Five sponsorship levels:

- \$20,000—Giant Sequoia
- \$10,000—Valley Oak

- \$5,000—Manzanita
- \$1,000—California poppy
- In-kind Sponsorship

One way chapters can help is by sponsoring students. Will be a place on the website. We really want to go after a younger group; will have a minorities button, too.

Logistics:

- Working on three possible speakers in addition to Gerome Ringo, our keynote speaker: John Muir Laws, Peter Raven and Steven Hubbard.
- 20 – 30 sessions—3 concurrent going on at all times. Sessions will be regional—vegetation, rare plants, land management, restoration, climate change, etc.
- Students activities:
 - Posters
 - Papers
 - Job and resume board
- Several workshops are already established, including **Illustration of Plants and Animals** by John Muir Laws, Carol Witham—**Vernal Pool Animals, CEQA and NEQA** workshops, **RSABG** workshop, **Jepson Herbarium** contributing one, Jim Nelson. Wide range of invitations out.
- Chapter help:
 - Add a link to the conference site from chapter webpage.
 - Sponsor student attendance
 - Become a sponsor
 - Volunteer to help marketing tasks
 - Put in newsletters (get the information from the web page)—keep it in front of the members.
 - Volunteer to be on a committee.
 - Volunteer at the conference.
 - Attend the conference and stay at the Sheraton.
- The conference will be directed to academics *and* everyone interested in conservation.

Stewart: This conference promotes the positive—strategies and solutions.

Bishop: The fee schedule should be looked at. It must be feasible for an ordinary member *not* on an expense account or otherwise subsidized to attend.

Crawford: It is going to be an expensive conference to put on. We have a number of ways to reduce the cost, but it is going to be expensive. The fee structure is not on the web page yet.

13. Earth Share—Lynn Houser

This is a federation of about 80 environmental organizations. There are about 80 different ones. Some are nationwide, some are very local. This provides unrestricted funds to CNPS by automatic payroll deductions.

The EarthShare volunteer coordinates with the regional office. They do a campaign in the Fall. They try to get everybody to sign up for payroll deductions to whatever organization they want. The amount is entirely optional. It can be designated to more than one organization. The employers in Sonoma County (the county is the biggest employer) make a really big deal about it.

The representative goes to events and makes a short presentation about CNPS and EarthShare. Milo Baker has had very good results with a minimum investment of time—16 hours last year, usually concentrated in September and October.

We should blanket the state with this. It's a really good way to get some more income. If you can get a company signed up, you will get a higher percentage the first year. You have to go through EarthShare's protocol.

To get involved, contact Lynn.

14. Annual Report—Halli Mason

- 28 chapters responded
- The report is online for all chapters.
- Announce it in the newsletter.
- Volunteer hours of all the chapters: the equivalent of 47 FTEs (full time employees).
- Early Bird award went to the Bristlecone Chapter

15. December Chapter Council Meeting Hosting—Jim Bishop

We need to make a decision about how we're going to handle the December meeting. We fell short of that in September. We need to agree to adopt the changes that were proposed in the hosting process to add the fourth chapter in the Bay Area hosting group.

- Delia Taylor reports that Mills College is a potential site for this year's meeting at considerably less cost than the Faculty Club. This group has to say that's the direction we want to go and the Santa Clara chapter has to say "yes" they will join in with East Bay, Yerba Buena, and Jepson. We do not have in place the responsible host chapter and the venue. That's got to happen soon.
- Kevin Bryant of the Santa Clara chapter is OK with that for 2008 though Mills is pretty far away for his chapter to be of much real assistance.
- Delia just wants someone else to be the lead this year.
- Yerba Buena is just across the bridge. Mills College is far for Santa Clara. The Yerba Buena delegate cannot commit yet.

Levine: We should provide some clarification as to the duties of the lead chapter.

Bishop: Someone may have to visit the site.

Do we agree with the shifts in chapters under the chapter-host groupings. [Chapter Council Meetings, the Hosting Process, sent out prior to the meeting.]

→ Action Item--Hosting Process: By a show of hands, these changes, as specified in the document, were approved.

Bishop: We need an answer by the end of the month. Larry has to know so that the logistics go out; Brad plans the meeting. Let them know. Larry will be the point person.

16. Open Forum—omitted

17. Announcements

Awards—Charlie Blair

Patt McDaniel—[Sorry, Charlie, I missed this. Can you fill in some details?]

Horticulture—Peggi Duvall

The state is setting aside \$200 per chapter to support native plant workshops. Forms to apply for these funds are on the website. This will be discussed further at the Horticulture Committee meeting.

Membership—Arvind Kumar

- Membership has increased by 300 members since December, but still is 200 less than January last year.

- Greatest growth in membership: Redbud, San Diego, and San Gabriel. Each was awarded a book.
- Membership cards are being prepared and will be distributed.
- **Pacific Horticulture** will publish our events. The Fall issue is in preparation so Fall events need to be sent in immediately.
- Membership renewal is now available on line and can be set for automatic renewal. This should be announced in newsletters.

Legislation—Vern Goehring

The Legislator of the Year award will be presented this coming Wednesday.

A new list of bills is out and on the website. The Legislative Committee will be identifying bills of concern. There are bills concerning wildfires and nursery regulation. The Legislative Committee will meet this afternoon.

Stewart: Genevieve Walton, recipient of several CNPS Educational Research grants, is requesting locations of *Phacelia ssp.*

Magney: Channel Islands has for sale beautiful note cards designed by Carlin Moyer. They can be purchased today or through the chapter.

Monterey Bay chapter: The annual Monterey Bay Spring Wildflower Show will take place April 18 – 20.

Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden: The RSABG Wildflower Show will take place Easter weekend, March 22 – 23. The Out of the Wild symposium is April 16 – 19.

Jenkins: The meeting is adjourned for lunch. We will reconvene here at 5:20. The Herbicide draft will be brought before the group once again.

Afternoon breakout sessions—see summaries following the minutes.

5:20 Reconvene

Reconsideration of Herbicide Policy

Bishop: Larry has worked on the text. We hope all the concerns have been met.

Basic change—back to the original point of item #2, which had to do with roadside spraying. The wording addresses these issues.

➔ **Action Item-- Herbicide Policy:** A motion is made and seconded (Britting/Stewart) to approve the policy. The motion carried with one opposed and no abstentions. (The opposed vote was due to a concern about lack of chapter reviews of the final text—a process concern.)

Recap of the day—what worked

The group as a whole felt that the afternoon breakout sessions were positive experiences.

Brown: Would like more roundtables where we can **all** discuss issues, more time for open forum.

McLean: A recap of the breakout sessions would be helpful since it was not possible to attend them all.

Bishop: More time to hear about the sessions.

Jenkins: Maybe we should have only two blocks of sessions rather than three, or shorter sessions.

Levine: Can we have reports now on the breakout sessions?

McLean: There are no minutes of those sessions. The chair of each committee that met should recap by email.

Britting: Leaders of today's sessions could write a two or three sentence summary and post it on the web.

Levine: Requests that the following groups submit summaries:

- Vern's group (legislation)
- Policy Committee

- Horticulture Committee
- Membership Committee

Houser: Can these be sent to Sarah so that they go out with the minutes?

Britting: They will be on the web.

Blair: If the topic is important enough to have a meeting, it is important enough for all to know.

Stewart: Is Sarah willing to add these mini-reports to the minutes?

Jayne: Yes, if they are pre-written.

June Meeting

- Date: June 7
- Place: Coloma in El Dorado County
- Motels in Placerville
- Group campgrounds in Lotus
- White-water rafting is available. We could arrange a half-day trip on Friday.

ACTION ITEMS:

→ **Action Item—Minutes for December 2007**, approved.

→ **Action Item—Invasive Plants Policy:** A motion to adopt **Wildland Invasive Plants, Integrated Weed Management** policy—Landis/Foster M/S—carried unanimously. [Full text available on at cnps.org]

→ **Action Item—Hosting Process:** By a show of hands, changes as distributed prior to meeting, were approved.

→ **Action Item—Herbicide Policy:** A motion is made and seconded (Britting/Stewart) to approve the policy. The motion carried with one opposed and no abstentions.

AFTERNOON BREAKOUT SESSIONS

Summary of Rare Plant Communities afternoon session discussion:

Donna Shorrock, CNPS state office vegetation ecologist, gave a brief overview of how rare plant communities are being considered by CNPS. Topics touched upon included the importance of conservation at the community level, existing tools for community conservation, the history of the program in the 1990s, and what is currently underway.

Some of the highlights of what activities the rare plant communities program is currently undertaking include:

1. *Formation of ad hoc advisory committee*
The committee has been engaged in ongoing discussions regarding several topics including how to define “rare” plant communities, developing methods to identify high priority areas for sampling/ conservation, establishing rare community mapping methods, and devising efficient ways to process and disseminate data that can be delivered and quickly assimilated into maps, which will be available for conservation and research purposes.
2. *Development of white (position) paper:*
 - To summarize previous work, identify needs, goals, and processes to meet them
 - Will be valuable in aiding CNPS with procuring funding for future work in rare plant communities
3. *Promoting utilization of systematic processes to identify, classify, and map rare community types* (e.g., using CNPS relevés and rapid assessment protocols to collect plot data)
4. *Acquiring examples of previous rare plant community projects*
 - Results may substantiate similar current or future projects
 - Demonstrate various ways communities have been defined
5. *Soliciting Chapter feedback* to inform the state office of local activities, identify areas where assistance is needed, and improve accuracy of current state list of rare alliances. Look for a questionnaire to be emailed to Chapter presidents and vegetation chairs/ rare plant botanists in the near future.

The final component of the discussion revolved around chapter needs and interests. For some, the topic of rare plant communities was brand new, while others had been working with rare communities for some time. Some of the comments from chapters are listed below.

Classification

- Do not want to lose Holland, because they include animal habitat that captures a different more general view (e.g., grasslands), and species-specific alliances may be not be general enough to maintain/capture the habitat that needs protection
- Holland system still better describes vegetation types than the alliance list (e.g., northern coastal scrub, coastal prairies)
- Some Chapters report both the habitat (Holland type) and the Alliance type in a document, to have broader term and the specific – to protect as broadly as possible (e.g., coastal sage scrub and those alliances that CA gnatcatcher is found within)
- Need better crosswalks between Holland and Alliance types

Conservation & Climate Change

- ESA is a great start for conservation for species, but it has led to postage stamp conservation of “ecological ghettos” that don’t really sustain the species and other related habitat elements – we should look ahead to focus upon plant communities to get ahead of the game on conservation
- CEQA is now starting to require people to address global climate change
- CNPS could get ahead of the game to look at communities and those that may be affected by climate change – we should look at the nexus of CEQA and those plant communities that we need to best protect where they may shift.
- Can really assess the ability to ID species level changes in types with climate change if we use Alliances and Associations
- Cal Poly SLO Climex (Scott Steinmaus) – model to look at distributions of species within communities to predict changes in communities, species, and invasive weeds

Questions that were presented in the session (ran out of time for responses) and which will be sent to chapters in questionnaire form:

CNPS – Rare Plant Community Questionnaire (follow-up to 2005 Veg Program questionnaire)

- 1) At the chapter level, what types of activities have you done that include rare plant communities? Are these plant communities rare locally (at the chapter or county level), statewide, or globally? How does this rank with other chapter activities in terms of importance?
- 2) Within your chapter, have you worked at the local level to get protection for rare plant communities? Are rare or threatened plant communities identified and included in environmental review and comment letters submitted by your chapter? What approaches or conservation tools have you used?
- 3) What roles has your chapter played in the development of HCP/NCCP and General Plan updates and/ or other planning processes for better identification/representation of rare vegetation/ communities? In your opinion, does the plan now offer adequate and specific protection of rare communities?
- 4) Are there any other groups or agencies in your chapter area working on identification and/or protection of rare plant community types?
- 5) Do you know of any rare communities that need to be described and protected in your chapter? Are they eminently threatened? Have you taken efforts to survey these communities, or do you need assistance with this? Locally, state, or globally rare?
- 6) What are your chapter’s primary needs for adequately identifying and documenting rare plant communities? Which is most limiting? People, information, or time?

Legislative Group

On March 8 afternoon, an informal group, made up of those we managed to round up at the last minute, met on the patio outside the Chapter Council meeting room. Vern went through the list of new Senate and Assembly bills he had handed out in the morning. He stressed that Green California, a consortium of State environmental lobbyists with which he participates, will be monitoring and preparing comments and positions on these, which will help CNPS in our efforts. While there are many that raise concerns, not all bad bills are real threats—this is due to the subject matter (been there before) or who the author is (no credibility on the issue). At present, some merit watchful concern, such as SB1295 (Ducheny, Coastal Commission), but others, especially SB1618 (Hollingsworth, Defensible Space), will probably not go far. San Diego CNPS helped craft SB1595 (Kehoe, Fuels Mgmt), and other chapters might want to check the language for regional appropriateness. Several bills pertaining to fire prevention were discussed in the Policy Committee session and SB1404 (Lowenthal, plant labeling) was reviewed in the Horticultural Committee session.

The Legislative Committee is currently reviewing a long list of newly introduced bills. All of these bills are available on the CNPS website if people are interested in helping to screen those of most interest to our mission.

Vern apologizes to members who might have wanted to be part of this meeting, but weren’t located in the brief time available for “rout up”. We urge them to contact Alison Schilling or Vern Goehring if they want to be on an email list for legislative updates.

A short report of the meeting on 08 March 2008 of the CNPS Program Policy Committee, Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Gardens

Attending the Program Policy Committee (PPC) meeting were: PPC members Katie Barrows, Betsey Landis, Jim Bishop, and guests Carol Witham, Celia Kutcher, Allison Schilling, Lauren Brown, Gabi McLean, Carolyn Longstreth, and Vern Goering.

The following topics were discussed (in no particular order), and the indicated actions taken or conclusions reached.

1. There is a need to revise the policy adoption process and policy format. The PPC will work on that.
 2. There is a need to update existing policies. The updating process will be the same as the adoption process, with a sponsor working with the PPC to bring the revised policy to the Chapter Council for their consideration. Carol Witham noted the existence of a list made 5 years ago of the policies needing updating. She will work with Jim Bishop to make the list available.
Vince Scheidt will sponsor the revision of the "Policy That CNPS Focuses on Plants". I think one other policy was proposed for updating, but I forget which policy and who volunteered to be the sponsor.
 3. It was suggested that there be a set of what amount to "policy abstracts" available to the media and the public on the CNPS website, that concisely state the policy without all the other materials.
 4. It was suggested that we need a policy on fire-safe practices that aims at sensible vegetation clearing requirements. Vern pointed out that there is no time for policy development, because the legislature is right now considering legislation on this topic. It was agreed that the only practical thing to do is to continue the conversation between Vern and several members who are informed on that subject, and to let the Legislative Committee be the focus of the current effort to influence the legislature.
 5. The most recent changes in the text of the Herbicide Policy were discussed and clarified, and members not yet familiar with the changes that Larry Levine had crafted since the morning discussion were encouraged to meet with Larry to see the current wording of the text.
 6. Lauren Brown volunteered to be a member of the PPC. Thank you Lauren!
- Respectfully submitted, from memory, Jim Bishop, Policy Committee Chairperson.

Nick Jensen's presentation on Rare Plants is attached separately.

Arvind Kumar's PowerPoint presentation on Membership is attached separately.

Sarah Jayne
Chapter Council Secretary