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**Subject:** Description of Statewide Volunteer Awards and Process

**Effective Date:** September 9, 2011

**Authorized by:** CNPS Board of Directors

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### **Introduction**

The Society values the people and organizations that support and promote its mission. The recognition awards described below are intended to highlight the work of people within and outside the organization. For each award, the intent of the award and the process for determining the recipient is described below.

We encourage CNPS Chapters to also recognize people or organizations that support CNPS Mission on a local or regional level. The following process may be used or Chapters may develop their own award and process for determining recipients.

### **CNPS Volunteer Recognition**

In an effort to recognize the ongoing commitment of CNPS's dedicated volunteers, Volunteer Recognition Awards will be presented to CNPS members, individually or a committee, who have assumed leadership roles and/or contributed in significant ways to CNPS programs.

With the exception of Leadership Awards, which are issued by the Executive Director, awards will be issued by the Board President, the Executive Director, or another member of the Board, with recommendations taken from Board or Council members, CNPS committees, CNPS Staff, and other knowledgeable people. Recommendations for various awards (except Leadership Excellence Awards, which are determined and issued by the Executive Director) may be submitted to the Volunteer Recognition Committee (VRC) throughout the year. The CNPS Legislative Consultant will assist in the evaluation of any candidates recommended for the Outstanding Agency Personnel and the Legislator of the Year awards. The VRC, with endorsement by the Board President, will evaluate candidates relative to award criteria and determine award recipients for all other categories.

Awards generally will be issued at Chapter Council meetings. Awards will consist of a framed certificate and any other item deemed appropriate.

### **Outstanding Agency Personnel**

This award honors agency staff who have provided extraordinary service in conservation of California's flora. Agencies are the keystone of native plant management in California through management of millions of acres of Federal, State, and privately owned lands and through implementation of our environmental laws and programs. CNPS recognizes that agencies can be difficult environments in which to achieve conservation due to budgetary, political and bureaucratic obstacles. This award celebrates both the recipients' conservation achievements and their determination and ability to do what is needed to conserve California's flora.

Formal solicitation for nominations will be distributed to Chapter Presidents, delegates, CNPS State Board Members and staff during the month of October each year. Recommendations should be submitted to the Volunteer Recognition Committee. The VRC will forward their recommendations on awards to the Executive Director and President. The nomination is approved by the Board of Directors in their November or December meeting.

Outstanding Agency Personnel Awards will be issued at the December or March Chapter Council meeting. Awards will consist of a recognition plaque and any other item deemed appropriate.

### **Legislator of the Year**

This award honors and recognizes a state or federal legislator who has contributed significantly to conserve and promote a public appreciation of California's native plant diversity.

This award is given in recognition of the pivotal role elected officials can play in promoting native plant conservation by their direct action through:

- sponsoring legislation which provides authority, funding and other support for scientific management and research, conservation planning and enforcement, recovery programs, and environmental education,
- sponsoring legislation which provides funding for acquisition and management of critical natural landscapes abundant in native plant species,
- sponsoring legislation that provides effective tools for site specific conservation and protection of native plants,
- promoting partnerships between government agencies, business entities and landowners, non-profit organizations, and the general public to ensure maximum native plant diversity for future generations,
- demonstrates a personal interest in promoting understanding and appreciation for native plants and their constant support of the California Native Plant Society's legislative efforts.

Formal solicitation for nominations will be distributed to Chapter Presidents, Delegates, CNPS State Board Members and staff during the month of October each year. Recommendations should be submitted to the Volunteer Recognition Committee by November 15. The VRC will evaluate the nominations, and forward their recommended nominee to the Executive Director and President. The nomination will be ratified by the Board of Directors in their December meeting.

Legislator of the Year Awards will be issued at the December or March Chapter Council meeting. Awards will consist of a framed photograph of a native plant or natural landscape, containing a small gold plate or other emblem with the following notation:

Honorable XXXXXXXXXXXX  
California Native Plant Society  
"Legislator-of-the-Year"  
20XX

### **Leadership Excellence**

This award honors and recognizes volunteers that have made a significant contribution(s) to the success of CNPS programs, including the essential administrative functions of the state office.

Nominations will be solicited from the CNPS staff, with final evaluation and award determination made by the CNPS Executive Director in consultation with the staff.

Awards may be presented at any appropriate opportunity throughout the year, and will consist of a recognition plaque or any other item deemed appropriate.

### **Excellence in Native Plant Horticulture**

This award honors and recognizes an individual or organization for their extraordinary contributions to furthering the implementation of CNPS's statewide goals and objectives in horticulture. The award recognizes the importance of helping Californians connect with native plants in their home and community landscapes as a strategy for furthering the CNPS mission, vision and goals. This is an annual award.

**Criteria:** Any individual or organization that has made significant contribution(s) to furthering CNPS's statewide objectives in horticulture during the past year is eligible. Nominees that have demonstrated a strong focus on outreach and education outcomes through statewide organizational work, service on state committees, regional event planning, or legislative advocacy that promotes the horticultural use of native plants will be given a strong preference for this award.

Nominations will be solicited by the Volunteer Recognition Committee in December and January of each year. Any CNPS member or member of the state staff may submit recommendations to the Volunteer Recognition Committee. The VRC will evaluate the nominations in consultation with the CNPS Horticulture Committee, and forward their recommended nominee to the Executive Director and President. The nomination will be ratified by the Board of Directors in their February or March meeting.

Annual Horticulture Awards will be issued at the March Chapter Council meeting or other appropriate location. Awards will consist of a recognition plaque and any other item deemed appropriate.

### **Conservation Advocate**

This award honors and recognizes the contributions of an individual or organization to the conservation of native plants. Conservation is the primary reason for CNPS's existence, and volunteer support in conservation advocacy is essential to achieving our statewide conservation objectives. This is an annual award.

**Criteria:** Any individual or organization that has made a significant contribution(s) to CNPS's statewide conservation objectives during the past year.

Nominations will be solicited by the Volunteer Recognition Committee in June and due to the VRC by July 15 of each year. Any CNPS member or CNPS staff person may submit recommendations to the Volunteer Recognition Committee. The VRC will evaluate the nominations in consultation with the CNPS Conservation Director, and forward their recommended nominee to the Executive Director and President. The nomination will be ratified by the Board of Directors in their August or September meeting.

Conservation Advocate of the Year Awards will be issued at the September Chapter Council meeting or other appropriate location. Awards will consist of a recognition plaque and any other item deemed appropriate.

### **Contributions to Plant Science**

This award honors and recognizes an individual or group of individuals who have made significant contributions to plant science over the past year.

**Criteria:** Contributions may include the following pertaining to California's flora and natural habitats/vegetation:

- Providing comprehensive and reliable scientific information
- Promoting and supporting sound ecological research, activities and practices towards maintaining and preserving large natural landscapes
- Mobilizing a committed and effective pool of people to actively generate and promote plant science research/resources

Nominations will be solicited by the VRC in June and July of each year. Any CNPS member or CNPS staff person may submit recommendations to the Volunteer Recognition Committee. The VRC will evaluate the nominations in consultation with the CNPS Vegetation Program Director and the CNPS Botanist, and forward their recommended nominee to the Executive Director and President. The nomination will be ratified by the Board of Directors in their September meeting.

Contributions in Plant Science Awards will be issued at the September Chapter Council meeting or other appropriate location. Awards will consist of a recognition plaque and any other item deemed appropriate.

**Summary of CNPS Volunteer Awards and Nomination and Presentation Schedule:**

<b>Award</b>	<b>Nomination Deadline</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Presentation Date</b>
CNPS Volunteer Recognition	None	Submit to VRC;	ongoing
Outstanding Agency Personnel	November 15	Submit to VRC	December CC or other public venue
Legislator of the Year	November 15	Submit to VRC	December CC or other public venue
Leadership Excellence	None	ED	Varies
Horticulture Volunteer	January 31	Submit to VRC	March CC
Conservation Advocate	July 31	Submit to VRC	September CC
Contributions in Plant Science	July 31	Submit to VRC	September CC