

WNPS Conservation Statement

The Washington Native Plant Society advocates for ecological land management practices and policies that conserve native plants and native plant habitats on public and private lands in Washington.

The mission of WNPS is to promote the appreciation and conservation of Washington's native plants and their habitats through study, education, and advocacy. Advocacy for native plants and their habitats is interpreted broadly. Advocacy includes, but is not limited to, endorsements, statements, research, and intervention activities that support the protection of native plant diversity, native habitats, and associated ecosystem services. When we advocate, our ethical obligations and value-based commitments require that we understand, use, and extend the scientific knowledge required to protect biodiversity and on-going evolution.

WNPS Conservation Principles

- For the purpose of WNPS conservation, native plants include all vascular plants, non-vascular plants, fungi, lichens, and algae that were present within the borders of Washington before Euro-Asian contact, generally regarded as circa 1850 in the Pacific Northwest.
- Native plant habitats are dynamic ecosystems that progress through stages of disturbance, regrowth, and maturity—thereby supporting species diversity over time. Native plant habitats are influenced by many locational factors including geography, altitude, climate, hydrology, connectivity, and proximity to human development. Policy-making that affects these and other factors are of justifiable concern to the WNPS conservation mission.
- Conservation advocacy promotes policies that are intended to preserve and protect native plant diversity, native habitats, and associated ecosystem services. Conservation policies may originate within the organization or from government, educational, or other agencies. The policies may: (1) promote adequate funding; (2) support regulations, incentives, and responsible citizenship; (3) include, but are not limited to, actions related to land acquisition, use designation, or management practices; (4) address conservation on both public and private land.
- Land management policies and decision-making shall incorporate best available science and site-specific information. Observation and monitoring are important sources of information in supporting or promoting the use of best available science. WNPS recognizes that information and understanding is not limited to the scientific establishment. Information and understanding may originate from citizen scientists, individuals, and communities. It may include documented observation or traditional knowledge that can be confirmed by use of the scientific method.
- Regional, national, and international practices and policies impact native plants and habitats in Washington. Advocacy that extends beyond Washington's geographic boundaries may justifiably support the WNPS conservation mission.
- Conservation advocacy is ongoing and often incremental. Effective advocacy may frequently involve working in partnership with other organizations and interests over significant time periods.

WNPS State Conservation Committee Charter

WNPS bylaws designate the State Conservation Committee as a standing committee. This committee is the responsible for defining and pursuing the conservation goals of the organization with the approval of the WNPS Board of Directors. WNPS standing committees consist of a chairperson, selected by the board of directors, and committee members selected by the committee chairperson. The WNPS conservation committee chairperson is a member of the WNPS state board of directors.

The WNPS Framework for Conservation: 2014-2019 guides the work of the Conservation Committee. It outlines goals and objectives that are intended to benefit the organization and that support its mission and this charter. It contains an implementation strategy that assigns responsibility and includes incremental and overall measurable achievement benchmarks. The Conservation Chair is responsible for producing an annual review of the current status of work on the framework objectives.

WNPS chapters are encouraged to form chapter conservation committees in scale with local chapter interests and resources. Chapter conservation chairs are members of the state Conservation Committee. Chapter conservation committees follow WNPS Conservation Committee policies but are encouraged to work on their particular conservation interests and issues.

WNPS and chapter conservation committees follow the directives of WNPS policies related to conservation advocacy. These policies contribute to continuity by helping ensure that committee work is consistent over time and across the organization. Some policies are used to guide the processes of the conservation committees and others are guides to conservation practices. Conservation committees are responsible for developing additional policies that facilitate advocacy that supports the WNPS mission and are within their interests and abilities. Policies should be regularly reviewed and updated in order to ensure they are consistent with WNPS current practices and best available science.

Conservation Committee policies guiding internal activities include:

- *Policy on Conservation and Endorsement Activities (Adopted 10/12/1996, revised and adopted 10/17/1998)*
- *Policy on the Review of Public Statements on Behalf of the Washington Native Plant Society (Revised and adopted 4/27/2013)*

Existing Conservation Committee policies on Conservation Practices include:

- *Policy on Plant Collection*
- *Policy on Grazing and Public Lands*

WNPS letters of concern or support are an additional important component of the collected knowledge of WNPS and are a significant source of guidance for conservation advocacy.

Summary: All Conservation Committee work is intended to benefit WNPS and uphold its mission.

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–Becky Chaney, WNPS Conservation Committee Chair