



Florida Native Plant Society

Conservation Committee Report Juliet Rynear

May 15, 2014 – Board of Director’s meeting, 6:00 – 7:00 pm
Location: FGCU South Village (SoVi) Dining Room
FNPS Annual Conference, Fort Myers, FL

Chair: Juliet Rynear

Vice Chair: Annie Schmidt

Members:

Jackie Rolly, Scott Davis, Richard Moyroud, Rosalind Rowe, Steve Dickman, Alan Franck, Sharon Carter, Shirley Denton, Jude Simpson, Jim Buckner, Karen Puracan, Todd Angel, Margitta Claterbos, Harriet Jones, Jane Pope, Molly Taylor, and Candace Arnold (have either committed to the committee or have participated in past FNPS Conservation Committee meetings, grant reviews, and/or special issues).

New member:

- We welcome Jackie Rolly to the Conservation Committee. Thank you Jackie for agreeing to help out and share your expertise!

FNPS Conservation Grants

- Grant agreements and W9s were mailed to the two applicants approved by the Committee for Conservation Grants in 2014.
 - Thomas Greene: **Mapping Wet Prairies and Rare Species of Point Washington State Forest – 2nd Year.** The 2nd year of this project will complete the mapping of larger wet prairies, complete the updating of historic Element Occurrences (EOs) of most rare or imperiled plant species, and continue mapping of new EOs of rare and imperiled plants, on the 15,000 acre Point Washington State Forest in south Walton County. Requesting \$1,470.
 - The Friends of Boyd Hill Nature Preserve (Barbara Stalbird): **Sand Scrub Conservation Project.** This project will evaluate the current health and diversity of the sand scrub at Boyd Hill Nature Preserve through a species inventory, an analysis of that inventory and recommendations for future management of the scrub in an effort to ensure the preservation of this imperiled native plant community. Requesting \$1,500.
- Juliet sent Kellie Westervelt information on the 2014 applicants for her grant report to the Jelks Family Foundation.

- Juliet responded to email from Whitney L. Davidson regarding the 2015 conservation grants and native landscaping on her property - she was wondering if her home landscaping project would be eligible for a conservation grant.
- Juliet responded to an email from Pam Michaels who asked whether her home landscaping project would qualify for a conservation grant.
- The committee would like to thank the following for their generous contributions to the FNPS Conservation Grant Awards:

Dade Chapter - in honor of Joyce and Don Gann	\$1,500.00
Suncoast Chapter (Tribute funds - in honor of Betty Wargo)	\$2,500.00
Jelks Family Foundation	\$1,500.00
Sea Rocket Chapter	\$500.00
Tarflower (in honor of Dick Deuerling)	\$1,000.00
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Annie Schmidt and John Stites	\$25.00
balance in account from 2013 carryover	<u>\$0.00</u>
	\$7,525.00

Conservation Grants work plan

- No action at this time.

Secure funding for the Division of Plant Industry’s Endangered and Threatened Plant Conservation Grants Program and maintain FNPS representation on the Endangered Plant Advisory Council (EPAC).

- No action at this time.

Defend the Endangered Species Act & Provide expert guidance to government agencies, and various private organizations

- Todd Angel gave a presentation “Flora, Fauna, and Fire: Fire Ecology in Florida” at the Heartland Chapter meeting on April 15th. This was an excellent presentation and he would be happy to give the talk to other FNPS Chapters. Many members would benefit from a better understanding of the importance of fire to our native plant communities.
- Annie Schmidt, Juliet Rynear, Steve Woodmansee, Jackie Rolly, and Shirley Denton responded to a request for help and advice from Leigh Brooks regarding collection/rescue of native plants from St. Joe property in north Florida which was slated for development. While the FNPS website Handbook Wiki states that “A plant rescue form has been developed by FNPS to be used to document landowner permission. This form should be signed and present on site while a plant rescue is being conducted,” we were unable to locate the form. Jackie Rolly shared the forms that she and the Tarflower Chapter have used and agreed to bring the forms to the annual conference for discussion at the Conservation Committee meeting. We hope to present a package to the Board for approval.
- Juliet responded to an alert from Marjorie Holt and Brooke Tringali regarding bulldozing of scrub habitat containing one of the last 9 remaining wild populations of *Lupinus aridorum* (Scrub Lupine) in Orlando. Juliet contacted US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), engineers for the Kerina Parkside Development, and left two messages with

the landowner's secretary. The bulldozing was unrelated to the development (which has not yet received permits) and occurred in a utility easement. Bok Tower Garden's Rare Plant Conservation Program will request permission from the landowner to rescue germplasm prior to development.

- Annie Schmidt, Juliet, and Anne Cox responded to an email from Leigh Brooks regarding an introduction of a state-listed plant species outside of its natural range. Leigh had tried to find an FNPS policy on the subject but could not. Steve Woodmansee shared a draft proposal that he had written a few years ago but that **was never finalized and never went to a vote before the Board**. The committee will work on Steve's draft and present it to the Board after further review.
- While "plant rescue" is addressed as a last resort in the FNPS 1988 policy on "Transplanting Native Plants from the Wild," there is a need to update the policy and to provide specific criteria for transplantation. For example, there should always be a plan in place that will address **(not an exhaustive list, just examples)**:
 - 1) Prior to rescue, there should be a designated recipient site chosen within the historical range of the rescued species and of the appropriate natural community.
 - 2) "Hardening-off" of transplants before reintroduction into another site.
 - 3) Recipient site should be protected from development.
 - 4) Recipient site should have a management plan in place to ensure initial and long-term survival of the plant community.
- Kellie Westervelt is working to set up another meeting with USFWS Larry Williams, Vivian Negron-Ortiz, Dave Bender, and Juliet Ryneer regarding the new policy direction that USFWS is planning regarding Florida's native plant species and to discuss current projects and opportunities.

Habitat preservation and land acquisition

- No action at this time.

Status Report on the development of a Plant Provenance Presentation

- In progress.

Website and Conservation page

- Juliet Ryneer began adding content to the new Conservation page; however, there is a problem with content showing up on both the initial and secondary pages.
- Juliet tried to update the Conservation Grant page to reflect the Fall 2013 Palmetto article update on the Swamp Fern Experimental Hammock project; however, still cannot get the formatting to be consistent on the Conservation Grants page. Must work out "bugs" before attempting an update.
- Richard Moyroud wrote a summary of the history and functions of the Endangered Plant Advisory Council (EPAC) and included highlights of the Council's successes over the past 20 years. The summary will be posted on the new Conservation page as soon as we get the "bugs" worked out.

Request input and vote from Board of Directors (remove from Consent Agenda)

- ❖ Regarding funds donated to the Conservation Grants – could we implement a formal mechanism for roll-over of unused funds from one year to the next? This would eliminate some current confusion, make it clear to chapters that their donations are being used for only the Conservation Grants, and make the budgeting process easier.