

**Summary of the Board Meeting Minutes  
November 14, 2009**

Committee Chairs reported the following:

**Annual Meeting:**

- Annual Meeting and Silent Auction were quite successful and actually made money for the Society! Congratulations to all.

**Conservation:**

- Chair Tom Grant gave an update on our participation in the lawsuit for *Penstemon grahamii*. He also requested clarification of the Conservation Committee role.

**Education & Outreach:**

- Presented a program entitled "Natural Areas Vegetation Management in Local Government Park Systems in the Colorado Front Range: an Ecological Approach" to about 50 people at the Colorado Open Space Alliance annual meeting in September.
- Currently working on a separate presentation with the Native Plants Committee of the Colorado Weed Management Association annual meeting in December, "Weeds on the Wild Side", which will detail how to recognize and evaluate native plant communities, including the identification of early feral species, and they are gearing up for a slightly modified version of the Vegetation Management presentation for the ProGreen Expo in February.
- John Vickery is continuing to develop a list of "Prairie Dog Survivors", tenacious natives and non-noxious non-native plants that tolerate or flourish in prairie dog colonies.
- The E&O committee would love to have more Board and/or member involvements with the presenting of programs similar to those mentioned, and they are compiling a list of upcoming conferences and symposia.

**Finance:**

- Quarterly report shows good receipts and control of expenses in the checking account, so income is in good shape. Since the economic downturn, interest generated from the endowments to the Research Grants' programs is down. Treasurer is researching how to maintain these funds.

**Field Trips, Field Studies and Workshops:**

- New "Guidelines for Submitting Material for the CoNPS Web Site" for the Committee Chairs are now on our website at [http://conps.org/about\\_this\\_web\\_site.html](http://conps.org/about_this_web_site.html)

**Workshops:**

- Offering a free workshop for hosting has had limited success. Henson will ensure this season is completed. A new Chair is needed by January 2010 to create the next season. Training is available.

Agenda Items:

- **Introductions**
  - A welcome by Boyce was made to new At-Large Director Carol English, and Jan Turner was welcomed for another term.
- **Renewal and Reinvigoration of the Society**
  - Issues and problems that various Board members have voiced their dissatisfaction over recently in regard to the direction that the Society seems to be moving toward:
    - Lack of commitment by Board members in follow-through and attention to detail
    - Lack of members to volunteer to take the lead on various tasks within the Society
    - The Society as a state-wide organization is largely invisible to members. Because there is no statewide communication, only Chapter contact, excitement about plants in general and energy for participation is low.
    - Membership numbers should be higher, to increase the number of people who care about plants.

- Some possible solutions/action plans:
  - Board members were asked to renew their commitment to the Society and the plants of Colorado
  - Immediate needs are for Committee Chairs and Chapter Presidents to make sure their web pages are updated, and to send favorite links and botanical news, including job announcements, to the Webmaster.
  - Defining what we do best or at least what we offer that members value (providing learning about native plants) is key.
  - Engaged members who care and can help conserve protect plants is the broader picture that the statewide organization can bring through education. We would be more successful if more of our members would become active volunteers.
  - To move the Society forward, a continuity of contact must be started. The contact needs to be a two-way conversation with members asked to specifically respond to a question or offer ideas. To be effective, this contact must come from the President. Responses from members must go directly to the President.
    - **How to communicate:** Once a month e-news was desired. Board to contribute items by the first Saturday of the month to the President. President to create and send to Adm Assistant for statewide emailing.
    - **What to communicate:**
      - Hot topics or exciting information about plants
      - Chapter updates
      - Education opportunities
  - To build membership:
    - Provide incentives
    - Provide a certain number of free memberships
    - Target the Native Plant Master Program
    - Reach new audiences: university herbaria and departments. Collaboration with other initiatives and organizations in conservation may lead to more energy and members.
    - Student involvement seems to energize organizations and helps increase membership. A recruitment effort from area colleges is needed. Having students do presentations and posters can be a source of recruitment.
    - Beginning wildflower id workshops can work but good publicity needs to be outside our own Society.
    - Outreach to schools about native plants using an already prepared presentation. Perhaps responding to requests can create opportunities and energy for volunteers.
  - Retention of current members is also critical. Chapters request that non-renewing members NOT be dropped from the Society's roles. Perhaps moving them to a sub-list is needed. Keeping lapsed members on list to receive both Chapter news and President's letter may help bring them back.
  - Help chapters share success with each other about speakers, trips projects etc. via email distribution lists.

#### Chapter Reports:

#### **Boulder Chapter:**

- Pat Murphy proposed having a special fund for erecting a bench in Ann Armstrong's honor in Boulder. Discussion followed: is it legal for CoNPS to do this? Will Boulder accept the money from us? Why doesn't Boulder collect the money? Pat is going to find answers.

**Southeast Chapter:**

- "Reestablishment" of the Chapter with 4 monthly meetings and 9 field trips for 2009.
- Meeting attendance ranged between the mid teens to the mid twenties. Field trip participation averaged 13 persons with most trips in the mid to high teens.
- Membership has increased to 61.
- 2010 Plans:
  - 5 meetings and at least 9 field trips
  - Document field trips with digital photography, species lists and herbaria vouchers.
  - Create a "Virtual Field Trip" Internet site with digital photography uploads.
  - Create an internet nexus for people who want to get together for impromptu field trips.

**Southwest Chapter:**

- Twelve field trips for 2009.
- Worked with the Natural Areas Program of the state of Colorado to protect an area that is home to two rare Colorado plants.
- Very good attendance at 3 programs during the fall, winter, and spring of 2008-2009.
- Working with BLM to place informational signs in Colorado Plateau hanging garden alcoves to help educate the public about protecting the plants.
- Working with the Fort Lewis College Center of Southwest Studies to help sponsor the new botanical art exhibit, "Rare: Imperiled Plants of Colorado".
- Working with the Colorado Mountain Club in its efforts to build trail on sections of Engineer Mountain.
- Working to protect several rare species in Lone Mesa State Park. Several square miles of the Park and these species (all recently discovered) are threatened by a proposed dam on Plateau Creek.
- Ran free wildflower programs in Durango and Cortez.