

WHY PROTECT NATIVE PLANTS?

A spectacular array of native plants grace the landscapes of our continent. Together, these plants form diverse communities and ecosystems that directly support our economic prosperity and quality of life. No matter how small, all plants play a valuable role in our lives.

Ecological Values: Native plants convert the sun's energy into food; thus they are the source of all food to the animal kingdom. Plants cycle and clean fresh water upon which terrestrial animals depend, and ensure soil stability for ecosystems. We depend on plants to provide the oxygen that all living organisms require.

Economic Values: Plants are sources of genetic and raw materials that are used to expand or diversify agricultural and industrial products, including foods and medicine. Native plants provide a storehouse of genetic diversity for future exploration, discovery, and use, to meet human needs.

Aesthetic Values: The beauty of wildflowers is just one of the many aesthetic values of native plants. The presence of plants in their native habitats and in cultivation enhances our world in many ways. Native plant communities and natural areas provide opportunities for people to experience nature.

Ecological research has yielded only limited understanding on the complexities of our ecosystems. Each plant, each component, is essential to maintaining ecosystem integrity. It is impossible to know the full ramifications of the loss of one or more species in this intricate biological web of life.



LEFT: Nichol's Turk's-head cactus (*Echinocactus horizonthalonius* var. *nicholii*) is an endangered species under the care of the Center for Plant Conservation in its National Collection of Endangered Plants.

COVER: An Apprenticeships in Science and Engineering intern works with The Berry Botanic Garden and USDA Forest Service to collect seeds of rare Indian rice (*Fritillaria camschatcensis*) from a Mt. Hood meadow in Oregon.

PCA GRANT PROGRAM

Since 1995, PCA has worked with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to fund a challenge grant program for plant conservation issues. This program has funded more than 300 projects totaling over \$14 million in plant conservation work on or near federal lands. To learn more, go to www.nps.gov/plants/nfwf/.

PCA Federal Members include:

Bureau of Land Management, Department of Defense, Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Highway Administration, National Park Service, USDA Agricultural Research Service, USDA Forest Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Geological Survey.

PCA's Cooperators include:

Over 260 botanical gardens, native plant societies, trade and professional associations, businesses, educational groups, nonprofits, landscape architects, local government and tribal agencies.

PCA is the North American Plant Specialist Group

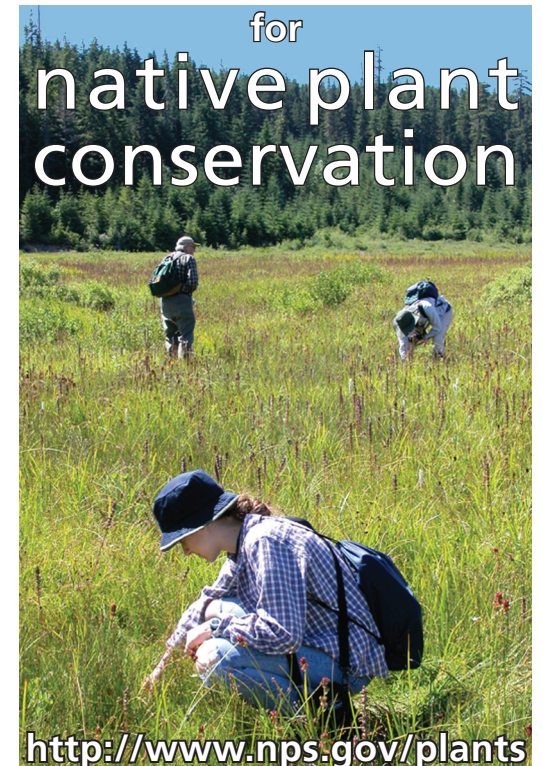
IUCN

The World Conservation Union SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION



Plant Conservation Alliance

BUILDING A STRONG STRATEGY



PLANT CONSERVATION ALLIANCE'S NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Conserving the biodiversity and health of native plants and ecosystems is essential to sustain the natural resource base upon which we depend for survival. There is an urgent need to develop effective plant conservation programs before more species and communities become critically endangered. Native plant conservation strategies are not only needed to protect the most imperiled species, but to ensure the long-term survival of all native plant species and plant communities.

Organizations and individuals interested in native plant conservation need to pool resources and combine energies to develop innovative approaches to ensure the continued existence of our plant resources. When established PCA noted that most plant conservation efforts lacked focus and were fragmented among federal agencies, states, conservation groups, botanical gardens, academia, and private individuals.

The national Plant Conservation Alliance provides a framework and strategy for linking resources and expertise in developing a coordinated national approach to plant conservation.

This strategy is intended to be an evolving one that motivates thinking and catalyzes action toward plant conservation. Initially, six broad strategies and supporting goals and actions have been identified to launch the initiative, and suggested actions and opportunities have been identified to guide efforts for implementing the National Framework. Different priorities will guide implementation at national, regional, and local levels.

The Plant Conservation Alliance mission:

"To protect native plants by ensuring that native plant populations and their communities are maintained, enhanced, and restored."

Below is a summarized comparison of the common goals of the Plant Conservation Alliance's National Framework and the Convention of Biological Diversity's Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

PLANT CONSERVATION ALLIANCE NATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Adopted 1995

GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION

Adopted 2002

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

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| A. Build diverse partnerships. Share resources and talents. Work to promote consistent policies and increase funding. | xv. Increase numbers of trained people working in plant conservation. xvi. Establish and strengthen regional, national and international networks. |
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CONNECTING PEOPLE & PLANTS

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| B. Help people understand, enjoy, and value native plants and communities. Educate the public, policy makers and land managers. Create events and encourage hands-on activities. | xiv. Incorporate importance of plant diversity in communication, education and awareness programs. |
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CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES

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| C. Promote ecosystem management. Protect significant habitats. Control invasives. Develop native materials. Provide <i>ex situ</i> collections of imperiled species. Provide Training. | iv. Conserve world's ecological regions. v. Protect important plant diversity areas. vii. Conserve threatened species <i>in situ</i> . viii. Establish <i>ex situ</i> collections. x. Manage major invasive species. |
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ENCOURAGING RESEARCH

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| D. Encourage more botanists for research and technology development. Assess needs. Coordinate monitoring and adaptive management. Maintain herbaria. | iii. Use research and experience to develop models with protocols for plant conservation and sustainable use. xv. Increase numbers of trained practitioners, and facilities. |
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PROMOTING SUSTAINABILITY

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| E. Determine and encourage appropriate and sustainable use. Document indigenous knowledge. | vi. Conserve plant diversity on production lands. ix. Maintain genetic diversity of crops & major socioeconomic plants and associated indigenous knowledge. xi. Remove endangerment from international trade. xii. Sustainably manage sources of plant-based products. xiii. Halt decline of plant resources supporting sustainable livelihoods, food security, and health care. |
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MAINTAINING GOOD DATA

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| F. Coordinate and promote datasharing and compatible, economical and efficient databases. | i. Compile and synthesize working lists of known plant species. ii. Finish preliminary assessments of conservation status of known plant species. |
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