



## THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA

### POSITION PAPER — 2005

*The Garden Club of America supports independent, academic, peer-reviewed scientific research as the basis for formulation of responsible public policy and legislation, as well as appropriate funding to ensure quality results.*

### GCA SUPPORTS OUR NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

The Garden Club of America believes that our country's national parks are irreplaceable treasures whose value is incalculable. As important and meaningful symbols of our American heritage and culture, our parks must by law be managed by the federal government under a mandate of conservation stewardship. The National Park Service is directed by the Organic Act of 1916 and the Redwoods Act of 1978 to ensure that our natural and cultural park resources and values will continue to exist in a condition that allows the American people the opportunity to enjoy them forever.

Distinguished from other public lands which are available for multiple uses, the National Park System exists solely for the purpose of conservation of scenery and natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for future generations. Therefore, our National Parks deserve the highest possible level of protection. While recreation and inspiration are important components of a national park experience, the NPS Management Policy Manual makes the conservation of resources its first priority. The Garden Club of America appreciates the intent of Congress in establishing the National Park System and respectfully reminds Congress of its responsibility for funding the operations of the entire park system.

Therefore, The Garden Club of America supports:

#### Strengthening Public Policy to:

- Place a priority on conservation, education, and preservation.
- Foster biodiversity and the protection of native plant communities.
- Include adequate funding for botanists to inventory plant communities.
- Protect national parks from exploitation and pollution.
- Encourage ecologically compatible use of lands surrounding parks and collaboration with neighboring communities.
- Meet annual funding needs as well as make up for previous funding deficiencies and cumulative shortages.
- Provide sufficient federal personnel for NPS programs by assuring adequate funding of federal staff.
- Protect visibility and viewshed in all parts of our national park system.
- Fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the use of the federal portion of that fund for its intended purpose, the purchase and restoration of public lands.

#### Managing National Parks to:

- Prevent, control and eradicate invasive plants.
- Make available the tools and training needed to maximize the effectiveness of park managers.
- Encourage professionalism in educators and public awareness of the need for resource protection.

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The purpose of The Garden Club of America is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to share the advantages of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence and publications, and to restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment through educational programs and action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement.