

November 3, 2010

Fon Duke
DOD Coordinator
Desert Managers Group
2701 Barstow Road
Barstow, CA 92311

Russell Scofield
DOI Coordinator
Desert Managers Group
PO Box 2205
Yucca Valley, CA 92286

Dear Mr. Duke and Mr. Scofield,

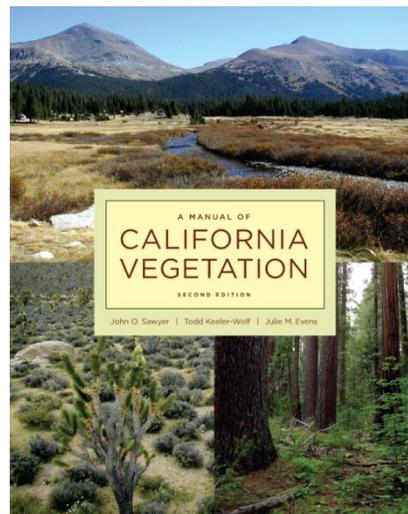
The recent publication of *A Manual of California Vegetation, 2 Edition (MCV)* is the results of more than ten years of active work in updating the CNPS signature publication on vegetation for the state. This new guide to California's plant communities focuses on both individual species and their surrounding habitat.

We are writing to ask you to place a request for funding for this project on the agenda for the Desert Managers Group meeting. CNPS asks the Desert Managers Group for support in the amount of \$9,600. This figure is based on the total cost of the program (\$64,000) and the proportion of California that is desert (15%).

We want to enlist the support of the Desert Managers Group in taking the next step toward digitizing the information housed in the print edition and making it available in an online database. This online resource will display continually updated descriptions, synthesized data, photographs, and range maps for over 480 plant communities known to occur in the state –this is **information found nowhere else online!** Users would be able to produce their own lists of vegetation types by region through a set of simple online functions, and find pertinent information about specific vegetation types, plant species, regional distributions, or other characteristics of interest.

Since information from the first edition of *A Manual of California Vegetation* went online in 1997, advances in computer software and internet technology have been extensive. The tools and resources available for the second edition of the *Manual* will surely be unmatched in quality and usability.

The CNPS Vegetation Program has developed a plan to put the second edition of the MCV online in a way that will enable users to make full use of the enormous increase in knowledge and data since the *Manual* was first published in 1995. The objectives of this upgrade include:



- Updating the data platform to current technological standards, which will allow immediate displays of the most current information on California vegetation;
- Adding intuitive search capabilities as well as custom reporting functions for people to easily access and use the data;
- Providing a parallel display and eventual interface with the soon-to-be upgraded Online Inventory of Rare Plants, allowing the two databases to complement each other and providing comparative data between the Rare Plant and Vegetation programs.

In addition, our knowledge of plant communities continues to expand as CNPS and others assess and map vegetation in different parts of the state. Web applications will enable us to display new information compiled from both internal and external sources. By developing efficient tools to receive new information from users, such as consulting biologists and citizen scientists, we also will be able to update our databases and post new information more readily. By establishing online communication links, we can continue to quantify, describe, map, and evaluate our vegetation resources through an innovative and useful online system.

CNPS has already raised \$24,000 in dedicated funding from a private donor, and \$11,500 from public entities (State Parks Foundation, the Nature Conservancy, and Save the Redwoods League) but we need your help to fund the additional \$28,000 needed to ensure completion of the project. You supported the work necessary to complete the 2nd edition of Manual of California Vegetation, please also consider making a financial contribution to develop the online database for the Manual.

All donors who contribute \$1,000 or more will be awarded an Inaugural Organizational Membership at the appropriate level (the benefits of our new organizational memberships is attached as a second pdf). Organizational supporters will also be acknowledged on the CNPS website and in the CNPS Bulletin issue containing the announcement of the kickoff of the new online resource. Contributions of \$2,500 will also qualify for a clickable listing on the Online Manual Landing Page. Contributions of \$5,000 or more will include a more prominent listing and a logo if desired.

Thank you, in advance, for helping us take this next step in sharing and building on the wealth of information contained in the Manual of California Vegetation, 2nd edition. Please call me at (916) 447-2677, extension 201, with any questions and to discuss your sponsorship commitment.

Sincerely,

Tara Hansen
Executive Director