



THE GARDEN CLUB of AMERICA

## THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA POSITION PAPER

*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.*

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### NATIONAL PARKS

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.

The National Park System is directed "to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wildlife therein and to provide 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 intention of Congress in establishing the National Park System and respectfully reminds Congress of its responsibility for fully funding the operations of the entire park system. Therefore, The Garden Club of America supports federal, state, and local legislation and policy that addresses the following:

#### CONSERVATION AND BIODIVERSITY

- Placing a priority on conservation, education, and preservation.
- Fostering biodiversity and the protection of native plant communities and whole ecosystems within and around the parks.
- Including adequate funding for botanists to inventory plant communities.
- Protecting national parks from exploitation, pollution, and the effects of climate change.
- Enhancing new units that protect natural resources, including native plants and wildlife, and promote natural and cultural resource protection within urban communities.
- Encouraging ecologically compatible use of lands surrounding parks and collaboration with neighboring communities.
- Establishing corridors to enable migration of wildlife adapting to climate change.
- Ensuring the President's authority under the Antiquities Act is preserved in order to swiftly protect lands and waterways as well as historic and cultural sites.

#### MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

- Meeting annual funding needs as well as make up for previous funding deficiencies and cumulative shortages.
- Providing sufficient federal personnel for NPS programs by assuring adequate funding of federal staff.
- Protecting visibility and view sheds in all parts of our national park system.
- Provide full, permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund of 1965 and use the federal portion of the funds for its intended purpose: the purchase of public lands.
- Preventing, controlling, and eradicating invasive plants.
- Planning for the future by encouraging managers and superintendents to engage the public in general management and other activity-level planning efforts.
- Making available the tools and training needed to maximize the effectiveness of park managers.
- Encouraging professionalism in educators and public awareness of the need for resource protection.
- Controlling animal populations where necessary to restore balance to the park ecosystem.

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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.*