



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.

CLEAN WATER

The Garden Club of America recognizes that all life is dependent upon clean, uncontaminated water. We support the original objective of the 1972 Clean Water Act to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation’s waters.” We recognize that a watershed-based approach is an important way to achieve this goal.

Despite outstanding progress since 1972, more than one third of the waters in the United States still do not meet minimum standards. Contamination from industry, agriculture, resource extractions, water providers, and households is growing faster than our institutional ability to set and enforce standards. The proliferation of excess nutrients and toxic substances pollutes our rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. Critical wetlands loss and urban and agricultural run-off have increased the pollution and sediment load in our waters. Water quantity is also a problem, exacerbated by climate change. In many parts of the country, water supply is endangered by droughts, overdrafting of groundwater supplies, and diversions of scarce surface water for agricultural use and for continuing commercial and residential development.

The protection of freshwater resources is necessary to ensure the availability of an adequate supply of freshwater both now and in the future. In order to protect our water resources, promote water conservation and reuse, and prevent pollution, The Garden Club of America supports federal, state, and local legislation and policy that addresses the following:

WATER POLLUTION REDUCTION:

- Ensuring a vital Clean Water Act including broad jurisdictional coverage.
- Reducing point-source pollution from industry and sewage treatment plants.
- Reducing nonpoint-source pollution from urban and agricultural runoff.
- Reducing airborne pollutants that degrade water quality.
- Enforcing strict water quality standards and pollution permits.
- Improving funding for clean water programs.

ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION:

- Restoring and preserving the nation's surface water.
- Protecting groundwater.
- Preserving and protecting wetlands, including strict standards for any method of wetland alteration.
- Providing incentives for the creation and preservation of riparian buffer areas.
- Developing national and global policies to protect coastal waters and the world's oceans.
- Ensuring sufficient instream flows and natural flow patterns to sustain the integrity of river systems.

SAFEGUARDING OF HUMAN HEALTH:

- Protecting America’s drinking water and educating the public regarding its contents.
- Supporting infrastructure improvements that give all citizens access to safe drinking water.

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.