

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

FNPS POLICY ON ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM

The conservation policy statement adopted by FNPS states, "It is the specific role of the FNPS to promote understanding of the dependency the people of Florida, the nation, and the world have on native plant communities" and, "the preservation and perpetuation of native plant communities is our highest priority."

One of the strengths of the FNPS is the diversity of its membership, but the variety of their interests can lead to differing perspectives on some issues. In an effort to accommodate the viewpoints of its membership and to build and maintain a reputation for credibility and effectiveness, the board has established this policy to guide the society and its chapters when controversial issues arise.

The society can have the greatest influence in behalf of the preservation and perpetuation of native plant communities by educating its members, other organizations, governmental agencies, developers, and the general public. The environmental consequences of various courses of action are poorly understood by the public, especially where plant communities are concerned. FNPS is the organization best equipped to explain these choices. FNPS members are also in a position to provide expertise to the environmental activist organizations to which they belong. They can also

provide factual input to governmental bodies as they formulate policies and laws concerning land use, acquisition, and management. Positive efforts such as education and persuasion should take precedence over confrontation in efforts to reach our goals.

However, there will be times when members of FNPS will want to take a public stand on some issues they consider vital to the future of Florida's native plant communities. FNPS members, as individuals, are encouraged to take an active role in environmental action, using knowledge and expertise gained through membership in the society. However, members and chapters are requested not to speak in the name of the Florida Native Plant Society unless authorized by the FNPS board. The board will carefully consider all such proposals in the light of the long-term well-being of the native plant communities of Florida and the best interests of the FNPS. In the interest of information and coordination, chapters are urged to furnish the board with regular reports of environmental issues on which they are taking action or planning to do so in the future.

*Adopted by the FNPS board,
October 22, 1983.*

● Jane Brooks
Conservation Chairman