

Myrna P. Steinkamp Memorial Fund

Approved 4/06

An Endowment for the Support of Small Grants

On September 22, 2000, the Board of Directors (the Board) of the Colorado Native Plant Society (the Society) established the Myrna P. Steinkamp Memorial Fund (the Fund), renaming the Rare Plant Book Fund in memory of Dr. Steinkamp. A founding member of CoNPS who worked on behalf of the Society for many years in a variety of capacities, Myrna Steinkamp participated in the preparation of both editions of the Society's publication, *Rare Plants of Colorado*. The financial source of the Myrna P. Steinkamp Memorial Fund was the Rare Plant Book Fund, supplemented by donations from members of the Society. The following guidelines, adopted on March 17, 2006 by the Board, govern the management and use of the Fund:

Purpose: The Steinkamp Fund will provide small grants for research and other activities that will benefit the rare plants of Colorado. Within the confines of a research environment, the Fund will advance the Society's mission to promote the appreciation and conservation of Colorado's native flora, particularly when compatible research needs have been identified by organizations such as the Colorado Natural Heritage Program or Colorado Natural Areas Program. Funds may be awarded for field or laboratory studies.

Frequency of Awards: The Society makes awards on an annual basis for several reasons:

- an annual funding cycle is commonplace and helps researchers coordinate their grant solicitations with other funding opportunities for the upcoming year;
- most field research occurs during the active growing season, making a more frequent grant cycle less desirable;
- an annual cycle is frequent enough to generate regular publicity for the Society; and
- an annual cycle is infrequent enough to reduce the burden on the selection committee.

The Society strictly refuses to receive grant requests at any other time in order to fully evaluate each proposal fairly against the quality of other competing proposals, to prevent becoming the last source of hope for failing projects, and to limit the burden on the evaluation committee.

Solicitation of Appropriate Projects: The Society issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) each winter and also publicizes the grant process through the *Aquilegia*. The Society chooses to actively solicit proposals from the research community because:

- active solicitation may attract a number of higher quality proposals from which the Society may choose

- active solicitation may help to publicize the Society which may in turn attract new members from Colorado's research community; and
- greater knowledge of the Fund may result in greater contributions to the Fund.

Deadlines for receipt of grant proposals and final selections are made during the winter so that:

- recipients can receive funds in time to utilize them fully; and
- denied applicants have time to make other arrangements for the upcoming field season.

Management of the Fund: The Society strives to be fiscally responsible and finds that enlarging the real-dollar worth of the Fund is desirable. Consequently, the Society ~~annually awards only a portion of the interest accrued on the principal of the Fund. The awarded portion is equal to the interest earned that year, minus a portion of interest equal to the annual rate of inflation for that year (this portion remains with the principal). may award a maximum of 3% of the total value of the fund annually.~~ This preserves the spending power of the Fund so that the Society will always have the opportunity to spend, in real dollars, an amount equal to or greater than that amount spent in previous years. In the event that sufficiently acceptable proposals are not submitted during a particular grant cycle, the Society capitalizes all remaining accrued interest.

The annual amount available to grantees depends largely upon the revenue generated by the Fund annually and the receipt of sufficiently acceptable proposals. Any contributions or donations to the Fund are immediately added to the principal rather than spent. While this may hamper the Society's ability to fund proposals in the short-term, it allows the Fund to grow more rapidly so its funding capacity is enlarged in the long-term. Note that the Board may supplement the interest earned from the principal of the Fund with annual operating funds in order to enlarge the amount available for grants in any one year. The Board may also direct Society funds be used to increase the principal of the Fund at any time.

The Society Treasurer shall be responsible for investing the assets of the fund in such stocks, bonds, mutual funds, CDs or other financial vehicles as appropriate, subject to the review and approval of the President, Vice President and Secretary (and other member volunteers), who shall provide oversight of the Treasurer's investment activities.

Project Selection: The Society annually develops an RFP that indicates the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate competing grant proposals. The criteria are simple and submitted proposals should reflect this in their brevity. Among other things, an applicant is expected to address the question of how their research will promote the appreciation and conservation of Colorado's rare native flora. Furthermore, an explanation of how this work fits in with described or, as of yet, undescribed research needs in Colorado or the world is expected.

Requirements of Grant Recipients: Grant recipients and advisors of student recipients must be members of the Society. Many grant programs require a progress update, a final report, and resulting published materials, and credit for any work performed toward which the organization has contributed (in presentations and written materials). These all seem like reasonable requests, but the Society weighs the burden imposed by such requirements against the (small) amount of the award. The Board requires awardees to submit an article for publication in *Aquilegia* and assurances that appropriate credit will be given to the Society as a financial sponsor of the research. Additional requirements may include one public presentation at either the annual meeting or an appropriate chapter meeting as well as leading a field trip.

Administration of the Fund: The Chair of the Research Grants Committee, a volunteer without conflicts of interest who is appointed by the Board, will administer the RFP process and selection of grant recipients from both the Marr and Steinkamp funds. The committee chair will perform the following duties on an annual basis:

- organize an evaluation committee to prepare a preliminary review and rank all proposals;
- send a Request for Proposals (RFP) to the editor of *Aquilegia* and to the webmaster, for posting on the Society's web page;
- send the RFP to a list of academic and agency contacts;
- send the recommendations of the evaluation committee as well as project abstracts to all members of the Board and elected officers;
- prepare and send correspondence to all applicants as needed;
- ensure that all grantees fulfill their responsibilities (a summary of their research to be printed in *Aquilegia* and posted on the Society web page, field trips, etc.); and
- present a report to the Board detailing the research and activities of the grantees.

Enlargement of the Fund: The Fund should be enlarged. The Board believes in the need for the Fund and the work it supports; therefore, it will identify ways to enlarge the Fund so as to strengthen its funding capabilities.

Objective:

Request for Proposals - The John W. Marr and Myrna P. Steinkamp Funds

The Colorado Native Plant Society supports research projects in plant biology from the John W. Marr and Myrna P. Steinkamp funds. These separate funds honor the late Dr. John Marr, Professor at the University of Colorado and the first President of the CONPS, and Myrna Steinkamp, a founding member of CONPS who worked on behalf of the Society for many years in a variety of capacities. Both funds were established to support research on the biology and natural history of Colorado native plants by means of small grants. The Steinkamp Fund targets rare species and those of conservation concern. Both field and laboratory studies are eligible for funding. Thanks to the generous contributions of many members and supporters, a total of nearly \$3,000 is available, although

individual awards will not exceed \$1,000. Recipients of the awards must agree to summarize their studies for publication in *Aquilegia*.