



“PLANTING INFO ...”

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POSITION PAPERS, A GLANCE BACK, and DEAD ZONES

POSITION PAPERS:

Again, What are they? Where are they? What on earth do they have to do with me?

Review and refresh: In using GCG Position Papers as a jumping off spot for the Environmental Issues of PLANTING INFO ... for the Hersey term, attention is directed to these documents - sometimes organizations call them White Papers. They are GCG's backbone and a vital implement in the garden club toolbox. Many members still aren't familiar with them.

WHAT ARE THEY? Position Papers are statements setting forth the details of where GCG stands on many issues and what it would like to have become law and/or public policy and private practice, all with a focus on the environment and its conservation. They describe broad details of what GCG believes and practices after it proclaims *Beautification ... Conservation ... Education* as its Mission.

WHERE ARE THEY? They are embedded within the GCG website. Go to the website home page for two ways to find them.

1. On the left side of that page, in the list in green on a green background, find and click on Projects and Programs; next to appear is a list on green again that includes Legislative Advocacy and Issues; click on that to find GCG Position Papers. Scroll down that bulleted list to find each Paper and click on the one you search for.
2. Easier is to look at the larger list on white background currently to the right on the home page, and click on the *read more* under Legislative Advocacy and Issues. The list of Position Papers will appear.

WHAT ON EARTH DO THEY HAVE TO DO WITH ME? Position Papers are everything you need to know about the tenets of GCG efforts to show you what to do and what we are trying to do in terms of broad concepts that apply to specific GCG programs. Importantly, when you contact your elected officials on all levels, it often helps to say that you are a Garden Club of Georgia member who supports an issue, topic, or a Bill (include its number if there is one) on, as example, what warming temperatures can do to Georgia's air quality. You can then reference that statement in a specific Position Paper and copy and paste that Paper into your message. OF COURSE, you do not have to include your GCG affiliation. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS TO LET THOSE WHO ARE ELECTED KNOW WHAT YOU AS A VOTER AND CONSTITUENT WANT THE PERSON WHO REPRESENTS YOU TO VOTE FOR OR AGAINST. NOTE ALSO THAT GCG CAN NOT AND DOES NOT EVER TAKE A POLITICAL STANCE - **PERIOD**. Our vital nonprofit 501(C)(3) status with the IRS does not allow that.

Position Papers can work effectively as filters or strainers for outside information such as news items, speeches, legislative bills, books and other sources of information.

A GLANCE BACK:

In the previous Environmental issue, focus was on the Historical Preservation Paper. Do use the GCG website to review that Paper if you need to. As an update, under consideration as an historic site, a bit out of the ordinary among historic government buildings, churches, as well as public and private homes and properties is the Plaza Shopping Center on Atlanta's Ponce DeLeon Avenue, just east of downtown. Mention of it here is included as cross reference among our **Planting... Environmental** issues. It is described as Georgia's first strip shopping center - with off street

parking and is now considered for such historic recognition.



Photo at left by Dave N through Yelp

The Plaza Theater and especially its refurbished marquee presents itself prominently in the shopping center, in a linear building with different businesses and stores along with parking between the stores and the street.

It has been in operation since 1939. **Just for fun**, look at the photo above and make a list of the most prominent design components; then, compare your list to any description of Art Deco Design.

GCG WILDLIFE POSITION PAPER:

GCG Supports Preservation of Endangered Wildlife, 2003: Revised 2016

All life may depend on the plant kingdom, but without animal life the entire ecosystem as we know it would completely collapse. In 1966, Congress passed the Endangered Species Preservation Act. This was amended into the Endangered Species Conservation Act in 1969, then further developed into the landmark Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973. The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc. has been involved in providing a means whereby the ecosystems upon which endangered/threatened species depend may be conserved and to provide a program for the conservation of such endangered and threatened species.

Traditionally, most state wildlife agency efforts were focused on game species. It is vital that existing laws and regulations encompass ALL endangered species.

GCG is aware of this great need to preserve endangered and threatened species in our state. We encourage amendments to the ESA, or reauthorization that both strengthen measures to protect these species and to expand the efforts for research on recovery and safe breeding habitats. GCG's commitments to protection of Endangered/Threatened Species include the encouragement and support of the following:

- Legislation that will effectively protect our endangered species.*
- Positive incentives, i.e. grants, subsidies, etc. for private landowners to provide natural habitat for certain species.*
- Better control of wetland usage.*
- Educational programs to increase awareness of the need to protect endangered fauna.*
- Strengthen existing laws for the protection of fauna.*
- Promote groups to catalogue latest known sightings of endangered fauna.*

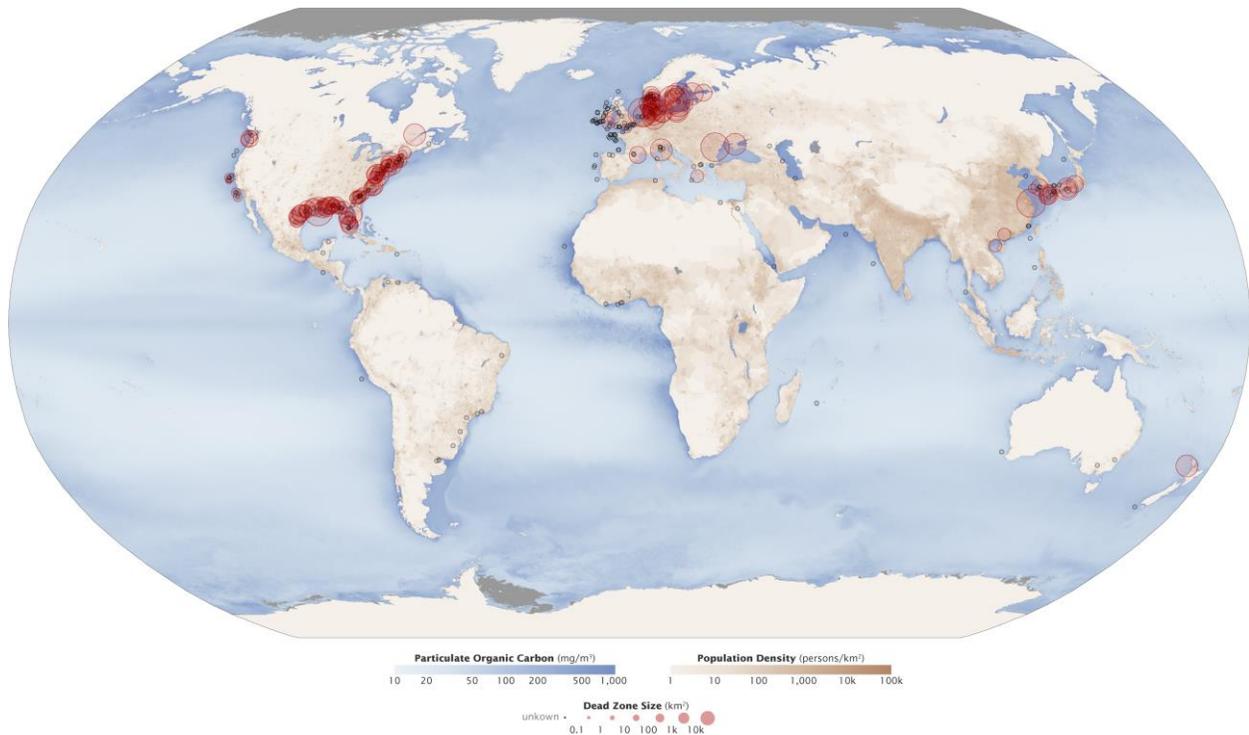
DEAD ZONES: This issue of **Planting** features Dead Zones and applies to the Endangered and Protected Flora, the Endangered Wildlife, and the Water Position Papers. For purposes of categorizing for one Position Paper per issue, let's place Dead Zones with Endangered Wildlife. Dead zones in this context have nothing to do with Zombies or spaces where cell phones will not work, but are a term from ecology to describe areas in oceans and other waters that because of low levels of dissolved oxygen - *hypoxia* - have become uninhabitable for marine life including fish, shrimp, clams and oysters.

Almost a decade ago, NASA Earth Observatory stated that such marine dead zones that cannot support aquatic life forms such as fish and shellfish have become much larger and that such valued and valuable sea inhabitants have to move or suffocate.

What and where are they?

The What: Dead zones are areas hypoxic (low-oxygen) with high carbon dioxide in the world's oceans and large lakes, caused by excessive nutrient pollution from human activities coupled with other factors that deplete the oxygen required to support most marine life in bottom and near-bottom water. (NOAA)

The Where: Forty years ago, oceanographers began noting increased instances of dead zones. Such zones are found close to inhabited coasts, rather than in large areas of open water. Dead zones in the world's waters are where aquatic life can not be supported due to depleted oxygen levels. Some dead zones are small and expectedly others cover thousands of square miles. Currently, one in the Gulf of Mexico, along the Louisiana coast is as large as New Jersey and one extends along the coast of Florida as well as up the East Coast.



Map below is from NASA World Observatory shows worldwide dead zones.

The Why: Hypoxic areas are caused by excessive nutrient pollution from human activities coupled with other factors that deplete the oxygen required to support most marine life in bottom and near-bottom water. A major cause is nitrogen and phosphorus from industry and also from agricultural fertilizers that as runoff from rains goes into stream and rivers. Animal and other wastes also contribute to the mix as do septic tank seeping and overflows from holding ponds. Additionally, nitrogen from industry also falls in the form of acid rain. As such pollutants sink, they cause, especially during spring rains, or in an especially rainy Georgia summer such as this, tremendous algae growth. In turn, the algae consumes oxygen and dead zones develop.

A bigger question to consider: As the soggy summer of 2017 continues and GCG members anticipate the U.S. Supreme Court's possible placing Florida's seemingly lingering around forever and highly expensive lawsuit against Georgia on its Fall schedule, one wonders what part dead zones might play in Florida's decline of oysters and other profitable seafood harvests in Apalachicola Bay. Georgia's not allowing sufficient water to flow from Lake Lanier through Georgia into Florida may well not be the major source of source of decline of marine life in Apalachicola Bay. Moreover, one major point against Florida's suit is that it does not include the Army Corps of Engineers.

Furthermore, it is the Army Corps of Engineers that determines how much Lake Lanier water is released and when it is released. A factor in the decline in Florida's Apalachicola Bay marine life to consider is possibly not about the amount of water released from Lake Lanier into the Chattahoochee/Flint River that flows to Florida. Perhaps highly relevant to the lawsuit Florida has brought is that dead zones in the Florida section of the Chattahoochee/Flint that becomes the

Apalachicola at the Florida line as well as estuaries and power plants in tourist developed coastal Florida are what is causing the decline in commercially successful fishing in Apalachicola Bay. The photo below is not a leaf with blue center and green edges. It is of Lake Sinclair and western Lake Erie. The green is an algae dead zone along its edges. Such algae dead zones damage water supplies for air and land animals, making such areas and waters not fit for consumption or habitation. Such dead zones can damage water supplies and in turn also damage land and air animal life including humans.

•Linkedin



Again, remember to seek information related to Position Papers from a variety of sound science, peer reviewed sources while we as GCG members and as individuals continue to educate ourselves independently as well as through the Environmental Studies courses offered through our nationwide - and beyond umbrella organization, National Garden Cubs, Inc.

For more information, use Google or use other search engine for **dead zones** and, as always, rely on established, reputable sources. One repeated bit of advice received decades ago in a philosophy course at UNC Chapel Hill was that any source of information or advice will to some extent determine the validity and quality of the information or advice received. Be careful about your sources!