



The Nature Conservancy Congratulates St. George on Dwarf Bear Poppy Day

Salt Lake City, UT — May 4, 2007 — Saturday, May 12, marks the first official Dwarf Bear Poppy Day in St. George's history. The Nature Conservancy would like to extend an official thank you to St. George citizens, and to Mayor Daniel McArthur, for the declaration in honor of this special native species.

A true St. George treasure, the dwarf bear poppy is an extraordinary wildflower that illuminates the desert shrublands with its spectacular white blooms each spring. The poppy, like many of St. George's unique plants and animals, is extremely rare, found in a small area of Washington County and nowhere else on Earth.

But the implications of Dwarf Bear Poppy Day are much larger than the recognition of one exceptional flower. This proclamation is one more tangible demonstration that St. George citizens value the world-class natural beauty in their own backyards.

From native flowers like the poppy and the Siler pincushion cactus to fantastic animals such as the desert tortoise, the southwestern willow flycatcher and the red-banded gila monster, the Mojave Desert in Utah is a natural wonderland unequalled anywhere on the planet.

The Nature Conservancy and many other groups have worked for years with local residents to help protect the plants and wildlife that make St. George and the surrounding areas so special. But ultimately, and appropriately, the fate of this rare landscape rests with the citizens who call it home.

With growth pressures escalating, and critical issues such as traffic, water, jobs and housing reaching a boiling point, St. George is entering an exciting and crucial phase of its development. Future residents will look back on the choices made in the next few years, and they will see the foundation of their society, economy and quality of life.

The preservation of this area's extraordinary natural world, right down to the individual beauty of globally rare wildflowers, is a priceless legacy that St. George's citizens can choose to leave for their children and their grandchildren.

The Nature Conservancy is proud to join St. George citizens in celebrating Dwarf Bear Poppy Day, and in honoring this City's interest in safeguarding some of our state's most incredible natural heritage.

The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. To date, the Conservancy and its more than one million members have been responsible for the protection of more than 15 million acres in the United States and have helped preserve more than 102 million acres in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. [Visit The Nature Conservancy on the Web at www.nature.org.](http://www.nature.org)

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