



# News Release

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## RARE SOUTHWEST PLANT DOES NOT WARRANT ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT PROTECTION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service published today its finding that the Gentry indigo bush is not threatened to the degree that the species requires protection under the Endangered Species Act. The Gentry indigo bush (*Dalea tentaculoides*) occurs in isolated canyons in southeastern Arizona and northwest Sonora, Mexico.

To be listed as threatened, a species must be likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

“Although some Gentry indigo bush populations experience ongoing threats, our analysis reveals that the species does not warrant Endangered Species Act protection,” said Steve Spangle, Arizona Field Supervisor. “The five known populations are widely separated and it’s extremely unlikely that they would all experience a severe decline simultaneously. Populations are persisting, they’ve demonstrated that they are adapted to floods, and a new population has been discovered. This would have to be considered a rare plant, but not a threatened or endangered one.”

On Feb. 2, 2005, the Service found that a petition to list the Gentry indigo bush under the Endangered Species Act provided sufficient information to warrant further investigation and sought additional, current information on the plant’s status and threats. Resulting information indicated that a population in the Sycamore Canyon bottom that had apparently declined during a flood in 1993 is recolonizing from the seeds and resprouts from plants previously thought to be dead; suitable habitat may exist outside of the floodplain, possibly expanding the amount of known suitable habitat; and there is no indication of decline in two populations in Mexico and a third population that was recently discovered in Mexico.

“We remain dedicated to the conservation of the Gentry indigo bush, as we are with any rare species, and request that any new information concerning its status and threats be submitted to us,” added Spangle.

The Gentry indigo bush is an erect perennial shrub of the pea family that grows up to 3 feet tall. It flowers in rose-purple clusters in spring and may produce a second set of flowers following monsoon rains in late summer and fall. Plants are usually found on floodplain terraces within isolated canyons and are adapted to the periodic, low-intensity flooding that frequents confined canyons.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency

enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies. Visit the Service's website at <http://www.fws.gov>.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Photographs of and background information on Gentry indigo bush are available by contacting Jeff Humphrey (602-242-0210 or [jeff\\_humphrey@fws.gov](mailto:jeff_humphrey@fws.gov)) or at <http://arizonaes.fws.gov> .