

Designation of Revised Critical Habitat for *Allium munzii* (Munz's onion) and *Atriplex coronata* var. *notatior* (San Jacinto Valley crownscale); Proposed Rule

About the document

Title: Proposed revised rule to designate critical habitat for two endangered plants – *Allium munzii* (Munz's onion) and *Atriplex coronata* var. *notatior* (San Jacinto Valley crownscale).

Subject and Purpose: This document is a proposal to revise critical habitat for these two plants under the Endangered Species Act (Act). In total, approximately 889 acres (360 hectares) are being proposed for designation as critical habitat for *A. munzii* and approximately 8,020 acres (3,246 hectares) for *A. c. var. notatior*. All of the proposed revised critical habitat is located in Riverside County, California. The objective of designating critical habitat is to protect areas that are essential to the conservation of the species or which may require special management considerations or protection. Critical habitat receives protection under section 7 of the Act through the requirement that Federal agencies ensure, through consultation with the Service, that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out is not likely to result in destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat. The designation of critical habitat does not affect land ownership or establish a conservation area.

Importance of Scientific Information: This proposal to designate revised critical habitat includes scientific information about the two species and specifies the criteria utilized to identify critical habitat for each.

About the Peer Review Process

Type of review: Letter.

Number of reviewers: Letters to three peer reviewers requesting peer review were sent at the time of publication of the Federal Register proposed rule for the designation of critical habitat (April 17, 2012).

Reviewer Expertise: Familiarity with the life history and habitat requirements of these two endangered plants (botanists).

Selection of Peer Reviewer: Peer reviewers were selected by the Service based on their expertise with the subject matter and have no conflicts of interest as described in the Office of Management Peer Review Guidelines.

Management of Peer Review: The peer review is being managed by the Service concurrent with the public comment period of April 17, 2012 through June 18, 2012.

About Public Participation

Opportunities for the Public: The proposed revised rule provides a public comment period of 60 days. The rule identifies specific information requested from the public. Public comments are to be submitted either electronically through www.regulations.gov or by hard copy to the Service (Division of Policy and Directives Management).

Public nominations of peer reviewers: No other individuals or groups were asked to nominate peer reviewers.

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