



Sierra Nevada Plants Frequently Asked Questions Addendum

Webber's Ivesia Proposed Critical Habitat & Draft Economic Analysis

Q. What decision did the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) Make?

A. On August 2, 2013, the Service proposed to protect Webber's ivesia (*Ivesia webberi*) as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and is proposed to designate 2,011 acres of critical habitat for Webber's ivesia in Washoe and Douglas Counties, Nevada, and in Lassen, Plumas, and Sierra, Counties, California. At that time, the Service proposed 16 units of critical habitat (two with subunits). The Service is proposing to correct the boundaries in five of those units based on new information received from the U.S. Forest Service, better defining the physical and biological features along the boundaries. This boundary correction will increase the proposed designation of critical habitat by 159 acres bringing the total number of acres of proposed as critical habitat from 2,011 to 2,170 acres.

About The Species



Webber's ivesia is also a member of the rose family. Similar in overall appearance to Soldier Meadow cinquefoil, Webber's ivesia is also a low-growing, perennial forb with clusters of leaves that lie nearly flat on the ground, and are approximately ten inches in diameter. Webber's ivesia has greenish-gray leaves, dark red, wiry stems, and headlike clusters of small bright yellow flowers. Flowering typically begins in May and extends through June and the whole plant becomes reddish-tinged late in the season.

Webber's ivesia is restricted to sites with sparse vegetation and shallow, rocky, clay soils on mid elevation flats, benches or terraces between 4,475 and 6,237 feet elevation in

Washoe and Douglas Counties in Nevada, and in Lassen, Plumas and Sierra Counties, in California. All 17 known populations of Webber's ivesia are within the transition zone between the eastern edge of the northern Sierra Nevada and the northwestern edge of the Great Basin. One of these populations is presumed extirpated.

Q. What is critical habitat and how does the Service determine what areas to propose?

A. Critical habitat is a term in the ESA of 1973, as amended. It identifies geographic areas that contain features essential for the conservation of a threatened or endangered species and may require special management considerations. The designation of critical habitat does not affect land ownership or establish a refuge, wilderness, reserve, preserve or other conservation area. It does not allow government control of or public access to private lands.

Biologists consider physical or biological habitat features needed for life and successful reproduction of the species. These include, but are not limited to:

- Space for individual and population growth;
- Food, water, air, light, minerals, or other nutritional or physiological requirements
- Cover or shelter; and
- Habitats that are protected from disturbance or are representative of the historic geographical and ecological distributions of a species.

For more information about critical habitat, visit: <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/what-we-do/critical-habitats.html>.

Q. What is a draft economic analysis (DEA) and what are the findings?

A. When specifying an area as critical habitat, the ESA requires the Service to consider economic and other relevant impacts of the designation.

The DEA, available for public inspection, estimates the costs associated with the designation of critical habitat are not likely to reach \$100 million per year and that the section 7-related costs of designating critical habitat for Webber's ivesia are likely to be limited (less than two consultations per year) to the additional administrative effort required to consider adverse modification in a small number of consultations. The costs of such administrative efforts are likely to range from approximately \$400 to \$9,000 per consultation.

Q. What are Primary Constituent Elements (PCEs)?

A. According to 50 CFR 424.12(b), we are required to identify the physical or biological features essential to the conservation of Webber's ivesia in areas occupied at the time of listing, focusing on the features' primary constituent elements. We consider primary constituent elements to be those specific elements of the physical or biological features that provide for a species' life-history processes and are essential to the conservation of the species.

Based on our current knowledge of the physical or biological features and habitat characteristics required to sustain the species' life-history processes, we determine that the primary constituent elements specific to Webber's ivesia are:

- (i) *Plant Community*
 - a. Open to sparsely vegetated areas composed of generally short-statured associated plant species.
 - b. Presence of appropriate associated species that can include (but are not limited to): *Antennaria dimorpha*, *Artemisia arbuscula*, *Balsamorhiza hookeri*, *Elymus elymoides*, *Erigeron bloomeri*, *Lewisia rediviva*, *Poa secunda*, and *Viola beckwithii*. Sites dominated by nonnative, invasive species such as *Bromus tectorum*, *Poa bulbosa*, and *Taeniatherum caput-medusae* should not be discounted, because *Ivesia webberi* may co-occur with these species.
 - c. An intact assemblage of appropriate associated species to attract the floral visitors that may be acting as pollinators of Webber's ivesia.
- (ii) *Topography*
 - a. Flats, benches, or terraces that are generally above or adjacent to large valleys. Occupied sites vary from slightly concave to slightly convex or gently sloped (0–15°) and occur on all aspects.
- (iii) *Elevation*
 - a. Elevations between 4,475 and 6,237 ft. (1,364 and 1,901 m).
- (iv) *Suitable Soils and Hydrology*
 - a. Vernal moist soils with an argillic horizon that shrink and swell upon drying and wetting; these soil conditions are characteristic of known Webber's ivesia populations and are likely important in the maintenance of the seedbank and population recruitment.
 - b. Suitable soils that can include (but are not limited to): Reno—a fine, smectitic, mesic Abruptic Xeric Argidurid; Xman—a clayey, smectitic, mesic, shallow Xeric Haplargids; Aldi—a clayey, smectitic, frigid Lithic Ultic Argixerolls; and Barshaad—a fine, smectitic, mesic Aridic Palexeroll



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Q. What is being proposed as CH?

A. We are proposing to designate 2,170 acres as critical habitat for Webber’s ivesia in Washoe and Douglas Counties in Nevada, and in Lassen, Plumas and Sierra Counties, in California which includes 16 units (2 comprised of 2 subunits each). The area within the 16 units is currently occupied by the species. Approximately 70% of the proposed critical habitat is on federally managed lands, 10% is state, and 20% is on private land.

The units with revised boundaries include: Unit 9 (Stateline Road 1), Unit 10 (Stateline Road 2), Unit 12 (Black Springs), Unit 13 (Raleigh Heights), and Unit 14 (Dutch Louie Flat).

CH Unit and Subunit #	Unit or Subunit Name	Federal	State or Local Government	Private	Total Area
		acres	acres	acres	acres
1	Sierra Valley	51	44	179	274
2	Constantia	155	—	—	155
3	East of HJWA, Evans Canyon	22	100	—	122
4	Hallelujah Junction WA	—	69	—	69
5	5a Dog Valley Meadow	386	—	—	386
	5b Upper Dog Valley	12	—	17	29
6	White Lake Overlook	98	—	11	109
7	7a Mules Ear Flat	31	—	34	65
	7b Three Pine Flat; Jeffrey Pine Saddle	3	—	65	68
8	Ivesia Flat	62	—	—	62
9	Stateline Road 1	186	—	7	193
10	Stateline Road 2	66	—	—	66
11	Hungry Valley	56	—	—	56
12	Black Springs	133	—	30	163
13	Raleigh Heights	229	—	24	253
14	Dutch Louie Flat	13	—	41	54
15	The Pines Powerline	—	—	32	32
16	Dante Mine Road	10	—	4	14
Total Acres		1,365	214	432	2,170

Q. Where do I submit comments on Webber’s ivesia proposed critical habitat or draft Economic Analysis?

A. Scientific information regarding these proposals will be accepted until March 17, 2014 and may be submitted by one of the following methods:

- (1) *Electronically:* Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal:

<http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS-R8-ES-2013-0080, which is the docket for this rulemaking. Then, in the Search panel on the left side of the screen, under the Document Type heading, click on the Proposed Rules link to locate this document. You may submit a comment by clicking on "Comment Now!"

(2) *By hard copy*: Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R8-ES-2013-0080; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042-PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.