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# News Release



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## **FINAL RECOVERY PLAN FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY PLANT NOW AVAILABLE**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today published a final recovery plan for the robust spineflower, a plant found in Santa Cruz and Marin counties in California.

The robust spineflower is an annual plant in the buckwheat family and grows to about eight inches in height. Small clusters of white-to-pinkish flowers appear from April through June. Most populations of the spineflower occur on private land and at Manresa and Sunset state beaches in Santa Cruz County, and at Pogonip Park, a park owned by the city of Santa Cruz. It also occurs on the Buena Vista property near Santa Cruz, which was recently purchased by the Trust for Public Land. Two populations also occur at Point Reyes National Seashore in Marin County.

“We’ll continue to work with our partners to stabilize populations of this species and move closer to recovery of this rare plant,” said Diane Noda, field supervisor for the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office.

The recovery plan describes the plant’s status and current management, recovery objectives, and specific actions needed to remove the plant from the federal list of threatened and endangered species. Recommended actions necessary to recover the plant include:

- Working with willing landowners to secure and protect existing populations and habitat on private or unprotected lands;
- Managing lands to control or eliminate threats to the plant and its habitat;
- Conducting research to better understand the plant’s life history and the plant’s responses to management actions;
- Surveying for additional plant populations and suitable habitat for reintroduction or reestablishment of new populations; and,
- Monitoring populations to determine the effectiveness of management.

Threats to the plant include habitat destruction and degradation from urban development, recreational activities, and competition from non-native vegetation. In addition, the smaller populations of this plant are at risk of being lost to random, naturally occurring events such as storms, drought, or fire.

Restoring an endangered or threatened species to the point where it is again a secure, self-sustaining member of its ecosystem is the primary goal of the Endangered Species Act. Recovery plans provide a blueprint for actions by federal, state, and other public agencies and private interests in the conservation of a species and its ecosystems. Recovery plans do not oblige the expenditure of funds or require that actions be implemented.

Native plants are important for their ecological, economic, and aesthetic values. Plants play an important role in development of crops that resist disease, insects, and drought. At least 25 percent of prescription drugs contain ingredients derived from plant compounds, including medicine to treat cancer, heart disease, juvenile leukemia, and malaria, as well as those being used to assist in organ transplants. Plants are also used to develop natural pesticides.

Copies of the recovery plan can be downloaded from the Ventura Fish and Wildlife web site at: <http://ventura.fws.gov>, by calling 644-1766, or by writing to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 2493 Portola Road, Suite B; Ventura, CA 93003.

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