



Frequently Asked Questions about the Draft Recovery Plan for Yreka Phlox

Q. What is a recovery plan?

The Endangered Species Act requires that a recovery plan be prepared for any species that is listed as threatened or endangered, unless a recovery plan would not contribute to the conservation of the species. Recovery plans can be prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, appropriate public and private agencies and institutions, or other qualified persons, but are not legally binding documents. Rather, they function as a blueprint for the recovery of a species. For the Yreka phlox, a recovery team composed of individuals with expertise in the species and its biology, private landowners, representatives of industrial timber company landowners, Siskiyou County and City of Yreka officials assisted the Service in developing the draft recovery plan.

Q. What information is contained in the draft recovery plan for the Yreka phlox?

The recovery plan contains detailed information about Yreka phlox, including its life history and habitat needs, causes for decline and current threats, as well as measures that best available science shows could restore healthy populations of the species. Costs associated with undertaking recovery measures is also discussed and is estimated at this time to be \$845,750 over a period of 10 years.

Recovery plans are required to identify specific actions which, if undertaken, can recover a species to the point at which it may be considered for reclassification from endangered to threatened, or removed from Federal protection altogether. In the case of the Yreka phlox, the draft recovery plan outlines possible measures to recover the species.

Q. What recovery measures are contained in the draft plan?

To aid in the recovery of the Yreka phlox, recovery team members recommend the following major actions: (1) Securing permanent protection for the four known occurrences, two of which must be the China Hill and Soap Creek Ridge occurrences, (2) Implementing a monitoring and management strategy that identifies and addresses current threats and those that may develop over the next 10 years, (3) Developing a seed bank and propagation techniques, (4) Surveying suitable soils for possible undiscovered occurrences, (5) Conducting biological research that can be used to guide recovery efforts, and (6) Increasing public awareness and participation in recovery efforts for this species.

Q. Are there any conservation measures already underway?

Yes, the Service is actively searching for additional occurrences of Yreka phlox within the area identified in the recovery plan that have serpentine soils and a high potential for supporting previously undiscovered populations. The Service and California Department of Fish and Game have funded a research project to determine what species pollinate Yreka phlox. Finally, the City of Yreka, California Department of Fish and Game, and California Wildlife Conservation Board, and the Service have been involved in several efforts for willing-seller acquisition of

Yreka phlox habitat on China Hill. The City of Yreka will maintain these properties for conservation of Yreka phlox and potentially for other compatible open space uses.

Q. Who is required to assist with implementing recovery actions, once the Yreka phlox plan is finalized?

Only the Service and other Federal agencies are *required* to take part in recovery efforts. However, the assistance and support of private landowners and other non-federal agencies and interest groups is extremely important to the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered species. It is estimated that about 80 percent of all federally protected species are found on private lands. A variety of grant programs are available for Tribal and private landowners who want to help conserve species on their lands. You can learn more about conservation grant programs on the Internet at <http://endangered.fws.gov> and click on the *recovery* link.

Q. Why bother with saving plants?

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 used to treat cancer, heart disease, juvenile leukemia, and malaria, as well as that used to assist organ transplant recipients. Plants are also used to develop natural pesticides.

Q. How will this affect private and public property?

The recovery plan outlines a strategy to recover the Yreka phlox and as such, does not obligate other parties, either private or public, to undertake any specific actions. Other than identifying the general location of known occurrences, the recovery plan does not affect private or public property. Rather, the plan identifies specific actions that, if implemented, will be most important to accomplishing the ultimate goal of recovering this species.

The Endangered Species Act does not prohibit "take" of listed plants on private land, but landowners must comply with state laws protecting imperiled plants. Consultations with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service come into play for private and other landowners only when Federal funding or permits are required for activities that may affect listed species. On Federal lands it is unlawful to remove or purposefully damage endangered plants.

Activities such as construction of fences, livestock water ponds, and livestock grazing that do not involve any Federal agency funding or authorization on private lands continue to be unaffected by the Federal listing of the Yreka phlox.

Q: What's the deadline for commenting on this draft plan?

Comments must be received at the address below by October 17, 2004.

Q: How can I comment on the draft plan?

Send your comments to: Field Supervisor, Yreka Fish and Wildlife Office, 1829 S. Oregon Street, Yreka, CA 96097, or fax them to 530-842-4517.

Copies of the Draft Recovery Plan for Yreka Phlox can be accessed on the Internet at <http://endangered.fws.gov>, click on the link to **Recovery Plans**. Copies are also available at the address above, or by calling Nadine Kanim, 530-842-5763.

