

USDA Forest Service Botany in the News

Federal Agencies finalize Conservation Agreement to protect five Central Utah Navajo Sandstone Endemics

Who: Fishlake National Forest, National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Non-federal partners include the Utah Native Plant Society and Capitol Reef Natural History Association.

What: A Conservation Agreement and Strategy to protect five rare endemic plants in Central Utah was signed by federal land management agencies this past month. It is the culmination of an interagency partnership that began seven years ago to share botanical expertise and resources to conduct range-wide surveys (regardless of agency ownership) to understand the distribution, range, threats, and opportunities to manage shared species. The five species protected through this Agreement include: Maguire's daisy (*Erigeron maguirei*), Wonderland Alice-flower (*Aliciella caespitosa*), Mussentuchit gilia (*Aliciella tenuis*), Harrison's milkvetch (*Astragalus harrisonii*) and Pinnate spring-parsley (*Cymopterus beckii*).

When: Ten-year Agreement starting in 2006.

Where: All five of these rare plant species are endemic to the Navajo sandstone geologic formation in south-central Utah's Colorado Plateau.

How: In 1999 the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Capitol Reef National Park signed an MOU to establish an Interagency Program to inventory and monitor threatened, endangered and sensitive plant species shared by these agencies. From 1999-2005, the Interagency Rare Plant Team surveyed and recorded many new locations of these plant species and helped determine which species are truly rare and in need of additional conservation actions. The Conservation Agreement is a direct result of this partnership.

Why: The Conservation Agreement and Strategy consolidates the current understanding of the biology, ecology, and management needs of the Navajo sandstone endemics. It enables the agencies to work together to implement active management programs to promote and conserve these species and their habitats and ensure long-term protection of these treasured rare plants.

Contact: Robert Campbell, Forest Ecologist, Fishlake NF (435) 896-1095 or Deb Clark, Rare Plant Team Leader, at (435) 425-3791 ext. 142.



Wonderland Alice-flower (*Aliciella caespitosa*). Photo by Teresa Prendusi.



Mussentuchit gilia (*Aliciella tenuis*). Photo by Deb Clark.



Maguire's daisy (*Erigeron maguirei*) a federally Threatened species. Photo by Deb Clark.



Colorado Plateau: View of Boulder Mountain from Capitol Reef National Park. Photo by Teresa Prendusi.