

Rare Plant Status Review: *Carex inops* ssp. *inops*
Proposed List Change from List 3.3 to List 4.3
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Carex inops ssp. *inops* is a rhizomatous, perennial herb in the Cyperaceae. It is known from dry openings in mixed conifer forest from approximately 680 to 2000 meters in elevation. Associated species frequently reported growing with *C. inops* ssp. *inops* include *Pinus ponderosa*, *P. lambertiana*, *Abies concolor*, *Calocedrus decurrens*, *Pseudotsuga menziesii*, *Quercus kelloggii*, *Arctostaphylos patula*, *Ceanothus prostratus*, and *Symphoricarpos mollis*. *C. inops* ssp. *inops* was first reviewed as a proposed new addition List 2 of the CNPS Inventory in 1998. At that time, questions were raised about its rarity and distribution in California and it was subsequently placed on List 3.3. *C. inops* ssp. *inops* is included in the *Flora of North America* (Vol. 23) and the *Jepson Manual* (1993), and will be included in the second edition of the *Jepson Manual* (Margriet Wetherwax, pers. comm. 2009).

Today, *C. inops* ssp. *inops* is known from approximately 80 occurrences in Humboldt, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, and Siskiyou counties (see Locations_CarexInopsInops.xls for more information on known occurrences). The CNPS Inventory indicates that *C. inops* ssp. *inops* also occurs in Lassen County, but there is no documentation to support this statement. The majority of the occurrences of *C. inops* ssp. *inops* in California are centered in a relatively small geographic area near the Shasta-Siskiyou county line. *C. inops* ssp. *inops* also occurs, and is more common in Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. NatureServe ranks *C. inops* ssp. *inops* as a G5T4? (Apparently secure) taxon. It is unranked (SNR) in Oregon and Washington, is ranked S3S4 in British Columbia, and is ranked as a S3? taxon in California. The population size at occurrences of *C. inops* ssp. *inops* is not well known. Observations on CNDDDB field survey forms range from a "small patch approximately 7.3 square meters" at one occurrence to "population too large to estimate" at another occurrence. The element occurrence rank is not known from most occurrences. Additionally, population trend and area of occupancy data is not known for most California occurrences of *C. inops* ssp. *inops*. Nearly all occurrences, however, have been documented in the last 20 years (many have been documented within the last decade).

The CNPS Inventory currently lists no threats to *C. inops* ssp. *inops*, and its threat rank is .3 (not very endangered in California). Information about how *C. inops* ssp. *inops* responds to various forms of land management is needed to fully assess its conservation status.

Based on the available information about its rarity and distribution in California, it appears that *C. inops* ssp. *inops* should no longer be included on List 3 (plants about which we need more information). Potential options include placing *C. inops* ssp. *inops* on either List 2 or List 4. CNPS List 2 generally contains plants with fewer than 50 occurrences in California ranked as "excellent" or "good" by CNDDDB. CNPS List 4 contains plants of limited distribution or plants that are infrequent over a broad geographic area. Plants on this list generally have more than 50 extant occurrences in

California. *C. inops* ssp. *inops* is currently known from approximately 80 occurrences. This plant is not yet fully processed and mapped at the CNDDDB, making a complete assessment more difficult. Consequently, CNPS and CNDDDB recommend that *C. inops* ssp. *inops* be re-ranked to List 4.3.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Re-Rank to CNPS List 4.3

CNDDDB: Keep on G5T4? S3?

Revised CNPS *Inventory* record:

Carex inops Bailey ssp. *inops*

long-stolonated sedge

Cyperaceae

List 4.3

Humboldt (HUM), Modoc (MOD), Plumas (PLU), Shasta (SHA), Siskiyou (SIS), Oregon (OR), Washington (WA)

Lower montane coniferous forest (LCFRs) / openings; elevation 680-2000 meters.

Perennial, rhizomatous herb, blooms Apr-Jul.

Similar to *C. pennsylvanica* var. *vespertina* (not in CA). See *Proceedings of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 22:126 (1886) for original description.