

Rare Plant Status Review: *Poa sierrae*
Proposed New Add to List 1B.3, G2G3 S2S3

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February 5, 2010

Background

Poa sierrae is a California endemic, rhizomatous, herbaceous perennial in the Poaceae. It was a newly described species in 1979 and was included in *The Jepson Manual* (1993). It is distinguished from other species of *Poa* based on leaf and flower characteristics. According to D. W. Taylor (pers. comm. 2009), *P. sierrae* "is easily distinguished by its odd fleshy bulblets." Its closest relative is *P. rhizomata*, which is currently on the CNPS 4.3 list and is restricted to the Klamath Mountains in Siskiyou and Trinity County (Howell 1979). *P. sierrae* flowers between April and June.

P. sierrae grows in yellow pine forest (lower montane coniferous forest) habitat on shady, moist rocky slopes, often in canyons from approximately 365 to 1160 meters in elevation.

P. sierrae is known from approximately 17 occurrences in the northern Sierra Nevada Foothills and the Cascade Range Foothills. *P. sierrae* is found as far north as Shasta County and as far south as El Dorado County. It is ranked as a G2G3 taxon by NatureServe.

There are no known threats to occurrences of *P. sierrae*. The population size, population trends, area of occupancy, and land ownership at occurrences of *P. sierrae* are not well known.

P. sierrae was last evaluated by CNPS as a possible new addition to the 3rd Edition (1984) of the Inventory. At that time, it was considered "too common" by reviewers and was not included.

P. sierrae is known from a relatively small geographic area (it is known from 11-13 quads in 6 counties), but does not appear to have highly restrictive habitat requirements. Of the 17 known occurrences, only 2 have been documented in the past 20 years (occurrences that have not been "seen" in the past 20 years are considered historic by the CNDDDB), and 3 are represented by historical herbarium specimens that were collected more than 50 years ago.

List 1B typically contains plants known from 50 or fewer viable occurrences that are ranked as either good or excellent by CNDDDB. List 4 typically includes plants with greater than 50 viable occurrences. The available data seems to indicate that *P. sierrae* should be added to List 1B. However, it may be more appropriate to add *P. Sierrae* to List 4 based on the abundance of suitable habitat and the possibility that it may be under-collected.

Based on the current data and available information CNPS and CNDDDB recommend that *P. sierrae* be added to List 1B.3, G2G3 S2S3.

Recommended Actions

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 1B.3

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G2G3 / S2S3

Please review the draft CNPS Inventory record below, respond Yes or No on the proposal to add this species to the Inventory and CNDDDB, and provide any edits/comments. If responding No, please provide supporting information.

Draft CNPS Inventory Record

Poa sierrae J. T. Howell

Sierra blue grass

Poaceae

List 1B.3

Butte, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Shasta

Berry Creek 575B (39121F4), Brush Creek 575A (39121F3), Butte Meadows 608D (40121A5), Colfax 541C (39120A8), Devil Peak 525A (38120H5), Devils Rock? 664D (40122G1), Dutch Flat 541A (39120B7), Michigan Bluff 540C (39120A6), Montgomery Creek? 663C (40121G8), Pulga 591C (39121G4), Soapstone Hill 591D (39121G3), Storrie 591A (39121H3), Washington 557D (39120C7)

LCFr. 365-1160 meters

Perennial herb (rhizomatous). Blooms April-June.