

**Rare Plant Status Review: *Selaginella cinerascens*  
Proposed New Add to List 4.1**

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Changes made to the original status document review appear in blue.

**Background**

*Selaginella cinerascens* is a rhizomatous, herbaceous perennial in the Selaginellaceae. It is included in the *Jepson Manual* (1993) and the *Flora of North America* (Vol. 2), and will be included in the *Jepson Manual* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). *S. cinerascens* is differentiated from other species of *Selaginella* based on its light brown to gray color, and leaf and branching characteristics.

*S. cinerascens* is known from dry areas in chaparral and coastal scrub habitats from 20 to 640 meters in elevation.

*S. cinerascens* is known approximately 120 occurrences in coastal San Diego County, southern Riverside county, southern Orange County, and northern Baja California, Mexico. It is ranked as a G4, S4 taxon by NatureServe. Reiser (2001) states that *S. cinerascens* is, "very common south into Baja California." Many occurrences of *S. cinerascens* are only known from historical herbarium collections from areas that are now urbanized. Additionally, some occurrences documented by reports to CNDDDB, were located in surveys prior to development activities. Consequently, many of the documented occurrences of *S. cinerascens* may now be extirpated. Field surveys should be conducted to determine the status of occurrences of *S. cinerascens* in areas that are threatened by development. Additionally, areas with suitable habitat within and beyond the known range of *S. cinerascens* should be searched for new occurrences.

*S. cinerascens* was first included on List 4 (Plants Rare in California, Common Elsewhere) in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (1980) of the CNPS Inventory. It was included on List 2 (Plants Rare in California, Common Elsewhere) in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (1984) of the CNPS Inventory. In the 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (1988) of the CNPS Inventory, *S. cinerascens* was moved to List 4 (Plants of Limited Distribution, A Watch List). In 1999, in preparation for the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the CNPS Inventory, a number of reviewers concluded that *S. cinerascens* was too common to be included on List 4, and it was subsequently deleted (it was placed on the Considered but Rejected list). Recently, several local botanists have concluded that the decision to delete *S. cinerascens* may not have been appropriate (it should also be noted that the downgrade to CBR was controversial in 1999).

*S. cinerascens* continues to be highly threatened by development throughout its range. Anecdotal evidence indicates that development pressure in the past decade has resulted in increased habitat fragmentation and the extirpation of numerous occurrences of *S. cinerascens*.

List 4 is a “watch list,” which includes “plants of limited distribution.” Plants on this list typically are geographically restricted and are known from more than 50 occurrences. Based on the available information, *S. cinerascens* does seem to qualify for inclusion on CNPS List 4. *S. cinerascens* is geographically restricted and highly threatened by development throughout its range, and, as a result, its distribution and numbers are likely to decline further in the future. Consequently, CNPS and CNDDDB recommend that *S. cinerascens* be added to CNPS List 4.1.

### **Recommended Actions**

CNPS: Add to CNPS List 4.1

CNDDDB: Add to CNDDDB as G4 / S3S4

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.

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### **Draft CNPS Inventory Record**

*Selaginella cinerascens* A.A. Eaton

ashy spike-moss

Selaginellaceae

List 4.1

Orange, [Riverside](#), San Diego; Baja California

Chaparral, coastal scrub. 20-640 meters

Herbaceous perennial (rhizomatous).

Threatened by development. See *Fern Bulletin* 7:33 (1899) for original description.