

**From:** [Donna Stevens](#)  
**To:** [Mason, Wendy, EMNRD](#)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Rule Change to the NM State Endangered Plant Law  
**Date:** Thursday, November 4, 2021 4:09:04 PM

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Dear Ms. Mason,

I am writing to support the rule change to the New Mexico State Endangered Plant Law. As the Executive Director of the Upper Gila Watershed Alliance, a watershed protection nonprofit based in the Gila Valley and Silver City, I represent our membership of about 300 people.

I am also the co-author of Common Southwestern Native Plants: An Identification Guide. I have a fairly extensive - certainly not exhaustive - knowledge of New Mexico's beautiful native flora. For a few years in the mid-90s and again in 2011-2014, I conducted plant surveys in the Gila National Forest, and became very familiar with the plant species therein.

The current state and federal laws are inadequate in their protection of native plants, including endemic and imperiled species. The Endangered Species Act is far more robust in its protection of fauna than of flora. No animal species, endangered or common, would exist without plants to provide food for them. One could make a case that plants are more important than animals.

The proposed rule change would go a long way towards protection of New Mexico's stunning native flora. But even more than preserving plant species, this rule change will protect ecosystems and animals, as well.

We all know that extinction is forever. For the sake of our children and grandchildren, we must protect New Mexico's native plants, at all costs. I urge you to adopt the new rule change.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,  
Donna Stevens  
Executive Director  
Upper Gila Watershed Alliance  
PO Box 383  
Gila, NM 88038