



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

NEWS RELEASE

SNAKE RIVER FISH AND WILDLIFE OFFICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC INVITED TO OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS SPALDING'S CATCHFLY RECOVERY PLANNING EFFORT TO BEGIN

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is inviting interested parties to "Stakeholder" Open House meetings for Spalding's Catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*), a plant listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The Service has begun the recovery planning effort for Spalding's catchfly in several western states. The plant is a long-lived perennial herb in the pink or carnation family. It is found primarily in open grasslands in portions of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, Canada. More than half the sites containing Spalding's catchfly are located on privately-owned lands.

The meetings will provide a forum where the public can learn more about the plant, ask the Service questions, and discuss potential conservation activities and funding opportunities for those interested in its recovery. "As the Service begins the recovery planning process for Spalding's catchfly, we want to ensure that the stakeholders and others with an interest in the conservation of the plant are given an opportunity to contribute their thoughts and expertise to this effort," said Jeff Foss, Snake River Fish and Wildlife Office Field Supervisor.

Nearly 350 individuals and organizations have been contacted about the Stakeholder meetings, and have received a questionnaire that will better enable the Service to address recovery needs for the plant. Information gained from the meetings will be used by the Service for a recovery plan for Spalding's catchfly. Questionnaires will be available at the meetings for public response, but there will be no opportunity for oral public comment.

This announcement further extends an invitation to all interested parties to attend the meetings. The meetings are scheduled as follows:

- February 26: 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
490 N. Meridian Rd., Kalispell, Montana
- March 1: 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Wallowa Mountain Visitor Center
88401 Highway 82, Enterprise, Oregon
- March 2: 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. American Legion Hall
106 W. Broadway Ave., Ritzville, Washington
- March 3: 3-5 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. Idaho Department of Fish and Game
1540 Warner Ave., Lewiston, Idaho

For more information, please contact Snake River Fish and Wildlife botanist, Gina Glenne, at 208-685-6958, or Snake River Fish and Wildlife biologist, Marilyn Hemker, at 208-378-5288.

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million acre -National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses 542 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

