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Contact: Noah Greenwald, (503) 484-7495



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### **Endangered Species Act Success Story: Two California Plants Proposed for Downlisting From Endangered to Threatened**

CARLSBAD, *Calif.*— The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed today to downlist two California plants, the San Clemente Island lotus and San Clemente Island paintbrush, from endangered to threatened based on substantial recovery of the plants' populations. Both plants declined dramatically after goats and pigs were brought to the islands and were protected as endangered species in 1977. Following this protection, the Navy, which owns the island and uses it for training, worked hard to remove nonnative ungulates and develop a management plan to protect the plants and other rare species from its training activities.

"These plants are just two among hundreds of species that are coming back from the brink of extinction because of the powerful protections of the Endangered Species Act," said Noah Greenwald, the Center's endangered species director. "The Endangered Species Act has brought these plants out of the ICU and into the recovery room."

By 1979, the beautiful San Clemente Island paintbrush had been reduced to just 450 plants in 19 occurrences, mostly on steep slopes inaccessible to feral grazers. Today there are more than 11,000 plants, in 29 occurrences. The San Clemente Island lotus had likewise declined to 1,340 plants in just six occurrences in 1980, but today more than 3,500 plants survive, in 29 occurrences.

"The Navy's played a major role in the remarkable recovery of these two plants," said Greenwald.

A third plant, the San Clemente Island bush mallow, was not found to warrant downlisting today; it suffers from ongoing threats such as military activities, erosion, nonnatives, fire, climate change and low genetic diversity.

*Alaska · Arizona · California · Florida · Minnesota · Nevada · New Mexico · New York · Oregon · Vermont · Washington, DC*  
*P.O. Box 710 · Tucson, AZ 85702-0710 tel: (520) 623.5252 fax: (520) 623.9797 [www.BiologicalDiversity.org](http://www.BiologicalDiversity.org)*

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