Sidalcea pedata
pedate checker-mallow

5-Year Review:
Summary and Evaluation

Sidalcea pedata (pedate checker-mallow)
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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Carlsbad, CA

March 18, 2011

5-YEAR REVIEW

Sidalcea pedata (pedate checker-mallow)

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose of 5-Year Reviews:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is required by section 4(c)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) to conduct a status review of each listed species at least once every 5 years. The purpose of a 5-year review is to evaluate whether or not the species' status has changed since it was listed. Based on the 5-year review, we recommend whether the species should be removed from the list of endangered and threatened species, be changed in status from endangered to threatened, or be changed in status from threatened to endangered. Our original listing of a species as endangered or threatened is based on the existence of threats attributable to one or more of the five threat factors described in section 4(a)(1) of the Act, and we must consider these same five factors in any subsequent consideration of reclassification or delisting of a species. In the 5-year review, we consider the best available scientific and commercial data on the species, and focus on new information available since the species was listed or last reviewed. If we recommend a change in listing status based on the results of the 5-year review, we must propose to do so through a separate rule-making process defined in the Act that includes public review and comment.

Species Overview:

Sidalcea pedata (pedate checker-mallow) is a multi-stemmed perennial herb in the Malvaceae (mallow family) that is restricted to the moist alkaline meadows of the Big Bear Valley of San Bernardino County, California. *Sidalcea pedata* was listed by the State of California as an endangered species in January 1982 and federally listed as an endangered species in August 1984. At the time of listing, there were 19 known extant occurrences of *S. pedata* at three locations, including near Bluff Lake, Baldwin Lake, and the south shore of Big Bear Lake. Little information is available regarding the historical distribution of *S. pedata*, but it is thought to have occurred throughout moist meadows of Big Bear Valley and it is currently extant at 16 occurrences in the Big Bear Valley. The primary threats at the time of listing were habitat loss and degradation due to urban development, off-road vehicle use, and cattle grazing.

Methodology Used to Complete This Review:

This review was prepared by Jennifer McCarthy at the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, following the Region 8 guidance issued in March 2008. We used information from the 1998 Recovery Plan, survey information from experts who have been monitoring various localities of this species, and the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) maintained by the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). The Recovery Plan and personal communications with species experts were our primary sources of information used to update the species' status and threats. We received no information relevant to *Sidalcea pedata* from the public, in response to our notice in the **Federal Register** initiating this 5-year review. This 5-year review contains updated information on the species' biology and threats, and an assessment

of that information compared to that known at the time of listing. We focus on current threats to the species that are attributable to the Act's five listing factors. The review synthesizes all this information to evaluate the listing status of the species and provides an indication of its progress towards recovery. Finally, based on this synthesis and the threats identified in the five-factor analysis, we recommend a prioritized list of conservation actions to be completed or initiated within the next 5 years.

Contact Information:

Lead Regional Office: Larry Rabin, Deputy Division Chief for Listing, Recovery, and Habitat Conservation Planning, Region 8; (916) 414–6464.

Lead Field Office: Jennifer McCarthy and Anna Braswell, Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, Region 8; (760) 431–9440.

Federal Register (FR) Notice Citation Announcing Initiation of This Review:

A notice announcing initiation of the 5-year review of this taxon and the opening of a 60-day period to receive information from the public was published in the **Federal Register** on March 25, 2009 (USFWS 2009, pp. 12878–12883). No information relevant to *Sidalcea pedata* was received.

Listing History:

Federal Listing
FR Notice: 49 FR 34497–34500
Date of Final Listing Rule: August 31, 1984
Entity Listed: *Sidalcea pedata* (pedate checker-mallow), a plant species.
Classification: Endangered

State Listing
Sidalcea pedata was listed as endangered by the State of California in 1982.

Associated Rulemakings: None

Review History: No previous taxon-specific reviews of *Sidalcea pedata* have been conducted.

Species' Recovery Priority Number at Start of 5-Year Review:

The recovery priority number for *Sidalcea pedata* is 5C according to the Service's 2010 Recovery Data Call for the Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office, based on a 1–18 ranking system where 1 is the highest-ranked recovery priority and 18 is the lowest (USFWS 1983a, pp. 43098–43105; USFWS 1983b, p. 51985). This number indicates that the taxon is a species that faces a high degree of threat and has a low potential for recovery. The "C" indicates conflict with construction or other development projects or other forms of economic activity.

Recovery Plan or Outline:

Name of Plan
Recovery Plan for the Pedate Checker-mallow (*Sidalcea pedata*) and Slender-Petaled Mustard (*Thelypodium stenopetalum*)

Date Issued
July 1998

II. REVIEW ANALYSIS

Application of the 1996 Distinct Population Segment (DPS) Policy:

The Endangered Species Act defines "species" as including any subspecies of fish or wildlife or plants, and any distinct population segment (DPS) of any species of vertebrate wildlife. This definition of species under the Act limits listing as distinct population segments to species of vertebrate fish or wildlife. Because the species under review is a plant the DPS policy is not applicable, and the application of the DPS policy to the species' listing is not addressed in this review.

Information on the Species and its Status:

Species Description

Sidalcea pedata (pedate checker-mallow) is a multi-stemmed perennial herb in the Malvaceae (mallow family). The 20 to 40 decimeter (7 to 16 inches (in)) plant has erect stems that arise from a fleshy, nonrhizomatous taproot. The typically reddish stems are broad and pubescent. The predominantly basal leaves are palmately five to seven parted into narrow, three lobed divisions, which are further dissected into linear to oblong segments. The few stem leaves are small and divided into three segments that are also dissected into linear segments. The five-parted flowers, which occur in many-flowered, loose, spike-like terminal racemes (inflorescence), may vary in color from pink to magenta with darker veins; petals are 9 to 12 millimeters (0.4 to 0.6 in) long. *Sidalcea pedata* has a generational turnover of approximately 3 to 5 years. The taxon flowers between May and August (USFS 2000a, p. 37).

Species Biology and Life History

Sidalcea pedata is gynodioecious, meaning there are plants with both female and hermaphrodite flowers and plants with female flowers only. Research findings indicate that female and hermaphrodite plants differ substantially in their reproductive biology and pollination ecology (Leong 2006, p. 24). Hermaphrodites can produce seeds through outcrossing (pollen transfer between separate plants) and geitonogamy (pollen transfer between separate flowers on the same plant), whereas females appear to produce seeds solely through outcrossing. The most common visitors to *S. pedata* appear to be generalist bees, predominantly in the genus *Osmia*. *Sidalcea pedata* also attracts one specialist pollinator, the female of the bee species *Diadasia nigrifrons* (Anthrohoridae). Other visitors include flies, butterflies, and beetles. Bee visitors appear to

distinguish between the two sex morphs and are more highly attracted to hermaphrodite flowers when initially flying to a new group of stems (Leong 2006, p. 24). Female plants also appear to be much more productive than hermaphrodites. *Sidalcea pedata* seeds are small and dispersal appears to be limited to the area surrounding the parent plant (USFS 2000a, p. 37).

Observations in the field suggest that *Sidalcea pedata* is a tolerant species and individuals are able to survive in areas that have been significantly disturbed; individuals have been observed in mowed, vacant, and compacted lots (S. Eliason, USFS, pers. obs. 2010). However, research indicates that *S. pedata* does not reproduce in or near severely impacted areas and that non-compacted soils are important to the reproductive success and persistence of this species (Krantz 1981, p. VI).

Habitat or Ecosystem

Sidalcea pedata is primarily found on vernally moist meadows and sparsely vegetated, drier meadow sites at elevations from 1,600 to 2,500 meters (m) (5,250 to 8,200 feet (ft)) in the Big Bear Valley, San Bernardino Mountains of California (USFS 2000b, p. 38). The geological history of the area as a Pleistocene lake bed has resulted in a high clay component in the soil that contributes to the formation of these moist meadows. The clay forms a barrier to percolation of surface water and creates favorable conditions to support moist to wet meadow plant species. The clay soils of these meadows are often saturated with surface water in the spring, but dry by July (Krantz 1980, p. 2). Community dominants are mostly low herbaceous species less than 0.5 m (1.6 ft) high (Krantz 1994, p. 100). Moist meadows are characterized by a shallow water table that is usually less than 0.6 m (2 ft) deep (Wood 1975, p. 30). Research indicates that moist meadow plant communities are groundwater dependent, but become precipitation dependent after the groundwater level drops below the rooting zone of the plants (Elmore *et al.* 2006, p. 770).

Sidalcea pedata is found towards the drier edges of moist meadows, or drier sparsely vegetated meadows dominated by *Artemisia rothrockii* (basin sagebrush) (USFS 2000a, p. 152; Krantz 1994, p. 100). These preferred areas are characterized by annual saturation of the soil but not to the extent that denser, more water tolerant vegetation intrude. However, *S. pedata* is considered to be an obligate wetlands indicator (i.e., it almost always occurs under natural conditions in wetlands; USFWS 1988, pp. 18–19). No comprehensive study of preferred soil conditions within *S. pedata* habitat has yet been conducted (USFWS 1998, p. 6).

The moist to wet open meadows where *Sidalcea pedata* occurs are at times interspersed with pebble plains, another rare habitat type in the Big Bear Valley area. Pebble plains are areas where the clay soils are “paved” with sarapossa quartzite pebbles. These pebble plains provide habitat for a number of Big Bear endemics, including (but not limited to): *Linanthus killipii (*Baldwin lake), *Mimulus exiguus* (small monkeyflower), *M. purpureus* (purple monkeyflower), *Castilleja lasiorhyncha* (Indian paintbrush), *Pyrrocoma uniflora* var. *gossypina* (plantain goldenweed), *Packera bernardinus* (San Bernardino ragwort), and three other federally endangered plant species—*Poa atropurpurea* (San Bernardino bluegrass), *Taraxacum californicum* (California taraxacum), and *Thelypodium stenopetalum* (slender-petaled mustard). At the time of listing, there remained only three locations in Big Bear where pebble plains and

vernally moist meadows formed these habitat "mosaics," with their unique floral assemblages: Eagle Point on Big Bear Lake, Baldwin Lake, and Lower Holcomb Valley (Krantz 1981, p. 2).

Much of the former moist meadow habitat necessary for the continued existence of *Sidalcea pedata* has been eliminated. Overall, 91 percent of all meadow habitat in Big Bear and Holcomb Valley has been lost since the turn of the century (USFS 2000b, p. 46); estimates suggest that there are fewer than 400 hectares (ha) (1,000 acres (ac)) remaining in these areas.

Spatial Distribution

The historical distribution of *Sidalcea pedata* is not well known, although it was likely more common around Big Bear Valley in habitat eliminated by the construction and operation of Big Bear Dam in the 1890s and subsequent residential and commercial development. At the time of listing, there were 19 known extant *S. pedata* occurrences (Appendix 1). The listing rule describes *S. pedata* as being known from only three locations: near Bluff Lake, near Baldwin Lake, and the south shore of Big Bear Lake; however, the listing rule does not provide a more specific occurrence distribution. The listing rule also states that scattered individuals can be found in a few other areas, mostly vacant lots or remnant meadows surrounded by housing or commercial developments (USFWS 1984, p. 34498).

CNDDB has been a repository for information on the location and the status of rare taxa in California, including *Sidalcea pedata* for over 30 years. The data are chronologically and cumulatively recorded by localities that are assigned element occurrence (EO) reference numbers. At the time of listing, data from the CNDDB (CNDDB 2010), and the Recovery Plan (USFWS 1998) indicate that there are 24 historical occurrences. An additional occurrence has since been located in the front yard of a Boulder Bay residence (this has not yet been assigned an occurrence number) and is presumed to have been extant at the time of listing. A transplantation experiment (EO 26) was also performed, bringing the total number of historical *S. pedata* occurrences to 26. Seven of these were extirpated prior to listing; near Arrowbear (EO 2), Bear Valley Golf Course (EO 4), Big Bear Lake near Trout Lake (EO 10), Fawnskin Meadow at Grout Bay (EO 11), near the Big Bear Ranger Station (EO 25), Villa Grove Pebble Plain (EO 27), and south of Big Bear High School (EO 28). Three additional occurrences have been extirpated since listing: near Big Bear Airport (EO 13), Mallard Lagoon (EO 7), and Belleville Meadow (EO 26) (this however was a transplantation experiment). Occurrences on the east side of Baldwin Lake (EOs 9, 30), and Eagle Point (EO 21) have not been seen in years; these occurrences are presumed extant, but fieldwork is necessary to confirm their status. Currently, we consider there to be 16 extant occurrences of *S. pedata* occupying less than 8.1 ha (20 ac) (Appendix 1). The location and distribution of extant *S. pedata* occurrences are illustrated in Figure 1.

Abundance

Data on population size and density have not been compiled for all known occurrences of *Sidalcea pedata*. The density of *S. pedata* individuals within a meadow is dependent on meadow size and quality, hydrological regime, and annual precipitation. In 1989, an attempt was made to

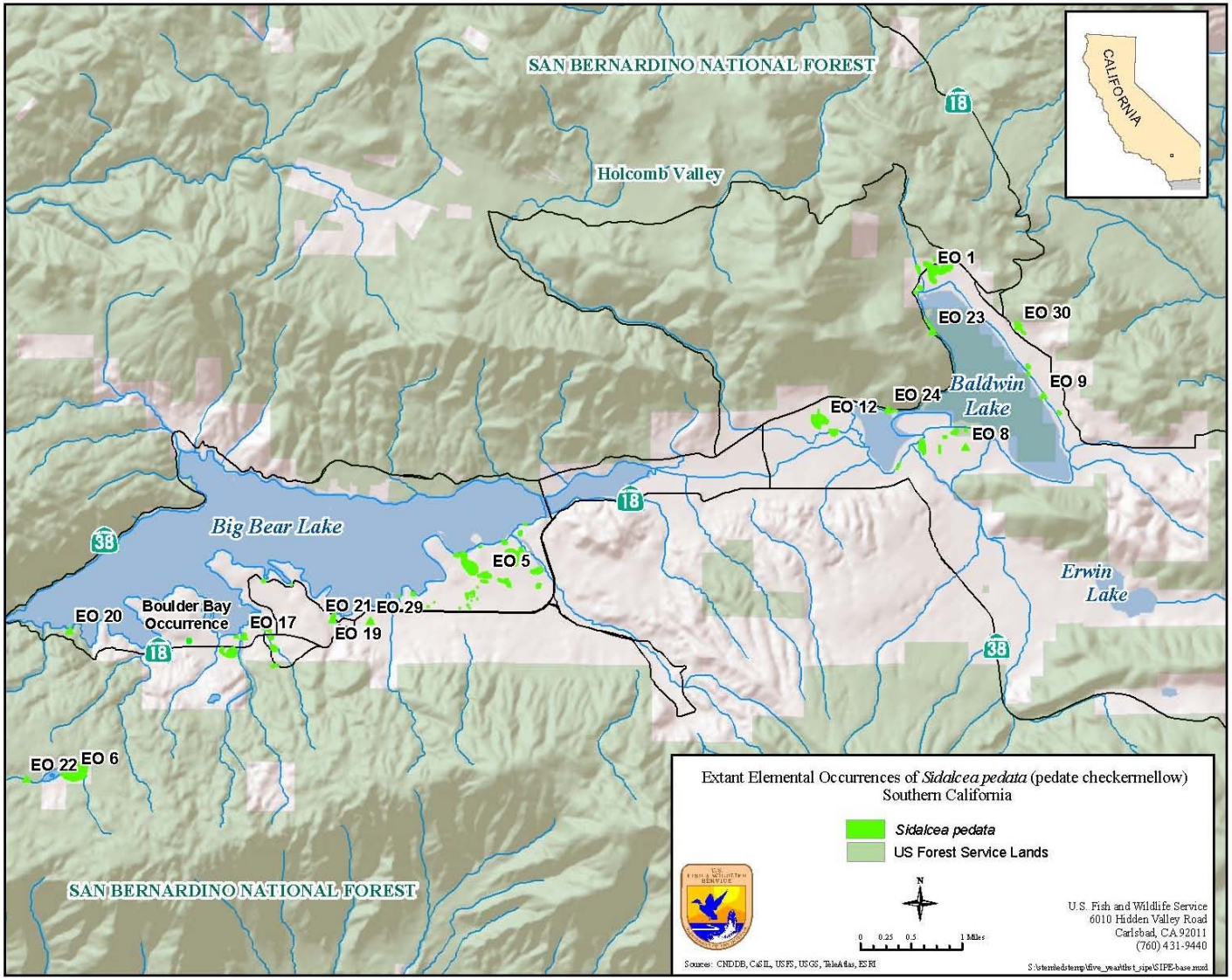

Figure 1: Distribution of extant *Sidalcea pedata* (pedate checker-mallow) occurrences; produced for 2011 5-year review.

determine the size and plant density of six populations on protected or semi-protected sites in the Big Bear Valley. The estimated extent of occupied habitat ranged from 1.4 ha (3.3 ac) at Bluff Lake to 0.04 ha (0.1 ac) at Ski Beach (USFS 2005, p. 208).

Current density and abundance data for S*idalcea pedata* is unknown, because surveys have not occurred in recent years. However, recent observations by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010) suggest that several occurrences are demonstrating population decline: east shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 9, 30), south shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 8), and populations at Eagle Point not in parcel K (EO 21). Observations of apparent population declines at several occurrences should be taken into consideration, because populations of *S. pedata* tend to be highly detectable and occur in the same locations from year to year with low annual variability (unless disturbed) (USFS 2000a, p. 152).

Changes in Taxonomic Classification or Nomenclature

Neither the taxonomic classification nor the nomenclature of *Sidalcea pedata* has changed since listing.

Genetics

A phylogenentic analysis of nuclear ribosomal DNA sequences for *Sidalcea* was recently conducted and resolved five major, well-supported lineages (including the *malviflora* clade, which includes *Sidalcea pedata*). The study improved phylogenetic resolution and support in rDNA trees of *Sidalcea* and also indicate that life-form evolution in *Sidalcea* has been highly dynamic (Andreasen and Baldwin 2003, p. 443). This may aid in the long-term persistence of *S. pedata*, as a species with a small population size. See Factor E below for a discussion of impacts from reduced population size on *S. pedata*.

Species-Specific Research and/or Grant-Supported Activities

Sidalcea pedata plants were transplanted onto San Bernardino National Forest land at Belleville Meadow (EO 26) in the 1980s from an impending development project (unknown EO number) (CNDDB 2010, USFWS 1998, p. 25). Twelve plants were transplanted and though one individual was later found in 1999, no *S. pedata* plants have been found since. A second transplantation experiment was initiated on private land in 1990 as partial mitigation for a private development project in Big Bear City (unknown EO). During that time, 13 mature and four seedling *S. pedata* plants were transplanted from the parcel to be developed to a small lot then managed by The Nature Conservancy (USFWS 1998, p. 24; USFWS 2005, p. 210; CNDDB 2010). Both efforts were considered unsuccessful. While it is not fully understood why *S. pedata* transplantations have been unsuccessful, degraded hydrological conditions may have contributed (USFWS 2005, p. 210). Further research on the efficacy of transplantation methodologies is necessary.

Dr. Joan Leong (California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, CA) investigated two key aspects of *Sidalcea pedata* biology considered necessary for conservation planning: the species' breeding system and its pollination biology (Leong 2006). Five main sites in the Big Bear

Valley were surveyed from 2002 to 2005. The study found that *S. pedata* is gynodioecious (produces female and hermaphrodite sex morphs) and the fecundity of the females was almost twice that of the hermaphrodites. Results also show pollination services are required for both hermaphrodites and females. Pollination studies indicated bees in the families Apidae, Halictidae, and Megachilidae were the most frequent visitors to *S. pedata* and most bee species were generalist pollinators. Bees of the genus *Osmia* were the most abundant visitors. Bee visitors appeared to distinguish between the two sex morphs and were more highly attracted to hermaphrodite flowers when initially flying to a new group of stems.

Vulnerability Factors

Species may be vulnerable to threats for a variety of reasons. Primack (2006, p. 159) outlined the following five categories of species considered most vulnerable to extinction:

1) Species with very narrow geographical ranges,
2) species with only one or a few populations,
3) species in which population size is small (identified as one of the best predictors of species extinction rate),
4) species in which population size is declining, and
5) species that are hunted or harvested by people.

Evaluation of these categories relative to life history traits can be used to develop a vulnerability profile for *Sidalcea pedata*. Fiedler and Ahouse (1992, p. 32) consider ecology, biotic competition, population dynamics, reproductive biology, and genetics among the factors affecting the rarity of a plant taxon, which would be reflected in categories two and three above. These traits may render the species more vulnerable to the threats discussed below and should be considered in developing management actions. We have identified the following vulnerability factors for *S. pedata* include the following:

1) The species has a naturally discontinuous, narrow geographical range and is restricted to moist meadow habitat. *Sidalcea pedata* is distributed on approximately 8.1 ha (20 ac) of moist meadow habitat in the Big Bear Valley.
2) The species is currently known from only 16 extant occurrences at three locations.
3) Some occurrences of *Sidalcea pedata* contain only a few individuals.
4) Some populations may be considered stable, but others are declining.

Although life history and habitat specificity traits create natural limitations for *Sidalcea pedata,* the threats described below in the five-factor analysis exacerbate the species' vulnerabilities described above.

Five-Factor Analysis

The following five-factor analysis describes and evaluates the threats attributable to one or more of the five listing factors outlined in section 4(a)(1) of the Act.

FACTOR A: Present or Threatened Destruction, Modification, or Curtailment of Habitat or Range

The listing rule identified urban and commercial development and off-highway vehicle (OHV) activity as the main threats to habitat occupied by *Sidalcea pedata* (USFWS 1984, p. 34498). Since listing, these threats have continued to impact *S. pedata* habitat. We have also identified two new Factor A threats: alteration of hydrology and invasion by nonnative plants, which are described below.

Development

Development of the Big Bear Lake Reservoir (1884) and the Big Bear Dam (1911) destroyed almost all of the natural meadowland within Big Bear Valley. As a result, habitat occupied by *Thelypodium stenopetalum* was reduced from 2,800 ha (7,000 ac) to about 400 ha (1,000 ac) (USFWS 1984, p. 34498). This construction appears to have affected the extinction of some of the plants that formerly grew in the valley (Parish 1917, p. 164) and likely eliminated *Sidalcea pedata* populations. Residential and commercial development led to the extirpation of seven known historical occurrences of *S. pedata* in the decades prior to listing (Appendix 1). At the time of listing, about 80 percent of the remaining *S. pedata* habitat (approximately 400 ha (1,000 ac) was considered vulnerable to development (USFWS 1984, p. 34499).

Since listing in 1984, habitat loss associated with development continues to be the predominant threat to *Sidalcea pedata* and has contributed to two extirpations: Mallard Lagoon (EO 7) and the Big Bear City Airport (EO 13). In the 2000s, the Big Bear area experienced more residential construction than occurred in the previous decades. The population in Big Bear grew 14.1 percent from 2000 to 2007 (City of Big Bear Lake 2010, p. II–1) and this region is likely to experience continued growth over the next few decades (USFS 2002, p. 25). Over the past 20 years, occurrences on private lands are now either extirpated or are highly disturbed. Virtually all known private land occurrences exhibit some level of disturbance (USFS 2000b, p. 2). The USFS (2000, p. 2) suggests that "simply protecting the National Forest land occurrences will likely not be enough to ensure survival and recovery of these [in reference to the meadow species] species" and that "without aggressive conservation, recovery and restoration efforts, the federally-protected occurrences may not be enough to ensure long-term survival of these species."

The threat of development remains high because the majority of *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences are on private land (10 of 16 EOs). Two of these occurrences are currently posted for sale: Metcalf Creek at the Drive-in and Flea market (EO 17) and the YMCA camp at Bluff Lake (EO 6) (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010). Impacts of development pressures on private land are evident at a number of occurrences: the east side of Baldwin Lake (EO 9, 30) has been highly developed to the extent that populations may become extirpated or too small to persist, and populations at Metcalf Creek (EO 17), Eagle Point (EOs 19, 21), and the south shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 8) have also been impacted by development. The only *S. pedata* occurrence that is considered fully protected is at the north shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 1) on the Baldwin Lake Ecological Reserve (managed by CDFG). The direct threat of development to *S. pedata* habitat therefore remains substantial and is currently impacting habitat at 10 of the 16 extant occurrences (Appendix 1).

Off-Highway Vehicles (OHVs)

The listing rule indicated that OHV activity eliminated colonies and damaged *Sidalcea pedata* habitat (USFWS 1984, p. 34499). In 2000, a review by the USFS found that approximately 1.1 miles (1.7 kilometers (1.3 ha (3.3 ac))) of unauthorized roads bisect or are adjacent to known occupied meadow plant occurrences and that the unauthorized network of roads allow for an "unknown, though likely high, level of random and on-going impacts to threatened/endangered meadow plant habitat (USFS 2000a, p. 99)." OHV use continues to impact moist meadow habitat by altering hydrology, compacting soil, and degrading habitat.

Preventing OHV use within *Sidalcea pedata* habitat has been difficult because much of the activity is either on private land or is unauthorized. Occurrences at the north and south shores of Baldwin Lake (EOs 1, 6) are particularly vulnerable to OHV use. At the south shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 6), OHV trails bisect the *S. pedata* occurrence, connecting private land to the shoreline (USFS 2000, p. 62). Fencing that may provide protection to the occurrence at the north shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 1)—at the side of State Route 18, which could prevent unauthorized OHVs from entering—has been knocked down or has fallen down due to heavy snow drifts (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010). In 2010, the USFS placed boulders at the entrance of these roads to prevent illegal OHV activity, which appears successful in reducing impacts from this threat (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010) on USFS land. Currently 10 of the 16 known extant occurrences are subject to impacts from OHV activity.

Alteration of Hydrology

Sidalcea pedata is susceptible to changes of the natural hydrological conditions within its habitat due to its apparent dependence on soil moisture (USFS 2000b, p. 37). Alteration of hydrology poses a threat to all *S. pedata* occurrences (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010). Alteration of drainages and swales, depletion of groundwater, and conversion of drainages to flood control channels all have the potential to significantly impact populations of *S. pedata*. In extreme cases, alteration of hydrology may result in the dewatering of the habitat by lowering the water table (USFS 2000b, p. 43). For example, an increase in residential development and the subsequent installation of a large number of private wells has the potential to lower the water table and thereby alter the hydrology of moist meadow habitat (Krantz 1979, p. IV; Eliason, pers. obs. 2010). Additionally, development, roads, and OHV activity may alter the hydrology of an area by creating gullies, which can cut off the water supply to a meadow aquifer downstream by intercepting, concentrating, and diverting runoff (USFS 2002, p. 22)

Alteration of soil hydrology or existing drainage patterns may have impacted several *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences including Eagle Point (EO 21) and the north shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 1). At each of these locations, efforts were made to prevent hydrology-related impacts to the habitat and to the species. For instance, CDFG's purchase of private lands containing the watershed for the north shore of the Baldwin Lake occurrence (EO 1; Baldwin Lake Ecological Reserve) in 1992 has helped to maintain natural hydrologic patterns. The Pan Hot Springs occurrence (EO 12) is found on deed restricted land; however, the water source for the habitat is not included in the deed restriction. Without control of water availability, the plants and their habitat at this occurrence remain threatened (USFS 2002, p. 25).

While protection measures have lessened the threat of altered hydrology at several occurrences, it remains a rangewide threat to 14 of the 16 known extant occurrences (Appendix 1).

Invasive Nonnative Plants

Since listing, invasive nonnative plants have been identified as a threat to the majority of *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences throughout the range. Nonnative species of grasses and forbs invade many plant communities often as an indirect result of habitat disturbance (Vitousek *et al.* 1997). Development, roads, and other threats that disturb moist meadow habitat allow invasive nonnative plants to occupy and replace *S. pedata*, and may decrease the amount of soil nutrients available to co-existing *S. pedata* and usurp natural pollinators (Levine *et al.* 2003, p. 777). Nonnative grasses in particular impact *S. pedata* habitat by potentially decreasing community water availability, which is often mediated by the displacement of species that use more water (Levine *et al.* 2003, p. 778). Invasion by nonnative grasses, which have shallower root systems than the perennials they replace, may result in habitat with altered hydrology (Levine *et al.* 2003, p. 778) that may make it more difficult for *S. pedata* to thrive because grasses have a highly diffuse root system that is well positioned in the soil horizon to remove moisture that otherwise could support seedlings of *S. pedata*. Additionally, dead grasses may create a mat or thatch that impedes or prevents seedlings from becoming established.

Thinopyrum intermedium (previously *Elytrigia intermedia*) (intermediate wheatgrass) has been identified as a threat to occurrences at Baldwin Lake (EOs 1, 8, 9, 23, 24, 30), Eagle Point (EOs 19 and 21), and in the south of Pan Hot Springs (EO 12). An entire population at the northern end of the Pan Hot Springs occurrence (EO 12) has been extirpated from the meadow edge since the early 1990s by a dense invasion of *T. intermedium* (Krantz 2008, p. 11; Eliason, pers. comm. 2011). *Thinopyrum intermedium* invades *Sidalcea pedata* habitat and outcompetes it for space. It also produces a thatch that *S. pedata* seedlings cannot penetrate. Control methods such as burning or mowing have proven ineffective as both grasses are perennial and that returns in subsequent years (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010). Nonnative plants are a threat to 14 of the 16 known extant occurrences of *S. pedata* (Appendix 1).

Summary of Factor A

In summary, the most significant ongoing threat to *Sidalcea pedata* continues to be development on private lands (10 of 16 occurrences are potentially impacted). Three occurrences have been extirpated since listing and an additional six have demonstrated population decreases as a result of habitat loss. The occurrence at the north shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 1) is the only occurrence considered fully protected. While fencing, signage, and barriers have been installed at several occurrences, unauthorized OHV activity continues to impact *S. pedata* habitat at 10 of 16 extant occurrences. Alterations of hydrology and invasion by nonnative species have been identified as new rangewide threats since listing. Habitat occupied by *S. pedata* is impacted by development, OHVs, altered hydrology, and nonnatives and continues to be threatened with extinction throughout its range.

FACTOR B: Overutilization for Commercial, Recreational, Scientific, or Educational Purposes

Overutilization for commercial purposes was not known to be a factor in the 1983 final listing rule (USFWS 1984, p. 48136). Overutilization for any purpose does not appear to be a threat at this time.

FACTOR C: Disease or Predation

The listing rule indicated that historically, cattle grazing in the Big Bear Basin likely affected the species composition of many of the meadow areas formerly supporting *Sidalcea pedata* and that the few remaining colonies may still be adversely impacted by cattle grazing (USFWS 1984, p. 34499). Since listing we have determined that cattle grazing is no longer a threat, although grazing by burros and horses has impacted *S. pedata.* In early 1997, a population of wild burros, estimated to be 117 animals, inhabited the Big Bear Valley and Baldwin Lake area. That same year, 77 of the burros were removed and those remaining are now prevented from entering habitat occupied by *S. pedata* (USFS 2002, p. 18). Based on the best information available, we found no evidence that burro grazing poses a threat to the species at this time.

Since the time of listing, horse grazing and pasturing activities have been identified as threats that are impacting occurrences at Pan Hot Springs (EO 12), Metcalf Creek (EO 17), and Bluff Lake (EO 6). Voluntary landowner agreements resulted in the relocation of equestrian activities away from rare plant habitat in the areas, and in 1987, horse corrals were removed from Pan Hot Springs. These efforts were successful and recovery of *Sidalcea pedata* populations has been observed at that location (USFS 2002, p. 19). Horse grazing and pasturing activities remains a threat to only 3 of 16 *S. pedata* occurrences at the east and south shores of Baldwin Lake (EOs 8, 9, 30). These occurrences are on private lands and there are no protective measures in place to reduce this threat.

FACTOR D: Inadequacy of Existing Regulatory Mechanisms

At the time *Sidalcea pedata* was listed as endangered under the Act, it was already listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Our listing rule stated that listing by the State of California did not provide sufficient protection to ensure survival of the species in its natural habitat, as it principally addresses salvage of plants when there is a change in land use and restrictions on trade (USFWS 1984, p. 34499). No Federal regulatory mechanisms that might provide for the conservation of *S. pedata* were described in our listing rule other than reference to the general benefits of listing under the Act. The following discussion describes State, Federal, and local laws and regulations relevant to conservation of *S. pedata*.

State Protections

State laws potentially providing protection to *Sidalcea pedata* include CESA, Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the Natural Communities Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act enacted in 1991.

California Endangered Species Act (CESA) and Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA)

Protections have been afforded to *Sidalcea pedata* since the species was listed as endangered by the State in 1982. Both the NPPA and CESA include prohibitions forbidding the "take" of State-listed species (Chapter 10, Section 1908 and Chapter 1.5, Section 2080, CFG code). With regard to prohibitions of unauthorized take under NPPA, landowners are exempt from this prohibition for plants to be taken in the process of habitat modification. Where landowners are notified by the State that a rare or endangered plant is growing on their land, the landowners are required to notify CDFG 10 days in advance of changing land use in order to allow salvage of listed plants. Sections 2081(b) and (c) of CESA allow CDFG to issue incidental take permits for State-listed threatened and endangered species if:

1) The authorized take is incidental to an otherwise lawful activity;
2) the impacts of the authorized take are minimized and fully mitigated;
3) the measures required to minimize and fully mitigate the impacts of the authorized take are roughly proportional in extent to the impact of the taking of the species, maintain the applicant's objectives to the greatest extent possible, and are capable of successful implementation;
4) adequate funding is provided to implement the required minimization and mitigation measures and to monitor compliance with and the effectiveness of the measures; and
5) issuance of the permit will not jeopardize the continued existence of a State-listed species.

Protections for *Sidalcea pedata* afforded under CESA and NPPA may be lessened as a result of enforcement of a local weed abatement requirement of the County of San Bernardino as described in the Local Agencies (San Bernardino County Land Use/Fire Hazard Abatement Division) section below.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA is the principal statute mandating environmental assessment of projects in California. The purpose of CEQA is to evaluate whether a proposed project may have an adverse effect on the environment and, if so, to determine whether that effect can be reduced or eliminated by pursuing an alternative course of action or through mitigation. CEQA applies to projects proposed to be undertaken or requiring approval by State and local public agencies (*http://www.ceres.ca.gov/topic/env_law/ceqa/summary.html*). CEQA requires disclosure of potential environmental impacts and a determination of "significant" if a project has the potential to reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plants, including *Sidalcea pedata*; however, projects may move forward if there is a statement of overriding consideration. If significant effects are identified, the lead agency has the option of requiring mitigation through changes in the project or to decide that overriding considerations make mitigation infeasible (CEQA section 21002). Protection of listed species through CEQA is, therefore, dependent upon the discretion of the lead agency involved.

The Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) Act

The NCCP program is a cooperative effort between the State of California and numerous private and public partners with the goal of protecting habitats and species. An NCCP program identifies and provides for the regional or area-wide protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. The program began in 1991 under the State's NCCP Act (CFG Code 2800-2835). The primary objective of the NCCP program is to conserve natural communities at the ecosystem scale while accommodating compatible land uses (*http://www.dfg.ca.gov/nccp/*). Regional NCCPs provide protection to federally-listed species by conserving native habitats upon which the species depend. Many NCCPs are developed in conjunction with Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) prepared pursuant to the Act. *Sidalcea pedata* does not occur on lands within an HCP.

California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)

Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement

The CDFG Code at section 1602 requires notification by any person, business, State, or local government agency, or utility that proposes an activity that will: 1) substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of any river, stream or lake; 2) substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake or; 3) deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or any other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake. This notification applies to any work undertaken in or near a river, stream, or lake that flows at least intermittently through a bed or channel. This includes ephemeral streams, desert washes, and waterways with subsurface flows. It may also apply to work undertaken within the flood plain of a body of water. If CDFG determines that the activity may substantially adversely affect fish and wildlife resources, a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement will be prepared. The agreement includes reasonable conditions necessary to protect those resources and must comply with CEQA. This CDFG requirement may afford protections to the State-listed *Sidalcea pedata* in the intermittent waterways and shallow flood plain associated with Big Bear Lake and Baldwin Lake occurrences.

Baldwin Lake Ecological Reserve

The CDFG owns and conserves 55 ha (138 ac) of sensitive habitat on the north shore of Baldwin Lake (EO 1). This is considered the only fully protected occurrence of *Sidalcea pedata*. Most of this land, which was originally purchased by The Nature Conservancy and transferred to CDFG in 1986, is now designated as the Baldwin Lake Ecological Reserve (Reserve). The Reserve includes 1 ha (3 ac) of wet meadow habitat supporting *S. pedata*. A management plan and "Operations and Maintenance Schedule" for the Reserve and adjacent lands were completed in August 1989 pursuant to a cooperative endeavor involving CDFG, The Nature Conservancy, and the USFS. Management actions include rerouting of trails to avoid rare plant habitat, installation of fencing along State Highway 18 to limit access, and surveying in 2000 (no significant changes to habitat were noted) (USFS 2000, pp. 32–33). Additionally, the Friends of the Forest (the official interpretive association of the Big Bear Service District) renovated an abandoned building in the Reserve in 1992 for use as a visitor center, which provided information on

endangered and threatened species in Big Bear Valley, including *S. pedata*. Management actions appear to be successful, as the *S. pedata* occurrence seems to be stable here.

Federal Protections

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4371 *et seq*.) provides some protection for listed species that may be affected by activities undertaken, authorized, or funded by Federal agencies. Prior to implementation of such projects with a Federal nexus, NEPA requires the agency to analyze the project for potential impacts to the human environment, including natural resources. In cases where that analysis reveals significant environmental effects, the Federal agency must propose mitigations that could offset those effects (40 C.F.R. 1502.16). These mitigations usually provide some protection for listed species. However, NEPA does not require that adverse impacts be reduced to a level of insignificance, only that impacts be assessed and the analysis disclosed to the public.

Clean Water Act (CWA)

Under section 404, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) regulates the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States, which include navigable and isolated waters, headwaters, and adjacent wetlands (33 U.S.C. 1344). In general, the term "wetland" refers to areas meeting the Corps' criteria of hydric soils, hydrology (either sufficient annual flooding or water on the soil surface), and hydrophytic vegetation (plants specifically adapted for growing in wetlands). Any action with the potential to impact waters of the United States must be reviewed under the Clean Water Act (CWA), NEPA, and the Act. These reviews require consideration of impacts to listed species and their habitats, and recommendations for mitigation of significant impacts. Big Bear Lake is considered a jurisdictional wetland; however, the ephemeral drainages where *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences are found require a significant nexus determination. In response to the recent Supreme Court decisions, the Corps and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have recently released a memorandum providing guidelines for determining jurisdiction under the CWA. This guidance indicates that wetlands adjacent to navigable-in-fact waters of the United States are subject to regulation under the CWA, as are non-adjacent wetlands that are shown to have a significant nexus to navigable waters. The guidelines provide for a case-by-case determination of a "significant nexus" standard. Thus, the CWA may not provide protections for all moist meadow habitat around Big Bear Lake where *S. pedata* is found. No jurisdictional determination has been made on Baldwin Lake and its tributaries (G. Salas, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, pers. comm. 2011).

Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act)

Since listing, the Act is the primary Federal law that provides protection for *Sidalcea pedata.* The Service's responsibilities include administering the Act, including sections 7, 9, and 10. Section 7(a)(2) of the Act requires Federal agencies, including the Service to ensure that actions they fund, authorize, or carry out do not "jeopardize" a listed species or result in the "destruction or adverse modification" of designated critical habitat. Critical habitat has not been proposed for

this taxon. A jeopardy determination is made for a project that is reasonably expected, either directly or indirectly, to appreciably reduce the likelihood of both the survival and recovery of a listed species in the wild by reducing its reproduction, numbers, or distribution (50 C.F.R. § 402.02).

Under Section 9(a)(2) of the Act, with respect to endangered plant taxa, it is unlawful to remove and reduce to possession (i.e., collect) any such taxon from areas under Federal jurisdiction; maliciously damage or destroy any such taxon on any such area; or remove, cut, dig up, or damage or destroy any such species on any other area in knowing violation of any law or regulation of any state or in the course of any violation of a state criminal trespass law.

Section 10(a)(1)(A) of the Act contains provisions for collection of plants or plant parts for scientific purposes or to enhance the propagation and survival of the species. Under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Act, the Service may issue "incidental take" (take is defined in section 3(18) of the Act) permits for listed animal species to non-Federal applicants. Take and therefore incidental take protections are not extended to plants.

National Forest Management Act (NFMA)

The National Forest Management Act (NFMA) (36 C.F.R. 219.20(b)(i)) has required USFS to incorporate standards and guidelines into Land and Resource Management Plans, including provisions to support and manage plant and animal communities for diversity and for the long-term, rangewide viability of native species. The USFS recently released a proposed planning rule for National Forest System Land management planning, including preparation of its Land and Resource Management Plans, which is likely to change future management of listed species, particularly rare plant occurrences on National Forests (76 FR 8480; February 14, 2011).

The most recently revised Land and Resource Management Plans for the four southern California national forests includes strategic direction in the form of land use zoning and standards (USFS 2005). The land use zoning and standards indicates that for projects under the plans, new activities will be neutral or beneficial to *Sidalcea pedata* and expansion of existing facilities or new facilities will focus recreational use away from *S. pedata* habitat. Exceptions were included for fuel abatement activities ("fuel treatments") in wildland-urban interface areas and to allow for projects with short-term effects but long-term benefits (USFWS 2005, p. 15). However, projects proposed outside of the scope of the Plans may still impact the species.

Meadow Habitat Management Guide

In 2002, the San Bernardino National Forest completed the Meadow Habitat Management Guide (USFS 2002). This guide updates the status of *Sidalcea pedata* on USFS land and on private lands and describes location-specific management strategies to promote the recovery of this species. Management direction and prescriptions are based on existing laws, regulations, and USFS policy (USFS 2002, p. 1). The Meadow Habitat Management Guide identifies 12 meadow or meadow systems with *S. pedata* (based on hydrology). On USFS land, examples of recommended management actions include monitoring for *S. pedata*, monitoring for nonnatives along trails and roads, rerouting of roads, and limiting accessibility. On private lands,

management actions may include cooperating with land owners (i.e., CDFG, City of Big Bear Lake, cabin owners) to conserve meadow habitat or discourage impacts (USFS 2002, pp. 29–70). Thus far, the occurrence at Pan Hot Springs (EO 7) is the only occurrence on private land where this recommended action has been implemented, and cooperating with land owners has led to the relocation of horse pasturing activities away from *S. pedata* (see Factor C for further discussion).

Local Agencies

San Bernardino County Land Use/Fire Hazard Abatement Division

The San Bernardino County Land Use/Fire Hazard Abatement Division inspects open area parcels, homes that have a significant amount of tall weeds, and responds to complaints regarding weeds. Species identified as weeds are not identified in the San Bernardino County code; however, there is no discrimination for rare plants growing on the identified properties (Codified Ordinances of the County of San Bernardino 2010, 23.0304). If the Code Enforcement Office determines a property could be a fire hazard, residents may receive a weed abatement order in the mail. Because mowing is conducted by private owners who wish to remove weeds under the weed abatement program (see Factor E discussion), occurrences of *Sidalcea pedata* within these areas may be impacted. One example is at the newly discovered occurrence in the front yard of a resident's house in Boulder Bay. CDFG discovered that *S. pedata* was present, but the County ordered the resident to mow for weeds. To resolve this conflict, the City of Big Bear Lake suggested that there should be exceptions when rare plants are present, though these have not yet been adopted by San Bernardino County (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010).

City of Big Bear Lake

The City of Big Bear Lake General Plan, completed in 1983, includes a Conservation Element that recognizes the significance of rare plant populations within the city boundaries. Populations of *Sidalcea pedata* are designated on a "Rare Plant Habitat Map" within the Conservation Element.

The City of Big Bear Lake received a deed restriction for 2.8 ha (7.0 ac) of rare plant habitat at Eagle Point often referred to as "Lot K" (EO 19). This parcel contains populations of *Sidalcea pedata*. The deed restriction on this property, which is still owned by the developers of an adjacent housing development, was granted to the City of Big Bear Lake as mitigation for project impacts. Although these lands are considered conserved, there are currently no management provisions in place.

Big Bear City Community Services District

Sidalcea pedata occurs on property at Pan Hot Springs (EO 12) owned and managed by the Big Bear Community Services District. This parcel includes 20 ha (50 ac) of sensitive meadow and wetland habitat. Approximately 4 ha (10 ac) of the property has been set aside as a rare plant preserve. This area is covered by a Big Bear Community Services District deed restriction that requires protection of the rare plant populations and habitat and is managed following guidelines and directives outlined in the Pan Hot Springs Management Plan (Krantz 2008). This

protection agreement was designed in consultation with the Service, Corps, and The Nature Conservancy personnel.

Summary of Factor D

In summary, the Act is the primary Federal law that has provided protection for *Sidalcea pedata* since its listing as endangered in 1984. Other Federal and State regulatory mechanisms provide discretionary protections for the species based on current management direction, but do not guarantee protection for *S. pedata* absent its status under the Act. One occurrence at Baldwin Lake (EO 1) is considered fully protected; however, even this population is impacted by recreational activities and illegal trespass. Two of the 16 extant *S. pedata* occurrences are afforded protection through local agencies by protecting land to conserve rare plant populations. There are also unresolved conflicts between State protections afforded under CESA and NPPA and county weed abatement provisions. Therefore, State and other Federal laws and regulations have limited ability to protect the species in absence of the Act. Inadequacies in provisions or implementation in regulatory mechanisms are not considered threats to the species, although these inadequacies may permit or precipitate actual threats that are described under Factors A, B, C, and E.

FACTOR E: Other Natural or Manmade Factors Affecting Its Continued Existence

The listing rule did not identify any other natural or manmade threats impacting *Sidalcea pedata* continued existence. Since listing, several new threats under Factor E have been identified and include: recreation activities, fire suppression, reduced populations, and climate change and drought.

Recreational Activities

Impacts associated with recreational activities have been identified as a rangewide threat to *Sidalcea pedata* (Appendix 1). Recreational activities include but are not limited to: hiking, camping, fishing, horse riding, mountain biking, and dog walking. The primary impact from recreational activities is trampling that can crush and kill individual plants. Additional impacts include soil compaction, devegetation, escaped campfire threats, introduction or spread of nonnative species, and burial of plants with litter (USFS 2002, p. 23). Fencing and signage indicating the presence of sensitive species have proven effective at reducing the threat of recreational activities at the north and south shore of Baldwin Lake. Moderate success has also been made in educating the public and heightening the awareness of the need for the protection and recovery of *S. pedata* and numerous other listed and rare species near Big Bear Lake. The Big Bear Discovery Center at San Bernardino National Forest regularly presents public education programs on a variety of subjects, including threatened and endangered species (USFS 2000b, p. 80). Though recreational activities are a rangewide threat, the resulting impacts have been reduced at Pan Hot Springs (EO 12) and Bluff Lake (EO 6) through coordination with private landowners (USFS 2002, p. 23).

Fire Suppression Measures

Implementation of fire suppression measures has been identified as a threat at 11of 16 extant *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences. The San Bernardino County Land Use/Fire Hazard Abatement Division (see Factor D discussion) requires that owners must remove weeds and grasses in areas where this vegetation acts as fuel that may pose a fire threat. Weeds and grasses are described by the County of San Bernardino generally as annuals that grow and dry out each year, and thus removal activities do not discriminate for rare plants (County of San Bernardino 2010). Weed and grass removal generally involves mowing, which damages or destroys individual *S. pedata* plants. If removal activities are conducted before or during *S. pedata* flowering and fruit development, the plants reproductive output and germination may be significantly impacted. While *S. pedata* appears to be a robust species and has been observed in mowed, vacant lots (Eagle Point (EO 21), Metcalf Creek (EO 17)), these populations (or in many cases just individual perennial plants) may be "hanging on" and not reproducing (Eliason, pers. obs. 2010). If mowing is to continue, effort should be made to time this activity to avoid impacting *S. pedata* germination and the persistence of the populations.

Reduced Populations

Fragmentation and isolation can adversely impact small populations of plants that are already reduced in distribution such as *Sidalcea pedata* resulting in increased vulnerability to extirpation (Barrett and Kohn 1991, pp. 3–30). These effects may be the result of several factors, including small areas of suitable habitat, local extirpations, or ongoing natural or artificial factors limiting establishment and survival of the taxon.

The small numbers of *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences is a concern because it increases the possibility that impacts from urban development or other activities near moist meadow habitat could destroy all or a significant portion of the species' population. *Sidalcea pedata* is distributed on less than 8.1 ha (20 ac) of moist meadow habitat (USFWS 1998, p. iii). Stochastic events outside the natural range of frequency and severity (such as floods, fires, contamination, or drought) can substantially reduce or eliminate species such as *S. pedata* with a restricted range and small population, and increase the likelihood of its extinction (Lande 1993, p. 912).

Genetic effects may further influence population demography via inbreeding depression and genetic drift (Barrett and Kohn 1991, pp. 3–30; Menges 1991, pp. 58–61). Allee (1931, pp. 17–50) suggested small, single populations are vulnerable to extirpation when opportunities for reproduction diminish because of reduced opportunity of individuals to reproduce (Allee effect or depensation) (Courchamp *et al.* 2008, pp. vi–216). Stephens *et al.* (1999, pp. 185–190), Dennis (2002, pp. 389–401) and Courchamp *et al.* (2008, pp. vi–216) suggest that the Allee effect is a density-dependent event that is inversely related to population size.

Climate Change and Drought

Soil hydrology is likely a limiting factor in the distribution of *Sidalcea pedata* in moist meadows. Currently, altered hydrology is a rangewide threat to *S. pedata*, and may be exacerbated by climate change. There is a broad consensus among scientists that the earth is in a warming trend

caused by anthropogenic greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide (IPCC 2007). Climate models are beginning to examine what will happen in localized regions such as southern California, and many scientists believe warmer, wetter winters and warmer, drier summers will occur within the next century as well as an increase in extreme temperature events (e.g., Field *et al*. 1999, pp. 2–3, 20; Christensen *et al.* 2007, p. 891). Climate-related changes in California have been documented (Croke *et al*. 1998, pp. 2128, 2130; Breashears *et al*. 2005, p. 15144; McMullen 2009, p.41; Dominquez *et al*. 2010, p. 500). Predictions for California indicate prolonged drought and other climate-related changes will continue in the future (Field *et al.* 1999, pp. 8–10; Lenihan *et al.* 2003, p. 1667; Hayhoe *et al.* 2004, p. 12422; Breashears *et al.* 2005, p. 15144; Seager *et al.* 2007, p. 1181; IPCC 2007, p. 9). The impacts on species like *S. pedata* that depend on specific hydrological regimes may be more severe.

Five factors associated with a changing climate may affect the long-term viability of *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences in its current habitat configuration: 1) drier conditions may result in less suitable moist meadow habitat, a lower percent germination and smaller population sizes, fewer and less reliable reproductive recovery cycles of abundant individuals; 2) higher temperatures may inhibit germination, dry out meadows, affect pollinator services; 3) a shift in the timing and nature of the annual precipitation may favor nonnative species and increase erosion and summer drought; 4) the timing of pollinator life-cycles may become out-of-sync with timing of flowering *S. pedata*; and 5) drier conditions may result in increased fire frequency, making the ecosystems in which *S. pedata* currently grows more vulnerable to the threats of subsequent erosion and nonnative/native plant invasion. In a changing climate, conditions could change in a way that would allow both native and nonnative plants to invade the habitat where *S. pedata* occurs.

While we recognize that climate change is an important issue with potential effects to listed species and their habitats, we lack adequate information to make accurate predictions regarding its effects to particular species (including *Sidalcea pedata)* or sites at this time. It seems likely that *S. pedata,* a species restricted to montane meadows in a single small portion of a mountain range found on clay soils with particular hydrological needs, would be threatened rangewide by any differences in climatic regimes brought on by changes to the climate. A changing climate with spatial and temporal shifting of temperature and precipitation may cause this species-specific adaptations to climate to work against its survival. A changing climate may also provide advantages to other native and nonnative plant species. Sharing information between scientists, land managers, and decision makers will increase our ability to address these threats. Increasing the success with which we address current threats to *S. pedata* will increase our success of handling the uncertain effects of future climate change.

Summary of Factor E

Since listing, recreational activities, fire suppression, reduced, fragmented, or isolated populations, and climate change have been identified as rangewide threats to *Sidalcea pedata*. Numerous recreational activities can crush or damage plants or degrade habitat. While fencing and signage has been installed to reduce the impacts of such activities in *S. pedata* habitat, unauthorized trespass still occurs. Landowner agreements and educational efforts to raise awareness may be beneficial in reducing this threat on private lands. Mowing as a means of fire suppression poses a substantial threat to *S. pedata* on private lands. *Sidalcea pedata* populations

have been fragmented and isolated and are at risk of extirpation from stochastic events or genetic effects associated with its small population size. Because *S. pedata* is limited by specific hydrological regimes, the species is likely threatened by climate change and drought events, which may alter its habitat to a point that it is no longer suitable. As a result of the persistence of impacts associated with recreation, fire suppression, small population size, and potentially climate change, Factor E threats continue to threaten *S. pedata* with extinction throughout its range.

III. RECOVERY CRITERIA

Recovery plans provide guidance to the Service, states, and other partners and interested parties on ways to minimize threats to listed species, and on criteria that may be used to determine when recovery goals are achieved. There are many paths to accomplishing the recovery of a species and recovery may be achieved without fully meeting all recovery plan criteria. For example, one or more criteria may have been exceeded while other criteria may not have been accomplished. In that instance, we may determine that, over all, the threats have been minimized sufficiently, and the species is robust enough, to downlist or delist the species. In other cases, new recovery approaches or opportunities unknown at the time the recovery plan was finalized may be more appropriate ways to achieve recovery. Likewise, new information may change the extent that criteria need to be met for recognizing recovery of the species. Overall, recovery is a dynamic process requiring adaptive management, and assessing a species' degree of recovery is likewise an adaptive process that may, or may not, fully follow the guidance provided in a recovery plan. We focus our evaluation of species status in this 5-year review on progress that has been made toward recovery since the species was listed by eliminating or reducing the threats discussed in the five-factor analysis. In that context, progress towards fulfilling recovery criteria serves to indicate the extent to which threat factors have been reduced or eliminated.

The primary objective of the recovery plan for *Sidalcea pedata* and *Thelypodium stenopetalum* was "to enable the reclassification to threatened and ultimately delist the two species by providing written guidance on protecting and maintaining sufficient populations and habitat (USFWS 1998, p. 34)." Although recovery criteria were developed for the two plant species, the criteria were not threat-based, as addressing ecosystem function and integrity was the modus for recovery plans developed during the 1990s (Clark *et al.* 2002, pp. 1510–1519). The criteria to assess recovery of *S. pedata* also do not reflect the most current information available. Overall, little progress has been made toward satisfying the recovery criteria.

Recovery criteria focused on reclassification from endangered to threatened were listed as:

1) *Populations of Sidalcea pedata and adjacent suitable habitat are fully protected through land management agreements, land ownership by resource agency or conservation organization, conservation easement, or other permanent means of protection.*
2) *Populations are stable or increasing with allowances for natural fluctuations.*

Since listing, conservation measures have been put into place that allow for at least partial protection of several *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences. The occurrence at the north shore of Baldwin

Lake (EO 1) is the only population of *S. pedata* that is considered fully protected (USFWS 2005, p. 208); however, even this population is impacted by recreational activities and illegal trespass. Voluntary landowner agreements have also lessened the impact associated with horses (grazing activities) at Pan Hot Springs and Bluff Lake. Six occurrences are found in part on USFS lands and receive guidance for protection through the Forest Service's Land and Resource Management Plan and the Meadow Habitat Management Guide. Two other extant occurrences receive partial protection by local agencies. One of the occurrences at Eagle Point (parcel K, EO 19) is found on privately owned, deed restricted land governed by the City of Big Bear Lake and has been set aside as a rare plant preserve as mitigation for Eagle Point development. The Pan Hot Springs occurrence (EO 12) is found, in part on land owned by Big Bear City's Community Services District and it receives partial protection through management actions identified in the Pan Hot Springs Meadow Habitat Management Plan (Krantz 2008).

Eleven occurrences are located in part on private land and receive no formal protection. Development on private land remains the predominant threat to *Sidalcea pedata*. As the majority of occurrences receive no protection, the conservation efforts described above are not enough to meet reclassification criterion 1 for *S. pedata* from endangered to threatened status.

The populations of *Sidalcea pedata* are declining overall, with extirpation of three occurrences (EOs 7, 13, and 26) since listing. All occurrences are impacted by multiple threats and though some populations are presumed extant, surveys are needed to verify their current status (e.g., east side of Baldwin Lake). The construction of a house directly on top of part of the population that was recently studied (i.e., at EO 21) is just one example demonstrating *S. pedata* population declines and the precarious nature of occurrences on private lands in the Big Bear Valley. Surveys are necessary to determine that status of occurrences on private land, but observations in the field suggest that *S. pedata* are not increasing and may be declining; therefore, reclassification criterion 2 has not been met.

Overall, while some steps have been made in achieving recovery, progress towards reclassifying and eventually delisting *Sidalcea pedata* has been largely unsuccessful and there are indications—such as two extirpations, and the significant habitat degradation at the east and south shores of Baldwin Lake (EOs 8, 9, 30), Metcalf Creek (EO 17) and Eagle Point (EO 21)—that *S. pedata* is facing an increasing threat of extirpation. The recovery plan was not threats-based; consequently, action items necessary to meet the plan's recovery criteria are insufficient to reduce or eliminate the threats identified in the five-factor analysis and recover the species.

IV. SYNTHESIS

Sidalcea pedata and other obligate moist meadow or pebble plain species are conservation dependent because their habitat occurs within natural areas with unique hydrological conditions that are also vulnerable to development pressures. The majority of moist meadow habitat (91 percent) has been lost in Big Bear and Holcomb Valleys since the turn of the century (USFS 2000b, p. 46). Residential construction on private land and population growth has continued since listing and contributed to the extirpation of two *S. pedata* occurrences.

The original threats that led to listing of *Sidalcea pedata* included loss of habitat from development and OHV use. Since listing, seven additional threats have been identified: alteration of hydrology, invasion by nonnative plants, grazing, recreational activities, fire suppression, reduced, isolated or fragmented populations, and climate change and drought. Protections afforded by the Act and corresponding cooperative endeavors with private landowners and local and State governments, have helped to reduce impacts of OHV use and recreation activities. Development on private lands continues to be the predominant threat to *S. pedata*. Cooperation with private landowners regarding recovery and restoration efforts is critical to the persistence to the species.

Since listing, *Sidalcea pedata* has persisted in 16 of 19 occurrences throughout its range. The species is dependent on unique moist meadow habitat and the anticipated effects of climate change and drought events may represent a significant threat to the species long-term retention, recovery efforts, or facilitate extinction of the species. The status of *S. pedata* as endangered is appropriate due to the suite of current threats, which affect its short and long-term existence. The direct and indirect effects of increased development and urbanization include: (1) loss and degradation of habitat, and associated alteration of hydrological regimes of moist meadow landscapes; (2) increased displacement by invasive nonnative plants; (3) continued incidental OHV activities; and (4) continued recreational activities. Reductions in population distributions resulting from increased fragmentation and isolation of extant occurrences make this species increasingly vulnerable to stochastic events and genetic effects associated with small population size. Many of the persisting threats to this taxon are considered rangewide, including alteration in hydrology, recreational activities, small population size, and drought and climate change. Therefore, we find that *S. pedata* still meets the definition of endangered and do not recommend a change in status at this time.

V. RESULTS

Recommended Listing Action:

____ Downlist to Threatened
____ Uplist to Endangered
____ Delist (indicate reason for delisting according to 50 CFR 424.11):
    ____ *Extinction*
    ____ *Recovery*
    ____ *Original data for classification in error*
_X_ No Change

New Recovery Priority Number and Brief Rationale: No change.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS

1) Work with partners, in particular private landowners, to help conserve *Sidalcea pedata*. Identify opportunities through the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Programs to implement conservation opportunities on private lands.

2) Conduct monitoring to inventory actual occurrences and update the status of *Sidalcea pedata* occurrences throughout the species range. While the occurrences on the east side of Baldwin Lake (EOs 9, 30) are presumed extant, surveys should occur because they have not been conducted at this species location for many years.

3) Establish a seed bank focusing first on small, isolated populations that have the greatest potential to become extirpated.

4) Work with the State and San Bernardino County to resolve conflicts with the weed abatement plan.

5) Develop a threats-based recovery plan or outline to guide conservation actions for the species.

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Appendix 1: Occurrence table for *Sidalcea pedata* (pedate checker-mallow) occurrences; prepared for 2011 5-year review.

Area	EO*	Location	Owner	Extant at listing	Current status	Current Threats	Current Conservation
Baldwin Lake	1	Baldwin lake - north end, SBM	CDFG	Yes	Extant	A: OHV use, alteration of hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities	Seven acres in Baldwin Lake Ecological Reserve (protected), bisected by road, fence is in need of repairs
	8	South of Baldwin Lake, Bear Valley, SBM	Private; Wildhaven Ranch	Yes	Presumed Extant (significantly impacted)	A: Development, OHV use, altered hydrology, nonnatives C: Grazing E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection but Wildhaven Ranch is fenced. Private land occurrence on vacant lot, development is a real threat, area has been subdivided
	9	Baldwin Lake- East Side; Vale Dr. South to Conchita Way, BTWN Nelson Ridge and Baldwin Lake.	Private	Yes	Presumed extant (may be extirpated)	A: Development, OHV use, alteration of hydrology, nonnatives C: Grazing E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection, very few plants last seen in 1983, highly developed
	23	Hwy 18, North West side of Baldwin Lake	USFS, SB NF	Yes	Extant	A:, Alteration of hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities	SBNF LRMP, Fencing and boulders have been put in place to prevent illegal OHV use
	24	Hwy 18, North West side of Baldwin Lake	USFS, SB NF	Yes	Extant	A:, Alteration of hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities	SBNF LRMP, Fencing and boulders have been put in place to prevent illegal OHV use
	30	East side Baldwin Lake and Baldwin Lake Rd., Near Falling Springs Rd and Terrace Rd. BTWN Nelson Ridge and Baldwin Lake	Private	Yes	Presumed extant (may be extirpated)	A: Development, OHV use, alteration of hydrology, nonnatives; C: grazing E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection, highly developed area, needs to be surveyed to determine if *Sidalcea pedata* is still here

	12	Pan Hot Springs, Baldwin lake- West end	Private; USFS, Big Bear Community Services District	Yes	Presumed Extant	A: Development, OHV use, nonnatives, alteration of hydrology; E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	SBNF LRMP; Pan Springs Meadow HMP; 4 hectares is protected through deed restriction, water source is privately owned
Bluff Lake	6	Bluff Lake Meadow, SBM	Private	Yes	Extant	A: Development, altered hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	Wildlands Conservancy protects the area, provides conservation education, but is proposing to sell the camp (and leave the meadow), which may impact *Sidalcea pedata*
	22	Lodgepole Meadow; West of Bluff Lake along Siberia Creek	USFS, SB NF	Yes	Presumed Extant	A: Alteration of hydrology, E: Recreation activities	SBNF LRMP, SBFS is considering burning this area
Holcomb Valley	26	Belleville Meadow, North of BBL	USFS, SB NF	Yes	Extirpated		SBNF LRMP, site of transplantation experiment, 12 or 25 (two estimates in EO) transplanted to this location in the early 1980s, no longer here
Big Bear Lake	17	Hwy 18, South of Metcalf Bay, Presbyterian Conference Grounds, Drive-in Theater, Flea Market Site	Private, USFS SB NF	Yes	Extant (Declining)	A: Development, OHV use, alteration of hydrology, nonnatives E:Recreation activities, fire suppression	Partially protected on SBNF LRMP, remainder has no formal protection, private lands for sale, potential for future development
	No EO	The front yard of a residence in Boulder Bay (referred to as Boulder Bay occurrence in figure 1)	Private	Yes	Extant	A: Development, OHV use, alteration of hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection, SB county, wants owner to mow yard for weed abatement, CDFG trying to stop it

	19	Rathbun Meadows (Eagle Point and China Gardens, near Eagle Point, City of BBL, East of Oriole Drive)	Private	Yes	Extant	A: Altered hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	Mitigation for Eagle Point Development; 1 acre owned by TNC (Parcel K); Fee ownership with deed restriction
	21	Rathbun Meadows (Talmadge Drive & Lakeview Drive, BBL, China Gardens, East of Eagle Point, North of Interlaken shopping center, Eureka and Park Drive)	Private	Yes	Presumed Extant (significant population loss if not extirpated)	A: Development, OHV use, altered hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection, needs fieldwork, not looked at since 1979
	20	Old Ski Beach, Big Bear Lake, SBM	USFS, SB NF	Yes	Extant	E: Recreation activities (incidental trampling)	SBNF LRMP; fenced, signage
Big Bear Lake	5	Big Bear Lake, West of Eagle Point, East of Stanfield Cutoff, BBL	Private	Yes	Extant	A: Development, OHV use, nonnatives E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection
	29	South West of BBL Post office, North side of Beaver Lane	Private	Yes	Presumed Extant (small, robust population)	A: Development, OHV use, altered hydrology, nonnatives E: Recreation activities, fire suppression	No formal protection, needs surveying to get an accurate abundance estimate
	2	Deer Lick, SBM	USFS, SB NF; Private	No	Extirpated		
	4	Bear Valley Golf Course	Private	No	Extirpated		
	10	Big Bear Lake near Trout Lake	Unknown	No	Extirpated		
	11	Fawnskin Meadow, SBM	Unknown	No	Extirpated		

	25	Big Bear Ranger Station, South of Hwy 18 and North of BBL	USFS, SB NF	No	Extirpated		
	27	Villa Grove Pebble Plain, Moonridge, Bear Valley	Private	No	Extirpated		
	28	South of Big Bear High School, West side of Georgia Street, BBL	Private	No	Extirpated		
	13	Big Bear City Airport	Private	Yes	Extirpated		
	7	Lakeview Drive, near Mallard Lagoon	Private	Yes	Extirpated		

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
5-YEAR REVIEW

***Sidalcea pedata* (pedate checker-mallow)**

Current Classification: Endangered

Recommendation Resulting from the 5-Year Review:

____ Downlist to Threatened
____ Uplist to Endangered
____ Delist
X No change needed

Review Conducted By: Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office

FIELD OFFICE APPROVAL:

ACTING

Lead Field Supervisor, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Approve _____ Date MAR 18 2011

Scott A. Sobiech