



Officials turn down protection for plant

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Federal wildlife officials on Tuesday decided against giving habitat protection to a threatened plant in Riverside and San Bernardino counties, disappointing environmentalists.

Populations of the thread-leaved brodiaea, a purple-flowered member of the lily family, live in Waterman Canyon above San Bernardino, but the numbers are too few to help the species recover, said Jane Hendron, a

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service spokeswoman.

And even though a population near the Arrowhead Hot Springs Hotel is thriving, the agency omitted that particular thread-leaved brodiaea community because of a mapping error in its proposal, Hendron said.

Western Riverside County was not affected because the flower is one of several species already protected under the county's

habitat conservation plan, she said.

Ileene Anderson, a botanist with the Center for Biological Diversity, said the decision is the latest in a series that drastically reduces habitat protections for sensitive species.

"It just gets gutted at the end," she said.

--Jennifer Bowles

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