

KPBS

Rare Plant At Risk of Extinction in San Diego County

By [Ed Joyce](#)

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SAN DIEGO — An environmental group says a federal agency plans to propose setting aside land to protect an endangered plant that grows in San Diego County. But the group says it's not enough to prevent the extinction of the "San Diego ambrosia."

The San Diego ambrosia is a blue-gray herb that grows on flat or gently-sloping grasslands and on upper terraces of rivers and drainages. Clusters of tiny, light-yellow flowers on the plant bloom summer through fall.

Ileene Anderson, a biologist with the Center for Biological Diversity, said the plant only exists in San Diego and Riverside Counties and Baja California.

"For that alone it's part of our natural heritage that through millions of years of evolution that this plant has endured and continued to reproduce successfully," Anderson said.

Anderson said a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposal to set aside 802 acres in San Diego and Riverside Counties is a good start.

But she said that may not be enough to save the plant from extinction.

Anderson also said the San Diego ambrosia has been eliminated in many areas by urban growth.