



# Rare Plant Watch

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Community Science for Conservation

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State Botany Program

Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department

# The Problem



Our rare plant data is old – many occurrences have not been revisited in decades.



We (collectively) lack baseline knowledge to make fully informed management decisions.

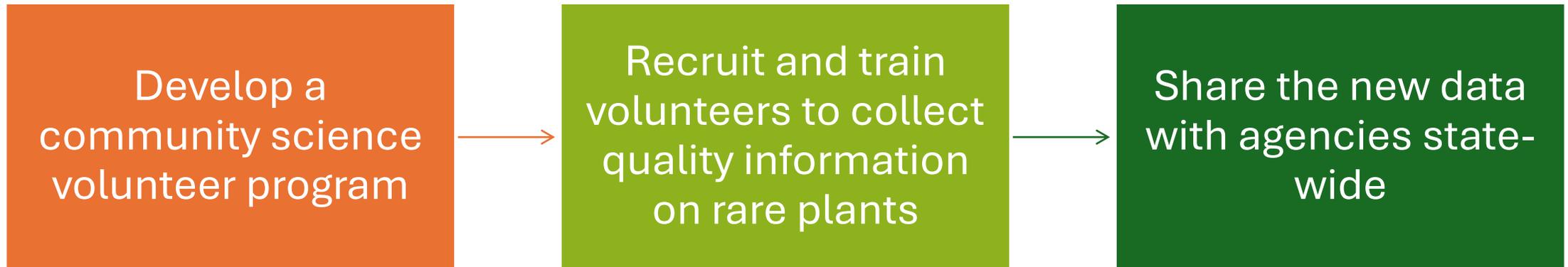
Population status, range extent, size, trends, extant or extirpated, and threats



We (professional botanists in NM) lack the capacity and funding to update the data.

# A Solution

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# How?

- This is not a new concept
- Learn from and emulate other state's programs
- Start small and stay sustainable



Since 2012

**Montana Natural Heritage Program**

The logo for the Montana Native Plant Society is shown on a light yellow rectangular background. It features a small, stylized plant icon with a single stem and a small flower at the top. Below the icon, the words "MONTANA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY" are written in a light green, sans-serif font, stacked in two lines.

Since 2019

**RARE CARE**

CONSERVING WASHINGTON'S  
RARE AND ENDEMIC PLANTS

Since 2001



chicago botanic  
**garden**  
NEGAUNEE INSTITUTE

Plants of  
Concern

Since 2000

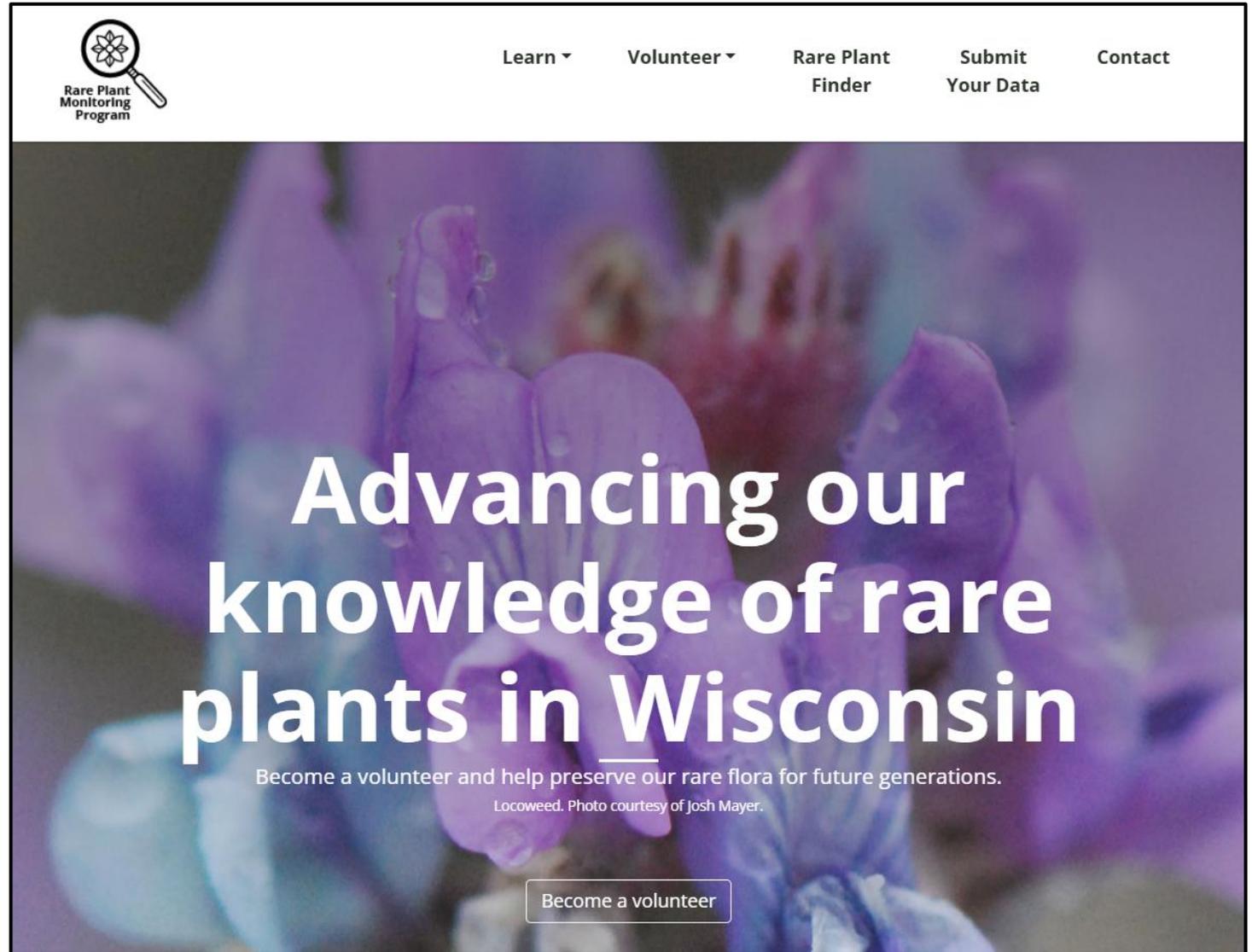


Since 1993

# Emulating Wisconsin

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- Since 2014
- Low management burden
- Efficient data process
- Easy volunteer communication
- 200 – 400 volunteer reports per year



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Rare Plant Monitoring Program. The top navigation bar includes the program logo (a magnifying glass over a flower) and the text "Rare Plant Monitoring Program". To the right of the logo are five menu items: "Learn", "Volunteer", "Rare Plant Finder", "Submit Your Data", and "Contact". The main content area features a large, blurred image of purple flowers. Overlaid on this image is the main heading "Advancing our knowledge of rare plants in Wisconsin" in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below the heading is a sub-headline: "Become a volunteer and help preserve our rare flora for future generations." followed by a smaller line of text: "Locoweed. Photo courtesy of Josh Mayer." At the bottom center of the image is a white button with the text "Become a volunteer".



## 2026 Goals

- Overcome the steep organizational/set-up barrier
- Successfully run a limited-scope project; a proof-of-concept
- Create an attractive, sustainable program that can continue in the future.
- Design the program to be collaborative, inclusive, and low-management effort.



Photo: Marty Purdy - *Escobaria sneedii* var. *leei*

## In brief, we expect the season to look like...

- Recruit and train volunteers in the survey protocol
- Allow volunteers to choose their own target species.
- Send information packets to each volunteer for their assignment
- The volunteers make trips and collect data on our platform
- Season-end QA/QC before sending the data to NH and land managers.



# The To-Do list

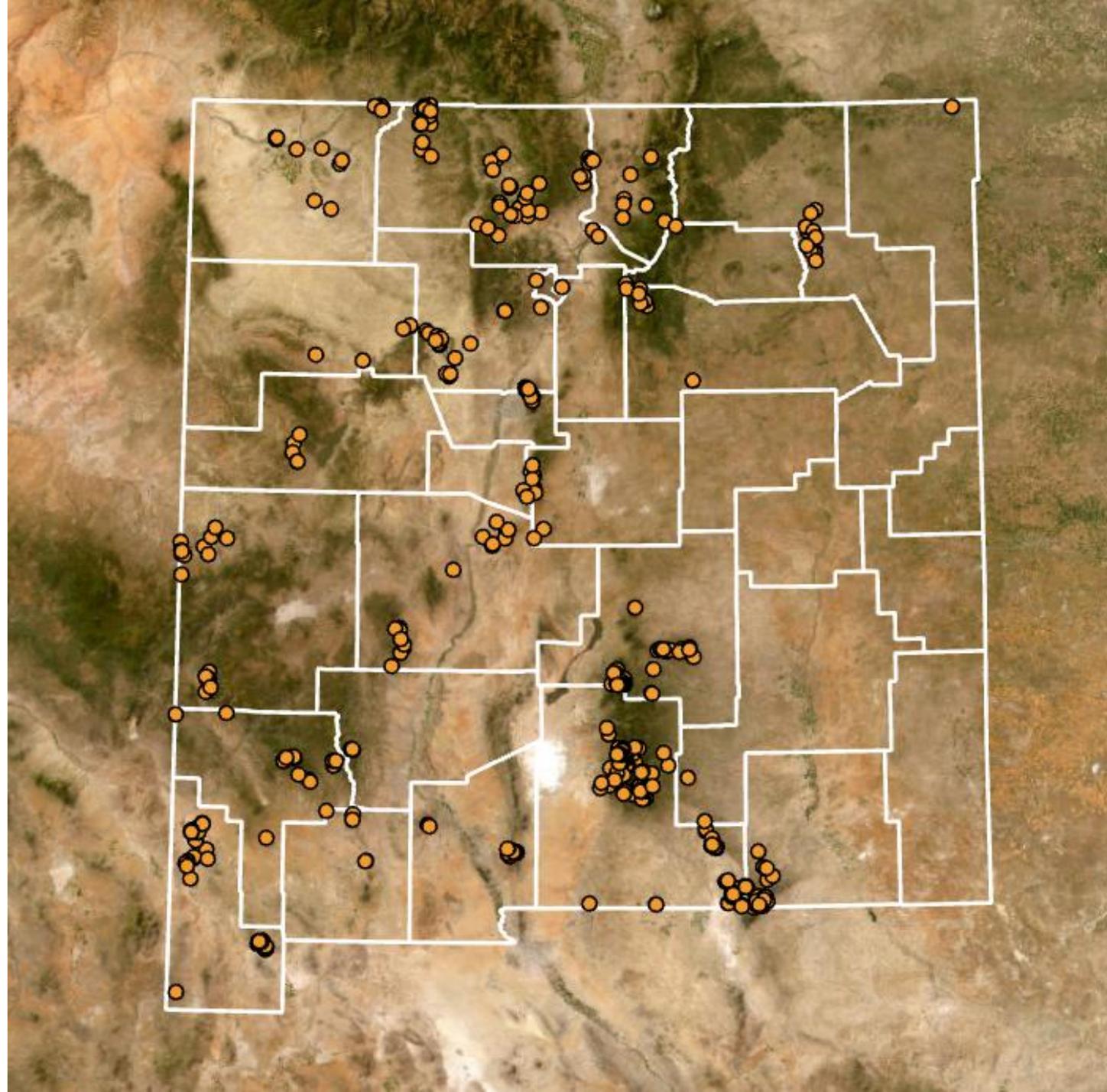
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- ✓ Make list of target occurrences
- ✓ Make viewing platform for volunteers to view/choose targets
- ✓ Agreement form(s)
- ✓ Develop survey protocol
- ✓ Develop digital survey platform (Survey123)
- ✓ Volunteer communication process
- 7. Generate info packets for each plant

# Target records

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- 50 species
- 290 assignments
- Reviewed for issues(...)
- Variety
  - location
  - timing
  - ease of identifiability



# Viewing Platform

- Still in [draft form](#)
- Filterable
- Goal:  
add Ease-of-access filter

**Rare Plant Finder**  
New Mexico Forestry Division

Find address or ...

ID Difficulty:  
- All - Easy Moderate  
Difficult

ID Months:  
January February March  
April May June July  
August September October  
November December

Last Survey Range; Enter Beginning & Ending Year:  
 and

Click for New Mexico State Endangered Plants List Page

# Digital Survey

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- Mostly developed!
- Survey123
- Either browser or phone app-based
- Collect the data that is important to conservation and management

## Scout Existing Site

### Scouting Information

**Site ID**

-Please select- 

**Volunteer Name\***

Please enter your name. If multiple people are present, please separate names with a comma.

**Visit Date\***

 2/9/2026 

**Species\***

Select a Species

-Please select- 



# Volunteers

- Sign-ups are open!
- Enthusiastic response
- Communication will be ongoing
- Training webinar will occur in March

## NM Rare Plant Watch: Volunteer Sign-up

Please read the [program description and expectations](#) (link). If you feel that NM Rare Plant Watch is a good fit for you, we invite you to complete this application form! You will be added to our volunteer list and invited to the digital training event. You will need to sign a data confidentiality agreement and liability waiver before participating in program activities. [See a draft agreement form here](#) (The form may change)

*By signing up as a volunteer, you are agreeing to complete program training and committing to completing at least one Rare Plant Survey in 2026.*

Reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I'm excited to begin this conservation journey with you!

Regards,

Katie Kline, Botanist/Plant Ecologist

NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department

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\* Indicates required question

I agree that... \*

- I have read the program description and think this program is a good fit for me.
- I am able and willing to work independently outdoors, possibly in remote areas.
- I am familiar with botanical terms and the process to identify plants; or I am willing to learn with my own resources.



# Big News!

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- Generous grant from NPSNM
- Part-time volunteer coordinator at IAE



# Looking forward:



WORK WITH NPSNM  
CHAPTERS



COORDINATE WITH CPC  
MEMBERS FOR PRIORITY  
SEED COLLECTION SPECIES



TIE IN WITH LAND  
MANAGEMENT AGENCIES



FUTURE FUNDING

**Sign-up as a volunteer!**



**Kathleen.Kline@emnrd.nm.gov**