

Endangered Species Act 40th Anniversary Success Stories Robbins' Cinquefoil



In 1819, the Crawford Path, one of the oldest and most popular recreation hiking trails in the nation, is built through the Monroe Flats, where over 95 percent of the world's Robbins' cinquefoil (*Potentilla robbinsiana*) population exists in a one acre area (now part of the White Mountain National Forest). The species is "discovered" five years later and over the next 150 years, more than 850 specimens are collected and at times commercially sold to collectors and herbaria. Foot traffic on the Appalachian Trail causes some negative impacts to individual plants, but as backpacking booms and hiker use of Crawford Path increases dramatically, the population teeters on the brink of extinction. In response to this, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service places Robbins' cinquefoil on the endangered species list due to human disturbance and a recovery plan is issued.

A partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, White Mountain National Forest, Appalachian Mountain Club, and New England Wild Flower Society was then forged to prevent extinction.



USFWS has been an active partner assisting with monitoring and transplanting Robin's Cinquefoil.



Robbin's Cinquefoil only occurs on one mountain peak on the White Mountain National Forest.

When Robbins' cinquefoil was listed as endangered in 1980, its population numbered approximately 3,700 plants. In response to management actions, the population rebounded and was officially removed from the endangered species list in 2002. Today the population numbers over 14,000 individuals. A Memorandum of Agreement between the White Mountain National Forest and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ensures species protection in perpetuity through monitoring and habitat protection.



The Appalachian Mountain Club helped relocate trail segments outside of critical habitat for Robin's Cinquefoil.



White Mountain National Forest
71 White Mountain Drive
Compton, NH 03223
603-536-6100