

## Endangered Species Review and Clearance Report of Hasselstrom Pit, Lewis County, Idaho

Requested by Knife River Corporation in association with Camas Gravel Company

Date: October 19, 2020

### Project Description

Knife River Corporation in association with Camas Gravel Company have applied for an air quality permit to operate a rock crushing operation at an existing gravel mining pit located on private property approximately two miles north of Winchester, Idaho. The crushing operation is expected to occur within an existing gravel pit on the approximately 5-acre site.

### Site Description

Ownership: Private

Owner: Eric Hasselstrom of Winchester Idaho.

County & State: Lewis County, Idaho

Tribal Jurisdiction: Within Nez Perce Reservation

Legal Description: T34N, R02W, Section 19 NWSE, SWSE

Directions: Approximately 2 miles north of Winchester, 0.5 miles east of Winchester Road and north of Roberts Road. (see Map on page 3).

Size: 4.9 Acres

### Environmental Setting

This site is located within the Lapwai Creek watershed which is a tributary to the Clearwater River. Historic vegetation in this area was likely open ponderosa pine-dominated forest interspersed with bunchgrass prairie, and wetland plant communities. The Nez Perce people (*Nimiipuu*) have lived in this region since time immemorial, and utilize the native plant communities for food, fiber, and medicinal plants. They also hunt and fish for the wildlife and fish that are produced from the great diversity of habitats within their homeland, including the Lapwai Watershed.

A review of rare plant records indicates that there are nine historic and extant populations of the federally listed Threatened plant Spalding's Catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*) within the southwestern quadrant of the Reservation near the current project work site. Spalding's catchfly is an herbaceous perennial in the Caryophyllaceae (Pink) family (see photo below).



Spalding's catchfly is endemic to grassland communities within the inland northwest and adjacent British Columbia. This species emerges in late May or early June, flowers from July through early September, and produces seeds September through October before entering winter dormancy. Within the local area, it has been found on remnant Palouse Prairie sites as well as moist canyon grassland communities. Since this plant has a high likelihood of occurring on any undisturbed prairie communities within the area, it was determined that a site review by competent botanists was warranted.

**Field Review**

Date: October 15, 2020

In Attendance: Joe Smith, Regional Environmental Manager, Knife River Corporation  
Angela Sondenaa, PhD, Precious Lands Project Leader, Nez Perce Tribe  
Blair McClarin, Field Botanist, Nez Perce Tribe

A site visit was conducted rather late in the growing season on October 15, 2020. Since attending tribal staff have extensive experience surveying for and identifying this species, it was decided that opportunities to observe any existing above-ground *Silene* was still reasonable, even given the late date. The site visit was conducted on foot with botanists traversing the perimeter of the site looking for any remnant habitat or catchfly plants.

**Results**

No Spalding's catchfly plants were observed at the site. This entire project area has been plowed and used for annual grain production (probably for decades). No remnant native vegetation was observed within the footprint of the project area. Given this high level of intense disturbance, no Spalding's catchfly could be expected to persist under these conditions.

**Determination**

This project will have No effect on Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*).

**Author**

This report was prepared by Angela C. Sondenaa.

