



# Alaska National Heritage Correspondence

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## **Appendix L – Alaska Natural Heritage Program Correspondence**

This appendix contains correspondence received from the Alaska Natural Heritage Program (ANHP) regarding rare or uncommon plant and animal species with the potential to occur in interior Alaska in the general vicinity of the Red Devil Mine (RDM) site. Specifically, the following information is provided herein: (1) e-mail from K.M. Walton regarding rare or uncommon bird and mammal species; (2) e-mail from H. Cortes-Burns regarding rare or uncommon plant species; and (3) species ranks used by the ANHP. See Section 6.3.2.7 in the Baseline Ecological Risk Assessment for a discussion of this information.

**From:** Kelly M Walton [ankmw4@uaa.alaska.edu]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 12, 2011 5:01 PM  
**To:** Mach, Carl  
**Subject:** RE: Alaska Natural Heritage Program Data Request

Hi Carl,

Our rare species database does not have any animal occurrence data within a two mile radius of the Red Devil Mine Site, since your area of interest is such a small area, I would suggest looking at the list of possible species I have included below (by overlaying range maps of species of concern with your area of interest).

BLM Watchlist Species: Gray-cheeked Thrush

BLM Sensitive Species: Alaska Tiny Shrew, Rusty Blackbird, Short-eared Owl, Golden Eagle, Blackpoll Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and Trumpeter Swan

Natural Heritage S1-S3: Alaska Tiny Shrew (S3), Black-backed Woodpecker (S3), and Peregrine Falcon (S3B).

The attached file, RANKS.doc, explains the "sensitivity" ranking system of the Natural Heritage Programs in case you are unfamiliar with our ranking system. This is a two rank system where there is a G rank for the global status of the species plus an S rank for the state (or sub-national) status of the species. The numbers range from 1 to 5 with 1 indicating a very sensitive species and 5 indicating an abundant and secure species.

While we strive to populate our database to the best of our abilities, we are not able to capture all information for all G1-G3 and S1-S3 species all the time. We hope that this information provided here will help guide you in your decision making processes, but we also advise you to consult with experts in the field, who might be able to identify areas or species that we may be lacking information for. We update the rare and sensitive species database and lists regularly. We cannot guarantee that the information provided here will be valid for more than one year from today's date. Therefore, if your company is still working in this area next year and information on rare animal occurrences is needed, we would have to issue a second data request.

Please contact me if you have any further questions. This is only the animal part of your data request; you should receive a separate response from our botanist answering the plant part.

Sincerely,

Kelly Walton  
Zoologist  
Alaska Natural Heritage Program  
ankmw4@uaa.alaska.edu <mailto:ankmw4@uaa.alaska.edu>  
907-786-6349

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From: Mach, Carl [mailto:CMach@ene.com]  
Sent: Fri 12/9/2011 1:46 PM  
To: Kelly M Walton  
Subject: RE: Alaska Natural Heritage Program Data Request

Yes, I would be interested in information from the USFWS, BLM, USFS, and Natural Heritage Program regarding observations of species of conservation concern in the vicinity of the Red Devil Mine site. Thanks.

Carl Mach, Ph.D.  
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368 Pleasant View Dr.  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
716-684-8060  
cmach@ene.com

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From: Kelly M Walton [mailto:ankmw4@uaa.alaska.edu <mailto:ankmw4@uaa.alaska.edu> ]  
Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 4:15 PM  
To: Mach, Carl  
Subject: Alaska Natural Heritage Program Data Request

Hi Carl,

I will be answering the animal side of your Red Devil Mine data request that you submitted and I wanted to clarify what information you would like. You asked for states species of concern, Alaska Department of Fish and Game used to have a state of Alaska list of species of concern, but they recently discontinued it (see <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=specialstatus.akconcern> <<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=specialstatus.akconcern>> ) and we don't house any information about wildlife refuges. For other data requests we often give out information on species of conservation concern designed by USFWS, BLM, USFS, and the Natural Heritage Program (NatureServe S1-S3 ranks), would you be interested in any of that information.

Thanks,  
Kelly Walton

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**From:** Helen Cortes-Burns <hcortesburns@uaa.alaska.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 27, 2012 1:31 PM  
**To:** Mach, Carl  
**Cc:** Matthew L Carlson; Erin Johnson (personal email)  
**Subject:** Red Devil AKNHP rare plant data request

Dear Carl Mach,

We clipped all rare plant occurrences in our database to a 100km buffer polygon around your project area. The following species either occur or are likely to occur in/near the project site:

- *Papaver walpolei*
  - Species taxonomy and rank revised in 2011-2012? **No**
  - State rank: **S3**
  - Global rank: **G3**
  - Number of documented occurrences within buffered project area: 1
  
- *Polypodium sibiricum*
  - Species taxonomy and rank revised in 2011-2012? Yes
  - State rank: **S3**
  - Global rank: G5?
  - Number of documented occurrences within buffered project area: 2
  
- *Primula tschuktschorum*
  - Species taxonomy and rank revised in 2011-2012? Yes
  - State rank: **S3**
  - Global rank: **G2G3**
  - Number of documented occurrences within buffered project area: 1
  
- *Smelowskia pyriformis*
  - Species taxonomy and rank revised in 2011-2012? Yes
  - State rank: **S3**
  - Global rank: **G2**
  - Number of documented occurrences within buffered project area: 4
  
- *Thalictrum minus* subsp. *kemense*
  - Species taxonomy and rank revised in 2011-2012? Yes
  - State rank: **S2**
  - Global rank: GNR
  - Number of documented occurrences within buffered project area: 1

\*Definitions of NatureServe's ranks can be found here: <http://www.natureserve.org/explorer/ranking.htm#global>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions. Also, please note that we have not yet reviewed some of the species included in this request. Therefore, **we strongly encourage you to check back with us in early May for updates** on the non-revised species and/or that you check our 2012 Tracking List webpage for updates on the ranks and known (and validated) occurrences for AK's rare plants: <http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/botany/rare-plants-species-lists/2012-rare-vascular-plant-list>

Very best,

Helen

Species Ranks used by The Alaska Natural Heritage Program

**Species Global Rankings**

- G1: Critically imperiled globally. (Typically 5 or fewer occurrences)
- G2: Imperiled globally. (6-20 occurrences)
- G3: Rare or uncommon globally. (21-100 occurrences)
- G4: Apparently secure globally, but cause for long-term concern. (Usually more than 100 occurrences)
- G5: Demonstrably secure globally.
- G?: Unranked.
- G#G#: Rank of species uncertain, best described as a range between the two ranks.
- G#Q: Taxonomically questionable.
- G#T#: Global rank of species and global rank of the described variety or subspecies of the species.
- GU: Unrankable.
- GH: Historical Occurrence.
- GX: Extinct.
- HYB: Hybrid.

**Species State Rankings**

- S1: Critically imperiled in state. (Usually 5 or fewer occurrences)
- S2: Imperiled in state. (6-20 occurrences)
- S3: Rare or uncommon in state. (21-100 occurrences)
- S4: Apparently secure in state, but with cause for long-term concern (usually more than 100 occurrences)
- S5: Demonstrably secure in state.
- S#S#: State rank of species uncertain, best described as a range between the two ranks.
- S?: Unranked.
- SH: Historical Occurrence
- SU: Unrankable.
- SA: Accidental.
- SR: Reported from the state, but not yet verified.
- SRF: Reported falsely.
- SP: Occurs in nearby state. Potential to occur in the state.
- HYB: Hybride.
- SSYN: Synonyme.
- SNA : Not Applicable -A conservation status rank is not applicable because the Species or ecosystem is not a suitable target for conservation activities.

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Qualifiers:

- B: Breeding status
- N: Non-breeding status
- ?: Inexact
- Q: Questionable taxonomy