

TABLE 1.—APPROXIMATE AREA (HECTARES AND ACRES) OF PROPOSED CRITICAL HABITAT BY UNIT FOR *Arabis perstellata*—Continued

Critical habitat unit	County/State	Land ownership	Hectares	Acres
11. U.S. 127	Franklin/Kentucky	Private	11	27
12. Camp Pleasant Branch Woods	Franklin/Kentucky	Private	14	35
13. Saufley	Franklin/Kentucky	Private	8	20
14. Clements Bluff	Owen/Kentucky	State	11	27
15. Monterey U.S. 127	Owen/Kentucky	Private	12	30
16. Craddock Bottom	Owen/Kentucky	Private	23	57
17. Backbone North	Franklin/Kentucky	Private	11	27
18. Scales Mountain	Rutherford/Tennessee	Private	36	89
19. Sophie Hill	Rutherford/Tennessee	Private	16	40
20. Indian Mountain	Rutherford/Tennessee	Private	28	69
Total	408	1,008

Critical Habitat Unit Descriptions

We are proposing a total of 20 critical habitat units for *Arabis perstellata* in Kentucky and Tennessee—14 critical habitat units in Franklin County, Kentucky; 3 in Owen County, Kentucky; and 3 in Rutherford County, Tennessee. In order to provide determinable legal descriptions of the critical habitat boundaries, we drew polygons around these units, using as criteria the plant's primary constituent elements, the known extent of the populations, and the elevation contours on the map. We made an effort to avoid developed areas that are unlikely to contribute to the conservation of *Arabis perstellata*. Areas within the boundaries of the mapped units, such as buildings, roads, clearings, transmission lines, lawns, and other urban landscaped areas do not contain one or more of the primary constituent elements. As such, Federal actions limited to these areas would not trigger consultation pursuant to section 7 of the Act, unless they affect the species or primary constituent elements in the critical habitat.

On the basis of the best available scientific information, we determined that the 20 proposed critical habitat units represent the only known *Arabis perstellata* populations that meet the recovery criteria of being geographically distinct, self-sustaining, and containing 50 or more plants. These 20 sites contain the highest-quality populations in terms of size and habitat that are presently known. The remaining known populations (21) of *Arabis perstellata* do not meet these criteria, because each has fewer than 50 plants that occur on degraded sites, making their long-term viability questionable. As such, they are not essential to the conservation of this species. Once the proposed 20 sites have adequate management and permanent protection measures in place and their populations are stable or increasing for a 5-year period, we may consider this species for delisting.

Consequently, the proposed units are essential for the long-term conservation and eventual recovery of this species because they constitute the 20 geographically distinct sites that are most likely to be able to support self-sustaining populations of 50 or more individuals, as outlined in the recovery criteria.

A brief description of each of these critical habitat units is given below. The population information presented in all of the unit descriptions was taken from the KSNPC's Natural Heritage Database for the Kentucky units and the TDEC's Natural Heritage Database for the Tennessee units.

Unit 1. Sky View Drive in Franklin County, Kentucky

Unit 1 is located on the west side of the City of Frankfort. It occurs along U.S. 127 and Skyview Drive on the slopes of the first large ravine system due west of the confluence of Benson Creek and the Kentucky River. It contains approximately 22 ha (54 ac), all of which are privately owned. This site was first observed to have *Arabis perstellata* in 1979. In 2001, surveys conducted by the KSNPC found more than 150 plants, but not all habitat was surveyed. The majority of the plants occur on the west- and south-facing slopes and are associated with bare soil on trails and tree bases.

Unit 2. Benson Valley Woods in Franklin County, Kentucky

Unit 2 is located west of the City of Frankfort. The unit lies southeast of Benson Valley Road on the south side of Benson Creek. It is privately owned and contains approximately 37 ha (91 ac). The plants occur on the southeast-facing slope. They were first observed in 1979. KSNPC personnel last observed more than 200 plants in 2001. The site is threatened by trampling and competition by weeds.

Unit 3. Red Bridge Ridge in Franklin County, Kentucky

Unit 3 is located west of Kentucky (KY) Highway 1005, at the confluence of South Benson and Benson Creeks. The site is privately owned and is approximately 6 ha (15 ac) in size. Plants at this site were first observed in 1987. In 1990, 75 plants were found along the southeast- and northwest-facing slopes.

Unit 4. Tributary to South Benson Creek in Franklin County, Kentucky

This unit is located northeast of the City of Frankfort. It occurs along the southeast side of South Benson Creek and the north and south slopes of an unnamed tributary. The site is in private ownership and is 10 ha (25 ac) in size. In 1996, over 1,000 plants were found along the northwest-facing lower, mid, and upper slopes, making this one of the best sites in Kentucky for *Arabis perstellata*.

Unit 5. Davis Branch in Franklin County, Kentucky

This unit occurs along the east side of Harvieland Drive and Davis Branch. This unit contains approximately 3 ha (7 ac) and is privately owned. Plants were first observed at this site in 1990. In 2001, more than 200 plants were found along the south-facing slope throughout the ravine system.

Unit 6. Onans Bend in Franklin County, Kentucky

Unit 6 occurs north of Onans Bend Road and east of KY Highway 12. The unit lies along the banks of an unnamed stream near its mouth with the west bank of the Kentucky River. This unit is privately owned and contains approximately 12 ha (30 ac). Plants at this unit were first observed in 1979. In 1990, more than 100 plants were found on the south-facing slope. The plants were exceptionally vigorous. The site is threatened by weed competition.