Species Listing PROPOSAL Form:
Listing Endangered, Threatened, and Special Concern Species in Massachusetts

Scientific name: ______Schwalbea americana____  Current Listed Status (if any): ___state historic_

Common name: __American chaffseed____

Proposed Action:
____ Add the species, with the status of: ______
____ Remove the species
X    Change the species’ status to: _E____
    Change the scientific name to: _________
    Change the common name to: _________
    (Please justify proposed name change.)

Proponent’s Name and Address:
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Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program
Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
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Westborough, MA 01581

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Association, Institution or Business represented by proponent:

Proponent’s Signature:           Date Submitted:

Please submit to:  Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries &
Wildlife, 1 Rabbit Hill Road, Westborough, MA 01581

Justification

Justify the proposed change in legal status of the species by addressing each of the criteria below, as listed in the
Massachusetts Endangered Species Act (MGL c. 131A) and its implementing regulations (321 CMR 10.00), and
provide literature citations or other documentation wherever possible. Expand onto additional pages as needed
but make sure you address all of the questions below. The burden of proof is on the proponent for a listing,
delisting, or status change.

(1) Taxonomic status. Is the species a valid taxonomic entity?  Please cite scientific literature.
The name: Schwalbea americana L. shows that it was named by Linneaus and it is the accepted name in ITIS
And is the name published in the Federal Register, vol. 57, no. 189
Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Status for Schwalbea americana (American
Chaffseed)

(2) Recentness of records. How recently has the species been conclusively documented within Massachusetts?
July of 2018

(3) Native species status. Is the species indigenous to Massachusetts?
Yes
(4) **Habitat in Massachusetts.** Is a population of the species supported by habitat within the state of Massachusetts?
Yes. It is a sandplain grassland species and there are many acres of such habitat especially on Cape Cod and the Islands.

(5) **Federal Endangered Species Act status.** Is the species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act? If so, what is its federal status (Endangered or Threatened)
Endangered: Federal Register, vol. 57, no. 189
Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Status for *Schwalbea americana* (American Chaffseed)
(6) Rarity and geographic distribution.
  (a) Does the species have a small number of occurrences (populations) and/or small size of populations in the
state? Are there potentially undocumented occurrences in the state, and if so, is it possible to estimate the
potential number of undocumented occurrences?

There is currently one population, with five other state historic populations on record. The extant population
has over 2600 plant stems with an estimated 500 genets. Yes there are potentially undocumented occurrences
in the state. The potential number of undocumented occurrences are likely to be only one or two. This plant
has been highly sought after for decades.

(b) What is the extent of the species’ entire geographic range, and where within this range are Massachusetts
populations (center or edge of range, or peripherally isolated)? Is the species a state or regional endemic?

Louisiana north along the east coast states to Massachusetts. It is federally endangered. It is not a regional or
state endemic.

(7) Trends.
  (c) Is the species decreasing (or increasing) in state distribution, number of occurrences, and/or population
size? What is the reproductive status of populations? Is reproductive capacity naturally low? Has any long-
term trend in these factors been documented?

It is federally endangered and a highly researched plant in the Orobanchaceae, a family which is noted for its
consistent hemiparasitic mechanisms, which in turn often leads to variable populations. Our most recent
population was last noted in 1965, so a trend cannot be determined.

(8) Threats and vulnerability.
  (d) What factors are driving a decreasing trend, or threatening reproductive status in the state? Please identify
and describe any of the following threats, if present: habitat loss or degradation; predators, parasites, or
competitors; species-targeted taking of individual organisms or disruption of breeding activity.

Fire suppression is most likely a strong factor in the decline. Changes in mowing practices and brush
clearing can also play a role.

(e) Does the species have highly specialized habitat, resource needs, or other ecological requirements? Is
dispersal ability poor?
Populations have struggled all across the eastern seaboard with reasons for the decline unclear. The habitat is
not considered to be highly specialized. The seeds are very light and should be well dispersed in strong wind
events. However it is likely that seeds are often not fertile.

Conservation goals.

What specific conservation goals should be met in order to change the conservation status or to remove the
species from the state list? Please address goals for any or all of the following:

(a) State distribution, number of occurrences (populations), population levels, and/or reproductive rates
State status is required by MESA statues to follow federal listing status at the same level of listing or higher.

(b) Amount of protected habitat and/or number of protected occurrences
More research is needed to determine this.
(c) Management of protected habitat and/or occurrences

More research is needed to determine this.

**Literature cited, additional documentation, and comments.**

https://saveplants.org/national-collection/plant-search/plant-profile/?CPCNum=3877

Graves FM (1903) Schwalbea Americana in Connecticut. Rhodora 5:40–40