

Prior to the 2015 update, there were requests to change the ratings of five species on the National Wetland Plant List (NWPL) (Table1). These seven new ratings will be published along with other NWPL rating changes in early 2016. Glenn Lukos Associates requested changes to the wetland ratings of two species, *Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum* L. (Small Flowered Iceplant) and *Phacelia distans* Benth. (Distant Scorpion-Weed) in the Arid West (AW) region. Both species also occur in limited distributions in the Western Mountains, Valleys, and Coast (WMVC) Region. The National Panel (NP) sent the documentation provided by the requester to both the AW and WMVC Regional Panels (RP). The WMVC RP unanimously rated *M. nodiflorum* as FACU. The AW RP submitted one FAC and two FACU ratings. Since the AW RP did not reach a consensus (lacking the input of one agency), the NP reviewed the information submitted for *M. nodiflorum*. The NP unanimously rated the species as FACU. The revision from a FAC to FACU wetland rating for *M. nodiflorum* in the AW and WMVC regions took effect January 29, 2015. The National Panel examined the rating of *P. distans* and agreed to change it from OBL to UPL in the AW and the WMVC regions. This rating was effective July 15, 2014.

**Table 1. Species that were reevaluated using challenge study protocols. An asterisk indicates that a species was formally challenged with a written challenge proposal. The remaining species were informally challenged via email inquiries.**

Species	Region	Pre-Challenge Rating	Decided by	Post-Challenge Rating	Date
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i> L.	AW	FAC	National Panel	FACU	29 Jan 2015
<i>Mesembryanthemum nodiflorum</i> L.	WMVC	FAC	Regional Panel	FACU	29 Jan 2015
<i>Phacelia distans</i> Benth.	AW	OBL	National Panel	UPL	15 Jul 2014
<i>Phacelia distans</i> Benth.	WMVC	OBL	National Panel	UPL	15 Jul 2014
<i>Lonicera japonica</i> Thunb.	EMP	FAC	Regional Panel	FACU	22 May 2014
<i>Juglans californica</i> S. Wats.	AW	FAC	National Panel	FACU	22 May 2014
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.	AW	FAC	National Panel	FACU	23 Sep 2014

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) submitted challenge request packages to change the wetland ratings of three species from FAC to FACU. The species were *Lonicera japonica* Thunb. (Japanese Honeysuckle) in the Eastern Mountains and Piedmont (EMP), and *Sambucus nigra* ssp. *caerulea* (Raf.) R. Bolli (Blue Elderberry) and *Juglans californica* S. Wats. (California Walnut) in the AW region. After reviewing the challenge request package submitted by the NAHB, the EMP RP unanimously agreed to rate *L. japonica* as FACU. The NP discussed the outcome of these results and agreed that *L. japonica* should be rated FACU. In the AW region, the RP could not reach consensus on *J. californica* (2–FACU and 2–FAC) after reviewing the NAHB challenge request package. The National Panel discussed these results and unanimously agreed to rate *J. californica* FACU in the AW. The FACU ratings for *L. japonica* and *J. californica* were effective 22 May, 2014. The third last species, *Sambucus nigra* L. was rated FAC on the 2013 NWPL. It is made up of two subspecies, *S. nigra* ssp. *canadensis* (L.) R. Bolli and *S. nigra* ssp. *caerulea*. Since the NWPL provides wetland ratings for plants at the species level only, the AW RP reconsidered the FAC rating of *S. nigra* in light of the habitat information submitted by the NAHB for ssp. *caerulea*. The RP did not reach consensus. The NP then reviewed the NAHB report, the literature, and herbaria records. They also discussed their own field experiences with the habitat preferences of the two subspecies. After discussing these factors, the NP unanimously agreed that the wetland rating for *S. nigra* in the AW region should be changed to FACU to better reflect the frequency with which both subspecies occur in wetlands. The FACU rating for *Sambucus nigra* was effective 23 September, 2014.