

Senecio amplexans (Clasping Groundsel)

Conservation Status Rank Summary

Date Published: August 14, 2026

For details on assessment and ranking methodology, see: [Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species](#)

Rarity and Trends

Rank Factor	Date Assessed	Value Factor Rating	Score	Data Source	Comments
Rarity					
Range Extent	2025-12-03	$\frac{1.0 \text{ km}^2}{A = 100 \text{ km}^2}$	0.000	Expert Opinion	The 2026 MTNHP range map covers 874 square kilometers and likely over-estimates the species actual range which is based one documented occurrences. Regardless, both estimates fall within the same categorical option for assessing Range Extent.
Area of Occupancy	2025-12-03	$\frac{1 \mid 4 \text{ km}^2 \text{ cells}}{A = 1 \text{ 4-km}^2 \text{ grid cell}}$	0.000	MTNHP databases	Of the approximate 96,004 2km x 2km grid cells that cover Montana, 1 cell contains observations of the species.
Number of Occurrences	2025-12-03	$\frac{1}{A = 1 - 5}$	0.000	MTNHP Databases	None
Population Size	2025-12-03	$\frac{[20, 100]}{AB = 1 - 250 \text{ individuals}}$	[0.000, 0.790]	MTNHP databases	Data from 1993 placed the population between 20-100 plants.
# of Occurrences in Good Condition			-		Factor not used in ranking.
% of Area Occupied in Good Condition			-		Factor not used in ranking.
Environmental Specificity	2025-03-01	$\frac{\text{Very narrow to narrow}}{AB = \text{Very narrow to narrow}}$	-	Expert Opinion	Factor not used in ranking. Assessed by Scott Mincemoyer
Rarity is calculated by averaging weighted factor scores: $((0.00 \times 1) + (0.00 \times 2) + (0.00 \times 1) + ([0.00, 0.79] \times 2)) / 6 = [0.00, 0.26]$					
Trends					
Short-term Trend	2025-12-03	$\frac{*}{U = \text{Unknown}}$	-	Expert Opinion	Factor not used in ranking. Actual short-term trends are unknown though its habitat still appears to be intact, so populations may have remained relatively stable. However, it is unknown if the severe rain event in 2022, which caused damage along the highway, and the subsequent reconstruction efforts negatively impacted the population.
Long-term Trend	2025-12-03	$\frac{*}{U = \text{Unknown}}$	-	Expert Opinion	Factor not used in ranking. Trends are unknown.
No trend data used in this rank					

*Values may be absent if not precisely estimated; factors may still be assessed for rank if a Factor Rating can be assigned.

Threats

Rank Factor	Date Assessed	Value Factor Rating	Score	Data Source	Comments
Threats					
Overall Threat Impact		High - Medium BC = High - Medium	[1.830, 3.670]		None
Intrinsic Vulnerability	2025-03-01	Moderately vulnerable B = Moderately vulnerable	-	Expert Opinion	Factor not used in ranking. Assessed by Scott Mincemoyer
Threat score is calculated from Overall Threat Impact when available or Intrinsic Vulnerability if not: ([1.83, 3.67]) = [1.83, 3.67]					

Individual Threats Data

Threat Category	Date Assessed	Impact Score	Scope	Severity	Immediacy	Comments
Transportation & Service Corridors	2025-12-03	High - Medium	Large	Serious-Moderate	High-Moderate	The population is near the Beartooth Highway and construction/reconstruction activities have the potential to impact it.
Threat Tally: 0 - Very High, [0,1] - High, [0,1] - Medium, 0 - Low Overall Threat Impact* = High - Medium						

*See [Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species](#) for calculation of Overall Threat Impact based on the number and impact of individual threats.

Conservation Status Rank Calculation

Raw score

Due to rarity, species is automatically classified as S1

Calculated Rank: S1

Accepted Rank	S1
Author(s)	Scott Mincemoyer
Rank Approved By	Andrea Pipp
State Rank Reason	<i>Senecio amplexans</i> is extremely rare in Montana where it is known from one occurrence. Plants are found on steep, rocky, alpine habitat along the Beartooth Highway, where they could be negatively impacted by road maintenance and construction activities. The single occurrence in proximity to a disturbance corridor puts <i>Senecio amplexans</i> at greater risk to extirpation in the state. Monitoring and surveys that bring forth current data on distributions, population counts and viability, habitat conditions, and threats are greatly needed. Surveys in other areas of potential habitat are also greatly needed.

Supplementary Information

Montana Natural Heritage Program. 2021. Conservation Status Assessment Definitions, Process, Rank Factors, and Calculation of State Ranks for Montana Species. 18 p.

https://mtnhp.mt.gov/docs/Montana_State_Rank_Criteria_20211201.pdf

Montana Field Guide Species Account:

<https://fieldguide.mt.gov/speciesDetail.aspx?elcode=PDAST8H020>

Predicted Suitable Habitat Model:

<https://mtnhp.mt.gov/resources/models/?elcode=PDAST8H020>

Information Needs

Information needs are assessed by considering the availability of factors used to assess species status as well as the quality of these assessments. Current information availability and quality to inform Conservation Status Rank for this species are highlighted.

Rank Factor	Assessment Category	Value	Criteria
General Status	Status Quality	Adequate	Calculated rank has low uncertainty and is represented by a single rank (e.g. S3); accepted rank may be adjusted to a range rank (e.g. S2S3)
		Poor	Rank assessed as SU or calculated rank has notable uncertainty and corresponds to a range rank with 2 or more values (e.g. S2?, S1S3, or S4S5)
Rarity	Range Quality	Adequate	Range polygon adequately represents area of probable occupancy and does not include substantial unoccupied areas; range may be adequately defined and still include areas of unsuitable habitat (e.g. mountain ranges for plains species)
		Marginal	Range polygon defined, but may include or exclude notable areas where the species may or may not occur on the landscape
		Poor	Range polygon not defined
	Habitat Quality	Adequate	Species-habitat relationship is well-defined (e.g. relevant literature or robust habitat model available)
		Marginal	Understanding of species-habitat relationship is adequate among some but not all habitats (e.g. literature covers similar habitats outside of Montana or habitat model performance is only somewhat adequate)
		Poor	Species-habitat relationship is not well understood
Threats	Threat Quality	Adequate	Threat Impact is a single value (including "Unthreatened")
		Marginal	Threat Impact assessed at more than one value (e.g. "High - Medium")
		Poor	Threat Impact is Unknown but Intrinsic Vulnerability is assessed
		Unknown	Threat Impact is Unknown and Intrinsic Vulnerability is not assessed
Trends	Recency	Current	Short-term Trend assessment date less than 10 years old
		Out of Date but Adequate	Short-term Trend assessment date is more than 10 years old or Unknown, but species is Unthreatened
		Out of Date	Short-term Trend assessment date more than 10 years old
		Not Available	Short-term Trend data are not available
	Trend Quality	Sufficient	Short-term Trend assessed at a single value or multiple values with a minimum trend greater than -10% (stable or increasing)
		Unknown but Sufficient	Short-term Trend is Unknown, but species is Unthreatened
		Poor	Short-term Trend is less than -10% (in decline) with two or more values selected
		Unknown	Short-term Trend is Unknown

Summary of Information Availability

Summary of Information Needs

Monitoring and surveys that bring forth current data on distributions, population counts and viability, habitat conditions, and threats are greatly needed. Surveys in other areas of potential habitat are also greatly needed.

Additional Threat Details

The table below contains the complete threats assessment for this species. While the Conservation Status Rank Calculation is based on cumulative, broadly categorized (Level 1) threats data, threats are assessed and tracked for more specifically categorized (Level 2) threats when available.

Threat Category	Date Assessed	Assessed By	Data Source	Scope	Severity	Immediacy	Comments
Transportation & Service Corridors - 4.1 - Roads & Railroads	2025-12-03	S. Mincemoyer	MTNHP Threat Ranking 2021/Expert Opinion	Large	Serious-Moderate	High-Moderate	The population is near the Beartooth Highway and construction/reconstruction activities have the potential to impact it.