Clustered lady's slippers are most commonly associated with mixed conifer forests. On the Plumas NF, plants most frequently occur in microsites with moist soils, steep slopes, sufficient dogwood, and a relatively open over story canopy. These orchids lack physiological adaptations to regulate and tolerate drought and heat stress.

The Chips Fire was ignited by lightning on Saturday, July 28, 2012, and was declared 100% contained on August 31, 2012, after burning 75,431 acres on the Plumas National Forest in California and private ownership.

Post-fire monitoring of forty-six populations in the North Fork Feather River Watershed has found large declines in both population size and density. High severity burn extirpated populations while low severity burns had mixed impacts on populations but an overall decline.

Wildfire Effects on Populations of Cypripedium fasciculatum

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Results

Cypripedium fasciculatum sites experience natural fluctuations in population number over time, reflected in our data by the unburned sites and those outside the fire perimeter. Fire, even low severity, has a detrimental effect on populations. The duration of the effects are unknown but it seems virtually impossible for populations burned at high severity to recover any time soon. It may be possible for populations burned at low or moderate severity to recover and potentially benefit in the long term. Future management includes proactively working to reduce fuels in and around C. fasciculatum populations ahead of time to prevent high severity fires.

Monitoring

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