

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Barlow Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*25294

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2179 Site Class PCA
Site Alias None

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

| <u>NCA Site ID</u> | <u>NCA Site Code</u> | <u>NCA Site Name</u> |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| - | | No Data |

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 374402N
State Colorado Longitude 1075725W

Quad Code Quad Name
37107-F8 Hermosa Peak

County
Dolores (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14030002 Upper Dolores

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation - Feet - Meters
Maximum Elevation - Feet - Meters

Site Description

Barlow Creek is a moderately steep, subalpine stream with little sinuosity. A four-wheel drive road is located adjacent the creek. The headwaters originate on the north slope of Hermosa Peak, a prominent peak on the divide between the Dolores River and Hermosa Creek drainages. Barlow Creek Valley is narrow, broadening occasionally where the channel braids and dense stands of sedges occur on gentle gradients. Otherwise, willows line the stream in dense carrs in narrow to wide thickets. A rock impoundment is downstream of the site, where rocks were apparently used from the Flattop Mountain slide adjacent the creek. The impoundment creates a small water body, Barlow Lake, where water appears to flow through easily. Beaver dams account for the remainder of the ponds located throughout the floodplain. Beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*) dominates stands adjacent to active beaver dams with mountain willow (*Salix monticola*) dominating the dense shrub canopy. The remaining riparian area is dominated by Drummond's willow (*Salix drummondiana*) and wolf willow (*Salix wolfii*) in the shrub layer. The graminoid layer plant associates are small winged sedge (*Carex microptera*), water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*), woodrush (*Luzula parviflora*), mannagrass (*Glyceria striata*), bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*), smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), common horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*); and common mesic forb examples are heartleaf bittercress (*Cardamine cordifolia*), tall fringed blue bells (*Mertensia ciliata*), osha (*Ligusticum porteri*) and several others in the herbaceous layer. Soils in the riparian area have a shallow mineral horizon over alluvium, and vary throughout the site. Soils sampled within the emergent wetlands are saturated silty clay, with very little organic matter. The area surrounding Barlow Creek is used for recreation. The four-wheel drive road is popular for ATV and motorcycle use in the summer and snow machine travel in winter. Biologists reported high impacts from sheep grazing in 1993 and hypothesized this impact to be detrimental to the long-term survival of the plant association. During this survey it was observed that grazing practices have apparently improved since 1993, evidenced by the recovery of beaked sedge plant association's vigor. Exotics are present in the understory, though none dominate the herbaceous layer within the wetland area.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

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SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 11/10/2004

Designer March, M.A.

Boundary Justification

The boundary incorporates a portion of the immediate upper watershed to allow hydrological processes such as seasonal flooding and sediment deposition to operate unimpeded. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the elements are not fully contained by the site boundaries.

Primary Area 519.71 Acres 210.32 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) *Salix monticola*/*Carex utriculata* plant association in fair (C-ranked) condition.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

No Data

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

Recreation: ATV use; sight seeing, hunting. A rock impoundment is immediately downstream of occurrence.

Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

Exotics Comments

Taraxacum officinale; *Cirsium arvense*.

Offsite

No Data

Information Needs

No Data

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

| <u>Element</u> | | | <u>Global</u> | <u>State</u> | <u>Driving</u> |
|-----------------|--|------------------------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|
| <u>State ID</u> | <u>State Scientific Name</u> | <u>State Common Name</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Rank</u> | <u>Site Rank</u> |
| 24882 | <i>Salix monticola</i> / <i>Carex utriculata</i> Shrubland | Montane Riparian Willow Carr | G3 | S3 | Yes |

REFERENCES

| <u>Reference ID</u> | <u>Full Citation</u> |
|---------------------|--|
| 192742 | March, M.A. 2005. Final Report: Natural Heritage Wetland Inventory of Dolores County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO. |

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 11/10/2004

Version Author March, M.A.

Disclaimer

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