

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Beaver Creek/Lone Cone

Site Code S.USCOHP\*5075

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2011 Site Class PCA  
 Site Alias Dempsey Meadows South

## 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 375244N  
 State Colorado Longitude 1081124W

## Quad Code Quad Name

37108-G1	Dolores Peak
37108-G2	Groundhog Mountain
37108-H1	Little Cone
37108-H2	Beaver Park
37108-H3	Lone Cone

## County

Dolores (CO)  
 San Miguel (CO)

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

14030002	Upper Dolores
14030003	San Miguel

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	8,800.00	<b>Feet</b>	2,682.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	12,613.00	<b>Feet</b>	3,844.00	<b>Meters</b>

## Site Description

The Beaver Creek-Lone Cone site includes the north side of Lone Cone Mountain and the upper reaches of Beaver Creek. Lone Cone and the adjacent mountains at the southern end are composed of Tertiary Period volcanic rock that covered the underlying Mancos Shale (Cretaceous) found in the rest of the site. This area provides excellent examples of several plant communities that are common in Western Colorado. At the lowest elevations are aspen forests with clearings of Thurber fescue and other native grasses. Blue spruce riparian forest and willow communities line the streams. Spruce-fir forests and alpine tundra occupy the higher elevations on the flanks of Lone Cone. This site provides the large areas of habitat required for Northern Goshawks. A small natural lake on the east side of Lone Cone is the site of a population of King's clover, a plant that is extremely rare in Colorado, and the canyon bog orchid, a globally vulnerable plant. The unnamed lake is rimmed by a beautiful mossy wetland of water sedge, beaked sedge and tufted hairgrass, enhanced with elephantella, bog orchids, felwort, and death camas. The surrounding area is a wet, boggy forest of Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir. King's clover and another plant that is extremely rare in Colorado, variegated scouring rush, were also found along West Beaver Creek. Tiny ferns known as moonworts were growing along an old logging road in young second growth spruce below Lone Cone. They occur in areas that have sparse vegetation. Associated species in this location were black groundsel, wild strawberry, fireweed, Whipple's penstemon, Richardson's geranium, heartleaf arnica, spike trisetum, and alpine bluegrass. On the talus slopes at Devil's Chair, an excellent occurrence of Altai chickweed with thousands of individuals was found. The plants were growing in fine scree soils above a rock glacier. They were especially abundant in the shelter of larger rocks, accompanied by alpine groundsel, tufted hairgrass, moss campion, featherleaf fleabane, blackgroundsel, and sky pilot. The adjacent tundra community, with more soil development, consisted of a variety of grasses, forbs, mosses and lichens. Common species included slender wheatgrass, spike trisetum, pussytoes, alpine avens, Fremont's groundsel, alpine fescue, yarrow, mountain parsley, Geyer's onion, thistleleaf clover, Colorado cinquefoil, plantain goldenweed, and alpine fescue. Farther downhill, currant, mountain avens and Colorado columbine dominated the slopes. A Boreal Owl was recorded nesting in 1999 and Northern Goshawks nested here in the 1980's and 90's, most recently in 1998. The area provides habitat for wildlife and is popular for big game hunting. In addition to its recreational and scenic values, it is important for maintaining proper function of the watershed. Logging and cattle grazing have been important uses. There are several maintained forest roads in the area, as well as former mining roads that have been

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closed to motorized vehicles.

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## Key Environmental Factors

No Data

## Climate Description

No Data

## Land Use History

No Data

## Cultural Features

No Data

## SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 03/13/2000

Designer Lyon, M.J. and J.R. Sovell

## Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to include Bear Creek, with its riparian area and examples of surrounding forest, from the trailhead to Bear Creek Falls. The site encompasses the areas of aspen forest and tall willow community that were surveyed and found to be in good to excellent condition. This does not imply that areas outside the boundary that were not surveyed are not equally significant. Bear Creek Falls is the nesting site of Black Swifts. The entire area needed by this species for foraging would extend much farther, and was not included. Likewise, the entire watershed upstream of the boundaries can potentially affect the hydrology of this site. Flowing falls are a necessity for Colorado's nesting swifts. Diversion of stream flows reducing water flow at the falls could result in abandonment of breeding sites. This could also cause the loss of the two ferns that were found growing in cliffs that are wet with spray from the falls.

Primary Area 27,925.60 Acres 11,301.13 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

The biodiversity rank of this site is based on a fair occurrence of a plant community which is vulnerable on a global scale. Many state rare plant and bird species are also within the site.

Other Values Rank No Data

## Other Values Comments

No Data

## LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

## Land Use Comments

No Data

## Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

## Exotics Comments

No Data

## Offsite

Hydrological processes originating outside the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, and timing, must be managed to maintain site viability.

## Information Needs

No Data

## ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

Element State ID	State Scientific Name	State Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Driving Site Rank
23550	<i>Trifolium kingii</i>	King's clover	G5	S1	Yes
24480	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Mertensia ciliata</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G5	S5	No
24573	<i>Salix geyeriana</i> - <i>Salix monticola</i> / Mesic Forbs Shrubland	Geyer's Willow-Rocky Mountain Willow/Mesic Forb	G3	S3	Yes
23550	<i>Trifolium kingii</i>	King's clover	G5	S1	No

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17150	<i>Stellaria irrigua</i>	Altai chickweed	G4?	S2	No
24648	<i>Festuca thurberi</i> - <i>Lathyrus lanszwertii</i> var. <i>leucanthus</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G4	S4	Yes
24327	<i>Aegolius funereus</i>	Boreal Owl	G5	S2	No
21454	<i>Hippochaete variegata</i>	variegated scouringrush	G5	S1	Yes

## REFERENCES

Reference ID	Full Citation
-	No Data

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date	03/13/2000
Version Author	Lyon, M.J. and J.R. Sovell

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