

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Big Dominguez Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP\*279

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1148 Site Class PCA  
Site Alias Dominquez Canyon

### 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 384537N  
State Colorado Longitude 1082949W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
38108-G4	Triangle Mesa
38108-F5	Keith Creek
38108-G5	Jacks Canyon
38108-G3	Dominguez

### County

Delta (CO)  
Mesa (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
14020005	Lower Gunnison

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	4,800.00 Feet	1,463.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,000.00 Feet	2,743.00 Meters

### Site Description

Dominguez Creek supports excellent riparian vegetation with a diversity of plant species, vigorous growth of vegetation, low abundance of non-native aggressive species, and diversity of vegetation structure. In a stretch of about sixteen air miles from Carson Hole on the Uncompahgre Plateau to the Gunnison River, this beautiful stream descends from 9,000 to 4,800 ft., transitioning from coniferous forests to desert shrubs and cactus. Near the headwaters, mountain willow (*Salix monticola*) is common along the stream banks. Downstream, in the area of Big Dominguez Campground, the rushing stream forms small waterfalls and trout-filled plunge pools in the Precambrian rock. Riparian vegetation along this middle reach is very lush and diverse. Woolly sedge (*Carex pellita*), cloaked bulrush (*Scirpus pallidus*), Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*), redtop (*Agrostis gigantea*), fowl mannagrass (*Glyceria striata*), horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), scouring rush (*Hippochaete laevigata*), wild licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*), false-Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum stellata*), and canyon bog orchid (*Limnorchis ensifolia*) line the banks, while blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) and narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*) tower above thickets of river birch (*Betula occidentalis*), thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*), coyote willow (*Salix exigua*), and red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*). Approximately one to two miles downstream of the campground, beaver ponds have formed an extensive wetland complex consisting of open still water, scrub-shrub, and emergent wetlands. Above the creek, on the canyonsides, the bright green of pinon - juniper contrast with red sandstone cliffs. Farther downstream, Plains cottonwood (*Populus deltoides* ssp. *wislizeni*) replaces the narrowleaf, as the canyon bottom winds below sheer Wingate sandstone cliffs. Two rare plants are found above the creek: Grand Junction milkvetch (*Astragalus linifolius*) grows on rocky slopes and in draws in the pinon - juniper zone, while Colorado hookless cactus (*Sclerocactus glaucus*) is found in the lower reaches of the canyon in desert shrub communities. Soils along Big Dominguez Creek are alluvium and generally not mapped on the County soil survey. The Glenberg series, Coarse-loamy, mixed (calcareous), mesic, Ustic Torrifluvents is shown to occur on floodplain terraces within the site (Soil Conservation Service 1978).

### Key Environmental Factors

No Data

### Climate Description

Arid semi-desert.

### Land Use History

Grazed, oil and gas development and exploration.

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Big Dominguez Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP\*279

## Cultural Features

No Data

## SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 12/03/2001

Designer Rocchio, F.J.

## Boundary Justification

Boundaries are drawn to encompass the ecological processes believed necessary for long term viability of the elements. These boundaries will ensure continued natural surface flow and thus allow fluvial processes such as flood scouring, lateral flow, and channel meandering, to maintain a dynamic distribution of riparian and wetland plant associations along the drainage. It is mapped as a separate site from the biologically similar Little Dominguez Creek, because it is recognized by the public and BLM as a distinct area.

Primary Area 7,221.86 Acres

2,922.59 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports a good (B ranked) occurrence of Colorado hookless cactus (*Sclerocactus glaucus*), a plant which is globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3), and an excellent (A-ranked) example of Grand Junction milkvetch (*Astragalus linifolius*), a globally vulnerable (G3Q/S3) plant. The Grand Junction milkvetch is confined to the eastern base of the Uncompahgre Plateau in Mesa, Montrose and Delta counties. There is also a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) Fendler cloak-fern (*Argyrochosma fendleri*) and an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the state rare (G4/S3) narrowleaf cottonwood / red-osier dogwood riparian forest (*Populus angustifolia* / *Cornus sericea*). Many stands of this association occur in Colorado, but they are highly threatened by improper livestock grazing, development, highway corridors, and stream flow alterations. Although no large, pristine stands remain in Colorado, this stand is one of the few in excellent condition. The state imperiled (G5/S2) canyon tree frog is also found here. The canyon tree frog inhabits rocky canyons along intermittent or permanent streams. This desert frog reaches its northern limits in Southern Colorado. Although primarily terrestrial, it breeds in canyon bottom pools surrounded by rock. It is usually found near permanent pools or cottonwoods in the pinon - juniper zone.

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

No Data

## Information Needs

No Data

## ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

Element			Global	State	Driving
<u>State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Site Rank</u>
16984	<i>Sclerocactus glaucus</i>	Colorado hookless cactus	G2G3	S2S3	No
20453	<i>Astragalus linifolius</i>	Grand Junction milkvetch	G3Q	S3	No
20453	<i>Astragalus linifolius</i>	Grand Junction milkvetch	G3Q	S3	No
24809	<i>Salix monticola</i> / Mesic Forbs Shrubland	Montane Riparian Willow Carr	G4	S3	No
19160	<i>Hyla arenicolor</i>	Canyon Treefrog	G5	S2	No
24860	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Cornus sericea</i> Woodland	Cottonwood Riparian Forest	G4	S3	No

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name	Big Dominguez Creek	Site Code	S.USCOHP*279		
16984	<i>Sclerocactus glaucus</i>	Colorado hookless cactus	G2G3	S2S3	Yes
24686	<i>Betula occidentalis / Maianthemum stellatum</i>	Foothills Riparian Shrubland	G4?	S2	No
24773	<i>Alnus incana / Cornus sericea</i>	Shrubland	G3G4	S3	No
24867	<i>Picea pungens / Cornus sericea</i>	Woodland	G4	S2	No
21454	<i>Hippochaete variegata</i>	variegated scouringrush	G5	S1	No
20453	<i>Astragalus linifolius</i>	Grand Junction milkvetch	G3Q	S3	No
17626	<i>Epipactis gigantea</i>	helleborine	G4	S2S3	No
24362	<i>Oreocarya longiflora</i>	long-flower cat's-eye	G3	S3	No
21725	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	American Peregrine Falcon	G4T4	S2B	No
24246	<i>Argyrochosma fendleri</i>	Fendler cloak-fern	G3	S3	No

## REFERENCES

Reference ID	Full Citation
198627	Lyon, P. and B. Kuhn. 2010. Rare Plant Survey of Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area.
169188	Rocchio, Joe. 2001. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Survey of Critical Wetlands of Mesa County.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date	11/18/2010
Version Author	Lyon, M.J. and B. Kuhn

## Disclaimer

These data are a product and property of Colorado State University, Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP). These data are strictly "on loan" and should be considered "works in progress". Data maintained in the Colorado Natural Heritage Program database are an integral part of ongoing research at CSU and reflect the observations of many scientists, institutions and our current state of knowledge. These data are acquired from various sources, with varying levels of accuracy, and are continually being updated and revised. Many areas have never been surveyed and the absence of data in any particular geographic area does not necessarily mean that species or ecological communities of concern are not present. These data should not be regarded as a substitute for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. Absence of evidence is NOT evidence of absence. Absence of any data does not mean that other resources of special concern do not occur, but rather CNHP files do not currently contain information to document this presence. CNHP is not responsible for whether other, non-CNHP data providers have secured landowner permission for data collected.

**These data are provided for non-commercial purposes only.** Under no circumstances are data to be distributed in any fashion to outside parties. To ensure accurate application of data, tabular and narrative components must be evaluated in conjunction with spatial components. Failure to do so constitutes a misuse of the data. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program shall have no liability or responsibility to the data users, or any other person or entity with respect to liability, loss, or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the data, including but not limited to any interruption of service, loss of business, anticipatory profits or indirect, special, or consequential damages resulting from the use of operation of the data. Data users hereby agree to hold CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado harmless from any claim, demand, cause of action, loss, damage or expense from or related to data users use of or reliance on the data, regardless of the cause or nature thereof, and even in the event that such cause is attributable to the negligence or misconduct of CNHP.

These data are provided on an as-is basis, as-available basis without warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT. Although CNHP maintains high standards of data quality control, CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado further expressly disclaim any warranty that the data are error-free or current as of the date supplied