

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Bilk Basin

Site Code S.USCOHP*5086

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 209 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 375126N
State Colorado Longitude 1075729W

Quad Code Quad Name
37107-G8 Mount Wilson

County
San Miguel (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14030003 San Miguel

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	10,000.00	Feet	3,048.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	11,800.00	Feet	3,597.00	Meters

Site Description

Bilk Basin is a large mountain basin just above treeline at the headwaters of Bilk Creek. Wilson Peak, Mount Wilson, Cross Mountain, Lizard Head, and Sunshine Mountain rim the spectacular site. The mountains were formed by Tertiary volcanic flows that overlie Cretaceous Mancos shale comprised of shallow, turbid marine, calcareous sediments. Soils of the PCA are classified as Cryochrepts. Planeleaf willow occupies the central, wetter areas of the basin, while barren ground willow dominates the side slopes with better drainage. Associated with the barren ground willow was osha, forming a 20% cover. There were smaller amounts of triangle leaf groundsel and monkshood. Patches of sedge wetlands consisting of about equal amounts of beaked sedge and water sedge were interspersed with the willows. The narrow, crystal-clear stream meanders through this community, often curving nearly 360 degrees. Drier areas had pools and rivulets among bedrock outcrops and patches of krummholz on frost-heaved islands. There are fourfalls within the basin along Bilk Creek and at the third falls a single Black Swift was observed. Verification of nesting swifts at this falls was not possible, however, this falls and two of the others offer good quality swift habitat. All of the falls are permanent and they have many ledges and pockets for nesting. A developed trail passes the falls, but the falls are relatively undisturbed.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 08/07/1996
Designer Grunau, T.L.

Boundary Justification

The PCA includes all element occurrences in Bilk Basin, and follows the natural boundaries of the basin. The falls which are the nesting area of Black Swifts are contained in the PCA; however, the entire area needed for their survival is not included.

Primary Area 510.63 Acres 206.64 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

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Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains three excellent occurrences of willow plant communities apparently secure on a global scale. In addition to the nesting population of Black Swifts, the PCA has a good occurrence of the Altai cottongrass, a species that is vulnerable in Colorado and listed as sensitive by the USFS. Of the twenty-nine known occurrences in Colorado, this is the only one known from San Miguel County. The species is more common in San Juan and La Plata counties.

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

Nesting of Black Swifts at Bilk Creek Falls #3 needs verification.

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>
21874	<i>Eriophorum altaicum</i> var. <i>neogaeum</i>	Altai cottongrass	G4?T3T4	S3	No
24961	<i>Salix drummondiana</i> / Mesic Forbs Shrubland	Drummonds Willow/Mesic Forb	G4	S4	Yes
23518	<i>Cypseloides niger</i>	Black Swift	G4	S3B	No
24806	<i>Salix brachycarpa</i> / Mesic Forbs Shrubland	Alpine Willow Scrub	G4	S4	Yes
24836	<i>Salix planifolia</i> / <i>Caltha leptosepala</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G4	S4	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
-	No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

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

Disclaimer

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