

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Button Rock Mountain

Site Code S.USCOHP\*2272

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 622 Site Class PCA  
Site Alias Button Rock

## Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

<u>NCA Site ID</u>	<u>NCA Site Code</u>	<u>NCA Site Name</u>
2526	S.USCOHP*27434	North Saint Vrain-Hermit Park

## LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 401454N  
State Colorado Longitude 1052158W

## Quad Code Quad Name

40105-C3	Pinewood Lake
40105-C4	Panorama Peak
40105-B3	Lyons
40105-B4	Raymond

## County

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

10190005	St. Vrain
10190006	Big Thompson

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	6,138.45	<b>Feet</b>	1,871.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	8,450.00	<b>Feet</b>	2,575.56	<b>Meters</b>

## Site Description

Button Rock Mountain is part of a large pluton of Silver Plume granite at lower montane elevations in the North St. Vrain watershed west of Lyons. The hills and peaks in this area are steep and rugged, creating different microclimates on various aspects and in drainages. Soils are shallow, gravelly, and not well-developed. This site is part of an extensive ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) woodland that extends for tens of miles north and west. The woodland grades into ponderosa pine savanna to the east. Mixed conifer forest dominated by Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) is embedded within the ponderosa forest on cool, moist, north-facing slopes. Ponderosa pine is primarily dominant throughout on steep, south- and west-, and east-facing slopes and rocky tors and ridgelines. The woodland has variable canopy cover, there are several patches of old growth ponderosa pine trees (to 20-22" dbh). Shrub understory is well-developed with bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*) usually with greatest cover and creeping juniper (*Juniperus communis*), bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), and wax currant (*Ribes cereum*) common and constant throughout. Herbaceous cover is diverse with multiple graminoids like mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*), spike fescue (*Leucopoa kingii*), and needle-and-thread (*Hesperostipa comata*). Forbs are diverse co-dominants, especially around rock outcrops, which are prevalent. North-facing slopes are densely canopied with Douglas-fir forest. These slopes are likewise steep and have a well-developed shrub layer with waxflower (*Jamesia americana*), Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), and chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*). Creeping juniper, bearberry, and Oregon grape (*Mahonia repens*) are common dwarf shrubs as well. The rocky tors and adjacent sparsely-vegetated gravelly flats are primary habitat for the globally rare Larimer aletes (*Aletes humilis*). This site is on the edge of the Big Elk fire, which ignited in July 2002 and primarily burned in adjacent Larimer County.

## Key Environmental Factors

Silver Plume granite; lower montane elevation zone.

## Climate Description

No Data

## Land Use History

No Data

## Cultural Features

No Data

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## SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 10/21/2008

Designer Neid, S.L.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the elements and the granite outcrops.

Primary Area 3,907.67 Acres 1,581.38 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

### Biodiversity Significance Comments

This rank is based on an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of a globally rare (G2G3/S2S3) plant species, Larimer aletes (*Aletes humilis*). The site also supports an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3G4/S3) *Pseudotsuga menziesii* / *Jamesia americana* lower montane forest, a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) *Pinus ponderosa* / *Leucopoa kingii* foothills ponderosa pine savanna, an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the globally rare to common (G3G5/S3?) *Pinus ponderosa* / *Purshia tridentata* foothills ponderosa pine scrub woodland and an excellent to good (AB-ranked) occurrence of the state rare (G4G5/S3S4) *Pinus ponderosa* / *Carex rossii* lower montane forest.

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

<u>Element</u>			<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
<u>State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>			
24751	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Jamesia americana</i> Forest	Lower Montane Forests	G3G4	S3	No
24669	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> / <i>Purshia tridentata</i> Woodland	Foothills Ponderosa Pine Scrub Woodlands	G3G5	S3?	No
17408	<i>Aletes humilis</i>	Larimer aletes	G2G3	S2S3	Yes
24745	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> / <i>Carex rossii</i> Forest	Lower Montane Forests	G4G5	S3S4	No
24756	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> / <i>Leucopoa kingii</i> Woodland	Foothills Ponderosa Pine Savannas	G3	S3	No

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
195190	Neid, S., J. Lemly, K. Decker and D. Culver. 2009. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Boulder County 2007-2008. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

Original site design by Pague, C.A. 1994-09-12.

## VERSION

Version Date 10/21/2008

Version Author Neid, S.L.

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