

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Canyon Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP\*23867

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1567 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 383216N  
State Colorado Longitude 1062602W

## Quad Code Quad Name

38106-E4 Whitepine

## County

Gunnison (CO)

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

14020003 Tomichi

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	9,400.00	<b>Feet</b>	2,865.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	10,200.00	<b>Feet</b>	3,109.00	<b>Meters</b>

## Site Description

Canyon Creek is a small tributary of Tomichi Creek. The stream has gentle meanders and a large overflow channel that shows evidence of past high flows. Much of the creek flows through a medium-wide valley with a moderate gradient. In this portion, thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*) and various forbs dominate the riparian area. However, there is high vegetation structural diversity. The headwaters are dominated by Wolf willow (*Salix wolfii*) and planeleaf willow (*S. planifolia*) where the stream is moderately sinuous, forming a beaver carr mosaic. Much of the Wolf willow stand has been grazed resulting in low species richness and unstable streambanks. The stream is entrenched in many places. Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) are also present along the creek. The entire valley shows signs of human use, more historical than present. A trail runs parallel to the creek; grazing and logging are all noticeable.

## 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 12/30/2002

Designer Rocchio, F.J.

## Boundary Justification

The boundaries incorporate an area that will allow natural hydrological processes such as seasonal flooding, sediment deposition, and new channel formation to maintain viable populations of the elements along Canyon Creek. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the elements are not fully contained by the site boundaries. Given that the elements are dependent on natural hydrological processes associated with Canyon Creek and its tributaries, upstream activities such as water diversions, impoundments, and improper livestock grazing are detrimental to the hydrology of the riparian area. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

<b>Primary Area</b>	738.39	<b>Acres</b>	298.82	<b>Hectares</b>
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## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

**Biodiversity Significance Rank** B3: High Biodiversity Significance

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## Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site was drawn for a good (B-ranked) example of a globally vulnerable (G3G4/S3) thinleaf alder/mesic forb (*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*/mesic forb) riparian shrubland. This association is documented from several states but is not well documented in Colorado and is expected to be more common if properly inventoried. This plant association was once common and widespread, but is now declining. The association is rarely found in good condition without non-native species in the undergrowth. Because this community can change significantly with improper grazing, this plant association may not be recognized as the same type across state lines. There are over 30 documented occurrences of this plant association in Colorado. However, none are very large and only one or two are in pristine condition. All stands are highly threatened by improper livestock grazing, stream flow alterations, road and railroad improvements and maintenance and heavy recreational use. This site also supports a fair to good (BC-ranked) example of the globally vulnerable (G3/S2S3) Wolf willow/bluejoint reedgrass (*Salix wolfii*/*Calamagrostis canadensis*) shrubland.

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</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>
24645	<i>Alnus incana</i> / Mesic Forbs Shrubland	Thinleaf Alder/Mesic Forb Riparian Shrubland	G3	S3	Yes
22745	<i>Carex aquatilis</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Wet Meadows	G5	S4	No
40532	<i>Salix wolfii</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G3	S2S3	No

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
173839	Rocchio J., G Doyle, and R. Rondeau. 2003. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Gunnison County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 12/30/2002  
Version Author Rocchio, F.J.

## Disclaimer

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