

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Carnero Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP2*2079

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1394 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 375547N
State Colorado Longitude 1062512W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
37106-G3	Twin Mountains SE
37106-H4	Lookout Mountain
37106-H5	Bowers Peak
37106-H3	Lime Creek
38106-A4	Lake Mountain

County

Saguache (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
13010004	Saguache

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation - Feet - Meters
Maximum Elevation - Feet - Meters

Site Description

The Carnero Creek site covers approximately 13,000 acres and ranges in elevation from 8,300-11,300 feet (2,535-3,450 meters). "Carnero" means ram in english, which is appropriate for this site, since it is an important foraging and breeding ground for bighorn sheep. The lower portions of this site are primarily a mosaic of pinyon pine-juniper woodlands (*Pinus edulis*-*Juniperus monosperma*), mountain mahogany shrublands (*Cercocarpus montanus*) with some currant (*Ribes* sp.), *Yucca* (*Yucca glauca*), and rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*). A blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) shortgrass prairie and a montane grassland comprised of mountain muhly and Arizona fescue (*Muhlenbergia montana*-*Festuca arizonica*) dominate the lower south-facing slopes. The riparian area in the lower portion of the site has been managed for livestock production, and primarily used for hay meadows. This has resulted in a high number of non-native grasses and an eroding streambank. A narrow strip of native vegetation dominated by alder (*Alnus incana*) borders this portion. The higher elevation areas to the northwest include U. S. Forest Service lands where bristle cone pine (*Pinus aristata*) communities occur. The native trout populations get healthier with elevation in this site. White sucker (*Catostomus commersoni*) do not occur at the higher elevations. The hydrology of this upper portion is kept intact by a local population of American beaver (*Castor canadensis*), but the riparian areas and roadsides host exotic annuals. The surface and ground water of Carnero Creek is a major contributor to Russell and Mishak Lakes. The Carnero Creek site is also an important hunting ground for American peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus anatum*).

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 02/15/1998
Designer Wunder, M.B.

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Boundary Justification

This boundary is drawn to include the wetland complex and uplands that supports the elements of biodiversity found at the site. It is designed to 1) protect the element occurrences from direct impacts such as trampling or other surface disturbances; and 2) to include the immediate slopes which contribute surface and groundwater flow to the wetlands. When considering potential effects on this site, the watershed scale is the appropriate level for consideration. Activities anywhere within the entire watershed surrounding this site have the potential to benefit or injure the integrity of the elements present. The boundaries for this site were drawn using satellite imagery at scales ranging from 1:60,000 to 1:200,000.

Primary Area 19,367.92 Acres 7,837.95 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The Carnero Creek site supports a bristle cone pine woodland, a montane grassland, a Rio Grande cutthroat trout population, all of which are state rare. This population of Rio Grande cutthroat (*Oncorhynchus clarki virginalis*) progresses in quality as one continues up the stream. At the lower elevations, the fish community is degraded by the presence of white sucker (*Catostomus commersoni*), a species introduced from the eastern slope of Colorado as bait fish. Also present at this site are community occurrences of globally rare montane grasslands (*Festuca arizonica*-*Muhlenbergia montana*), shrublands (*Alnus incana*/mesic graminoid), and woodlands (*Pinus aristata*/*Festuca thurberi*).

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 State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
20205	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis</i>	Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No
24976	<i>Alnus incana</i> / Mesic Graminoids Shrubland	Montane Riparian Shrubland	G3	S3	No
20205	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis</i>	Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No
20351	<i>Bufo boreas</i> pop. 1	Boreal Toad (Southern Rocky Mountain Population)	G4T1Q	S1	No
24585	<i>Salix monticola</i> / Mesic Graminoids Shrubland	Montane Riparian Willow Carr	G3	S3	No
24588	<i>Pinus aristata</i> / <i>Festuca arizonica</i> Woodland	Montane Woodlands	G4	S3	No
24589	<i>Pinus aristata</i> / <i>Festuca thurberi</i> Woodland	Lower Montane Woodlands	G5	S2	No
20205	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis</i>	Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No
20205	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis</i>	Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No
24543	<i>Festuca arizonica</i> - <i>Muhlenbergia montana</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G3	S2	Yes

REFERENCES

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

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ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 02/15/1998

Version Author Wunder, M.B.

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