

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Cascade Falls

Site Code S.USCOHP\*25953

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2314 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 401611N  
State Colorado Longitude 1054616W

## Quad Code Quad Name

40105-C7 Grand Lake

## County

Grand (CO)

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

14010001 Colorado headwaters

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	8,700.00 Feet	2,651.76 Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,000.00 Feet	2,743.20 Meters

## Site Description

The Cascade Falls site is located above the North Inlet Trail in Rocky Mountain National Park, within an Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) / subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) forest with lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*). Cascade Falls is a popular destination for day and overnight hikes. The budding monkeyflower (*Mimulus gemmiparus*) is found under gneiss ledges (Tweto 1979), where surface seepage from springs and/or snowmelt provides seasonal moisture. The overhangs create a unique micro-environment that is 5 feet long and 2 feet wide. Associated plants within the seep area include bracted alumroot (*Heuchera bracteata*), oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), stiff club-moss (*Lycopodium annotinum*), and rockbrake (*Cryptogramma acrostichoides*).

## Key Environmental Factors

Presence of seeps along gneiss.

## Climate Description

The climate is mostly continental characterized by dry air, sunny days, clear nights, variable precipitation, and large diurnal temperature changes.

## Land Use History

No Data

## Cultural Features

No Data

## SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 01/20/2006  
Designer Culver, D.R.

## Boundary Justification

The boundaries are drawn to capture the immediate watershed that provides consistent moisture throughout the growing season. It encompasses portions of the North Inlet Trail and North Inlet.

Primary Area 173.60 Acres 70.25 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B1: Outstanding Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

The Cascade Falls site supports an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the globally critically imperiled (G1/S1) budding monkeyflower (*Mimulus gemmiparus*). This narrowly restricted Colorado endemic is known only from higher elevations in and around Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado and surrounding counties (NatureServe 2005). Budding monkeyflower has evolved a unique reproduction strategy. Its leaf

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petiole bases are modified to form pockets containing dormant embryonic shoots (Spackman et al. 1997).

This site is identified as irreplaceable due to its outstanding biodiversity.

Other Values Rank V2 - High values

## Other Values Comments

Popular trail for National Park visitors.

## 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>
18872	<i>Mimulus gemmiparus</i>	budding monkeyflower	G1	S1	Yes

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
193632	Culver, D.R. and Jones, J.R. 2006. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Grand County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
193578	NatureServe. 2005. NatureServe Explorer: An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 4.6. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. Available <a href="http://www.natureserve.org/explorer">http://www.natureserve.org/explorer</a> . (Accessed: December 8, 2005 ).
164970	Spackman, S., B. Jennings, J. Coles, C. Dawson, M. Minton, A. Kratz, and C. Spurrier. 1997. Colorado Rare Plant Field Guide. Prepared for the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program.
192747	Tweto, O. 1979. Geologic Map of Colorado, 1:500,000. United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior, and Geologic Survey of Colorado, Denver, CO.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 01/20/2006

Version Author Culver, D.R.

## Disclaimer

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