

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Cinnamon Pass

Site Code S.USCOHP*23787

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 204 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 375618N
State Colorado Longitude 1073246W

Quad Code Quad Name
37107-H5 Handies Peak

County

San Juan (CO)
Hinsdale (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14080104 Animas

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	12,000.00 Feet	3,658.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	13,328.00 Feet	4,062.00 Meters

Site Description

This site contains most of the northeast-facing bowl below Cinnamon Mountain, on the jeep road that connects Animas Forks and Lake City. It is geologically situated on the San Juan volcanic ash flow tuff. High ridges define the site, forming a tight horseshoe-shaped alpine bowl, with Cinnamon Mountain (13,328 ft.) as the high point, in the southwest corner. The terrain is variable, with three or four obvious terraced benches distributed throughout the upper portions of the site. Talus fields and semi-permanent snow fields dominate the steep slopes which form the upper-most reaches of the site. Soil moisture is variable, with low-lying areas remaining moist to saturated from snow-melt and elevated areas being moist only in early summer. The headwaters of Cinnamon Creek contain some excellent quality wetlands. Drier upper slopes support typical alpine tundra with rock outcrops. The highest areas are dominated by snow willow (*Salix reticulata* ssp. *nivalis*), the host plant of the extremely rare Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly (*Boloria improba acrocneuma*). More mesic slopes are dominated by alpine avens (*Geum rossii*). Other species include Holm's ragwort (*Senecio holmii*), creeping sibbaldia (*Sibbaldia procumbens*), moss campion (*Silene acaulis*), thick-leaf whitlow-grass (*Draba crassa*) and fleabane (*Erigeron vagus*). The wetland areas have small areas of standing water and permanently saturated peat soils that support a variety of grasses and sedges, including tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), globe sedge (*Carex perglobosa*), black sedge (*Carex nova*), smallwing sedge (*Carex microptera*), and native sedge (*Carex vernacula*), along with Altai cottongrass (*Eriophorum altaicum* var. *neogaeum*).

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 12/13/2002
Designer Lyon, M.J.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to encompass the occurrence of the alpine wetland community and areas upslope that provide moisture from snow melt that support the wetland. This area also includes the habitat of the Altai

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cottongrass and thick-leaf whitlow-grass. The boundary is not intended to include all of the area that would be required to sustain a population of the Uncompahgre fritillary (at this site, a total of five individuals were observed on August 8, 1995, and an even-year brood could not be confirmed). It does, however, contain appropriate habitat, including the snow willow upon which the butterflies depend.

Primary Area 631.26 Acres 255.46 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

Cinnamon Pass supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of thick-leaf whitlow-grass (*Draba crassa*), a plant that is globally vulnerable (G3/S3). There is also an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of alpine wetlands dominated by *Carex vernacula*, a community that is unranked (GU/S1) at present, and for which further research is needed to determine its rarity. The wetland areas contain excellent quality (A-ranked) patches of Altai cottongrass (*Eriophorum altaicum* var. *neogaeum*), a subspecies that is globally vulnerable (T3T4/S3).

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

Although *B. improba acrocneuma* is known from this site, very few numbers have been observed; a total of 5 individuals were observed on August 8, 1995 (L.D. Beutler pers. comm.), and an even-year brood could not be confirmed. Further surveys are needed to relocate this butterfly. More research is needed to determine the rarity of the *Carex vernacula* wetland.

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>			
21874	<i>Eriophorum altaicum</i> var. <i>neogaeum</i>	Altai cottongrass	G4?T3T4	S3	No
21274	<i>Draba crassa</i>	thick-leaf whitlow-grass	G3G4	S3	Yes
19963	<i>Carex vernacula</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Alpine Wetlands	GU	S1	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
176216	Beutler, L.D. 1995. Personal Communication to the Colorado Natural Heritage Program.
163571	Lyon, P. and D. Culver. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Surveys.
194565	Neid, S.L. and J.R. Jones. 2008. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Hinsdale County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/13/2002

Version Author Lyon, M.J.

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