

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Clay Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*6263

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 321 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 380905N
State Colorado Longitude 1081406W

Quad Code Quad Name
38108-B2 Sanborn Park

County

Montrose (CO)
San Miguel (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14030003 San Miguel

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,600.00 Feet	2,012.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	7,800.00 Feet	2,377.00 Meters

Site Description

Clay Creek is a perennial stream that flows in a southwesterly direction into the San Miguel River from the Uncompahgre Plateau. Geologic formations in the PCA are Jurassic Morrison Formation sandstones on the canyonsides, topped by a cap of Cretaceous Dakota sandstone. The steep canyonsides have an open pinyon-juniper woodland with mountain mahogany and squaw apple on the south-facing slopes. North-facing slopes have a dense cover of Douglas-fir and Gambel's oak, with Oregon grape, mountain lover and elk sedge in the understory. The riparian vegetation along the creek supports a community of narrowleaf cottonwood and red-osier dogwood, with skunkbrush, Rocky Mountain maple, box elder, and twinberry also present. Wetherill milkvetch, a plant that is globally vulnerable, was found at this PCA. The preferred habitat of Wetherill milkvetch is rocky dry washes and eroded gullies in the pinyon-juniper community. Soils are derived from clays and sandstones of the Morrison Formation, and are very soft and highly erodible. The plants are most often found on small level areas next to boulders where the light, inflated fruits have lodged. They are often in open areas, away from other plants. They seldom grow in areas with significant cover of litter. Associated species in the area include Indian ricegrass, twin bladderpod, rabbitbrush, mountain mahogany, and serviceberry. The PCA includes BLM, National Forest and private lands. Wetherill milkvetch was found on BLM land above the San Miguel River and on National Forest land above Clay Creek. Although the private lands were not surveyed, they also contain potential habitat for the milkvetch.

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 03/13/2000
Designer Fayette, K.K., M.J. Lyon and J.R. Sovell

Boundary Justification

The PCA was drawn to include the populations of Wetherill milkvetch that were found on the slopes above Clay Creek and above the San Miguel River, as well as intervening potential habitat. The unoccupied suitable habitat provides for the species to move over time and colonize new sites.

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Primary Area 1,134.79 Acres

459.24 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains a fair (C-ranked) and a poor (D-ranked) occurrence of a plant species which is vulnerable on a global scale (G3/S3). The populations of Wetherill milkvetch at this site were relatively small, so that they may not be viable, although there was sufficient habitat for the species in the area. Numbers of individuals appear to vary substantially from year to year, and further surveys may determine that the population is more extensive.

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>			
22584	<i>Astragalus wetherillii</i>	Wetherill's milkvetch	G3	S3	Yes
22584	<i>Astragalus wetherillii</i>	Wetherill's milkvetch	G3	S3	No

REFERENCES

Reference ID

Full Citation

-

No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 03/13/2000

Version Author Fayette, K.K., M.J. Lyon and J.R. Sovell

Disclaimer

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