Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Coal Creek at Keystone Mine **Site Code** S.USCOHP*5125

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 769 **Site Class** PCA

Site Alias None

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

NCA Site ID	NCA Site Code	NCA Site Name
-		No Data

LOCATORS

Nation United States **Latitude** 385137N

State Colorado **Longitude** 1070246W

Quad Code	Quad Name
38107-G1	Mount Axtell

County

Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code	Watershed Name
14020001	East-Taylor

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,300.00	**Feet**	2,835.00	**Meters**
Maximum Elevation	9,800.00	**Feet**	2,987.00	**Meters**

Site Description

Coal Creek originates near the town of Irwin and drains east down a steep, V-shaped valley cut through igneous, sedimentary (Mesa Verde formation), and unconsolidated glacial drift bedrock. Coal creek is fairly sinuous with scattered beaver ponds along its course. Willows and pockets of spruce stands fill the valley bottom, broken by occasional dry meadows on colluvial slopes. Kebler Pass Road (County Road 12), which gets a lot of traffic during summer months, skirts the north side of the site. The Mt. Emmons mine is also upslope of the site. Upland slopes are dominated by spruce-fir and are very steep. Within this site, beaver ponds are prevalent. Drummond willow (*Salix drummondiana*), planeleaf willow (*S. planifolia*), bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*), and numerous forbs such as, large-leaved avens (*Geum macrophyllum*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum sphondylium* ssp. *montanum*), monkshood (*Aconitum columbianum*), elephantella (*Pedicularis groenlandica*), bistort (*Polygonum bistortoides*), geranium (*Geranium richardsonii*), horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), orange sneezeweed (*Dugaldia hoopesii*), lovage (*Ligusticum tenuifolium*), and arrowleaf groundsel (*Senecio triangularis*) dominate the riparian and beaver pond areas. Graminoids such as tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*), tufted sedge (*C. lenticularis*), and woodrush (*Luzula parviflora*) are also common. Plant species diversity is high although non-natives such as dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) are common.

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** 08/09/1996

Designer Grunau, T.L.

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 Coal Creek. The boundaries also provide a small buffer from nearby roads where surface runoff may contribute excess nutrients, toxicants, and sediment. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to

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the elements are not fully contained by the site boundaries. Given that the elements are dependent on natural hydrological processes associated with Coal Creek and its tributaries upstream activities such as water diversions, impoundments, improper livestock grazing, and development are detrimental to the hydrology of the riparian area. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area 495.43 **Acres** 200.50 **Hectares**

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports a good (B-ranked) example of a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) riparian plant community, *Salix drummondiana / Calamagrostis canadensis* montane willow carr, and an excellent to good (AB-ranked) example of a globally apparently secure (G4/S4) riparian plant community Drummond's willow (*Salix drummondiana*) / mesic forb.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

No Data

LAND MANAGMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

No Data

Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

Exotics Comments

No Data

Offsite

Hydrological processes originating outside the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, and timing, must be managed to maintain site viability.

Information Needs

No Data

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

Element State ID	State Scientific Name	State Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Driving Site Rank
24473	*Salix drummondiana / Calamagrostis canadensis* Shrubland	Lower Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	Yes
24961	*Salix drummondiana* / Mesic Forbs Shrubland	Drummonds Willow/Mesic Forb	G4	S4	No

REFERENCES

Reference ID	Full Citation
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.
173182	Rocchio, J. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey of Critical Wetlands in Gunnison County.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/18/2002

Version Author Rocchio, F.J.

Disclaimer

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