

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Cobert Canyon

Site Code S.USCOHP3*2456

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1033 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 370210N
State Colorado Longitude 1033510W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
37103-A6	Pine Canyon
37103-A5	Cobert Mesa North

County

Las Animas (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
11040001	Cimarron headwaters

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	5,240.00 Feet	1,597.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	5,800.00 Feet	1,768.00 Meters

Site Description

Cobert Canyon is a fairly large canyon that has approximately 3.5 miles of grassland in the floor. The stream is ephemeral, but with some waterholes/springs. The canyon slopes are shrublands or woodlands in most areas, but with benches where there is a mosaic of grasslands and woodlands. Cliffs rise for 200-300 feet over the canyon forming spectacular views. Side canyons are rugged and often un-roaded. These areas contain what appears to be old growth juniper woodlands. At the heads of some canyons are splash pools. The canyon continues for approximately seven miles with many miles of side canyons. Some of the steeper canyon slopes are covered with shrubs, generally mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*), although Gambel's oak (*Quercus gambelii*) is also common. Some woodlands are almost pure pinon pine (*Pinus edulis*).

Key Environmental Factors

The most important environmental factors regulating these plant communities are the lack of consistent water, hot summers, and cold, windy winters.

Climate Description

The climate of this caprock country is typified by hot summers and cold winters. Of course the winters have many days that are mild. Precipitation is sparse, approximately 12-16 inches.

Land Use History

There is an extensive history for this area, beginning with Folsom Man. The type locality for Folsom Points is a short distance from here. Signs of indigenous peoples are common and include points, arrow heads, teepee rings, vision quest sites, and hunting shelters. Spanish habitation is marked by adobe and rock shelters. These early peoples no doubt conducted small scale agriculture and grazing of livestock. By the end of the 19th century, grazing had taken the form of huge ranching kingdoms. Although the ownerships have been considerably split up, the dominant land use remains as fairly large ranching operations.

Cultural Features

There are numerous sites for early peoples, whether they be European or natives.

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 01/14/1996
Designer Pague, C.A.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entirety of Cobert Canyon. Generally, the walls of the canyon are coincident with the boundary. Such a boundary includes all of the known plants in the canyon and a significant buffer.

Primary Area	3,009.70 Acres	1,217.99 Hectares
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SITE SIGNIFICANCE

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Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports several state imperiled ferns. There is an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the state critically imperiled (G4/S1) Standley's cloak fern (*Cheilanthes standleyi*), an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the state imperiled (G5?/S1S2) Eaton's lip fern (*Cheilanthes eatonii*) and an unranked occurrence of the state critically imperiled (G5/S1) Wooten's lip fern (*Cheilanthes wootonii*).

Other Values Rank V2 - High values

Other Values Comments

There are several Indian shelters as well as adobe buildings.

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

For the past 100 years, the land in this region has been used primarily for cattle and sheep grazing.

Natural Hazard Comments

There are numerous cliffs, unstable rocks, rattlesnakes and scorpions.

Exotics Comments

Burros are widespread on the ranch, but particularly on the hogback, just north of the site. There are a few tamarisk in Cobert Canyon. The Cotton Mesa has aoudads for game ranching purposes.

Offsite

All adjacent lands are used similarly for cattle operations, except the Cotton Mesa. That ranch is managed as a game farm.

Information Needs

There is an abundance of information that is needed about the ranch ecosystem. Particularly, we need to have better documentation of the natural communities.

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>
20884	<i>Cheilanthes standleyi</i>	Standley's cloak fern	G4	S1	No
21047	<i>Cheilanthes eatonii</i>	Eaton's lip fern	G5?	S1S2	No
21047	<i>Cheilanthes eatonii</i>	Eaton's lip fern	G5?	S1S2	Yes
20884	<i>Cheilanthes standleyi</i>	Standley's cloak fern	G4	S1	Yes
17514	<i>Cheilanthes wootonii</i>	Wooten's lip fern	G5	S1	No
20884	<i>Cheilanthes standleyi</i>	Standley's cloak fern	G4	S1	No
21047	<i>Cheilanthes eatonii</i>	Eaton's lip fern	G5?	S1S2	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
198519	Rondeau, R.J., J.R. Sovell, J.E. Stevens, D. Clark and L. Grunau. 2010. Final Report: Southeast Colorado Survey of Critical Biological Resources 2009. Addendum to the 2007 Survey. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 01/14/1996
Version Author Pague, C.A.

Disclaimer

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