

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Craig Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*21694

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1947 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 392244N
State Colorado Longitude 1053502W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
39105-C5	Topaz Mountain
39105-D5	Shawnee
39105-D6	Mount Logan

County

Park (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
10190002	Upper South Platte

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	10,500.00	Feet	3,200.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	12,000.00	Feet	3,658.00	Meters

Site Description

Craig Park is a ridge and valley system cut into the granite of the Kenosha and Platte River mountains. The valley of Craig Park was not glaciated, unlike most other valleys at this elevation in Colorado. The drainage follows a zone of weak bedrock associated with a major fault, which eroded more easily than the surrounding ridges. Subsequent alluvial deposition created the valley's flat floor. The floor of Craig Park is currently occupied by a 930 acre (376 ha) complex of fens, willow carrs, and wet meadows fed primarily by sideslope seepage and developed by centuries of beaver activity. These wetlands are surrounded by well-developed and high-quality subalpine grasslands dominated by Idaho fescue, a relatively uncommon plant in this part of Colorado. Alpine areas are characterized by gentle rolling terrain alternating with frost-shattered rock outcrops. The coarse soils derived from granite do not lend themselves to the development of periglacial features such as patterned ground. Sheltered pockets alternating with exposed knobs support a rich variety of alpine cover types, including alpine willow thicket, turf, and meadow. The coarse soils also produce relatively xeric coniferous forest types below treeline. On the southwest side of Craig Creek, much of the forest is old-growth Engelmann spruce, with large, old trees, snags, and deadfall. Younger spruce forests occur in the northwest corner of the area and lodgepole stands are found on the northeast boundary. Bristlecone stands of all ages occupy the very dry, southwest-facing slopes northeast of Craig Creek. Craig Park provides excellent representation of tundra, subalpine grassland, wetland, and coniferous forest cover types. Of the twenty-two plant associations noted, only the *Pinus aristata* / *Trifolium dasyphyllum* and *Kobresia myosuroides* / *Acomastylis rossii* - *Carex rupestris* plant associations have been reported previously from the Pike National Forest (Andrews 1993). The other twenty plant associations represent a unique opportunity to greatly expand representation in the Rocky Mountain Region's RNA system in the subalpine fir, Engelmann spruce, bristlecone pine, Parry's oatgrass, Idaho fescue, tufted hairgrass, kobresia, snow willow, water sedge, and planeleaf willow series. Craig Park is one of a number of important wetland complexes in the South Park region. Lost Park and East Lost Park, also located in the Lost Park wilderness southeast of Craig Park, contain a number of rare graminoids. High Creek Fen and other fens on the floor of South Park support a large number of endemic and Arctic disjunct plant species. Craig Park has the potential also to support such species, although further floristic inventory would be necessary to determine their presence.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Craig Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*21694

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 12/11/2000

Designer Culver, D.R. and J. Coles

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to encompass the wet meadow and riparian wetlands, as well as the upland communities of bristlecone pine and Parry's oatgrass.

Primary Area 2,660.04 Acres 1,076.49 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) *Pinus aristata* / *Trifolium dasyphyllum* montane woodland and an extant occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) *Danthonia parryi* montane grassland. There is also an imprecise record of the globally vulnerable (G3/S1) *Pinus aristata* / *Ribes montigenum* upper montane woodland. Site needs to be revisited to justify a B2 biodiversity rank.

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</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>
24835	<i>Pinus aristata</i> / <i>Trifolium dasyphyllum</i> Woodland	Upper Montane Woodlands	G2	S2	Yes
19228	<i>Danthonia parryi</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G3	S3	No
24726	<i>Pinus aristata</i> / <i>Ribes montigenum</i> Woodland	Upper Montane Woodlands	G3	S1	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
171610	Andrews, T. 1993. Research Natural Area Guide for the Rocky Mountain Region USDA Forest Service--Review Draft. USDA Forest Service, Fort Collins, Colorado. 37 pp.
163092	Coles, J. 1997. Field survey and ecological evaluation for the Craig Park potential natural area, Pike National Forest, Park County

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/11/2000

Version Author Culver, D.R. and J. Coles

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Craig Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*21694

Disclaimer

These data are a product and property of Colorado State University, Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP). These data are strictly "on loan" and should be considered "works in progress". Data maintained in the Colorado Natural Heritage Program database are an integral part of ongoing research at CSU and reflect the observations of many scientists, institutions and our current state of knowledge. These data are acquired from various sources, with varying levels of accuracy, and are continually being updated and revised. Many areas have never been surveyed and the absence of data in any particular geographic area does not necessarily mean that species or ecological communities of concern are not present. These data should not be regarded as a substitute for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. Absence of evidence is NOT evidence of absence. Absence of any data does not mean that other resources of special concern do not occur, but rather CNHP files do not currently contain information to document this presence. CNHP is not responsible for whether other, non-CNHP data providers have secured landowner permission for data collected.

These data are provided for non-commercial purposes only. Under no circumstances are data to be distributed in any fashion to outside parties. To ensure accurate application of data, tabular and narrative components must be evaluated in conjunction with spatial components. Failure to do so constitutes a misuse of the data. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program shall have no liability or responsibility to the data users, or any other person or entity with respect to liability, loss, or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the data, including but not limited to any interruption of service, loss of business, anticipatory profits or indirect, special, or consequential damages resulting from the use of operation of the data. Data users hereby agree to hold CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado harmless from any claim, demand, cause of action, loss, damage or expense from or related to data users use of or reliance on the data, regardless of the cause or nature thereof, and even in the event that such cause is attributable to the negligence or misconduct of CNHP.

These data are provided on an as-is basis, as-available basis without warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT. Although CNHP maintains high standards of data quality control, CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado further expressly disclaim any warranty that the data are error-free or current as of the date supplied