

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Cramer Creek Uplands

Site Code S.USCOHP*27935

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2659 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 383434N
State Colorado Longitude 1035450W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
38103-E7	Walker Point
38103-E8	Cockleburr Springs

County

Lincoln (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
11020008	Horse

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	5,000.00 Feet	1,524.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	5,100.00 Feet	1,554.48 Meters

Site Description

The Cramer Creek Uplands Potential Conservation Area is located approximately 50 air miles north of Ordway, in the eastern plains. Cramer Creek is a perennial stream that is fed by numerous springs as it flows southeast towards the Arkansas River. The vegetation is comprised of a sand sagebrush (*Artemisia filifolia*) prairie intermixed with shortgrass prairie. The prairie is dominated mainly by native grasses and forbs e.g., side oats grama (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), needle-and-thread grass (*Hesperostipa comata*), sand bluestem (*Andropogon hallii*), three-awn (*Aristida purpurea*), western wheatgrass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*). Native forbs include gilia beardtongue (*Penstemon ambiguus*), bush morning glory (*Ipomoea leptophylla*), painted milkvetch (*Astragalus ceramicus* var. *filifolius*), sand verbena (*Abronia fragrans*), buckwheat (*Eriogonum effusum*), plains zinnia (*Zinnia grandiflora*), and evening primrose (*Oenothera latifolia*). Two rare plants are found in the site: the plains ambrosia (*Ambrosia linearis*), a member of the daisy family whose globally distribution is only the eastern plains of Colorado, and the sandhill goosefoot (*Chenopodium cycloides*), an annual plant that is found only sporadically on sandy soils in the Great Plains. There are several animal species here that are known to be indicators of a functioning ecosystem. Two populations of the black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*) were documented during the survey in June 2009. The prairie dog is a keystone species that greatly increases the zoological diversity of prairie ecosystems by attracting predators and many other animals. The Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*), a species dependent on the black-tailed prairie dog, was seen utilizing the prairie dog towns and the Colorado Division of Wildlife has documented several occurrences and den sites for the swift fox (*Vulpes velox*). The Cassin's sparrow (*Aimophila cassinii*), another indicator species, was also observed.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

The climate of the eastern plains is comparatively uniform from place to place, with characteristic features of low relative humidity, abundant sunshine, light rainfall, moderate to high wind movement, and a large daily range in temperature. Summer daily maximum temperatures are often 95° F or above, and 100° F temperatures have been observed at all plain stations. Such temperatures are not infrequent at altitudes below 5,000 feet; above that elevation they are comparatively rare. The usual winter extremes in the plains are from zero to 10° F or 15° F below zero (WRCC).

Land Use History

No Data

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Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 10/01/2009

Designer Culver, D.R.

Boundary Justification

The site captures the sand sagebrush prairie and the rare plants that rely on minimal anthropogenic disturbances. A one mile buffer is delineated to protect the elements from potential on-site impacts. The boundaries were drawn using a digital orthophoto quad. Only private properties for which CNHP had written permission were field surveyed.

Primary Area 13,880.61 Acres 5,617.31 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) plains ragweed (*Ambrosia linearis*), a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3G4/S1) sandhill goosefoot (*Chenopodium cycloides*), a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a sand sagebrush prairie (*Artemisia filifolia* / *Bouteloua (curtipendula, gracilis)* whose global rank is unknown, and extant occurrences of the state rare (G4/S3) black-tailed prairie dog (*Cynomys ludovicianus*). Additionally, the Burrowing Owl (*Athene cucularia*), a watch listed species, was documented in both prairie dog towns and swift fox (*Vulpes velox*) has been documented by the Colorado Division of Wildlife; however, these species are not targets for this site.

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

Canada thistle, teasel, and kochia were documented.

Offsite

No Data

Information Needs

No Data

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
23164	<i>Ambrosia linearis</i>	plains ragweed	G3	S3	Yes
17796	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	Black-tailed Prairie Dog	G4	S3	No
17343	<i>Chenopodium cycloides</i>	sandhill goosefoot	G3G4	S1	Yes
17796	<i>Cynomys ludovicianus</i>	Black-tailed Prairie Dog	G4	S3	No
44165	<i>Artemisia filifolia</i> / <i>Bouteloua (curtipendula, gracilis)</i> Shrubland		GNR	SNR	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
198398	Culver, D.R. 2009. CNHP Final Report: Critical Biological Resources for Cramer Creek, Lincoln and Crowley Counties, CO. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
198320	Western Regional Climate Center. 2009. Record Climate Summaries. Accessed in 2009. http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/

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ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 10/01/2009

Version Author Culver, D.R.

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