

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Crazy Gulch

Site Code S.USCOHP*28246

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2747 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 385833N
State Colorado Longitude 1050925W

Quad Code Quad Name

38105-H2 Divide

County

Teller (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

10190002 Upper South Platte

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,000.00	Feet	2,743.20	Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,085.00	Feet	2,769.11	Meters

Site Description

This site is located in montane zone foothills on the west slope of the Front Range to the north of Pikes Peak. The surrounding landscape is characterized by low, rolling hills. Habitat is characterized by a large-patch mosaic of xeric grasslands, forests and moist swales. Hilltops are a patch mosaic of mixed coniferous-deciduous forest and grasslands. Hilltop grasslands are typically characterized by a mix of graminoids including blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*), slimstem muhly (*Muhlenbergia filiculmis*) and Arizona fescue (*Festuca arizonica*). Forested sites are characterized by an association of Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). Other conifers, including Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), are also present and dominate the upper canopy layer. Low gradient swales and hillslopes are occupied by Parry's oatgrass (*Danthonia parryi*) grasslands. Riparian habitat is characterized by mesic grasslands dominated by herbaceous species such as clustered field sedge (*Carex praegracilis*) and beaked sedge (*C. utriculata*) with small patches of shrubs including planeleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*) and shrubby cinquefoil (*Dasiphora floribunda*).

Key Environmental Factors

Key factors that influence site biota include environmental processes, especially fire and grazing intensity (Rondeau 2001). Fire has been suggested as a management tool in some cases where pine is encroaching into the grassland meadows. Parry's oatgrass (*D. parryi*) is considered to be very palatable to livestock, and overgrazing has been reported in some stands to reduce the abundance of Parry oatgrass (*Danthonia parryi*) (NatureServe 2010).

Climate Description

Broad elevational changes and complex topography in the Pikes Peak region result in broad differences in the local climate. Due to geography, precipitation in Front Range ecosystems in Teller County comes primarily during summer months. On this north-facing site at an average elevation of 9,100 feet 1971 to 2000, coldest temperatures occurred in January with an average maximum of 35.96 °F and a minimum of 8.80 °F. Warmest temperatures occurred in July with an average maximum of 73.08 °F and an average minimum of 45.27 °F. Annual average maximum precipitation was 19.30 inches. July and August are the wettest months of the year with 3.42 and 3.50 inches of precipitation respectively. Driest months are December through February with 0.55, 0.47 and 0.52 inches of precipitation respectively. March through June and September through November have intermediate amounts of precipitation (Prism 2010).

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

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SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 12/28/2010

Designer Malone, D.G.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to include the known occurrences as well as likely potential extent and habitat of the element occurrences. Additionally, a buffer was included in the boundary to protect ecological processes including hydrology and natural migration and dispersal. Only lands with access permission from landowners were surveyed.

Primary Area 1,487.16 Acres

601.83 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site is drawn for a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) grassland community Parry's oatgrass (*Danthonia parryi*) herbaceous vegetation and for a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S2) grassyslope sedge (*Carex oreocharis*). The Parry's oatgrass association has a limited distribution in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and southern Wyoming. It is suspected that many stands have been altered or destroyed by improper livestock grazing. Many remaining stands are small and/or have been impacted by anthropogenic activities, and are degraded to some degree (NatureServe 2010). Grassyslope sedge is a regional endemic of the southern Rocky Mountains from southeastern Wyoming to northern Arizona (NatureServe 2010).

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

Alien plant species include smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*) and woolly mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*).

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>
19228	<i>Danthonia parryi</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G3	S3	Yes
20528	<i>Carex oreocharis</i>	a sedge	G3	S2	Yes

REFERENCES

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Full Citation

198660	Culver, D.R., D. Malone, and A. Shaw. 2011. CNHP Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Teller County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
198314	NatureServe Explorer (Web Page). Accessed 2010. An online encyclopedia of life [web application]. Version 7.1. NatureServe, Arlington, Virginia. http://www.natureserve.org/explorer .
198649	Prism Climate Group (Web Page). Accessed 2010. Spatial Climate Analysis. http://www.prism.oregonstate.edu/
190863	Rondeau, R. 2001. Ecological system viability specifications for Southern Rocky Mountain ecoregion. First Edition. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO. 181 pp.
192747	Tweto, O. 1979. Geologic Map of Colorado, 1:500,000. United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior, and Geologic Survey of Colorado, Denver, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	12/28/2010
Version Author	Malone, D.G.

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