

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Cross Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP1\*2479

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 583 Site Class PCA  
Site Alias Cross And Fall Creek

### Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

<u>NCA Site ID</u>	<u>NCA Site Code</u>	<u>NCA Site Name</u>
1308	S.USCOHP*4412	Upper Eagle River
1806	S.USCOHP*4413	Upper Fryingpan

## LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 392855N  
State Colorado Longitude 1062819W

### Quad Code Quad Name

39106-E4 Minturn  
39106-D5 Mount Jackson  
39106-D4 Mount of the Holy Cross  
39106-E5 Grouse Mountain

### County

Eagle (CO)

### Watershed Code Watershed Name

14010004 Roaring Fork  
14010003 Eagle

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation 8,025.00 Feet 2,446.02 Meters  
Maximum Elevation 14,000.00 Feet 4,267.00 Meters

### Site Description

Cross Creek begins in the high peaks of the Sawatch Range in the Holy Cross Wilderness Area, managed by the White River National Forest. The creek runs in a north-northeasterly way. The headwaters begin on some of the highest peaks in Colorado: Holy Mountain at 14,005 feet and Mount Jackson at 13,670 feet. Numerous alpine and subalpine lakes occur in the upper basin of Cross Creek. Blodgett Lake, Treasure Vault Lake, Bowl of Tears, and Harvey Lake are in the upper reaches of Cross Creek. Glacially carved U-shaped valleys characterize the upper reaches of the valley. A meandering, slow-moving stream wanders from valley side to valley side supporting a large and extensive willow carr/sedge meadow complex. Salix planifolia and S. wolfii intermingle with Carex aquatilis, C. utriculata, Deschampsia cespitosa, Calamagrostis canadensis, and Eleocharis quinqueflora. Where the valley narrows, the creeks flow through a granite gorge with steep slopes and spectacular cliffs. Spruce-fir dominated slopes rise steeply to bare rock and tundra. The riparian vegetation within these narrow reaches resembles the slopes, except for a narrow strip of mesic forbs dominated by Mertensia ciliata, Senecio triangularis, and Cardamine cordifolia found along the creek bed. Most of the site is in pristine or near pristine condition. The water quality and riparian areas are in excellent condition. It is an exemplary high alpine and subalpine site supporting a rare and endemic subspecies of Colorado cutthroat trout.

### Key Environmental Factors

No Data

### Climate Description

No Data

### Land Use History

No Data

### Cultural Features

No Data

## SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 02/28/2000  
Designer Rondeau, R.J. and K.K. Fayette

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## Boundary Justification

The boundary delimits the extent of the Cross Creek watershed. In order to ensure adequate protection for the wetland complex and trout, the entire watershed must be considered; any activity occurring within the watershed boundary has the potential to impact the local hydrology and water quality and therefore the occurrences of trout and riparian communities. Lower portions of Cross Creek within the boundaries currently support populations of non-native cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout, however, there exist barriers to preclude upstream migration of these non-natives into reaches where only natives occur. The downstream boundary was extended to encompass the nesting area for peregrine falcons. While the upstream portions of the site provide hunting areas for these falcons, the boundaries do not specifically address all potential foraging areas for the nesting pair.

Primary Area 18,901.49 Acres 7,649.19 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

**Biodiversity Significance Rank** B3: High Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains an excellent occurrence of a plant community which is vulnerable on a global scale. It also contains an excellent occurrence of a fish subspecies which is globally vulnerable.

**Other Values Rank** V1 - Outstanding values

## Other Values Comments

No Data

## LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

## Land Use Comments

Most of the site is within Holy Cross Wilderness Area. Recreational trails exist in the area, but pose little threat to the unique elements of this system.

## Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

## Exotics Comments

No Data

## Offsite

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

## Information Needs

No Data

## ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
24905	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Salix drummondiana</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forest	G5	S4	No
21796	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No
24473	<i>Salix drummondiana</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Lower Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	No
22745	<i>Carex aquatilis</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Wet Meadows	G5	S4	No
23155	<i>Eleocharis quinqueflora</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Alpine Wetlands	G4	S3S4	No
18558	<i>Listera borealis</i>	northern twayblade	G4	S2	No
24805	<i>Salix planifolia</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G4	S2S3	No
24473	<i>Salix drummondiana</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Lower Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	Yes
21725	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	American Peregrine Falcon	G4T4	S2B	No
24480	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Mertensia ciliata</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G5	S5	No
21796	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	Yes
21796	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	Yes

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
-	No Data

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## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 02/28/2000

Version Author Rondeau, R.J. and K.K. Fayette

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