

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Deep Creek Uplands West

Site Code S.USCOHP1*1930

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2020 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 374736N
State Colorado Longitude 1065537W

Quad Code Quad Name

37106-G8 Creede

County

Mineral (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

13010001 Rio Grande headwaters

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,080.00	Feet	2,768.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	10,480.00	Feet	3,194.00	Meters

Site Description

The Deep Creek Uplands West site is part of a montane valley oriented south to north. Steep slopes with rhyolitic cliffs provide limited habitat for the narrowly restricted black canyon gilia (*Gilia penstemonoides*), while the talus slopes at the base of the cliffs harbor excellent habitat for the Colorado endemic Smith whitlow-grass (*Draba smithii*). Surrounding the cliffs are forested slopes of Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) interspersed with Arizona fescue (*Festuca arizonica*) grasslands. Near the ridge top, the vegetation changes to bristlecone pine (*Pinus aristata*) with Arizona fescue. Deep Creek provides excellent habitat for beavers which use the Drummond's willow (*Salix drummondii*) and Rocky Mountain willow (*Salix monticola*) found beside the stream for food and dam construction.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 12/10/1998

Designer Rondeau, R.J.

Boundary Justification

Encompasses stand boundaries and a small buffer. Long-term viability will depend on compatibility of management on adjacent lands. Deep Creek Uplands West site includes the known occurrences of the two globally rare plants and the montane woodlands. In addition, nearby suitable habitat for the elements has been included within this boundary. We used on-the-ground inventory and 7.5 minute topographic map to delineate the boundary.

Primary Area 416.80 Acres 168.67 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports a large (A-ranked) population of the Colorado endemic and globally imperiled (G2/S2) Smith whitlow-grass (*Draba smithii*) and a healthy stand of bristlecone pine (*Pinus aristata*) with Arizona

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fescue (*Festuca arizonica*). Smith whitlow-grass, an herbaceous mustard, has been found only in the southern Colorado counties of Mineral, Saguache, Costilla, and Las Animas, totaling approximately 15-20 occurrences. Of the known occurrences, Mineral County harbors the largest documented populations, and the Deep Creek site is among the best of these, with an estimated 500 individuals. The globally vulnerable (G3/S3) black canyon gilia (*Gilia penstemonoides*) has been found in Gunnison, Montrose, Hinsdale and Mineral counties, with approximately 25 known occurrences. Mineral County supports the largest known populations, of which Deep Creek supports a small (C-ranked) population.

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

Need to verify boundaries with on-site investigation. Current status information needed. Smith whitlow-grass grows well on steep rocky slopes, often of volcanic origin, and it has a large elevation range of 8,000-11,000 feet. These criteria are met throughout the San Juan Mountains, yet the plant is rarely present. Future studies are needed to help understand what other factors are limiting this plant to so few sites.

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element</u>			<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
<u>State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>			
24588	<i>Pinus aristata</i> / <i>Festuca arizonica</i> Woodland	Montane Woodlands	G4	S3	No
21624	<i>Draba smithii</i>	Smith whitlow-grass	G2	S2	Yes
23498	<i>Gilia penstemonoides</i>	Black Canyon gilia	G3	S3	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
194408	Rondeau, R. 1999. Final Report: Biological Survey of Mineral County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	12/10/1998
Version Author	Rondeau, R.J.

Disclaimer

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