

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Dry Fork Piceance Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*27014

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2458 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 400029N
State Colorado Longitude 1081113W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
40108-A2	White River City
39108-H2	Greasewood Gulch

County

Rio Blanco (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
14050006	Piceance-Yellow

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	5,900.00 Feet	1,798.32 Meters
Maximum Elevation	6,500.00 Feet	1,981.20 Meters

Site Description

This site is located on sparsely vegetated, dry shale hills north of County Road 22 within a shrub/grass community containing scattered pinons and junipers. It is predominately drawn to encompass the boundaries of a globally imperiled plant community, but also includes a globally vulnerable plant occurrence. The plant community is located on convex slopes, interrupted by drainages. The bottomlands to the south are interspersed with hay meadows. Geologically modern alluvium, including Piney Creek and younger deposits, covers nearly the entire northern half of the site. The Uinta Formation (formerly the Evacuation Creek Member of Green River Formation), made up of sandstones and siltstones, covers most of the southern portion, which is a little more than half of the site. The shape of the area is irregular, but basically averages 3.4 air miles in length (west to east) and 0.74 air miles in width (north to south). Typical native plant species include shrubs: fringed sagebrush (*Artemisia frigida*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos oreophilus*), horsebrush (*Tetradymia canescens*), rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) and Oregon grape (*Mahonia repens*); grasses Indian rice grass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), Prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*), and muttongrass (*Poa fendleriana*); and forbs white sagebrush (*Artemisia ludoviciana*), dragon milkvetch (*Astragalus lutosus*), Barneby's thistle (*Cirsium barnebyi*), erect chryptantha (*Cryptantha stricta*), spearleaf wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum lonchophyllum*), sticky rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*), Hood's phlox (*Phlox hoodii*), and sharpleaf twinpod (*Physaria acutifolia*). Non-native species include cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*).

Key Environmental Factors

Dry, easily eroded soils.

Climate Description

In the County, summers are warm or hot in most valleys but are much cooler in the mountains. Winters are cold in the mountains. Summer thunderstorms are prevalent; of the total precipitation, 55% usually falls between April and September. Average seasonal snowfall is 74.4 inches, average day time temperature is 45 degrees and average precipitation is 16.5 inches for Meeker between 1948 -2007 (Western Regional Climate Center 2008).

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 12/11/2007

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Designer Lyon, M.J. and J. Huggins

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses a rare plant community on shale hills above the Dry Fork of Piceance Creek and includes a rare plant in similar habitat in the next drainage to the south.

Primary Area 1,016.46 Acres 411.35 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) many-stem stickleaf (*Nuttallia multicaulis*) and a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2/S2?) western slope grassland community, *Pseudoroegneria spicata* herbaceous vegetation.

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

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) are common.

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>
23569	<i>Nuttallia multicaulis</i>	many-stem stickleaf	G3	S3	Yes
19115	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Western Slope Grasslands	G2	S2?	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
195049	BLM, White River Field Office. 2007. Personal communication to Peggy Lyon and Denise Culver of CNHP.
195026	Culver, D., J. Huggins and P. Lyon. 2008. Final Report: Significant Biological Resources in Rio Blanco County, CO. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
195034	WRCC. 2008. Western Regional Climate Center. Division of Atmospheric Sciences, Desert Research Institute. Reno, Nevada. < http://www.wrcc.dri.edu >.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/11/2007
Version Author Lyon, M.J. and J. Huggins

Disclaimer

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