

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name East Fork Cimarron River

Site Code S.USCOHP\*23626

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1177 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 381107N  
State Colorado Longitude 1072928W

Quad Code Quad Name  
38107-B4 Sheep Mountain

County  
Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name  
14020002 Upper Gunnison

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,200.00 Feet	2,804.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,600.00 Feet	2,926.00 Meters

### Site Description

The East Fork Cimarron River is situated in a wide valley, yet the stream is entrenched and sometimes in a canyon. The river is low due to 2002 drought but is still flowing strong. For being a second order stream the flow volume is high and flooding is common. There are dramatic breccia cliffs along this portion of the river and the landscape is very rocky with some overflow channels. Small floodplains have formed in a few areas. There is good regeneration of conifers along the riparian area. Livestock were observed grazing on adjacent slopes but did not appear to be grazing heavily in the riparian area. The slopes, both east and west facing, are dominated by Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*). The hydrology appears to be intact. Engelmann spruce, blue spruce (*Picea pungens*), subalpine fir, alder (*Alnus incana*), Drummond willow (*Salix drummondiana*), and twinberry honeysuckle (*Lonicera involucrata*) dominate the tree and shrub layers along the riparian zone. The understory consists of herbaceous species such as geranium (*Geranium richardsonii*), common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum sphondylium* var. *montanum*), Parry's goldenrod (*Oreochrysum parryi*), cowbane (*Oxypolis fendleri*), willowherb (*Epilobium saximontanum*), horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), and small-winged sedge (*Carex stenoptila*).

### 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 12/19/2002  
Designer Rocchio, F.J.

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries incorporate an area that will allow natural hydrological processes such as seasonal flooding, sediment deposition, and new channel formation to maintain viable populations of the elements along the East Fork Cimarron River. The boundaries also provide a small buffer from nearby trails where surface runoff may contribute excess nutrients and sediment. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the elements are not fully contained by the site boundaries. Given that the elements are dependent on natural hydrological processes associated with the East Fork Cimarron River and its tributaries, upstream activities such as water diversions, impoundments, and improper livestock grazing are detrimental to the

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hydrology of the riparian area. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area 197.48 Acres 79.92 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

### Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports an extant occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) small-winged sedge (*Carex stenoptila*) and a good (B-ranked) example of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) thinleaf alder / Drummond willow (*Alnus incana* / *Salix drummondiana*) shrubland. The association is generally found along steep-gradient streams with stable, shaded stream banks. This plant association is small, but widespread and has only been documented from Colorado. It is highly threatened by improper livestock grazing and stream impoundments.

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

Field survey needed to refine location of sedge population.

## 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>			
24743	<i>Alnus incana</i> - <i>Salix drummondiana</i> Shrubland	Montane Riparian Shrubland	G3	S3	Yes
20938	<i>Carex stenoptila</i>	small-winged sedge	G2	S2	Yes

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
173839	Rocchio J., G Doyle, and R. Rondeau. 2003. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Gunnison County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
173182	Rocchio, J. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey of Critical Wetlands in Gunnison County.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 12/19/2002  
Version Author Rocchio, F.J.

## Disclaimer

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