

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Fairview Peak

Site Code S.USCOHP*27377

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2518 Site Class PCA
Site Alias Ball Gulch
Site Alias Central Gulch
Site Alias Upper Geer Canyon

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

<u>NCA Site ID</u>	<u>NCA Site Code</u>	<u>NCA Site Name</u>
2526	S.USCOHP*27434	North Saint Vrain-Hermit Park

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 400851N
State Colorado Longitude 1052038W

Quad Code Quad Name

40105-A3 Boulder

40105-B3 Lyons

County

Watershed Code Watershed Name

10190005 St. Vrain

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation 6,299.21 Feet 1,920.00 Meters

Maximum Elevation 8,136.48 Feet 2,480.00 Meters

Site Description

This rugged mountainous region is within a large area of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) woodland that is just behind the foothills northwest of Boulder. Well-drained, gravelly, sandy loam soils derived from Silver Plume granite underlie the conifer forest that cover the steep hillslopes. Rock outcrops are frequent. South-facing slopes have ponderosa pine and north-facing slopes have mixed conifers with Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and a more well-developed shrub layer. A catastrophic fire killed the tree canopy in portions of the site (the Overland Fire in October 2003); there is some regeneration of tree species occurring. Within the site, the condition of the ponderosa pine woodland is variable throughout. Some areas have relatively dense young forest, some have more mixed age classes in the tree canopy, and some areas have relatively mature trees. Closer to the ridgeline, trees are short but older. There is regeneration of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir near the hilltop, especially near the burn margin. The open tree canopy on the south-facing slopes allows for frequent shrub copses of species like currant (*Ribes cereum*), common juniper (*Juniperus communis*), and Fendler's ceanothus (*Ceanothus fendleri*) typical of lower montane-foothills elevation. Herbaceous species are variable with areas of high species richness to those that are more depauperate with greater needle duff. Graminoids are characteristic but variable in cover and composition, but include spike fescue (*Leucopoa kingii*) along with Scribner needlegrass (*Achnatherum scribneri*), mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*), blue wildrye (*Elymus glaucus*), Ross' sedge (*Carex rossii*), little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and others. Forbs are likewise variable and can be diverse and include Front Range beardtongue (*Penstemon virens*), Fendler ragwort (*Packera fendleri*), hairy goldenaster (*Heterotheca foliosa*), little sunflower (*Helianthus pumilus*), and stiff blazing star (*Liatris punctata*). The interior forest is largely non-weedy although there are some areas in the adjacent burn with abundant cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and Jim Hill mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*). There are populations of several bat species in the area and within the site including fringed myotis (*Myotis thysanodes*) and pale lump-nosed bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii pallescens*). This site serves as habitat for mountain lion and black bears, and is part of a migration corridor for elk. It is potential nesting habitat for goshawk.

Key Environmental Factors

Lower montane-foothills elevation zone; fire disturbance regime.

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

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Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial

Mapped Date 10/21/2008

Designer Neid, S.L.

Boundary Justification

This site encompasses montane slopes within an extensive ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) woodland system with sporadic granitic summits and tors.

Primary Area 5,380.65 Acres

2,177.48 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains an excellent to good (AB-ranked) and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) Larimer aletes (*Aletes humilis*), good (B-ranked) occurrences of a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) ponderosa pine / spike fescue (*Pinus ponderosa* / *Leucopoa kingii*) woodland and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a state rare (G4?/S2) river birch / mesic forbs (*Betula occidentalis* / *Maianthemum stellatum*) foothills riparian shrubland.

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

Non native species include redtop (*Agrostis gigantea*), smooth brome (*Bromus inermis*), musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), toadflax (*Linaria dalmatica*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), and common 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>
24756	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> / <i>Leucopoa kingii</i> Woodland	Foothills Ponderosa Pine Savannas	G3	S3	No
17408	<i>Aletes humilis</i>	Larimer aletes	G2G3	S2S3	Yes
17408	<i>Aletes humilis</i>	Larimer aletes	G2G3	S2S3	Yes
24686	<i>Betula occidentalis</i> / <i>Maianthemum stellatum</i> Shrubland	Foothills Riparian Shrubland	G4?	S2	No
24756	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> / <i>Leucopoa kingii</i> Woodland	Foothills Ponderosa Pine Savannas	G3	S3	No

REFERENCES

Reference ID

Full Citation

195190

Neid, S., J. Lemly, K. Decker and D. Culver. 2009. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Boulder County 2007-2008. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

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ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 10/21/2008

Version Author Neid, S.L.

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