

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Fountain Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP\*22208

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 82 Site Class PCA  
 Site Alias Big Johnson Reservoir

## 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 384848N  
 State Colorado Longitude 1043911W

## Quad Code Quad Name

38104-F6	Fountain
38104-G6	Elsmere
38104-E6	Buttes
38104-F7	Cheyenne Mountain
38104-F5	Fountain NE
38104-G7	Colorado Springs
38104-G5	Corral Bluffs
38104-H6	Falcon NW
39104-A6	Black Forest
38104-H5	Falcon
38104-G8	Manitou Springs
38104-F8	Mount Big Chief
38104-E7	Timber Mountain

## County

Teller (CO)  
 El Paso (CO)

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

11020003	Fountain
11020004	Chico

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	5,590.00	<b>Feet</b>	1,704.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	5,900.00	<b>Feet</b>	1,798.00	<b>Meters</b>

## Site Description

The Fountain Creek site includes 3 areas that are known to be used by wintering Bald Eagles for roosting and feeding. The first area consists of Big Johnson Reservoir and a 0.25-mile-wide strip of shoreline (buffer zone) surrounding the reservoir. The reservoir is situated in a large, open expanse of shortgrass prairie that supports scattered Yucca glauca. A stand of large cottonwood (Populus deltoides ssp. monilifera) trees and several clusters of medium-sized trees are located at the western edge of the reservoir. Bald Eagles use these trees for roosting and for hunting perches from which they swoop down on fishes at the water's surface. The Big Johnson Reservoir area is used by a variety of avian species including wintering Lapland Longspurs (Calcarius lapponicus) (R. Bunn, pers. comm., Fort Carson). The area also serves as a stopover point for numerous migratory birds of many species (R. Bunn, pers. comm., Fort Carson). The second area includes a 1.3-mile-long stretch of Fountain Creek, located to the west of the city of Widefield. This area lies immediately to the south of the sewage treatment ponds and to the north of the gaging station at Fountain Creek. Riparian vegetation, including mature cottonwood trees, grows along the creek. Bald Eagles use the cottonwood trees for roosting and for hunting perches from which they attack black-tailed prairie dogs and other prey. A 3.5-mile-long stretch of Jimmy Camp Creek constitutes the third area. Riparian vegetation growing along Jimmy Camp Creek includes mature cottonwood trees that are used by Bald Eagles. Jimmy Camp Creek flows intermittently. Arkansas Darters (Etheostoma cragini) inhabit Jimmy Camp Creek within the site. In addition, black-tailed prairie dogs occur on or near each of the portions of the site describe above. Other birds that have been recorded from the site include Peregrin Falcon, Prairie Falcon, Mexican Spotted Owl, Burrowing Owl, Mountain Plover, Lewis's Woodpecker and there is a historical record of the Ovenbird. The

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Triploid Colorado Checkered Whiptail, an imperiled reptile, is also recorded from the site as are the northern leopard frog and swift fox. There are occurrences of Mesic Tallgrass Praire, Great Plains Shortgrass Prairie, and Montane Grassland inhabited by the rare butterflies the Dusted Skipper, Crossline Skipper, and Colorado Blue. Other rare plant community occurrences within the site include Narrowleaf Cottonwood and Common Chokecherry (*Populus angustifolia/Prunus virginiana*), Montane Riparian Forest (*Pseudotsuga menziesii/Betual occidentalis*), Lower Montane Forest (*Corylus cornuta* shrubland), and Mesic Oak Thickets (*Quercus gamblii/Carex inops*). Numerous rare plants occurrences have been recorded from the site. Some of the rarer and more recent records include the Pikes Peak Spring Parsley, James' Telesonix, Rocky Mountain Columbine, and Golden Columbine.

**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 10/04/2004

Designer Sovell, J.R.

**Boundary Justification**

The potential conservation area, designed primarily for Bald Eagle, is the 10 digit watershed boundary (NRCS 2001) of Fountain Creek, minus most of the developed areas around Colorado Springs. It encompasses 3 known Bald Eagle wintering sites: Big Johnson Reservoir, a 1.3 mile stretch of Fountain Creek and a 3.5 mile stretch of Jimmy Camp Creek. Bald Eagles often forage over vast areas many miles from their roosts.

Primary Area 156,744.22 Acres

63,432.39 Hectares

**SITE SIGNIFICANCE**

Biodiversity Significance Rank B5: General Biodiversity Interest

**Biodiversity Significance Comments**

The site supports 3 fair (C-ranked) occurrences of the apparently globally secure (G5) but locally restricted or vulnerable wintering (S1B, S3N) Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*).

Other Values Rank No Data

**Other Values Comments**

No Data

**LAND MANAGMENT ISSUES**

**Land Use Comments**

No Data

**Natural Hazard Comments**

No Data

**Exotics Comments**

No Data

**Offsite**

No Data

**Information Needs**

No Data

**ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY**

Element	State Scientific Name	State Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Driving Site Rank
21249	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	G5	S1B,S3N	Yes

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## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
171541	Bunn, R. 2000. Personal communication with Jim Gionfriddo for the CNHP El Paso Biological Inventory.
192546	Central Shortgrass Prairie Bird Working Group. 2004. Meeting held on July 29, 2004 at CSU. Participants included personnel from CNHP, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Colorado Division of Wildlife and Playa Lakes Joint Venture.
192567	Leiber, C. 2000. Personal communication with Jim Gionfriddo for the CNHP El Paso Biological Inventory.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

10 digit watershed boundary from Natural Resources Conservation Service, September 2001. Scale of data is 1:24000.

## VERSION

**Version Date** 10/04/2004

**Version Author** Sovell, J.R.

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