

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Fountain and Jimmy Camp Creeks

Site Code S.USCOHP\*22097

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 124 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 384032N  
 State Colorado Longitude 1044156W

## Quad Code Quad Name

38104-G6	Elsmere
38104-F6	Fountain
38104-E6	Buttes
38104-E5	Fountain SE

## County

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

11020003	Fountain
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## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	5,240.00	<b>Feet</b>	1,597.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	5,900.00	<b>Feet</b>	1,798.00	<b>Meters</b>

## Site Description

Fountain Creek Watershed comprises 927 square miles and includes portions within eleven governmental jurisdictions (Monument, Palmer Lake, Fountain, Woodland Park, Manitou Springs, Green Mountain Falls, City and County of Pueblo, Colorado Springs, Teller County, and El Paso County). The Colorado Division of Wildlife has documented Arkansas darter, a globally vulnerable small plains fish, in two reaches of Fountain Creek. This PCA encompasses the more northerly occurrence of the two Fountain Creek occurrences of Arkansas darter. Arkansas darter (*Etheostoma cragini*) occur within the riparian corridor of Fountain Creek between Williams Creek north to the between the towns of Widefield and Fountain (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2001b). Additionally, Arkansas darter occur within the Jimmy Camp Creek riparian corridor north to the Colorado Springs Airport (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2001b). Arkansas darter are a small eastern plains fish native to streams in the Arkansas River basin and are known to inhabit small, shallow, clear streams that are often spring-fed and have sandy substrates, slow current, cooler water, and aquatic vegetation (Nesler et al. 1999). In Fountain and Jimmy Camp creeks, Arkansas darters are probably most abundant in spring-fed marshes adjacent to the creeks. Other fish species that have been documented to occur with the Arkansas darter include fathead minnow (*Pimephales promelas*), flathead chub (*Platygobio gracilis*), longnose dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*), and brook stickleback (*Culaea inconstans*) (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2001d). Flooding and streambank erosion along Fountain Creek increased dramatically in recent years probably degrading the Arkansas darter habitat (G. Dowler, pers. comm., CDOW). Factors contributing to increased streamflows include an increase in hard surfaces (e.g., roads, rooftops, parking lots) and an increase in the volume of wastewater treatment plant discharge into Fountain Creek (Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments 1997). Hard surfaces prevent rainfall from soaking into the ground and discharging slowly to the creek. Instead, rainwater is collected in concrete culverts and delivered directly into the creeks. In addition, billions of gallons of water imported from basins west of the Continental Divide to supply demands of a growing population, ultimately discharge to Fountain Creek as treated wastewater. Higher flows translate to increased erosion and flooding, accelerating the loss of wetland habitat. Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments (PPACAG) and Pueblo Area Council of Governments (PACAG) are coordinating preparation of the Fountain Creek Watershed Plan ([www.fountain-crk.org](http://www.fountain-crk.org)) to address issues of watershed health. Reaches of Fountain Creek support a riparian forest of plains cottonwood with coyote willow. Unfortunately, Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), crack willow (*Salix fragilis*), and tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*), all invasive exotic species, comprise much of the vegetative cover and thus contribute to ecosystem degradation. However, the riparian vegetation provides important habitat for a range of bird species and is an important migration corridor along the Front Range. In fact, Fountain Creek Regional Park, located within the PCA, has been designated by the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area (IBA) of Colorado (Cafaro 2000).

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The IBA designation is based on the area providing essential wetland habitat and resources for resident and migrant species. Observers have recorded over 250 bird species in the park. A Great Blue Heron rookery supporting over 50 pair is located in the riparian area. Also documented as breeding within the Fountain Creek riparian area are Bullock's Oriole and Swainson's Hawk (Cafaro 2000). Other wildlife known in the riparian area include beaver, muskrat, and white-tailed deer. A bike trail runs along portions of Monument and Fountain Creeks and interpretive programs focusing on hands-on environmental education occur within Fountain Creek Regional Park.

## 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 06/15/2001

Designer Doyle, G.A.

## Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the reaches of Fountain and Jimmy Camp creeks considered occupied Arkansas darter habitat by the Colorado Division of Wildlife (Colorado Division of Wildlife 2001b). The PCA could be expanded to include a greater proportion of the upstream watershed to ensure maintenance of the ecological and hydrological processes necessary to support the Arkansas darter population.

Primary Area 5,221.58 Acres 2,113.11 Hectares

### SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3 S2) fish, the Arkansas darter (*Etheostoma cragini*).

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

No Data

### ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

Element State ID	State Scientific Name	State Common Name	Global Rank	State Rank	Driving Site Rank
20664	<i>Etheostoma cragini</i>	Arkansas Darter	G3G4	S2	Yes

### REFERENCES

Reference ID	Full Citation
-	No Data

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## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 06/15/2001

Version Author Doyle, G.A.

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