

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Groundhog Park

Site Code S.USCOHP\*10856

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 781 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 375226N  
State Colorado Longitude 1063510W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
37106-G5	Pine Cone Knob
37106-H5	Bowers Peak

### County

Saguache (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
13010004	Saguache

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	10,400.00 Feet	3,170.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	12,470.00 Feet	3,801.00 Meters

### Site Description

The Groundhog Park site delineates a gently undulating subalpine basin in the southwest portion of the Closed Basin. The site covers over 3,500 acres ranging from 10,400 to 12,470 feet in elevation. The basin supports numerous riparian willow (*Salix* spp.) carrs, fen wetlands, and montane grasslands. The fen wetlands along Benino and Groundhog creeks are fed by perennial discharge of cold groundwater from the surrounding uplands and support extensive stands of beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*), tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), planeleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*), and marsh marigold (*Caltha leptosepala*). Other notable wetland associates include rose crown (*Sedum rhodanthum*), elephantella (*Pedicularis groenlandica*), and hoary sedge (*Carex canescens*). The fen soils are peats with numerous hummocks overlaying gleyed sands. The montane grasslands are comprised of several species of fescue (*Festuca* spp.), Junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*), spiked trisetum (*Trisetum spicatum*), and oatgrass (*Danthonia intermedia*). This site is in a region of high precipitation and surrounding uplands support excellent stands of spruce - fir (*Picea engelmannii* - *Abies lasiocarpa*) and aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) forests. This site is very scenic and heavily used as a car camping area, with fishing and hunting in season. A major forest road skirts the western and northern margins of this site with small two track roads branching off. Livestock graze seasonally and tend to congregate in the open wetland and grassland areas.

### 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 02/14/1998  
Designer Sarr, D.A.

### Boundary Justification

This boundary is drawn to include the wetland complex that supports the elements of biodiversity found at the site. It is designed to 1) protect the wetland occurrences from direct impacts such as trampling or other surface disturbances; and 2) to include the immediate slopes which contribute surface and groundwater flow to the wetlands. The boundary was delineated after 1997 field visits by a CNHP wetland ecologist, and

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Groundhog Park  
corroboration with satellite imagery.

Site Code S.USCOHP\*10856

Primary Area 3,581.74 Acres 1,449.48 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

### Biodiversity Significance Comments

The Groundhog Park site contains the best examples of subalpine fen wetlands in the Closed Basin watershed. Specifically, the site supports good (B-ranked) stands of the globally imperiled (G2G3) planeleaf willow / tufted hairgrass (*Salix planifolia* / *Deschampsia caespitosa*) and the globally secure (G4/S4) planeleaf willow / hoary sedge (*Salix planifolia* / *Caltha leptosepala*) plant communities. These plant associations typically occur in wide, glaciated valleys adjacent to streams. They occur in swales, depressions, and on slopes where snow melt runoff saturates soils for much of the growing season. This is the largest wetland complex of its type in the Closed Basin and is in good condition.

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

<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>
24836	<i>Salix planifolia</i> / <i>Caltha leptosepala</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G4	S4	No
24965	<i>Salix monticola</i> / <i>Carex aquatilis</i> Shrubland	Montane Riparian Willow Carr	G3	S3	No
24475	<i>Dasiphora fruticosa</i> ssp. <i>floribunda</i> / <i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i> Shrubland	Montane Riparian Shrubland	G4	S3S4	No
24618	<i>Salix planifolia</i> / <i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G2G3	S2S3	Yes

## REFERENCES

Reference ID Full Citation

- No Data

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 02/14/1998

Version Author Sarr, D.A.

## Disclaimer

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Groundhog Park

Site Code S.USCOHP\*10856

These data are a product and property of Colorado State University, Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP). These data are strictly "on loan" and should be considered "works in progress". Data maintained in the Colorado Natural Heritage Program database are an integral part of ongoing research at CSU and reflect the observations of many scientists, institutions and our current state of knowledge. These data are acquired from various sources, with varying levels of accuracy, and are continually being updated and revised. Many areas have never been surveyed and the absence of data in any particular geographic area does not necessarily mean that species or ecological communities of concern are not present. These data should not be regarded as a substitute for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. Absence of evidence is NOT evidence of absence. Absence of any data does not mean that other resources of special concern do not occur, but rather CNHP files do not currently contain information to document this presence. CNHP is not responsible for whether other, non-CNHP data providers have secured landowner permission for data collected.

**These data are provided for non-commercial purposes only.** Under no circumstances are data to be distributed in any fashion to outside parties. To ensure accurate application of data, tabular and narrative components must be evaluated in conjunction with spatial components. Failure to do so constitutes a misuse of the data. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program shall have no liability or responsibility to the data users, or any other person or entity with respect to liability, loss, or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the data, including but not limited to any interruption of service, loss of business, anticipatory profits or indirect, special, or consequential damages resulting from the use of operation of the data. Data users hereby agree to hold CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado harmless from any claim, demand, cause of action, loss, damage or expense from or related to data users use of or reliance on the data, regardless of the cause or nature thereof, and even in the event that such cause is attributable to the negligence or misconduct of CNHP.

These data are provided on an as-is basis, as-available basis without warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT. Although CNHP maintains high standards of data quality control, CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado further expressly disclaim any warranty that the data are error-free or current as of the date supplied