

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Hay Gulch

Site Code S.USCOHP*27015

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2459 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>
2469	S.USCOHP*27038	Piceance

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 395918N
State Colorado Longitude 1080549W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
39108-H1	Segar Mountain
40108-A1	Buckskin Point

County

Rio Blanco (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
14050005	Upper White

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,080.00 Feet	1,853.18 Meters
Maximum Elevation	6,800.00 Feet	2,072.64 Meters

Site Description

Situated southwest of Meeker about 10.3 air miles, between State Highway 64 and County Road 13, Hay Gulch is a large draw/gulch trending northwest to southeast, about 1 mile south of the White River. The northern 2/3 of the site are within the Parachute Creek member of the Green River Formation (oil shale, marlstone and siltstone), while the lower 1/3 is predominately within the Uinta Formation, composed mostly of sandstones and siltstones. The valley floor contains deep soils from erosion, as there is an intermittent drainage which appears to flood frequently, washing out the BLM road. The sides of the gulch are steep and eroded, with intermittent white to tan shale cliffs above. There is a history of grazing and recreation, which has allowed for the invasion of many exotic plant species in the bottom of the gulch. There is also a pipeline cutting across the northern end of Hay Gulch within the site. Higher slopes above the cliffs have scattered pinon - juniper woodlands with bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*). Steep side slopes are mostly open with Barneby's thistle (*Cirsium barnebyi*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*), Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), spearleaf wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum lonchophyllum*), fringed sage (*Artemisia frigida*), and shadscale (*Atriplex confertifolia*). There are patches of dense shrubs on the slopes and their base areas, with serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*) and big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* var. *wyomingensis*). The north-facing slopes often include clumps of Gambel's oak (*Quercus gambelii*). The valley floor is dominated by big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* var. *tridentata*), rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*), Jim Hill mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*), snakeweed (*Gutierrezia sarothrae*) and cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*). The site encloses an area about 2.9 miles long and averages 1/3 mile wide.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

In the County, summers are warm or hot in most valleys but are much cooler in the mountains. Winters are cold in the mountains. Summer thunderstorms are prevalent; of the total precipitation, 55% usually falls between April and September. Average seasonal snowfall is 74.4 inches, average day time temperature is 45 degrees and average precipitation is 16.5 inches for Meeker between 1948 -2007 (Western Regional Climate Center 2008).

Land Use History

Recreation and grazing.

Cultural Features

No Data

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Hay Gulch

Site Code S.USCOHP*27015

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 12/11/2007

Designer Lyon, M.J. and J. Huggins

Boundary Justification

The site encompasses an occurrence of Piceance twinpod (*Physaria obcordata*) and the adjacent community dominated by bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*) located on the Parachute member of the Green River formation. Upland areas of the gulch are included as well, since activities upstream may have an effect on the occurrences, particularly by introduction of further non-native species.

Primary Area 1,548.83 Acres 626.79 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of Piceance Twinpod (*Physaria obcordata*), a plant that is critically imperiled globally (G1G2/S1S2) and listed as Threatened (LT). It also includes a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a bluebunch wheatgrass (*Pseudoroegneria spicata*) grassland community, considered globally imperiled (G2/S2?). A historic occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) Piceance bladderpod (*Lesquerella parviflora*) was searched for but not found in 2007.

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

A single plant of leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*) was found on the BLM road within the site and reported to BLM. Other non-native species found in the valley bottom were cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), weinerleaf (*Halogeton glomeratus*), houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*), horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*), Jim Hill mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*), and Russian thistle (*Salsola australis*).

Offsite

No Data

Information Needs

Confirm identification and extent of *Physaria obcordata* during flowering season.

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
19115	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Western Slope Grasslands	G2	S2?	Yes
17278	<i>Physaria obcordata</i>	Piceance twinpod	G1G2	S1S2	Yes
22639	<i>Thomomys bottae pervagus</i>	Botta's Pocket Gopher Subsp	G5T3	S3	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
195049	BLM, White River Field Office. 2007. Personal communication to Peggy Lyon and Denise Culver of CNHP.
195026	Culver, D., J. Huggins and P. Lyon. 2008. Final Report: Significant Biological Resources in Rio Blanco County, CO. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
195034	WRCC. 2008. Western Regional Climate Center. Division of Atmospheric Sciences, Desert Research Institute. Reno, Nevada. < http://www.wrcc.dri.edu >.

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Hay Gulch

Site Code S.USCOHP*27015

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/11/2007

Version Author Lyon, M.J. and J. Huggins

Disclaimer

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