

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Hermosa Cliffs

Site Code S.USCOHP7\*3279

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 604 Site Class PCA  
Site Alias Elbert

### 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 373329N  
State Colorado Longitude 1074948W

Quad Code Quad Name  
37107-E7 Electra Lake

County  
La Plata (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name  
14080104 Animas

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	8,600.00 Feet	2,621.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	10,532.00 Feet	3,210.00 Meters

### Site Description

The steep, east-facing Hermosa Cliffs are composed of sandstones, conglomerates and shales of the Rico and Hermosa formations. There are four Peregrine Falcon nests within the site, with activity noted at most of the nests in 2001, and registered as occupied sites (Bibles, pers. comm.) A hiking trail begins at Needles, crosses Elbert Creek and switchbacks up the east-facing slopes through a mature aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) forest to the top where it again comes close to Elbert Creek. Understory species in the aspen forest include western aster (*Aster ascendens*), Utah serviceberry (*Amelanchier utahensis*), aspen peavine (*Lathyrus leucanthus*), aspen daisy (*Erigeron speciosus*), chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), Parry's goldenrod (*Oreochrysum parryi*), fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*), Bebb willow (*Salix bebbiana*), Canby's aster (*Aster foliaceus*), Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), Wyoming paintbrush (*Castilleja linariifolia*), and little sunflower (*Helianthella quinquenervis*). A luxuriant riparian zone with Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) and Rocky Mountain maple is found along Elbert Creek. Other species here include white fir (*Abies concolor*), blue spruce (*Picea pungens*), aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos oreophilus*), Colorado columbine (*Aquilegia coerulea*), fendler meadowrue (*Thalictrum fendleri*), Scouler's willow (*Salix scouleriana*), sweet cicely (*Osmorhiza depauperata*), thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*), tall ragwort (*Senecio serra*), sprucefir fleabane (*Erigeron eximius*), heartleaf arnica (*Arnica cordifolia*), thimbleberry (*Rubus parviflorus*), baneberry (*Actaea rubra*), and elderberry (*Sambucus racemosa*).

### 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 03/22/2004  
Designer Sovell, J.R. and M.J. Lyon

### Boundary Justification

The planning boundary includes three known peregrine falcon nesting sites and the entire cliff complex where they are found, with a buffer of 1 km around each nest. Feeding areas extend far outside of the site boundaries, warranting landscape management that is compatible with the long-term viability of the site.

Primary Area 5,460.74 Acres 2,209.89 Hectares

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## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

**Biodiversity Significance Rank** B5: General Biodiversity Interest

### Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports an extant occurrence of the American Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*), a globally vulnerable subspecies (G4T3) for which breeding populations are rare in Colorado (S2B).

**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>
21725	<i>Falco peregrinus anatum</i>	American Peregrine Falcon	G4T4	S2B	Yes

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
184659	Bibles, B. 2003. Personal communication with Peggy Lyon for the La Plata County Biological Inventory.
184581	Lyon, P. 2003. Colorado Natural Heritage Program La Plata County Biological Assessment.

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

Other Heritage elements within the site: *Pseudotsuga menziesii*/Acer glabrum (lower montane forest), G4?/S1, B-ranked. *Populus tremuloides*/tall forbs (montane aspen forest), G5/S5, A-ranked.

## VERSION

**Version Date** 03/22/2004

**Version Author** Sovell, J.R. and M.J. Lyon

## Disclaimer

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