

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Horse Ranch Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*5126

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1187 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 385121N
State Colorado Longitude 1070911W

Quad Code Quad Name
38107-G2 Anthracite Range

County
Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14020004 North Fork Gunnison

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	8,500.00	Feet	2,591.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	12,000.00	Feet	3,658.00	Meters

Site Description

Anthracite Creek cuts through sedimentary bedrock and unconsolidated glacial drift within this site forming a broad floodplain dotted with numerous beaver ponds. Adjacent slopes are mostly aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) with spruce-fir scattered within. Recreation, mainly fishing and equestrian are popular in this area, although much of the riparian area is much too dense for such activities. County Road 12 runs along the northern side of the creek. Cattle graze margins of wetland but not interior as vegetation density precludes their entry. The hydrology of the site appears intact as there are no upstream hydrological alterations and streambanks are in good condition. Alder (*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*), Drummond willow (*Salix drummondiana*), and mountain willow (*S. monticola*) dominate the shrub layer in the riparian area. Much of the alder is young and the willows are dense. There is a lush and diverse herbaceous understory consisting of species such as aster (*Aster foliaceus*), common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), nodding ragwort (*Senecio bigelovii*), monk's hood (*Aconitum columbianum*), Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), English plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), willowherb (*Epilobium latifolium*), cow parsnip (*Heracleum sphondylium* var. *montanum*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), large-leaved avens (*Geum macrophyllum*), Canada goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), vetch (*Vicia americana*), Indian paintbrush (*Castilleja sulphurea*), tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*), small-winged sedge (*C. microptera*), tufted sedge (*C. lenticularis*), bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), Rocky Mountain bluegrass (*Poa agassizensis*), Kentucky bluegrass (*P. pratensis*), swamp bluegrass (*P. palustris*), fowl mannagrass (*Glyceria striata*), alpine timothy (*Phleum commutatum*), timothy (*P. pratense*), rush (*Juncus tracyi*), and blue wild rye (*Elymus glaucus*). The abundance of bluejoint reedgrass was much lower than previously described. Water starwort (*Callitriche* sp.), yellowcress (*Rorippa sinuata*), cattail (*Typha latifolia*), northern mannagrass (*Glyceria borealis*), and common spikerush (*Eleocharis palustris*) are common in the wettest PCAs. The point bars are covered with white-Dutch clover (*Trifolium repens*), water foxtail (*Alopecurus aequalis*), wild chamomile (*Matricaria perforata*), pearly everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*), dock (*Rumex triangulivalvis*), and young willow and alder saplings. White-Dutch clover was especially abundant on the point bars while stinging nettle was abundant throughout the floodplain.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Horse Ranch Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*5126

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial

Mapped Date 08/08/1996

Designer Grunau, T.L.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries incorporate an area that will allow natural hydrological processes such as seasonal flooding, sediment deposition, and new channel formation to maintain viable populations of the elements along Anthracite Creek. The boundaries also provide a small buffer from nearby trails and roads where surface runoff may contribute excess nutrients and sediment. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the elements are not fully contained by the site boundaries. Given that the elements are dependent on natural hydrological processes associated with Anthracite Creek and its tributaries, upstream activities such as water diversions, impoundments, and improper livestock grazing are detrimental to the hydrology of the riparian area. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area 656.20 Acres

265.56 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

High biodiversity significance. This site supports a good (B-ranked) example of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) thinlineaf alder/Drummond willow (*Alnus incana*/*Salix drummondiana*) shrubland. This plant association has only been documented from Colorado and is small but widespread. It is highly threatened by improper livestock grazing and stream impoundments. This association is generally found along steep-gradient streams with stable, shaded stream banks.

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

Hydrological processes originating outside the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, and timing, must be managed to maintain site viability.

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>
24743	<i>Alnus incana</i> - <i>Salix drummondiana</i> Shrubland	Montane Riparian Shrubland	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
173839	Rocchio J., G Doyle, and R. Rondeau. 2003. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Gunnison County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
173182	Rocchio, J. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey of Critical Wetlands in Gunnison County.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Horse Ranch Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*5126

VERSION

Version Date 12/18/2002

Version Author Rocchio, F.J.

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