

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Huerfano River at Cedarwood

Site Code S.USCOHP\*22031

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 22 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 375443N  
State Colorado Longitude 1043600W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
37104-H5	Cedarwood
37104-H6	Graneros Flats

## County

Pueblo (CO)  
Huerfano (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
11020006	Huerfano

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	5,100.00	<b>Feet</b>	1,554.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	5,470.00	<b>Feet</b>	1,667.00	<b>Meters</b>

## Site Description

The Huerfano River at Cedarwood site encompasses about six miles of the Huerfano River and the surrounding canyon walls near the Huerfano/Pueblo County line. In this reach, the Huerfano is an ephemeral plains stream winding through a canyon cut through about 600 feet of desert varnished Dakota Sandstone. The sandy/gravelly stream channel varies in width from about 15 to 30 feet and the canyon bottom up to 600 feet. Plains cottonwood and coyote willow (*Populus deltoides* - (*Salix amygdaloides*) / *Salix exigua*) grow in scattered bands along the stream with a rather continuous band of threesquare bulrush (*Scirpus pungens*) immediately adjacent to the channel. The plains cottonwood rarely forms dense cover and a variety of age classes are represented. In some areas, there is a shrubby band of American licorice (*Glycyrrhiza lepidota*) on the banks. Tamarisk (*Tamarix ramosissima*) and Russian olive (*Elaeagnus angustifolia*), invasive non-native species, are present within the channel but only in small amounts and rarely form dense cover. Side canyons can contain interesting spring-fed pools, some over five feet deep with thick aquatic plants and cattails (*Typha* sp.) on the banks. In September, the streambed was dry in most sections with some sections of moist sand and others with flowing water emerging and resubmerging further downstream. Flowing water sections and pools contained many small fishes, garter snakes (*Thamnophis radix*), and aquatic insects including mayfly nymphs, dragonfly nymphs, water striders, and toad bugs. Some of the stream banks are heavily grazed and have thick cover of rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*). In other places, shrubs within the riparian zone include skunkbrush (*Rhus trilobata*), golden currant (*Ribes aureum*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos* sp.), wild grape (*Vitis riparia*), chokecherry (*Padus virginiana*), and mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*). Further downstream, the cover of Russian olive and tamarisk increase as well as other non-native plant species. The canyon walls are vegetated with one-seeded juniper (*Juniperus monosperma*), pinyon pine (*Pinus edulis*), and mountain mahogany, with ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) on the north-facing slope. The mesas atop the canyon walls are a mixture of shortgrass prairie and juniper woodlands. The site contains a portion of the Hatchett Ranch, a large ranch that has recently been subdivided into 35-acre ranchettes. Upstream from the site, near Interstate 25, the Huerfano River is used for irrigated agriculture and thick stands of Russian olive and tamarisk occur with the cottonwood. Downstream from the site, the cover of Russian olive and tamarisk increase. There are no major dams on the stream.

## Key Environmental Factors

No Data

## Climate Description

No Data

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Huerfano River at Cedarwood

Site Code S.USCOHP\*22031

## 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 community occurrence and a portion of the river and riparian area upstream and downstream from the occurrence. The boundary could be extended farther downstream; however, the incidence of non-native invasive plants (e.g., tamarisk and Russian olive) increase downstream. The site could be expanded to include a greater proportion of the upstream watershed to ensure maintenance of the ecological and hydrological processes including periodic flooding.

Primary Area 1,849.92 Acres 748.64 Hectares

### SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site contains a good (B-ranked) example of a state rare (G3G4/S3) plains cottonwood riparian woodland, plains cottonwood with peachleaf willow and coyote willow (*Populus deltoides* - (*Salix amygdaloides*) / *Salix exigua*).

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>
24670	<i>Populus deltoides</i> - ( <i>Salix amygdaloides</i> ) / <i>Salix</i> ( <i>exigua</i> , <i>interior</i> ) Woodland	Plains Cottonwood Riparian Woodland	G3G4	S3	Yes

### REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
169085	Doyle, G.A. 2000. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey of Wetland and Riparian Areas in Pueblo and El Paso Counties.
162855	Doyle, G.A., J. Gionfriddo, D. Anderson, and D. Culver. 2000. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in El Paso and Pueblo Counties, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

### ADDITIONAL TOPICS

## Additional Topics

No Data

### VERSION

Version Date 09/15/2003

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Huerfano River at Cedarwood

Site Code S.USCOHP\*22031

Version Author Spackman, S.C.

## 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