

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Ice Lake Basin

Site Code S.USCOHP*9474

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 126 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 374839N
State Colorado Longitude 1074832W

Quad Code Quad Name

37107-G7 Ophir

County

San Juan (CO)
San Miguel (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14080104 Animas
14030003 San Miguel

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	11,080.00	Feet	3,377.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	13,767.00	Feet	4,196.00	Meters

Site Description

This site is one of the most popular hiking destinations in San Juan County. It includes two large basins (Upper and Lower) rimmed by high peaks on the north and west. The highest of these is Vermillion Peak (13,884 ft.), followed by U.S. Grant Peak (13,767 ft.), Fuller Peak (13,761 ft.), and Pilot Knob (13,738 ft.). On the northeast, a high ridge separates this basin from Clear Lake. Several small lakes are found within the site, of which Ice Lake is the largest. The Lower Ice Lake Basin supports a large wetland dominated by *Veratrum tenuipetalum*, with many typical wetland species, including *Mertensia ciliata*, *Delphinium barbeyi*, *Aconitum columbianum*, *Caltha leptosepala*, *Ligusticum porteri*, *Senecio triangularis*, *Cardamine cordifolia*, *Angelica grayi*, *Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Castilleja sulphurea*, *Cirsium scariosum* *Salix planifolia*, and *Salix brachycarpa*. Some small Engelmann spruces surround the picturesque lake, and tall rocky cliffs stand at the head of the basin. On the south-facing slope above the lower basin, *Besseya ritteriana* is abundant, with thousands of plants extending from the wetland to the base of the cliffs. From here a fairly steep trail leads to the upper basin, with several small lakes. Vegetation of the Upper Basin is a mosaic of several distinct plant communities. Streamside vegetation is represented by the alpine wetland community dominated by bitter cress and chiming bells. Low lying flatter areas with poor drainage support wet meadows dominated by marsh marigold. And somewhat drier areas are dominated by mud sedge. Drier tundra is dominated by *Geum rossii* or *Salix reticulata*. Several areas, including Fuller Lake, were surveyed for the Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly, which feeds on *Salix reticulata*, but were not found to be suitable habitat. To the west of Ice Lake, by the stream that feeds the lake, is a rock outcrop that supports a large population of *Draba graminea*. This shaded area retains snow late in the year, providing the moisture needed by these plants. Plants can be found in gravelly areas at the foot of the outcrop, and in crevices of the rock. The population continues to the north where the Drabas grow in gravelly soil at the base of a large talus slope, along with *Claytonia megarhiza*. Associated species in the Draba's habitat include *Poa alpina*, *Draba crassifolia*, *Micranthes oregana*, *Carex ebenea*, *Erigeron melanocephalus*, *Ranunculus macauleyi*, *Podistera eastwoodiae*, and *Saxifraga cernua*. Other common species in the area are *Geum rossii*, *Salix reticulata*, *Castilleja sulphurea*, *Hirculus platysepalus*, *Chondrosium prostratum*, and *Sedum rhodanthum*.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Ice Lake Basin

Site Code S.USCOHP*9474

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 12/13/2002

Designer Lyon, M.J.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the slopes above the basin to the top of the ridges and surrounding peaks, which provide the snow required for the survival of all of these species and communities. It is drawn to include both the upper and lower basins.

Primary Area 2,119.81 Acres 857.86 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The Ice Lake Basin site supports an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of San Juan whitlow-grass (*Draba graminea*), a globally imperiled (G2/S2) plant and an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of *Eriophorum altacium* var. *neogaeum*, a vulnerable subspecies (T3T4/S3) in Colorado. In addition, there are excellent (A-ranked) occurrences of three wetland plant communities.

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 Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
<u>State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>			
16989	<i>Caltha leptosepala</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Wet Meadows	G4	S4	No
19963	<i>Carex vernacula</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Alpine Wetlands	GU	S1	No
24679	<i>Cardamine cordifolia</i> - <i>Mertensia ciliata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Alpine Wetlands	G4	S4	No
21874	<i>Eriophorum altaicum</i> var. <i>neogaeum</i>	Altai cottongrass	G4?T3T4	S3	No
17247	<i>Draba graminea</i>	San Juan whitlow-grass	G2	S2	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
-	No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/13/2002

Version Author Lyon, M.J.

Disclaimer

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Ice Lake Basin

Site Code S.USCOHP*9474

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