

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Light Hill

Site Code S.USCOHP*10090

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1619 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 392002N
State Colorado Longitude 1070119W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
39107-C1	Basalt
39106-C8	Woody Creek

County

Pitkin (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
14010004	Roaring Fork

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	-	Feet	-	Meters
Maximum Elevation	-	Feet	-	Meters

Site Description

Light Hill rises from 6,800 to 8,500 feet over approximately 0.5 miles from the Roaring Fork River near Old Snowmass. The ridgetop consists of rolling hills of clay soils covered with sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), Gambel's oak (*Quercus gambelii*), and juniper (*Juniperus osteosperma*) shrublands and is bisected by a 2-track road. The globally vulnerable Harrington's beardtongue (*Penstemon harringtonii*) occurs within the sagebrush and on the edge of the Gambel's oak and juniper shrublands. Exotic plant species such as cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) undermine the overall quality of the site, although as of yet they are not pervasive. East Sopris Creek runs on the south side of Light Hill. The creek is dominated by a narrowleaf cottonwood - blue spruce / alder (*Populus angustifolia* - *Picea pungens* / *Alnus incana*) riparian forest. In addition, Light Hill supports a large herd of wintering elk and provides critical winter habitat for this herd. This site is about 5,000 total acres in size.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

The BLM is not using the land at this time.

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 06/11/1997
Designer Fayette, K.K.

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the occurrences and the surrounding high quality habitat. This surrounding habitat is intended to provide protection from direct disturbances, such as trampling and fragmentation. Indirect disturbances occurring outside the boundary, such as unnatural erosion caused from upslope activities or the establishment of exotic species, should be limited.

Primary Area 6,482.80 Acres 2,623.51 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

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Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site includes an excellent occurrence of a globally rare plant community, a good occurrence of a state rare plant community, a fair occurrence of the globally vulnerable Harrington's beardtongue, and a good occurrence of the state rare sage sparrow. Harrington's beardtongue (*Penstemon harringtonii*) is a globally vulnerable plant species which is restricted to Colorado and is found almost exclusively in sagebrush habitat. This species is only known from approximately 37 locations, all of which are centered around Edwards in Eagle County. In general, Harrington's beardtongue and its habitat are threatened from residential and recreational development. These threats, in addition to its restricted range, create an urgency for protection. Harrington's beardtongue populations are known to fluctuate in population numbers from year to year. Therefore, this specific location may be a higher priority than the current information reflects. The sage sparrow (*Amphispiza belli*) is a state-rare bird species that occurs along this ridgetop in sagebrush habitat. Williams Hill, Light Hill, and The Crown easily stand out as three of the best large unfragmented areas of plant communities still intact in the lower Roaring Fork Watershed.

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

Cheatgrass, houndstongue.

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>
24702	<i>Quercus gambelii</i> / <i>Amelanchier utahensis</i> Shrubland	Mixed Mountain Shrubland	G3G5	SU	No
24685	<i>Quercus gambelii</i> - <i>Cercocarpus montanus</i> / (<i>Carex geyeri</i>) Shrubland	Mixed Mountain Shrublands	G3	S3	No
21213	<i>Amphispiza belli</i>	Sage Sparrow	G5	S3B	No
19662	<i>Penstemon harringtonii</i>	Harrington beardtongue	G3	S3	No
24685	<i>Quercus gambelii</i> - <i>Cercocarpus montanus</i> / (<i>Carex geyeri</i>) Shrubland	Mixed Mountain Shrublands	G3	S3	No
24685	<i>Quercus gambelii</i> - <i>Cercocarpus montanus</i> / (<i>Carex geyeri</i>) Shrubland	Mixed Mountain Shrublands	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

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

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	05/06/1999
Version Author	Spackman, S.C.

Disclaimer

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