

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Los Pinos at Rattlesnake Hill

Site Code S.USCOHP*24810

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2122 Site Class PCA
Site Alias The Pine River

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

NCA Site ID NCA Site Code NCA Site Name
- No Data

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 370603N
State Colorado Longitude 1073723W

Quad Code Quad Name

37107-A5 Tiffany
37107-A6 Ignacio

County

La Plata (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14080101 Upper San Juan

SITE DESCRIPTION

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

Site Description

The broad floodplain has an overstory of narrowleaf cottonwood and plains cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*, *Populus deltoides* ssp. *wislizenii*) while the understory is of mixed shrubs and includes cottonwood saplings. Common shrub species include sand bar willow (*Salix exigua*), golden current (*Ribes aureum*), thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*), silver buffalo berry (*Shepherdia argentea*), bluestem willow (*Salix irrorata*), strapleaf willow (*Salix ligulifolia*), skunkbush sumac (*Rhus trilobata*), river hawthorn (*Crataegus rivularis*) and river birch (*Betula occidentalis*). In 1998, CNHP riparian ecologists found fringes of slender spikerush (*Eleocharis acicularis*) in this diverse area, though the species was not located in 2003. The area also has cacti, on raised cobbled soil, while dense riparian shrub thickets are adjacent. Canada thistle and musk thistle are scattered throughout the riparian area and become dense in adjacent hay meadows.

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 12/01/2003

Designer March, M.A. and D.R. Culver

Boundary Justification

The boundaries incorporate an area that will allow for as much of the natural hydrological processes from surrounding drainages as possible. Seasonal flooding and sediment deposition will help maintain a viable population of the elements along Los Pinos River. The boundaries also provide a small buffer from nearby trails, roads and hay fields where surface runoff may contribute excess nutrients, sediment and weed invasion. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the element are not fully contained by the site boundaries.

Primary Area 315.14 Acres 127.53 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

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Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) narrowleaf cottonwood / strapleaf willow - silver buffaloberry natural plant community in fair condition (C-ranked) and the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) narrowleaf cottonwood / thinleaf alder (*Populus angustifolia* / *Alnus incana*) plant association in good condition (B-ranked).

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

Meadows adjacent to riparian area have a weedy composition including dense patches of knapweed. Russian olive is known to occur in scattered to dense patches, both upstream and downstream of the site though none were noted within the site during the 2003 field season. Canada thistle is scattered throughout.

Offsite

Altered hydrology. Dam, diversions, waste water treatment plant immediately upstream.

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>
24496	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Salix ligulifolia</i> - <i>Shepherdia argentea</i> Woodland	Narrowleaf Cottonwood Riparian Forests	G3	S3	No
24541	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forest	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
184533	March, M. and D. Culver. 2003. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey for La Plata County Wetlands.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	12/01/2003
Version Author	March, M.A. and D.R. Culver

Disclaimer

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