

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Lovers Leap

Site Code S.USCOHP*649

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1170 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 405741N
State Colorado Longitude 1052237W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
40105-H3	Virginia Dale
40105-H4	Cherokee Park

County

Larimer (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
10190007	Cache La Poudre

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,800.00 Feet	2,072.64 Meters
Maximum Elevation	7,400.00 Feet	2,255.52 Meters

Site Description

This site is defined by large granitic outcrops surrounded by a grassland and shrubland mosaic. The granite outcrops and associated granitic soils support Larimer aletes (*Aletes humilis*) and Rocky Mountain cinquefoil (*Potentilla rupincola*). Fish and Dale creeks run through the site. The dominant vegetation consists of ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), waxflower (*Jamesia americana*), mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus montanus*), wax currant (*Ribes cereum*), cinquefoil (*Potentilla* spp.), buckwheat (*Eriogonum* sp.), prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia* sp.), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*) and other grasses, with about 40% cover composed of bare rock and gravel. Lichens are prevalent on the granite and *Selaginella* is a common ground cover. The Dale Creek riparian area is degraded but recoverable. It is dominated by alder (*Alnus incana*), river birch (*Betula occidentalis*), coyote willow (*Salix exigua*), mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), golden currant (*Ribes aureum*), bluebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*), and mixed graminoids. The site includes various unpaved roads and incorporates a section of Highway 287.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

The Overland Trail runs through the site.

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 03/01/2005

Designer Doyle, G.A.

Boundary Justification

The site boundary encompasses the granite outcrops that are known to support occurrences of two rare plant species, intervening potential habitat, as well as a portion of the surrounding high quality plant communities as a buffer to protect against direct disturbance. Unsurveyed potential habitat occurs outside of the site boundary; future surveys will likely lead to revisions of the boundary.

Primary Area	2,073.22 Acres	839.01 Hectares
--------------	----------------	-----------------

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Lovers Leap

Site Code S.USCOHP*649

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains excellent and fair (A and C-ranked) occurrences of globally imperiled (G2/S2) Rocky Mountain cinquefoil (*Potentilla rupincola*) and an extant (E-ranked) occurrence of globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) Larimer aletes (*Aletes humilis*). Rocky Mountain cinquefoil and Larimer aletes are Colorado endemics and are restricted to outcrops of Silver Plume granite.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

Historic site for the Overland Trail Stage Station. The Virginia Dale area is one of the most scenic areas in the county.

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

The riparian area around Dale Creek has been grazed heavily by horses and cattle.

Natural Hazard Comments

Rattlesnakes are probably present. Old barbed wire fences.

Exotics Comments

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) is very dense in areas, houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officianale*) and great mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*) occur by Dale Creek. Horses, cows and humans may be the source for the distribution of these exotics.

Offsite

No Data

Information Needs

Future plans for uses of this land.

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>
17408	<i>Aletes humilis</i>	Larimer aletes	G2G3	S2S3	No
19580	<i>Potentilla rupincola</i>	Rocky Mountain cinquefoil	G2	S2	Yes
19580	<i>Potentilla rupincola</i>	Rocky Mountain cinquefoil	G2	S2	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
192692	Doyle, G.A., S.L. Neid and R.J. Rondeau. 2005. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources, Larimer County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
166568	Kettler, S., J. Sanderson, S. Spackman, K. Fayette, C. Pague, D. Clark, and A. Hicks. 1996. Final Report: Significant plant, animal, and wetland resources of Larimer County and their conservation. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

Original site design by Spackman, S.C. and K.K. Fayette, 1996-10-21.

VERSION

Version Date	03/01/2005
Version Author	Doyle, G.A.

Disclaimer

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Lovers Leap

Site Code S.USCOHP*649

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