

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Lower Blacktail Creek at Radium

Site Code S.USCOHP*26011

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2329 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 395825N
State Colorado Longitude 1063300W

Quad Code Quad Name

39106-H5 Radium

County

Grand (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14010001 Colorado headwaters

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,930.00 Feet	2,112.26 Meters
Maximum Elevation	7,480.00 Feet	2,279.90 Meters

Site Description

The plant community inhabits a narrow, A type stream along Lower Blacktail Creek. Slope is moderate and the drainage is oriented towards southern exposures in most places. General geology consists of metamorphic rocks of the Precambrian Age, specifically granitic rocks of 1,700 MYA. Blacktail Creek is a free-flowing second order tributary in the upper Colorado River basin. Canopy is dominated by narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) with some scattered Colorado blue spruce (*Picea pungens*). Subcanopy consists of regeneration of all canopy species and a tall shrub layer dominated by thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*) and red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*). The herbaceous layer is dominated by mesic forb species along the creek and mesic graminoids along drying zones. Uplands are dominated by a mosaic of open big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) shrublands and mixed Rocky Mountain juniper (*Juniperus scopulorum*) - pinon pine (*Pinus edulis*) - Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) woodlands. The creek bottom consists of large boulders with alluvial, sandy, cobble bottom and some silt deposits. Adjacent floodplain is comprised of sandy loam over cobble. There is a trail constructed along the creek for the first mile up from the road which crosses the creek by a series of bridges. Some weeds are present along the trail in uplands areas, but do not inhabit the creek bottom except for occasional patches of Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*). The occurrence seems stable and probably in an upward trend due to lack of use in recent years.

Key Environmental Factors

Key environmental factors affecting the drainage include seasonal flooding, confined channel, and light exposure due to narrow canyon walls.

Climate Description

Area likely follows climate patterns typical for Colorado being generally xeric, with wet spring seasons and late summer "monsoons".

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 11/20/2005

Designer Jones, J.R.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries are drawn to encompass about 1.75 miles of lower Blacktail Creek. Surrounding uplands and tributaries are included and are important to hydrologic functions of the area such as sediment deposition, and seasonal flooding. Boundary does not include all areas that may negatively impact hydrologic processes

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if activities such as improper grazing, development, or water diversions are introduced.

Primary Area 129.88 Acres

52.56 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This area is drawn for a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S2) riparian plant community, narrowleaf cottonwood / Douglas-fir (*Populus angustifolia* / *Pseudotsuga menziesii*) woodland.

Other Values Rank V2 - High values

Other Values Comments

This is an accessible area of open space and a protected wildlife viewing area. It also provides a water source and wildlife habitat in an otherwise dry environment.

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

The dominant use of the area is for hunting and recreation.

Natural Hazard Comments

Flooding during spring run-off may become hazardous due to the narrow shape and steep side slopes of the valley along lower Blacktail Creek.

Exotics Comments

The majority of exotics found in the drainage occur along upper reaches of the trail and in disturbed areas. Exotics observed include Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), smooth brome (*Bromus tectorum*), hound's tongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*), and Canada thistle (*Breca arvensis*).

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>
24692	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forest	G3	S2	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
160903	Carsey, K., D. Cooper, K. Decker, D. Culver, and G. Kittel. 2003. Statewide wetlands classification and characterization: Wetland plant associations of Colorado. Prepared for Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Denver, CO by Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
193632	Culver, D.R. and Jones, J.R. 2006. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Grand County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
160140	Dorn, R. D. 1997. Rocky Mountain Region Willow Identification Field Guide. Renewable Resources R2-RR-97-01. Denver, CO: USDA, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region. 107p.
192747	Tweto, O. 1979. Geologic Map of Colorado, 1:500,000. United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior, and Geologic Survey of Colorado, Denver, CO.
172684	Weber, W.A. and R.C. Wittmann. 2001. Colorado Flora: Western Slope, Third Edition. University Press of Colorado, Niwot, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 11/20/2005

Version Author Jones, J.R.

Disclaimer

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