

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Maroon Creek/Castle Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*10312

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1472 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 391143N
State Colorado Longitude 1065100W
Quad Code Quad Name
39106-B7 Aspen
County

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

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	7,600.00 Feet	2,316.48 Meters
Maximum Elevation	8,000.00 Feet	2,438.40 Meters

Site Description

The headwaters of Castle and Maroon creeks begin at Castle Peak (14,265 feet) and the Maroon Peaks (14,014 feet and 14,156 feet) respectively. Both creeks flow northward toward Aspen and drain into the Roaring Fork River on the northeast edge of town. This site incorporates 1,137 acres including narrow riparian zones on portions of Castle and Maroon creeks and the Roaring Fork River. These riparian areas support four significant plant communities dominated by blue willow (*Salix drummondiana*), narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*) or blue spruce (*Picea pungens*). The highest elevations occur at approximately 8,000 feet in two parallel narrow canyons with rocky cliffs and red sandstone derived soils. Lower elevations open into the Roaring Fork Watershed at 7,600 feet. This lower portion is degraded and surrounded by residential development associated with the town of Aspen, a golf course, and the Aspen Highlands Ski Area. Roads associated with the above activities are plentiful and parallel the riparian areas.

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 05/03/1999

Designer Spackman, S.C.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the riparian communities and a very narrow buffer along the creeks to protect from direct disturbances. A much larger area, including the full watershed of both creeks needs to be considered when a plan is developed for the long-term viability of the communities of concern. Narrowleaf cottonwoods require periodic, above average, floods usually in June for seed germination and survival. Therefore, it is important to maintain a natural flooding regime.

Primary Area 1,138.17 Acres 460.60 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

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This site includes five occurrences of three globally vulnerable (G3) plant communities with degraded conditions at lower elevations and higher quality conditions at higher elevations. The most significant occurrence is a lower montane willow carr (*Salix drummondiana* / *Calamagrostis canadensis*) in excellent condition (A-ranked). This is the only occurrence of this particular willow association documented in the Roaring Fork Watershed.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

No Data

LAND MANAGMENT 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>
24473	<i>Salix drummondiana</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Lower Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	Yes
24823	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Picea pungens</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	Yes
24823	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Picea pungens</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	Yes
24823	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Picea pungens</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	No
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>
-	No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	05/03/1999
Version Author	Spackman, S.C.

Disclaimer

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