

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Meadow Springs Ranch

Site Code S.USCOHP1*2083

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 451 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 405349N
State Colorado Longitude 1045602W

Quad Code Quad Name

40104-H8 Carr West

County

Weld (CO)

Larimer (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

10190008 Lone Tree-Owl

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	5,750.00 Feet	1,752.60 Meters
Maximum Elevation	5,820.00 Feet	1,773.94 Meters

Site Description

Wet meadows within a matrix of shortgrass prairie support rare wetland plants including Colorado butterfly weed (*Gaura neomexicana* ssp. *coloradensis*), a federally listed Threatened species, and gay-feather (*Liatris ligulistylis*), a state rare plant. The wetlands occur along Spring Creek just east of Interstate 25 and appear to be ground water and ditch-fed. Flow has been channeled through parts of the wetland. The wetland has been used for cattle grazing since the 1860's and is hummocked in areas. A few plant species associated with the butterfly weed and gay-feather are three-square (*Schoenoplectus pungens*), rushes (*Juncus balticus* and *Juncus* sp.), prairie cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*), Nebraska sedge (*Carex nebrascensis*), spikerush (*Eleocharis* sp.), alkali muhly (*Muhlenbergia asperifolia*), blue-eyed grass (*Sisyrinchium montanum*), redwood plantain (*Plantago eriopoda*), cinquefoil (*Potentilla plattensis*), fleabane (*Erigeron lonchophyllus*), and the non-native grasses Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*) and fowl bluegrass (*Poa palustris*). The presence of Colorado butterfly weed was first reported at this location by Ellen Wheeling in 1994. The following is a summary of the number of reproductive individuals that have been reported from this population: 1994 (500 individuals), 1995 (964), 1996 (620), 1998 (1000), 1999 (265), 2004 (55). There have been a number of low rainfall years since 1999, a factor that has probably contributed to the lower number of plants in recent years (Hazlett 2004). The presence of reproductive individuals after a series of drought years is encouraging for the survival of the species at this site. Another consideration in the variation in survey results is the presence of cattle grazing on the wetland. Butterfly weed is palatable to cattle and other wildlife and individual plants show signs of grazing.

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 03/02/2005

Designer Doyle, G.A.

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the wetland and known rare plant occurrences. The recharge area for the

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wetland is not included within the site boundary.

Primary Area 471.95 Acres 190.99 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of Colorado butterfly weed (*Gaura neomexicana* ssp. *coloradensis*), a globally imperiled subspecies (G3T2/S1) that is federally listed as a threatened species. The entire range for this subspecies includes four counties within three states (Wyoming, Nebraska, and Colorado). Also contains a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of gay-feather (*Liatris ligulistylis*), a state rare (G5?/S1S2) plant.

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

No Data

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>
20240	<i>Oenothera coloradensis</i> ssp. <i>coloradensis</i>	Colorado butterfly plant	G3T2	S1	Yes
20054	<i>Liatris ligulistylis</i>	gay-feather	G5?	S1S2	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.
192770	Hazlett, D. 2004. Personal communication with Colorado Natural Heritage Program staff.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

Original site design by Pague, C.A. 1994-09-12.

VERSION

Version Date 03/02/2005

Version Author Doyle, G.A.

Disclaimer

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