

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Moffat Playa

Site Code S.USCOHP*10839

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 777 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>
2043	S.USCOHP*16597	San Luis Valley Playa Lake

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 380428N
State Colorado Longitude 1055913W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
38105-A8	Moffat North
38106-A1	Hickey Bridge

County

Saguache (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
13010004	Saguache

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	7,600.00 Feet	2,316.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	7,635.00 Feet	2,327.00 Meters

Site Description

The Moffat Playa site is a small part of a large saline playa lake complex northwest of Moffat. It is characterized by alternating dry shrublands and wetlands. The more saline shrublands are dominated by greasewood (*Sarcobatus vermiculatus*) and the less saline by rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*). The understories of both of these shrubland types are similar and vary with any of the following dominants: Alkali sacaton grass (*Sporobolus airoides*), western wheat grass (*Pascopyrum smithii*), salt meadow grass (*Distichlis spicata*), Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*), or barren ground. The low lands or small basins are dominated with ubiquitous stands of spike rush (*Eleocharis palustris*), Baltic rush, western wheat grass, salt meadow grass, and alkali sacaton grass. We did not find the slender spiderflower at this site, but this annual species is known to vary in abundance with yearly moisture condition. We believe the numerous wetlands that are visible on the color infrared aerial photos indicate potential habitat for this globally rare plant. Current land practices include cattle grazing, road building, and subdividing. The site is approximately 1,400 acres and ranges in elevation from 7,600-7,635 feet (2,315-2,330 meters).

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 02/15/1998
Designer Rondeau, R.J.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries drawn encompass the elements and a small part of the surrounding playa complex. Further inventories may find these boundaries to be too small and that a better ecological boundary incorporates the entire playa/shrubland complex. We drew the boundaries using 1988 NAPP 1:40,000 color infrared aerial photos.

Primary Area 1,428.60 Acres 578.13 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

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Biodiversity Significance Comments

The Moffat Playas support small occurrences of two wetland plant communities: a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3Q/S3) Great plains salt meadow (*Sporobolus airoides*) and a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of the state vulnerable (G4/S3) *Carex simulata* wet meadow. Larger and less fragmented occurrences of both of these communities are known from other sites in the Closed Basin.

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>
19429	<i>Sporobolus airoides</i> Southern Plains Herbaceous Vegetation	Great Plains Salt Meadows	G3Q	S3	Yes
16887	<i>Carex simulata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Wet Meadow	G4	S3	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
-	No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	02/15/1998
Version Author	Rondeau, R.J.

Disclaimer

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