

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Monarch Pass

Site Code S.USCOHP*27575

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2568 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 382959N
State Colorado Longitude 1061959W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
38106-D3	Pahlone Peak
38106-E3	Garfield

County

Chaffee (CO)
Gunnison (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
14020003	Tomichi
11020001	Arkansas Headwaters

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	11,000.00	Feet	3,352.80	Meters
Maximum Elevation	11,900.00	Feet	3,627.12	Meters

Site Description

Monarch Pass is located on the Continental Divide at the southern end of the Sawatch Range along the border between Gunnison and Chaffee counties. The pass carries U.S. Highway 50 over the Sawatch Range, providing a route between Tomichi Creek in the upper basin of the Gunnison River on the west and the South Arkansas River, a tributary of the Arkansas River on the east. This site is used heavily for recreation activities such as downhill and backcountry skiing, hiking, and mountain biking. The vegetation is dominated by Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and grouse whortleberry (*Vaccinium* sp.) with granitic outcrops and scree slopes.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

The site receives an average of 300 days of sunshine each year. A typical summer day is sunny, in the high 60's to low 70's with evening temperatures in the high 30's and low 40's. Annual rainfall is 10.15" and annual snowfall is 30.4" with most snow occurring from the end of October through April.

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

Monarch Pass construction, part of the Rainbow Highway project, was started in July 1919. During this highway work, a campground complete with ovens and shelter houses was built at Monarch Park in 1920, and the new Monarch Pass was opened for auto travel in September 1921 with a celebration and dedication at Monarch Park. This 22-mile road was reported to cost about \$10,000 per mile. The 1919 pathway taken over the Divide is today known as Old Monarch Pass, a pleasant gravel road in the summer and a favorite cross-country ski route in the winter (Bright 2004).

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 01/20/2009
Designer Culver, D.R.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the occurrences and a buffer against direct disturbance. The natural processes are not completely contained within the boundary, and off-site activities within the larger area have

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the potential to impact the rare plant populations.

Primary Area 1,291.91 Acres 522.82 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) reflected moonwort (*Botrychium echo*), an extant occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) Colorado Divide whitlow-grass (*Draba streptobrachia*) and an extant occurrence of the state imperiled (G5/S2) least moonwort (*Botrychium simplex*).

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>
22022	<i>Botrychium simplex</i>	least moonwort	G5	S2	No
21234	<i>Draba streptobrachia</i>	Colorado Divide whitlow-grass	G3	S3	No
20475	<i>Botrychium echo</i>	reflected moonwort	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
198294	Bright, W. 2004. Colorado Place Names. Johnson Books, Boulder, CO.
198290	Culver, D.R., D. Malone, S.L. Neid, and J. Handwerk. 2009. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Chaffee County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 01/20/2009
Version Author Culver, D.R.

Disclaimer

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