

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Mounts Harvard and Columbia

Site Code S.USCOHP\*8410

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1413 Site Class PCA  
Site Alias Mount Harvard

### 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 385446N  
State Colorado Longitude 1061836W

Quad Code Quad Name  
38106-H3 Mount Harvard

County  
Chaffee (CO)  
Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name  
14020001 East-Taylor  
11020001 Arkansas Headwaters

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	12,500.00	<b>Feet</b>	3,810.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	14,420.00	<b>Feet</b>	4,395.22	<b>Meters</b>

### Site Description

The Mounts Harvard and Columbia site is located in the Sawatch Range (Collegiate Peaks) northwest of Buena Vista. Pine Creek separates Mount Harvard from Mount Oxford. Mount Harvard at 14,420 ft., is the highest peak in Chaffee County and the third highest in Colorado. It was named in 1864 by a Harvard College geologist. Mount Columbia at 14,073 ft., was named in 1919 by Roger Toll of the Colorado Mountain Club when he found an unnamed peak and named it after his alma mater (Bright 2004). The site consists of typical alpine vegetation that has adapted to intense solar radiation, extreme cold, and dry, desiccating winds. The vegetation is dominated by Ross' avens (*Geum rossii*), boreal sagebrush (*Artemisia arctica*), dry sedges (*Carex elynoides*, *C. foena*, *C. rupestris*), alpine clovers (*Trifolium dasyphyllum*, *T. nanum*), and several alpine grasses (*Deschampsia cespitosa*, *Trisetum spicatum*, *Festuca brachyphyllum*). Colorado wild buckwheat (*Eriogonum coloradense*) was collected on Mt. Harvard in 1896 by F.E. Clements, but it has not been observed again since that time. Animals that utilize this site and other alpine areas include American Pipit (*Anthus rubescens*), Brown-capped Rosy Finch (*Leucosticte australis*), and White-tailed Ptarmigan (*Lagopus muta*).

### 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 01/13/2009  
Designer Culver, D.R.

### Boundary Justification

The site encompasses both peaks and alpine habitat. The boundaries are drawn to protect rare plants and the ecological processes from direct impacts such as trampling or other surface disturbances. A buffer is drawn to provide plants with suitable habitat where additional individuals can become established over time.

<b>Primary Area</b>	3,123.41	<b>Acres</b>	1,264.00	<b>Hectares</b>
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## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

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Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site encompasses two globally vulnerable (G3) whitlow grasses; thick-leaf (*Draba crassa*) and Colorado Divide (*Draba streptobrachia*), both are uncommon and occur only in Colorado in the alpine. The thick-leaf whitlow-grass occurrence is in good (B-ranked) condition and is driving the biodiversity rank of the site. Two occurrences of the state rare (G5/S2) dwarf hawksbeard (*Askellia nana*), one in good (B-ranked) condition and one in poor (D-ranked) condition, are also within the site. The dwarf hawksbeard is a circumpolar species that occurs in Colorado only within the alpine zone.

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

This site and element occurrences were not visited during the 2008 county survey and need to be updated.

## 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>
21274	<i>Draba crassa</i>	thick-leaf whitlow-grass	G3G4	S3	Yes
16688	<i>Askellia nana</i>	dwarf hawksbeard	G5	S2	No
16688	<i>Askellia nana</i>	dwarf hawksbeard	G5	S2	No
21234	<i>Draba streptobrachia</i>	Colorado Divide whitlow-grass	G3	S3	No

## REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
198294	Bright, W. 2004. Colorado Place Names. Johnson Books, Boulder, CO.
198276	Clements, F.E. 1896. Specimen collections at New York Botanic Gardens.
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

Original site design by Fayette, K.K. 1997-04-10. Updated by Spackman, S.C. 1999-03-02.

## VERSION

Version Date 01/13/2009  
Version Author Culver, D.R.

## Disclaimer

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