

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Mud Canyon

Site Code S.USCOHP*21454

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1071 Site Class PCA
Site Alias McElmo Falls

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 371916N
State Colorado Longitude 1083856W

Quad Code Quad Name

37108-C6 Mud Creek
37108-C5 Cortez

County

Montezuma (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14080202 Mcelmo

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	5,800.00 Feet	1,767.84 Meters
Maximum Elevation	6,000.00 Feet	1,828.80 Meters

Site Description

This site is located south of McElmo Canyon. It contains a mosaic of pinon-juniper (*Pinus edulis* - *Juniperus osteosperma*) woodland on the north-facing hillsides, and excellent examples of sagebrush/grass communities on south slopes and in low lying areas. A high diversity of plants occupies the red sandy soil of this site. In addition to big sagebrush, shrubs include bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*), low rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus*), longflower rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus depressus*), and black sagebrush (*Artemisia nova*). Major grasses include needle and thread (*Hesperostipa comata*), Indian rice grass (*Oryzopsis hymenoides*), blue gramma (*Bouteloua gracilis*), galleta (*Pleuraphis jamesii*), six weeks fescue (*Vulpia octoflora*), prairie junegrass (*Koeleria macrantha*) and bottlebrush squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*). Forbs include prince's plume (*Stanleya pinnata*), scarlet globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*), western tansy-mustard (*Descurainia pinnata*), scorpionweed (*Phacelia crenulata*), sand aster (*Chaetopappa ericoides*), New Mexico thistle (*Cirsium neomexicanum*) rock goldenrod (*Petradoria pumila*), thrift mock goldenweed (*Stenotus armerioides*), and granite prickly phlox (*Leptodactylon pungens*). Abajo Penstemon (*Penstemon lentus*), a species on CNHP's watch list, is also within the site. A stone-crushing facility is located on the western side. Several roads run through the site, and there is at least one stock pond. Exotic species are prevalent around disturbed areas. However, there are also large patches of pinon-juniper woodland and sagebrush shrublands that are in excellent condition.

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 12/08/2004
Designer Lyon, M.J.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to encompass all of the rare plant occurrences in the site, and includes sufficient suitable habitat within the pinon-juniper and sagebrush communities to allow for expansion of their populations. The uncertainty of the exact locations of the historic occurrences is reflected in the boundary.

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Primary Area 6,711.64 Acres

2,716.12 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site is drawn for an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of little Penstemon (*Penstemon breviculus*), a globally vulnerable (G3/S2) plant. Hundreds of plants were found flowering throughout both the pinon-juniper woodland and the sagebrush shrublands. The site also supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of Naturita milkvetch (*Astragalus naturitensis*), a plant that is globally imperiled (G2G3/S2S3) and on both the National Forest and BLM sensitive species lists, and an unranked occurrence of little penstemon (*Penstemon breviculus*). There are historical occurrences of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) Cliff Palace milkvetch (*Astragalus deterior*) and Naturita milkvetch (*Astragalus naturitensis*). Cliff Palace milkvetch (*Astragalus deterior*) was collected in this area by Penland in 1948 and has not been observed since. An additional survey for this species is planned for 2005.

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

Bur buttercup (*Ceratocephala orthoceras*), cheat grass (*Anisantha tectorum*), and redstem filaree (*Erodium cicutarium*) have been documented but did not appear to be significantly impacting the elements in 2000.

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>
21647	<i>Astragalus naturitensis</i>	Naturita milkvetch	G2G3	S2S3	Yes
21647	<i>Astragalus naturitensis</i>	Naturita milkvetch	G2G3	S2S3	No
23967	<i>Penstemon breviculus</i>	little penstemon	G3	S2	No
23967	<i>Penstemon breviculus</i>	little penstemon	G3	S2	No
23967	<i>Penstemon breviculus</i>	little penstemon	G3	S2	No
17957	<i>Astragalus deterior</i>	Cliff Palace milkvetch	G1G2	S1S2	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
192772	Lyon, M.J. 2005. Final Report: Survey of Rare Plants. San Juan Public Lands in Dolores and Montezuma counties, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

Original site design by Anderson, D.G. 2000-11-01.

VERSION

Version Date 12/08/2004

Version Author Lyon, M.J.

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