

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Nate Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP\*18805

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1689 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 381060N  
State Colorado Longitude 1073723W

### Quad Code Quad Name

38107-B6 Dallas  
38107-B5 Courthouse Mountain

### County

Ouray (CO)

### Watershed Code Watershed Name

14020006 Uncompahange

## SITE DESCRIPTION

<b>Minimum Elevation</b>	7,440.00	<b>Feet</b>	2,268.00	<b>Meters</b>
<b>Maximum Elevation</b>	9,400.00	<b>Feet</b>	2,865.00	<b>Meters</b>

### Site Description

Nate Creek is a tributary of Cow Creek, draining a portion of the west side of Cimarron Ridge. The Owl Creek Road parallels the creek, but does not seem to have much negative impact on the riparian zone below. The narrow canyon supports a diverse riparian community dominated by narrowleaf cottonwood and blue spruce. Regeneration of cottonwoods appears to be good. Thinleaf alder and red-osier dogwood line the stream bank. Other riparian species present include coyote willow, Rocky Mountain willow, box elder, and Rocky Mountain maple. A transitional zone away from the stream includes Gambel oak, Rocky Mountain juniper, serviceberry, virgin's bower, and chokecherry, with an understory of mountain lover and elk sedge. Red top, Canada wild rye, and horsetails grow in wetlands with standing water. Uplands in the lower part of the site are vegetated with pinon, juniper, serviceberry, big sagebrush, and Gambel oak. At the higher elevations, uplands have Engelmann spruce, subalpine fir and aspen. Although there are some cattle trails and clearings that have weedy exotic species, the majority of the area is in good condition. Exotic species noted include yellow sweet clover, timothy, houndstongue, Kentucky bluegrass, and Canada thistle. Downstream from this site there are several water diversions, and nearly all water is removed from the creek. Upstream along the creek, aspen and snowberry become more abundant. Major understory species here include Oregon grape, elk sedge and common juniper. Although there is some bank erosion and minor grazing impacts, the stream was determined by the forest service to be in proper functioning condition. The forest service identified by sight native Colorado River cutthroat trout in the upper portions of Nate Creek during 1998. Research has no yet been done to ascertain the genetic purity of the population. There was abundant bear sign in the upper canyon. Along the Owl Creek Road, above Nate Creek, is the largest population of wild hollyhock known in the area. Over one hundred large healthy clumps of these showy plants grow along the roadside, on a steep north-facing slope in moist spruce, fir and aspen forest. Associated species include cow parsnip, thimbleberry, elderberry, Rocky Mountain maple, tall larkspur, wolf currant, and mountain ash. The plants appear to benefit from the increased light and moisture from the road, as few plants were found away from disturbed areas. The tops of several plants were observed to have been grazed. The long-term effects of grazing are not known.

### Key Environmental Factors

No Data

### Climate Description

No Data

### Land Use History

No Data

### Cultural Features

No Data

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## SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes

Mapped Date 07/29/1999

Designer Lyon, M.J.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include both the riparian vegetation of Nate Creek and the site of the wild hollyhock along the Owl Creek Road.

Primary Area 1,316.09 Acres

532.61 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

### Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site contains a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable plant community, *Populus angustifolia* - *Picea pungens* / *Alnus incana*, and a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3? Q/S1) plant, large-flower globe-mallow (*Iliamna grandiflora*).

Other Values Rank No Data

### Other Values Comments

Wildlife habitat, recreation.

## 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>
19359	<i>Iliamna grandiflora</i>	large-flower globe-mallow	G3?Q	S1	No
24823	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Picea pungens</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	Yes
21796	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No

## REFERENCES

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

## ADDITIONAL TOPICS

### Additional Topics

No Data

## VERSION

Version Date 07/29/1999

Version Author Lyon, M.J.

## Disclaimer

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