

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Navajo River

Site Code S.USCOHP*4571

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1818 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 371312N
State Colorado Longitude 1063922W

Quad Code Quad Name

37106-B6 Elephant Head Rock
37106-C6 Summit Peak

County

Archuleta (CO)
Conejos (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

13010005 Conejos
14080101 Upper San Juan

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation 9,000.00 Feet 2,743.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation 12,800.00 Feet 3,901.00 Meters

Site Description

This PCA encompasses the high elevation headwaters of the Navajo River including Augustora Creek and the Navajo River. The north half of the PCA lies within the South San Juan Wilderness in the San Juan and Rio Grande National Forests. The southern part of the PCA is within the Navajo Headwaters Ranch, a privately owned working ranch. The landowners are interested in the conservation of the ranch's natural resources and are working with members of the local community including biologists to maintain the quality of the area. Navajo Creek and its headwaters are home to a population of native Colorado River cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus*). This particular population of cutthroat trout is genetically pure and believed to be indigenous to the area. The Colorado Division of Wildlife has classified this trout population as a Conservation Population because of its genetic purity. The population is above a falls on the Navajo River and is thereby protected from invasion by non-native trout.

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 06/01/1996

Designer Loar, A.M. and C.C. Fleming

Boundary Justification

Since the cutthroat trout population within this PCA depends exclusively on the local hydrology for their life needs, the extent of the watershed was included from the headwaters of Navajo Creek in Conejos County to reaches of Navajo Creek within the ranch valley. Thus, the floodplain and immediate watershed, which are necessary to support natural hydrological processes, are included to ensure the long-term maintenance of the riparian ecosystems and the fish population. Activities within these boundaries have the potential to impact the local hydrology and dependent ecology. The planning boundary includes the headwaters and major tributaries. A 1,000 foot upland buffer is provided to limit direct disturbance and local hydrologic

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alteration.

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Primary Area 4,616.27 Acres 1,868.15 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The biodiversity rank for this PCA is based on an excellent (A rank) population of cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus*), a fish species that is globally secure (G4T3). This population is one of only a few Colorado River cutthroat trout populations that are genetically pure. The population is protected from invasion by non-native trout by a natural barrier and is considered a Conservation Population because of its genetic purity and security from introduced non-native trout populations. Most remaining populations of this trout have hybridized with introduced non-native trout (Young et al. 1996). Historically Colorado River cutthroat trout were distributed throughout the colder headwaters of the Green and Colorado rivers as far south as the San Juan River; they perhaps occupied portions of the lower reaches of large rivers in winter (Young 1995). Currently Colorado River cutthroats are limited to a few small headwater streams of the Green and upper Colorado rivers in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, including the Escalante River drainage in southern Utah (Hepworth et al. 2001).

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

Hydrological processes originating outside of the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, timing and flow must be managed to maintain site viability.

Information Needs

Any possible barrier locations.

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>
21796	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

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

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 05/15/1997
Version Author Fleming, C.C.

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