

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name North Castle Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*23808

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 785 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 384543N
State Colorado Longitude 1070914W

Quad Code Quad Name
38107-G2 Anthracite Range

County
Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14020002 Upper Gunnison

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,400.00 Feet	2,865.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	10,000.00 Feet	3,048.00 Meters

Site Description

North Castle Creek flows through a broad curving valley with dense willow carrs and successive beaver ponds. Higher ground has heavy cover of non-native species due to historic overgrazing and current horse packing/recreation. Many ephemeral streams drain into the creek. Upslopes are dry grassland of Thurber fescue on south-facing slopes and dense Englemann spruce on north-facing slopes. Dominant species within the willow carrs include mountain willow (*Salix monticola*), Wolf's willow (*S. wolfii*), and bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*). Associated species include planeleaf willow (*S. planifolia*), Geyer willow (*S. geyeriana*), arrowleaf ragwort (*Senecio triangularis*), mountain bluebells (*Mertensia ciliata*), and American vetch (*Vicia americana*). Beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*) is dominant within the associated sedge meadows. The willow carrs and sedge meadows form a large mosaic of wetland communities. The willows are on the drier areas surrounded by sedges. The surface is hummocky with standing water.

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 12/30/2002

Designer Doyle, G.A.

Boundary Justification

The site includes a portion of North Castle Creek and the adjacent watershed. The boundary represents a preliminary estimate of the area needed to maintain local hydrological conditions. However, it should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the riparian area are not fully contained by the site boundaries. Any upstream activities along North Castle Creek and its tributaries could potentially be detrimental to the hydrology of the riparian area. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area 1,232.56 Acres 498.80 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name North Castle Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*23808

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports good (B-ranked) examples of globally vulnerable (G3) mountain willow/bluejoint reedgrass (*Salix monticola*/*Calamagrostis canadensis*) and Wolf's willow/bluejoint reedgrass (*Salix wolfii*/*Calamagrostis canadensis*) willow shrublands. The mountain willow/bluejoint reedgrass association is known only throughout the mountains of Colorado. There are thirteen documented locations and an additional twenty to thirty more stands are expected to occur. This association is threatened by improper livestock grazing, inappropriate stream flow alterations, and heavy recreation use. The Wolf's willow/bluejoint reedgrass association is documented from several states but is not well documented in Colorado, but is expected to be more common if properly inventoried.

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>
40532	<i>Salix wolfii</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G3	S2S3	Yes
24514	<i>Salix monticola</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Montane Willow Carr	G3	S3	Yes
24955	<i>Carex aquatilis</i> - <i>Carex utriculata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Wet Meadows	G4	S4	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
173839	Rocchio J., G Doyle, and R. Rondeau. 2003. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Gunnison County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/30/2002
Version Author Doyle, G.A.

Disclaimer

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name North Castle Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*23808

These data are a product and property of Colorado State University, Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CNHP). These data are strictly "on loan" and should be considered "works in progress". Data maintained in the Colorado Natural Heritage Program database are an integral part of ongoing research at CSU and reflect the observations of many scientists, institutions and our current state of knowledge. These data are acquired from various sources, with varying levels of accuracy, and are continually being updated and revised. Many areas have never been surveyed and the absence of data in any particular geographic area does not necessarily mean that species or ecological communities of concern are not present. These data should not be regarded as a substitute for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. Absence of evidence is NOT evidence of absence. Absence of any data does not mean that other resources of special concern do not occur, but rather CNHP files do not currently contain information to document this presence. CNHP is not responsible for whether other, non-CNHP data providers have secured landowner permission for data collected.

These data are provided for non-commercial purposes only. Under no circumstances are data to be distributed in any fashion to outside parties. To ensure accurate application of data, tabular and narrative components must be evaluated in conjunction with spatial components. Failure to do so constitutes a misuse of the data. The Colorado Natural Heritage Program shall have no liability or responsibility to the data users, or any other person or entity with respect to liability, loss, or damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the data, including but not limited to any interruption of service, loss of business, anticipatory profits or indirect, special, or consequential damages resulting from the use of operation of the data. Data users hereby agree to hold CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado harmless from any claim, demand, cause of action, loss, damage or expense from or related to data users use of or reliance on the data, regardless of the cause or nature thereof, and even in the event that such cause is attributable to the negligence or misconduct of CNHP.

These data are provided on an as-is basis, as-available basis without warranties of any kind, expressed or implied, INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE, AND NON-INFRINGEMENT. Although CNHP maintains high standards of data quality control, CNHP, Colorado State University, and the State of Colorado further expressly disclaim any warranty that the data are error-free or current as of the date supplied