

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name North Fork Fryingpan

Site Code S.USCOHP*16537

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 472 Site Class PCA
Site Alias Cunningham Creek

Network of Conservation Areas (NCA)

<u>NCA Site ID</u>	<u>NCA Site Code</u>	<u>NCA Site Name</u>
1308	S.USCOHP*4412	Upper Eagle River
1806	S.USCOHP*4413	Upper Fryingpan

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 392017N
State Colorado Longitude 1063350W

Quad Code Quad Name

39106-C5 Nast

County

Pitkin (CO)

Eagle (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14010004 Roaring Fork
14010003 Eagle

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation - Feet - Meters

Maximum Elevation - Feet - Meters

Site Description

This PCA includes the full drainages of Cunningham Creek and the North Fork of the Fryingpan River down to and including the Elk Wallow willow carr. The headwaters of this basin support alpine systems. Further downstream (10,000 feet) the vegetation is dominated by spruce-fir (*Picea engelmannii*-*Abies lasiocarpa*) and lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) forests with small willow carrs and wet meadows. One of these wet meadows supports a globally-vulnerable plant subspecies. At these middle elevations the rivers exhibit a pool drop pattern, and contain many boulders and side channels. Scattered outcrops of gray gneiss are found throughout the PCA. In general, the PCA supports fairly mature forests, indicated by mixed size classes and lots of dead and down trees, though some logging has occurred in this area in the past. Further downstream (about 9000 feet) Cunningham Creek flows into the North Fork of the Fryingpan River. The drainage then opens out of a lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) forest into a wide valley with extensive willow carrs dominated by Drummond's willow and Canada reedgrass (*Salix drummondiana*/*Calamagrostis canadensis*) and wet meadows (*Carex aquatilis*-*Carex utriculata*). The Elk Wallow campground is situated here, just out of the floodplain above the willow carr. Downstream of the PCA, the willow carr is interrupted by reservoirs and homes. There is a very large powerline that crosses through the PCA; and there are roads adjacent to the rivers for most of the lower elevation areas. These corridors in addition to logging have fragmented and altered the riparian areas. Elevation range within the PCA is about 8800 to almost 12,500 feet. A total of 13,477 acres are included in the PCA boundaries.

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 05/03/1999

Designer Spackman, S.C.

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Boundary Justification

The headwaters of the North Fork of the Fryingspan River and the full Cunningham Creek drainage are included in this PCA. This area should be adequate to protect the occurrences from direct disturbances and to allow for migration of the elements over time. Hydrological processes originating outside the boundary should be considered in protection planning.

Primary Area 13,483.05 Acres 5,456.42 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The PCA includes an extensive, good quality occurrence of a riparian community that is globally vulnerable. This community, dominated by Drummond's willow and Canada reedgrass (*Salix drummondiana*/*Calamagrostis canadensis*), has been documented in only 24 locations in Colorado. Further, a three mile stretch of an excellent occurrence of a globally secure plant community, a pristine occurrence of a common wetland, and a good occurrence of a globally-vulnerable plant subspecies were documented in this PCA. Colorado River cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki pleuriticus*) have been documented in two places in this PCA. One of these was last observed in 1981 and has been assigned an historical element occurrence rank by CNHP. The other was last observed in 1995. This subspecies is considered Sensitive by the U.S. Forest Service and is on the State Special Concern list. The greatest threat to the continued viability of Colorado River cutthroat trout is the introduction and migration of non-native fish species. Competition with brook trout and hybridization with rainbow trout are threats to this subspecies (Behnke 1992).

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 Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
<u>State ID</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>			
24480	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Mertensia ciliata</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G5	S5	No
24473	<i>Salix drummondiana</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Lower Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	Yes
24955	<i>Carex aquatilis</i> - <i>Carex utriculata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Wet Meadows	G4	S4	No
24684	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G5	S5	No
21796	<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii pleuriticus</i>	Colorado River Cutthroat Trout	G4T3	S3	No
21874	<i>Eriophorum altaicum</i> var. <i>neogaeum</i>	Altai cottongrass	G4?T3T4	S3	No
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

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VERSION

Version Date 05/03/1999

Version Author Spackman, S.C.

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