

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name North Fork Gunnison River

Site Code S.USCOHP*23816

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1063 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 385614N
State Colorado Longitude 1072313W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
38107-H3	Paonia Reservoir
38107-H4	Somerset

County

Gunnison (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
14020004	North Fork Gunnison

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,180.00 Feet	1,884.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	7,200.00 Feet	2,195.00 Meters

Site Description

A mild stretch of the North Fork Gunnison River flows through this site. Paonia Reservoir is located just upstream and has drastically altered the hydrology. The reservoir is located just upstream of the confluence of the North Fork Gunnison River and Anthracite Creek. No dams exist along Anthracite Creek, thus the site still has some seasonal flooding. Farms and pastures up and down stream alter hydrology, nutrients, bank stability, and potential for increase in non-native species. Highway 133 is also nearby. Despite the presence of the Paonia Reservoir, large flow volumes during spring runoff (mainly from Anthracite Creek) maintain an active floodplain consisting of a 20-meter band of active floodplain with sparse vegetation, then a band of narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*) and alder (*Alnus incana*) on a slightly higher floodplain. Five to ten year old narrowleaf cottonwoods are abundant here. Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) dominates many stretches. Other species found in the riparian area include sandbar willow (*Salix exigua*), Pacific willow (*S. lucida*), red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*), and coneflower (*Rudbeckia ampla*). Non-natives such as redtop (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), timothy (*Phleum pratense*), and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) are also present.

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 12/30/2002

Designer Rocchio, F.J.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries incorporate an area that will allow natural hydrological processes such as seasonal flooding, sediment deposition, and new channel formation to maintain viable populations of the elements along the North Fork Gunnison River. The boundaries also provide a small buffer from nearby trails and roads where surface runoff may contribute excess nutrients and sediment. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area 2,233.45 Acres 903.85 Hectares

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SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports an extant occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) juniper tumble mustard (*Thelypodopsis juniperorum*) and a good (B-ranked) example of a globally vulnerable (G3/S3) narrowleaf cottonwood / alder riparian forest (*Populus angustifolia* / *Alnus incana*). This association is known from New Mexico and Colorado. Although not well documented from other states, it is expected to occur throughout the range of narrowleaf cottonwood in the Rocky Mountains. In Colorado, this is a common community along montane streams, but few high quality examples exist. This association is highly threatened by improper livestock grazing, development and stream flow alterations.

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>
24541	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forest	G3	S3	Yes
22878	<i>Thelypodopsis juniperorum</i>	juniper tumble mustard	G2	S2	Yes

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.
173182	Rocchio, J. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey of Critical Wetlands in Gunnison County.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/30/2002
Version Author Rocchio, F.J.

Disclaimer

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