

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Ouray Canyons

Site Code S.USCOHP*18806

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 893 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>
666	S.USCOHP*19025	Uncompahgre River

LOCATORS

Nation United States Latitude 380010N
State Colorado Longitude 1074005W

Quad Code Quad Name

38107-A6 Ouray
37107-H6 Ironton

County

Ouray (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14020006 Uncompahange

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	7,800.00 Feet	2,377.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	10,200.00 Feet	3,109.00 Meters

Site Description

The canyons of Canyon Creek and the Uncompahgre Gorge meet at Ouray's Box Canyon Park, a popular tourist attraction managed by the City of Ouray Parks Department. Black Swifts have been known to nest in crevices in the canyon walls. There are historic records of a number of rare ferns in Box Canyon, but these seem to have been extirpated. A gravel county road follows Canyon Creek west to Yankee Boy Basin, while state Highway 550 follows the Uncompahgre River south to Red Mountain Pass. There is a small dam on the Uncompahgre River within the site. Both canyons support montane and riparian forest communities in good condition. Between the two canyons are steep cliffs of weathered Leadville limestone. These cliffs are home to several rare ferns. In the Uncompahgre Gorge just above Ouray, water has been diverted to create ice falls, which attract ice climbers from the entire country. Ownership of the area is a jumble of Forest Service lands and mining claims. The Forest Service has requested comments regarding its desire to consolidate properties and simplify its boundaries. The Ouray City Planning Department has requested that they be given time to acquire mining claims in this area.

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 11/30/1998
Designer Lyon, M.J.

Boundary Justification

The site includes both canyon bottoms and the cliffs above, and was expanded to include the Uncompahgre Gorge which contains similar species and geology.

Primary Area 1,203.27 Acres 486.95 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

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Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G1G2/S2) *Populus tremuloides* / *Acer glabrum* montane riparian forest, and multiple occurrences of more common plants and communities in varying condition.

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

Recreation, including ice climbing; scenery. Formerly mining.

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>
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No
24118	<i>Polypodium hesperium</i>	western polypody	G5	S1S2	No
24118	<i>Polypodium hesperium</i>	western polypody	G5	S1S2	No
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No
17355	<i>Pellaea atropurpurea</i>	purple cliff-brake	G5	S2S3	No
24861	<i>Populus tremuloides</i> / <i>Acer glabrum</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G2	S2	Yes
24118	<i>Polypodium hesperium</i>	western polypody	G5	S1S2	No
24696	<i>Abies concolor</i> / <i>Mahonia repens</i> Forest	Mixed Montane Forests	G5	S4	No
24490	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> / <i>Carex geyeri</i> Forest	Lower Montane Forests	G4?	S3	No
24118	<i>Polypodium hesperium</i>	western polypody	G5	S1S2	No
23498	<i>Gilia penstemonoides</i>	Black Canyon gilia	G3	S3	No
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No
24118	<i>Polypodium hesperium</i>	western polypody	G5	S1S2	No
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No
17560	<i>Draba incerta</i>	Yellowstone whitlow-grass	G5	S1	No
23381	<i>Woodsia neomexicana</i>	New Mexico cliff fern	G4?	S2	No

REFERENCES

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

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 06/28/1999
Version Author Lyon, M.J.

Disclaimer

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