

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Pass Creek at Cottonwood Pass

Site Code S.USCOHP*6889

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 995 Site Class PCA
Site Alias Pass Creek

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 385029N
State Colorado Longitude 1062523W

Quad Code Quad Name

38106-G4 Tincup

County

Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14020001 East-Taylor

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	10,300.00	Feet	3,139.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	11,600.00	Feet	3,536.00	Meters

Site Description

Pass Creek flows through willow carrs, sedge meadows with beaver ponds, and forested reaches. The valley is rather wide in places but the riparian vegetation generally occupies just a narrow band along the creek. Forested reaches are dominated by Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and non-forested reaches by willows or sedges. A portion of the creek supports a community of bog birch with mixed mesic forbs and graminoids (*Betula glandulosa*/Mesic forb-Mesic graminoid). This plant association is a low-stature open shrubland of subalpine and lower alpine elevations. It occurs intermixed with *Salix* (willow) shrublands and *Carex* (sedge) meadows, forming complex wetland mosaics. It grows in areas where soils are saturated from snowmelt runoff for a significant part of the growing season, and often on fens where the vegetation receives water from seeps and springs. Associated species include Engelmann spruce, lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), shrubby cinquefoil (*Pentaphylloides floribunda*), Wolf willow (*Salix wolfii*), barrenfruit willow (*Salix brachycarpa*), angelica (*Angelica pinnata*), mountain bluebells (*Mertensia ciliata*), strawberry (*Fragaria* sp.), willowherb (*Epilobium angustifolium*), hemlockparsley (*Conioselinum scopulorum*), and sedges (*Carex* spp.). Variegated scouringrush (*Hippochaete variegata*) grows in hummocky water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*) dominated fens. The associated community is planeleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*) willow carrs with bog birch. Associated species include Engelmann spruce, sedges (*Carex microglochis*, *C. cappilaris*), elephanthead (*Pedicularis groenlandica*), tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*), marsh marigold (*Caltha leptosepala*), meadow bistort (*Polygonum bistorta*), saxifrage (*Saxifraga odontoloma*), and cowbane (*Oxypolis fendleri*). Cottonwood Pass Road is very close by with an old two track even closer to the creek.

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 South Fork 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

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upstream activities along Pass 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 430.71 Acres 174.30 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports a good (B-ranked) example of a globally vulnerable (G3G4/S3) bog birch/mesic forb-mesic graminoid shrubland (*Betula glandulosa*/mesic forb-mesic graminoid). This association is documented only within Colorado. It typically grows on very wet peat in the subalpine and lower alpine elevations and is threatened by peat mining, stream flow alterations, and heavy recreational use. The site also supports an excellent occurrence of a state rare (G5/S1) plant species.

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>			
24497	<i>Betula nana</i> / Mesic Forbs - Mesic Graminoids Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Shrubland	G3G4	S3	Yes
21454	<i>Hippochaete variegata</i>	variegated scouringrush	G5	S1	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

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