

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Rock Creek at Gore Pass

Site Code S.USCOHP*25873

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2283 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 400511N
State Colorado Longitude 1063734W

Quad Code Quad Name

40106-A6 Lynx Pass
40106-A5 Gore Pass

County

Grand (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14010001 Colorado headwaters

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	8,760.00 Feet	2,670.05 Meters
Maximum Elevation	8,860.00 Feet	2,700.53 Meters

Site Description

Occurrence inhabits approximately .65 mile of Rock Creek, a small, free-flowing, confined second order stream. Community structure is consistent throughout with a canopy layer dominated by lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) and tall shrub layer of thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*), and Drummond's willow (*Salix drummondiana*). Stream edges and small adjacent floodplains are dominated by the tall shrubs. Lodgepole pine is present as a consistent layer throughout with some Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and subalpine fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*). Graminoids occur in very low cover with bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*) being most common. Forbs present include arrowleaf ragwort (*Senecio triangularis*), common cowparsnip (*Heracleum maximum*), and Virginia strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*). There are surprisingly few weedy species. Geology consists of igneous rocks of the Precambrian Age. Stream bottom consists of large boulders and a cobble layer interspersed with medium grain sand. There is a small floodplain of fine, sandy soils. Community is confined by Forest Service road and moderately sloped banks. Disturbances include fishing, camping, and general road proximity (dust, weeds, and wildlife). Community appears to be mature and stable, with coarse materials throughout, little erosion, and good vegetation cover. Past beaver activity evident just downstream of occurrence. Beavers may have been "removed" due to flooding of the road.

Key Environmental Factors

Key environmental factors contributing to site hydrology and biota include spring flooding, drainage shape being narrow, confined, perennial surface flows, and elevation.

Climate Description

Climate likely follows patterns typical of this region of Colorado, being generally xeric throughout the year, with wet spring seasons and late summer "monsoons".

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 12/28/2005
Designer Jones, J.R.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries include approximately one mile of Rock Creek, near its junction with Hwy 134. Boundaries include buffered upland area and encompass those ecological processes necessary to maintain site hydrology such as perennial surface flows, spring flooding and sediment deposition. However, boundaries do

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not include all ecological processes influencing the site and activities upstream and along adjacent slopes such as improper grazing, water diversion, and development may impact site hydrology and biota.

Primary Area 54.89 Acres 22.21 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site is drawn for a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) community, thinleaf alder (*Alnus incana*) / Drummond's willow (*Salix drummondiana*) shrubland.

Other Values Rank V3 - Moderate values

Other Values Comments

This site provides moderate other values including recreation and open space for camping, hiking, fishing, hunting, biking, and OHV use.

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

Predominant land uses include recreational use such as fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, biking, and OHV use. As well, areas upstream of this site are used for livestock grazing.

Natural Hazard Comments

Spring flooding may cause hazardous conditions along adjacent road as well as swift water.

Exotics Comments

Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), and common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) are all present along drier areas within the drainage.

Offsite

Off-site considerations for the drainage include adjacent road and logging of upland forests.

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>
24743	<i>Alnus incana</i> - <i>Salix drummondiana</i> Shrubland	Montane Riparian Shrubland	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
160903	Carsey, K., D. Cooper, K. Decker, D. Culver, and G. Kittel. 2003. Statewide wetlands classification and characterization: Wetland plant associations of Colorado. Prepared for Colorado Department of Natural Resources, Denver, CO by Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
193632	Culver, D.R. and Jones, J.R. 2006. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Grand County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
160140	Dorn, R. D. 1997. Rocky Mountain Region Willow Identification Field Guide. Renewable Resources R2-RR-97-01. Denver, CO: USDA, Forest Service, Rocky Mountain Region. 107p.
167224	Hurd, E.G., N.L. Shaw, J. Mastroguiseppe, L.C. Smithman, and S. Goodrich. 1998. Field Guide to Intermountain Sedges. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Rocky Mountain Research Station, Ogden, UT.
192747	Tweto, O. 1979. Geologic Map of Colorado, 1:500,000. United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior, and Geologic Survey of Colorado, Denver, CO.
193553	USDA, NRCS. 2005. The PLANTS Database, Version 3.5 (http://plants.usda.gov). Data compiled from various sources by Mark W. Skinner. National Plant Data Center < http://npdc.usda.gov/ >, Baton Rouge, LA 70874-4490 USA. Accessed 2005.
172684	Weber, W.A. and R.C. Wittmann. 2001. Colorado Flora: Western Slope, Third Edition. University Press of Colorado, Niwot, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

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VERSION

Version Date 12/28/2005

Version Author Jones, J.R.

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