

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Sheep Mountain near Virginia Dale

Site Code S.USCOHP*25451

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2224 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 405535N
State Colorado Longitude 1051438W

<u>Quad Code</u>	<u>Quad Name</u>
40105-H2	Table Mountain
40105-H3	Virginia Dale

County

Larimer (CO)

<u>Watershed Code</u>	<u>Watershed Name</u>
10190007	Cache La Poudre

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,800.00 Feet	2,072.64 Meters
Maximum Elevation	7,312.00 Feet	2,228.70 Meters

Site Description

This site is comprised of gently rolling prairie dissected by numerous draws and small drainages and is bounded by sandstone hogbacks to the south and east. Elevation increases north and west of the site, and the grassland begins to form a mosaic with ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) woodlands that occupy granitic rock outcrops. The grassland is punctuated by small, isolated buttes. The grassland is characterized by midgrasses, especially needle-and-thread grass (*Hesperostipa comata*), blue grama (*Bouteloua gracilis*), and slimstem muhly (*Muhlenbergia filiculmis*), with mountain muhly (*Muhlenbergia montana*) in the dry swales.

Key Environmental Factors

The grassland occupies relatively deeper soils surrounded by sandstone hogbacks and areas with granitic rock outcrops.

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

This site is on Maxwell Ranch, which was donated to Colorado State University.

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 03/18/2005
Designer Neid, S.L.

Boundary Justification

The boundary of this site was drawn to incorporate the area of deeper soils occupied by grassland surrounding the element occurrence east of County Road 37.

Primary Area	5,276.48 Acres	2,135.32 Hectares
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SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site was drawn for a fair to good (BC-ranked) occurrence of a globally critically imperiled (G1G2/S1S2) montane grassland (*Muhlenbergia montana* - *Hesperostipa comata*).

Other Values Rank No Data

Other Values Comments

No Data

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LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

Maxwell Ranch is a working ranch. The southern half of the site is maintained for winter grazing, whereas the north end is grazed in the summer.

Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

Exotics Comments

Invasive weeds (*Linaria dalmatica*, *Bromus tectorum*, *Sisymbrium altissimum*) are present and common at the north end of the site.

Offsite

The land to the west of County Road 37 is already subdivided and is being developed into low intensity residential housing.

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>
24730	<i>Muhlenbergia montana</i> - <i>Hesperostipa comata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G1G2	S1S2	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
192692	Doyle, G.A., S.L. Neid and R.J. Rondeau. 2005. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources, Larimer County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 03/18/2005

Version Author Neid, S.L.

Disclaimer

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