

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Snowshoe Canyon

Site Code S.USCOHP*107

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1670 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 385432N
State Colorado Longitude 1071836W

Quad Code Quad Name

38107-H3 Paonia Reservoir
38107-H2 Marcellina Mountain

County

Gunnison (CO)

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

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	6,600.00	Feet	2,012.00	Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,200.00	Feet	2,804.00	Meters

Site Description

Snowshoe Canyon is a narrow, steep gradient, scenic canyon. Snowshoe Creek flows through the canyon and supports a narrow band of riparian vegetation. The canyon is rather inaccessible due to its steep walls and the riparian area is in excellent condition. There are very few non-native plants and the canyon does not appear to be grazed by livestock. Dominant plants along the stream are blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) and alder (*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*) with narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*), strapleaf willow (*Salix eriocephala*), Bebb's willow (*Salix bebbiana*), honeysuckle (*Distegia involucrata*), Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*), and red-osier dogwood (*Cornus sericea*). Riparian vegetation along Grouse Spring Creek, a tributary to Snowshoe Canyon is dominated by quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*), Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), thinleaf alder, tall fringed bluebells (*Mertensia ciliata*), and Brandegees' fumewort (*Corydalis caseana* subsp. *brandegei*). Uplands range from dense stands of aspen and Douglas-fir to open woodlands.

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 Grouse Spring Creek and Snowshoe Creek and the adjacent canyon walls. Because of the steep nature of the adjacent slopes in Snowshoe Canyon, the boundary extends to the rim of the canyon. This should be sufficient to prevent direct and indirect disturbance, including but not limited to, exotic species invasion, physical alteration, and local hydrologic alteration. Any upstream activities along Snowshoe Creek and its tributaries, such as water diversions, impoundments, improper livestock grazing, and development could potentially be detrimental to the hydrology of the riparian area within the site. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area	2,451.29	Acres	992.01	Hectares
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SITE SIGNIFICANCE

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Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports an excellent (A-ranked) example of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) quaking aspen/thinleaf alder riparian plant community (*Populus tremuloides*/*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*). This plant association is located in narrow ravines and along first- and second-order streams of the west slope of Colorado. The site also contains a good (B-ranked) example of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) blue spruce/thinleaf alder (*Picea pungens*/*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*) riparian plant community. This woodland occurs in deep, shaded canyons and narrow valleys along relatively straight stream reaches. It generally forms small patches, but can be continuous for several river miles. This association is known from Wyoming to New Mexico. Fewer than 100 stands exist in Colorado, and very few of these are in pristine condition. These associations are threatened by development, road building and maintenance, heavy recreational use, improper livestock grazing, and stream flow alterations. This site also supports an excellent (A-ranked) example of an apparently globally secure (G4/S4) riparian plant community: narrowleaf cottonwood-blue spruce/thinleaf alder (*Populus angustifolia*-*Picea pungens*/*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*).

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

Hydrological processes originating outside the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, and timing, must be managed to maintain site viability.

Information Needs

[1994:] CNHP ecology team needs to add to info on this site.

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>
24518	<i>Picea pungens</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	Yes
24911	<i>Populus tremuloides</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	Yes
24823	<i>Populus angustifolia</i> - <i>Picea pungens</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Woodland	Montane Riparian Forests	G3	S3	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
164036	Doyle, G.A. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey of Critical Wetlands in Gunnison County.
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 01/06/2003
Version Author Doyle, G.A.

Disclaimer

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