

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name South Fork Mineral Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*1631

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1660 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 374754N
State Colorado Longitude 1074659W

Quad Code Quad Name

37107-G6 Silverton
37107-G7 Ophir

County

San Juan (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14080104 Animas

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,470.00 Feet	2,886.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	10,000.00 Feet	3,048.00 Meters

Site Description

The South Mineral Creek is a moderately steep sided valley located at the base of several 12,000 and 13,000 ft peaks. The site begins at the base of Rolling Mountain, a 13,693 ft. peak approximately 5 miles west of Silverton. South Mineral Creek drains west to east through a rolling, glaciated valley flanked by U.S. Forest Road 585. There are two designated USFS campgrounds and several dispersed areas for camping. Areas along the creek bed consist mainly of glacial drift and contain a number of highly mineralized springs. South Mineral Creek meanders only slightly throughout its eight-mile length and eventually joins the main fork of Mineral Creek at Silverton. Iron fen wetlands and limonite terraces are located at Cooper Gulch, Snowslide Gulch, and Zuni Gulch above the creek. The riparian wetlands are dominated by Rocky Mountain willow (*Salix monticola*) with Drummond's willow (*Salix drummondiana*) at the upper reaches and Geyer's willow (*Salix geyeriana*). The understory consists of bluejoint (*Calamagrostis canadensis*) with water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*) and beaked sedge (*Carex utriculata*).

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 12/19/2002

Designer Culver, D.R.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the South Mineral Creek floodplain. The boundaries incorporate an area that will allow natural hydrological processes such as seasonal flooding, sediment deposition, and new channel formation to maintain viable populations of the wetland. It should be noted that the hydrological processes necessary to the riparian elements are not fully contained by the site boundaries. Given that the elements are dependent on natural hydrological processes associated with South Mineral Creek, any upstream activities such as water diversions, impoundments, and mining development could potentially be detrimental to the wetland. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

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Primary Area 1,271.72 Acres

514.65 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site supports an excellent occurrence (A-ranked) of a globally imperiled (G2/S2) iron fen plant community, two good (B-ranked) occurrences of globally vulnerable (G3/S3) montane riparian plant communities, a good (B-ranked) occurrence of a globally imperiled (G2?/S2?) plant, a fair (C-ranked) occurrence of a vulnerable to secure (G4?T3T4/S3) subspecies of altai cotton grass and one good (B-ranked) and one fair (C-ranked) occurrence of state rare (G5/S1 and G5/S2) ferns.

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 of the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, timing and flow must be managed to maintain site viability.

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>			
24489	<i>Salix geyeriana</i> - <i>Salix monticola</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	No
24473	<i>Salix drummondiana</i> / <i>Calamagrostis canadensis</i> Shrubland	Lower Montane Willow Carrs	G3	S3	No
24847	(<i>Picea engelmannii</i>) / <i>Betula nana</i> / <i>Carex aquatilis</i> - <i>Sphagnum angustifolium</i> Woodland	Iron Fen	G2	S2	Yes
22152	<i>Cryptogramma stelleri</i>	slender rock-brake	G5	S2	No
21874	<i>Eriophorum altaicum</i> var. <i>neogaeum</i>	Altai cottongrass	G4?T3T4	S3	No
22486	<i>Cystopteris montana</i>	mountain bladder fern	G5	S1	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
162794	Baker, W. L. 1985. Field Survey to the San Juan Mountains of July 24-August 8, 1985.
158301	Culver, D.R. and P. Lyon. 2002. Colorado Natural Heritage Program Field Survey to San Juan County.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 12/19/2002

Version Author Culver, D.R.

Disclaimer

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