

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Stout Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*25892

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2290 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 382202N
State Colorado Longitude 1055158W

Quad Code Quad Name

38105-D7 Howard
38105-C8 Bushnell Peak
38105-C7 Coaldale

County

Fremont (CO)
Saguache (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

13010003 San Luis
11020001 Arkansas Headwaters

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	7,700.00	Feet	2,346.96	Meters
Maximum Elevation	13,105.00	Feet	3,994.40	Meters

Site Description

This riparian system flows down the steep north face of the Sangre de Cristo Range, beginning in glaciated valleys just below the jagged ridgeline and peaks. Stout Creek begins at Stout Creek Lakes and is joined by a major tributary that descends from Bushnell Lakes in the adjacent valley to the south. This site addresses Bushnell Lakes, although the valley of Stout Creek Lakes is likely comparable. The alpine zone is a narrow area in the bottom of the U-shaped valley and it forms a mosaic with subalpine spruce - fir forest patches right at treeline. The valley has a series of alpine lakes (Bushnell Lakes) connected by waterfalls before the stream tumbles down the north face of the mountain range. The stream flows through a mosaic of alpine meadow and subalpine spruce - fir forest at treeline. A short willow carr dominated by planeleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*) and diverse forbs lines the stream and forms a mosaic with the evergreen riparian forest (*Picea engelmannii* - *Abies lasiocarpa* / *Mertensia ciliata* forest) at subalpine elevations (above 11,000 feet). The stream continues to flow through subalpine spruce - fir forest until its confluence with Stout Creek before grading into mixed evergreen - aspen forest at lower elevations. In this high-gradient area in the upper montane zone the drainage pattern is complex. There are a series of channels that are variously active and inactive over the years; some years the perennial flow follows one branch, the next year it follows another leaving the first channel a dry bed of exposed cobbles. There is abundant evidence of high-energy flooding. Quaking aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) is the dominant canopy species in the riparian corridor at this elevation zone although conifers like white fir (*Abies concolor*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) are common. Large, multi-stemmed specimens of river birch (*Betula occidentalis*) form discontinuous patches along the reach with other diverse shrub species. The ground layer is comprised of moss-covered boulders and downed wood interspersed with lush and diverse forbs. At lower elevations, the tree canopy shifts to narrowleaf cottonwood (*Populus angustifolia*).

Key Environmental Factors

Subalpine, upper montane elevations; high to moderate gradient; perennial flow.

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

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SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 01/13/2006

Designer Neid, S.L.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn along the watershed boundary to south and east and along a sharp ridge defining a glaciated valley to southwest for immediate watershed protection in upper portion. The lower portion is buffered to 1 km.

Primary Area 2,855.15 Acres 1,155.44 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B2: Very High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site is drawn for an excellent (A-ranked) occurrence of a globally vulnerable (G3/S2) riparian natural community, quaking aspen / river birch (*Populus tremuloides* / *Betula occidentalis*) woodland, and an excellent to good (AB-ranked) occurrence of the globally imperiled (G2/S2) Colorado larkspur (*Delphinium ramosum* var. *alpestre*). Additionally, there are excellent (A-ranked) occurrences of an apparently globally secure (G4/S4) natural community, planeleaf willow / mesic forb (*Salix planifolia* / mesic forb) shrubland and a globally secure (G5/S5) riparian natural community, subalpine fir / tall fringed bluebells (*Abies lasiocarpa* / *Mertensia ciliata*) forest.

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>			
24611	<i>Populus tremuloides</i> / <i>Betula occidentalis</i> Forest		G3	S2	No
24480	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Mertensia ciliata</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G5	S5	No
40641	<i>Salix planifolia</i> / Mesic Forbs Shrubland [Provisional]	Planeleaf Willow/Mesic Forbs	G4	S4	No
16702	<i>Delphinium ramosum</i> var. <i>alpestre</i>	Colorado larkspur	G2	S2	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
193618	Neid, S.L. 2006. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Fremont County, Colorado. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 01/13/2006

Version Author Neid, S.L.

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