

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name The Ironclads

Site Code S.USCOHP*27376

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2517 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 400957N
State Colorado Longitude 1052910W

Quad Code Quad Name

40105-B4 Raymond
40105-B5 Allens Park

County

Boulder (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

10190005 St. Vrain

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	8,116.80 Feet	2,474.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	9,908.14 Feet	3,020.00 Meters

Site Description

The Ironclads are a large area of granitic rock pavement, smooth tors, and outcrops south of Allenspark along the Peak to Peak Highway in northwest Boulder County. The ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) woodland of The Ironclads is near the upper elevational limits for the system. Forest cover shifts rapidly from mixed conifer, including lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*) and Douglas-fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), to spruce - fir (*Picea engelmannii* - *Abies lasiocarpa*) forest within 0.5 miles. The extensive rock pavement is sparsely vegetated by stunted ponderosa pine and limber pine (*Pinus flexilis*). Dwarf birch (*Betula nana*) occurs sporadically in crevices across the broad slope. Bog birch is most often found in fen wetlands in Colorado, so its presence is unusual in this setting. Off the pavement there are shallow, well-drained, gravelly soils that support a mixed age class woodland with many large, mature ponderosa pine. There are minor amounts of Douglas-fir, especially in protected pockets or crevices. Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) is present in the subcanopy in limited areas. Dwarf shrubs are common and abundant and form large copses in the gravel surface soils. Species include bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*), Fendler's ceanothus (*Ceanothus fendleri*), and bitterbrush (*Purshia tridentata*). The herbaceous layer is well-developed and diverse. It is dominated by graminoids, especially spike fescue (*Leucopoa kingii*), which forms large swards. Needle duff and sand comprise the unvegetated surface. There is a network of ORV roads surrounding the main outcrops, but the rocky nature appears to limit some use.

Key Environmental Factors

Upper montane elevation zone; granite bedrock.

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 10/20/2008
Designer Neid, S.L.

Boundary Justification

This site includes The Ironclads, a notable landscape feature, and its immediate surrounding watershed. It is drawn for occurrences of rare ponderosa pine plant communities and includes enough area to support a mixed fire regime.

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Primary Area 2,019.36 Acres

817.21 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally vulnerable (G3/S3) *Pinus ponderosa* / *Leucopoa kingii* foothills ponderosa pine savanna.

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>			
24756	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i> / <i>Leucopoa kingii</i> Woodland	Foothills Ponderosa Pine Savannas	G3	S3	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
195190	Neid, S., J. Lemly, K. Decker and D. Culver. 2009. Final Report: Survey of Critical Biological Resources in Boulder County 2007-2008. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 10/20/2008

Version Author Neid, S.L.

Disclaimer

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