

# Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Union Park

Site Code S.USCOHP\*23630

## IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1903 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 384358N  
State Colorado Longitude 1063300W

## Quad Code Quad Name

38106-F5 Fairview Peak  
38106-G5 Taylor Park Reservoir

## County

Gunnison (CO)

## Watershed Code Watershed Name

14020001 East-Taylor

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,680.00 Feet	2,950.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	11,600.00 Feet	3,536.00 Meters

## Site Description

Union Park is a high, flat valley along the Lottis Creek drainage, surrounded by rounded granite bedrock ridges covered by lodgepole (Pinus contorta) and spruce-fir forest (Carsey and Decker 1999). It is separated from Taylor Park to the north by a low divide. Lottis Creek originates in a large glacial cirque on the north side of Fairview Peak, northwest of Gunnison. The creek flows northward through a glaciated valley to Union Park, where it spreads out into a long series of shallow beaver ponds, sedge-filled beaver meadows, and willow carrs. Lottis Creek turns westward across the valley floor and descends into Union Canyon on its way to its confluence with the Taylor River below Taylor Park Reservoir. The upper end of Union Canyon is a deep narrow cut in the granite ridge that borders the park on its western edge. The floor of Union Park features at least two levels of glacial outwash (at approximately 10 and 30 feet above the wetland) (Carsey and Decker 1999). Sideslopes are cloaked in lateral and recessional moraine. It is possible that Union Park once held a lake, which drained catastrophically down Union Canyon. The modern flat topography is a result of extensive beaver activity; dam building led to sediment collection and forced the creek channel to shift back and forth across the entire valley floor. The area includes excellent examples of a variety of common montane wetland community types, as well as good examples of beaver processes and pond succession. The large wetland area in Union Park is composed of numerous shallow beaver ponds with emergent wetlands dominated by common sedges such as beaked sedge (Carex utriculata) and water sedge (C. aquatilis). There is modest peat accumulation up to two feet thick in scattered, poorly drained areas. Most water flow is in channels, especially in the lower reach of the wetland where dam failure appears to be a common event. Willow carrs consist primarily of Wolf willow (Salix wolfii) intermixed with planeleaf willow (S. planifolia) and bog birch (Betula glandulosa). Slightly drier areas support meadows of tufted hairgrass (Deschampsia cespitosa) and water sedge. Nearby uplands support sagebrush shrubland and limited fescue grassland.

## 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 Doyle, G.A.

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## Boundary Justification

The boundary represents an estimate of the area needed to maintain local hydrological conditions. Any upstream activities along Lottis Creek and its tributaries such as water diversions, impoundments, improper livestock grazing, and development could potentially be detrimental to the hydrology of wetland areas within the PCA. This boundary indicates the minimum area that should be considered for any conservation management plan.

Primary Area 3,050.04 Acres 1,234.31 Hectares

## SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

## Biodiversity Significance Comments

Moderate biodiversity significance. This site supports excellent (A-ranked) examples of two globally apparently secure (G4/S3) wetland plant communities that are vulnerable in Colorado: wolf willow with beaked sedge (*Salix wolfii*/*Carex utriculata*) and wolf willow with water sedge (*Salix wolfii*/*Carex aquatilis*).

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</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>
24666	<i>Salix wolfii</i> / <i>Carex aquatilis</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G4	S3	Yes
24504	<i>Salix wolfii</i> / <i>Carex utriculata</i> Shrubland	Subalpine Riparian Willow Carr	G4	S3	Yes

## 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 12/19/2002

Version Author Doyle, G.A.

## Disclaimer

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