

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name Upper Rambouillet Park

Site Code S.USCOHP*26734

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 2416 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 375812N
State Colorado Longitude 1071326W

Quad Code Quad Name
37107-H2 Slumgullion Pass

County
Hinsdale (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name
14020002 Upper Gunnison

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	11,750.00 Feet	3,581.40 Meters
Maximum Elevation	11,950.00 Feet	3,642.36 Meters

Site Description

The site is drawn for a spring-fed wetland complex along the upper, northeastern reaches of Rambouillet Park. Rambouillet Park is a large, high elevation plateau with multiple spring-fed wetlands that flow southwest feeding the West Fork of Cebolla Creek. Bedrock geology is composed of quartz latite of Rambouillet Park, predominantly coarsely porphyritic quartz latite flows and breccias of the Oligocene epoch (Steven 1974, Tweto 1979). Soils are inundated to saturated throughout consisting of fibric to hemic peats up to 40+cm, grading into dry, rocky substrates. This wetland is a fen type of peatland. Peatlands are peat accumulating wetlands characterized by organic soils (histosols) with 40 cm peat accumulation in the upper 80 cm (USDA 2006). In this region where precipitation inputs are minimal, peatlands are fens dependent on groundwater with secondary inputs from other hydrologic sources (Cooper et al. 1999). The wetland varies throughout with multiple areas of shallow, open water that are interspersed with inundated soils and densely vegetated hummocks. Sheep sedge (*Carex illota*) is the dominant species throughout the gently sloping wetland creating dense patches on saturated soils and a near monoculture on hummocked areas. Lower reaches are composed of inundated soils, shallow, open water, and floating mats of water sedge (*Carex aquatilis*). Other graminoid species include tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*), Northwest Territory sedge (*Carex utriculata*), and mountain timothy (*Phleum alpinum*). Mesic forbs present include redpod stonecrop (*Rhodiola rhodantha*), American bistort (*Polygonum bistortoides*), Eastwood's podistera (*Podistera eastwoodiae*), and splittleaf groundsel (*Packera dimorphophylla*). Diamondleaf willow (*Salix planifolia*) is present in very low cover. No exotic species were observed within the wetland. A rough 4X4 road runs adjacent to the wetland along its western edge. It does not appear to be heavily used or impacting hydrology. Predominant use is recreation including hunting, skiing, and hiking. There is evidence of elk and deer use within the wetland, with scat and tracks throughout. Adjacent uplands are dominated by xeric, alpine meadows with large expanses of shortfruit willow (*Salix brachycarpa*) shrublands, and small patches of Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*).

Key Environmental Factors

Key environmental factors influencing species composition of the wetland are upper subalpine elevation, low gradient, perennial, groundwater-fed hydrology, and peat-accumulating soils.

Climate Description

Climate and weather tend to follow typical patterns of the San Juan Mountains of Colorado being generally xeric throughout the year with warm spring weather causing snowmelt flooding, wet summers, and a late summer monsoon season.

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

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SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 10/15/2006

Designer Jones, J.R.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries include 1,000 ft of uplands to buffer from impacts to site condition (Keate 2004). This buffer accounts for natural ecological processes important for the maintenance of wetland elements such as seasonal flooding, groundwater recharge, surface flows, and sediment deposition. However, the boundary does not include all hydrological processes necessary to the maintenance of site hydrology and upstream activities such as improper livestock grazing or recreational use, development, or water diversion could be detrimental to the site.

Primary Area 191.39 Acres 77.45 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

This site is drawn for a good (B-ranked) occurrence of the globally unranked, but state imperiled (GUQ/S2) sheep sedge (*Carex illota*) herbaceous vegetation.

Other Values Rank V2 - High values

Other Values Comments

The site provides aesthetic value and acts as a source of system biodiversity in the area. It also provides ecosystem health values such as important wildlife habitat, aquifer recharge and discharge, and flood attenuation and storage.

LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Land Use Comments

Predominant land use is recreation. Local USFS and BLM field offices use this area for snow pack measurement during winter.

Natural Hazard Comments

No Data

Exotics Comments

No exotics were observed.

Offsite

No Data

Information Needs

No Data

ASSOCIATED ELEMENTS OF BIODIVERSITY

<u>Element</u>	<u>State Scientific Name</u>	<u>State Common Name</u>	<u>Global Rank</u>	<u>State Rank</u>	<u>Driving Site Rank</u>
21256	<i>Carex illota</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Alpine Wetlands	GUQ	S2	Yes

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
191667	Cooper, S. V., C. Jean, and B. L. Heidel. 1999. Plant associations and related botanical inventory of the Beaverhead Mountains Section, Montana. Unpublished report to the Bureau of Land Management. Montana Natural Heritage Program, Helena. 235 pp.
192813	Keate, Nancy S. 2004. Bibliography of Impacts to Wetlands II - Draft - revised - Jan 2004. Utah Wetland Outreach, Wildlife Resources, Utah Department of Natural Resources.
194565	Neid, S.L. and J.R. Jones. 2008. Final Report: Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Hinsdale County. Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Fort Collins, CO.
194566	Steven, T.A. 1974. Geologic Map of the Durango Quadrangle, Southwestern Colorado. United States Geological Survey, Department of Interior, Reston, VA.
194564	USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service. 2006. Keys to Soil Taxonomy, 6th ed. Soil Survey Staff, Soil Conservation Services. Washington, DC. 12 p.

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ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date 10/15/2006

Version Author Jones, J.R.

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