

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name West Brush Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*2463

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1000 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 385548N
State Colorado Longitude 1065219W

Quad Code Quad Name

38106-H8 Gothic
38106-H7 Pearl Pass

County

Gunnison (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14020001 East-Taylor

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	9,200.00 Feet	2,804.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	13,200.00 Feet	4,023.00 Meters

Site Description

West Brush and Middle Brush creeks drain canyons on opposite sides of Teocalli Ridge. Vegetation along West Brush Creek varies from forested reaches within narrow canyons to willow carrs and sedge meadows in wider, U-shaped, glaciated valleys. Dominant shrubs beneath the subalpine fir-Engelmann spruce (*Abies lasiocarpa*-*Picea engelmannii*) forested reaches include alder (*Alnus incana* ssp. *tenuifolia*), Drummond willow (*Salix drummondiana*), and honeysuckle (*Distegia involucrata*). In the wider areas, willow-sedge mosaics dominate with the wettest areas supporting dense stands of beaked sedge and the drier areas dominated by Geyer willow (*Salix geyeriana*) or mountain willow (*S. monticola*). Bluejoint reedgrass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*) forms dense understory beneath the Geyer willow. Beaver activity within both creeks has created a series of ponds. The Colorado Division of Wildlife documented two boreal toad (*Bufo boreas*) breeding locations within the site. The boreal toad breeds in still or slowly moving water and successful breeding generally requires permanent or semipermanent water sources. The boreal toad was once common throughout the mountains of Colorado, but has undergone declines over the last 20 years. In 1993 the boreal toad was listed as state endangered and is currently a candidate species for federal listing. In the lower elevations of the site, the uplands are dominated by sagebrush and some aspen stands with north slopes dominated by spruce/fir forest with thick patches of aspen.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

No Data

SITE DESIGN

Site Map P - Partial Mapped Date 12/20/2002
Designer Lambert, B.A. and G.A. Doyle

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the two documented boreal toad breeding locations and adjacent contiguous habitat. A buffer is provided to prevent direct disturbance to the aquatic habitats. These boundaries are intended to protect potential breeding habitat and some post-breeding dispersal. As this species is known to move over two miles from breeding sites, it could be impacted by off-site factors. The boundary represents an estimate

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

Primary Area 8,071.21 Acres 3,266.32 Hectares

SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B3: High Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The site supports two breeding locations for boreal toad (*Bufo boreas*), a globally critically imperiled (T1Q/S1) subspecies.

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 the planning boundary, including water quality, quantity, and timing, 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>			
24684	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i> / <i>Alnus incana</i> Forest	Montane Riparian Forests	G5	S5	No
18795	<i>Carex utriculata</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Beaked Sedge Montane Wet Meadows	G5	S4	No
20351	<i>Bufo boreas</i> pop. 1	Boreal Toad (Southern Rocky Mountain Population)	G4T1Q	S1	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 12/20/2002
Version Author Lambert, B.A. and G.A. Doyle

Disclaimer

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