

Level 4 Potential Conservation Area (PCA) Report

Name West Lime Creek

Site Code S.USCOHP*23996

IDENTIFIERS

Site ID 1173 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 374458N
State Colorado Longitude 1074518W

Quad Code Quad Name

37107-F6	Snowdon Peak
37107-F7	Engineer Mountain
37107-G7	Ophir
37107-G6	Silverton

County

San Juan (CO)

Watershed Code Watershed Name

14080104 Animas

SITE DESCRIPTION

Minimum Elevation	10,000.00 Feet	3,048.00 Meters
Maximum Elevation	11,400.00 Feet	3,475.00 Meters

Site Description

The West Lime Creek site is located northwest of Highway 550 at the first major switchback south of Molas Pass. The creek is in excellent condition, with a series of small waterfalls and beautiful pools. The valley bottom is lined with montane forests of spruce and aspen, with a shrubby understory of *Lonicera involucrata*, *Heracleum lanatum* and *Ribes montigenum*. More open riparian areas are dominated by *Salix monticola* and *Salix drummondiana*. South and west-facing hillsides above the creek have an excellent example of montane grassland dominated by Thurber fescue. This community is the major grass-dominated type in San Juan County, and occurs in a mosaic with aspen and mixed conifer forests throughout much of the county. Associated species here include *Bromus ciliatus*, *Potentilla pulcherrima*, *Fragaria virginiana*, *Erigeron elatior*, *Geranium richardsonii*, *Valeriana edulis*, and *Thalictrum fendleri*. Kittenails (*Besseya Ritteriana*), a San Juan endemic plant was found at the base of these grassy slopes as well as in more moist areas upstream. Seeps in the south-facing hillside support another rare plant, *Hippochaete variegata*, along with *Salix brachycarpa*, *Parnassia fimbriata*, *Gentianopsis thermalis*, *Swertia perenne*, *Potentilla fruticosa*, *Juncus mertensianus*, *Carex aurea*, *Juncus longistylis*, and *Poa retrorsa*.

Key Environmental Factors

No Data

Climate Description

No Data

Land Use History

No Data

Cultural Features

Trail along creek.

SITE DESIGN

Site Map Y - Yes Mapped Date 12/13/2002
Designer Lyon, M.J.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include a variety of occurrences of plant species and communities in the riparian zone and adjacent hillsides of West Lime Creek. The integrity of all of these occurrences is tied to the supply of moisture from upslope.

Primary Area	1,309.64 Acres	530.00 Hectares
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SITE SIGNIFICANCE

Biodiversity Significance Rank B4: Moderate Biodiversity Significance

Biodiversity Significance Comments

The West Lime Creek site supports an excellent (A-ranked) example of a globally secure (G4/S4) forest community, *Festuca thurberi* - *Lathyrus lanszwertii* var. *leucanthus*, and a fair (C-ranked) population of variegated scouring rush (*Hippochaete varietaga*), a species that is extremely rare (G5/S1) in Colorado. In addition, a poor (D-ranked) occurrence of the state rare (G4?T3T4/S3) altai cottongrass (*Eriophorum altaicum* var. *neogaeum*) and an unranked occurrence of the state rare (G5/S2) slender rock-brake (*Cryptogramma stelleri*) have been documented.

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>			
22152	<i>Cryptogramma stelleri</i>	slender rock-brake	G5	S2	No
24648	<i>Festuca thurberi</i> - <i>Lathyrus lanszwertii</i> var. <i>leucanthus</i> Herbaceous Vegetation	Montane Grasslands	G4	S4	Yes
21874	<i>Eriophorum altaicum</i> var. <i>neogaeum</i>	Altai cottongrass	G4?T3T4	S3	No
21454	<i>Hippochaete variegata</i>	variegated scouringrush	G5	S1	No

REFERENCES

<u>Reference ID</u>	<u>Full Citation</u>
-	No Data

ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Additional Topics

No Data

VERSION

Version Date	12/13/2002
Version Author	Lyon, M.J.

Disclaimer

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